



## COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Tuesday

19 December 2023

6pm

Community Room 1, Community Hub, Maryborough  
and livestreamed on the internet.

## Contents

## Page

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1. Commencement of Meeting and preliminaries  | 1   |
| 2. Apologies  | 1   |
| 3. Leave of absence   | 1   |
| 4. Conflicts of interest  | 2   |
| 5. Confirmation of Minutes from previous Council Meetings   | 3   |
| 5.1 Draft Minutes of the Special Council meeting dated 31 October 2023                                  | 4   |
| 5.2 Draft Minutes of the Statutory Council Meeting dated 21 November 2023                               | 7   |
| 5.3 Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting Dated 28 November 2023   | 13  |
| 6. Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees   | 20  |
| 7. Petitions  | 20  |
| 8. Officer Reports  | 21  |
| 8.1 G1854 - 2023Q - 2023-24 Consideration of the resealing contract report                              | 21  |
| 8.1.2 G1854 - 2023Q - 2023-24 Tender Evaluation<br><i>(Confidential, provided under separate cover)</i> | N/A |
| 8.2 Contract G1459-2020 Bituminous Spray Sealing Report   | 25  |
| 8.3 Contract Award: G1826-23 Trade Services Report  | 28  |
| 8.3.1 G1826-23 Tender Evaluation<br><i>(Confidential, provided under separate cover)</i>                | N/A |
| 8.4 Community Asset Committee Establishment Report  | 34  |
| 8.4.1 DRAFT Template Instrument of Delegation to Community Asset Committee                              | 40  |
| 8.5 Establishment of Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee                                 | 53  |

|        |  |     |
|--------|--|-----|
| 8.5.1  | Schedule - Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee  | 57  |
| 8.6    | Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee                | 59  |
| 8.7    | Audit and Risk Committee Charter Review 2023 Report            | 64  |
| 8.7.1  | DRAFT Audit and Risk Committee Charter Review 2023             | 69  |
| 8.8    | Setting Council Meeting Dates Report for 2024                  | 81  |
| 8.9    | S5 Instrument of Delegation Report From Council to CEO         | 84  |
| 8.9.1  | S5 Instrument of Delegation from Council to CEO                | 87  |
| 8.10   | Communications and Engagement Strategy Report - Annual Review. | 91  |
| 8.10.1 | Communications and Engagement Strategy March 2021              | 95  |
| 8.10.2 | Communications and Engagement Strategy Annual Review           | 108 |
| 9.     | Councillor Reports and General Business                        | N/A |
| 10.    | Notice of Motion   | 131 |
| 10.1   |  |     |
|        | Notice of Motion, Cr Meddows Taylor                            | 132 |
| 10.1.1 | Notice of Motion Letter to the Prime Minister                  | 134 |
| 11.    | Urgent Business  | 137 |
| 12.    | Confidential Business  | 137 |
| 13.    | Meeting Closure  | 137 |

## 1. Commencement of Meeting and Welcome

Councils must, in the performance of its role, give effect to the overarching governance

principles in the *Local Government Act 2020*.<sup>1</sup>

These are included below to guide Councillor consideration of issues and Council decision making.

- a. Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- b. priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- c. the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;
- d. the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- e. innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;
- f. collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;
- g. the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- h. regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;
- i. the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

## 2. Apologies

Council's Governance Rules require that the minutes of Council meetings record the names of Councillors present and the names of any Councillors who apologised in advance for their non-attendance.<sup>2</sup>

The annual report will list councillor attendance at Council meetings. Councillor attendance at Councillor briefings is also recorded.

## 3. Leave of absence

One reason that a Councillor ceases to hold the office of Councillor (and that office becomes vacant) is if a Councillor is absent from Council meetings for a period of 4 consecutive months without leave obtained from the Council. (There are some exceptions to this - see section 35 for more information.)

A Councillor can request a leave of absence. Any reasonable request for leave must be granted.<sup>3</sup> Leave of absence is approved by Council.

Any request will be dealt with in this item which is a standing item on the agenda. The approvals of leave of absence will be noted in the minutes of Council in which it is granted. It will also be noted in the minutes of any Council meeting held during the period of the leave of absence.

<sup>1</sup> Section 9.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 2, rule 62.

<sup>3</sup> See Local Government Act 2020 s 35 (4) and s 35 (1) (e).

#### 4. Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of Interest must be disclosed at the commencement of a Council meeting or Councillor briefing, or as soon as a Councillor recognises that they have a conflict of interest.

The relevant provisions in the *Local Government Act 2020* include those in Part 6, Division 2 (from section 126). Failing to disclose a conflict of interest and excluding themselves from the decision making process is an offence.

#### Disclosures at Council meetings

Under the Governance Rules:<sup>1</sup>

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which he or she:

1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered; or

2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice:

2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;

2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and

2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:

(a) name of the other person;

(b) nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and

(c) nature of that other person's interest in the matter, and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting

announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub- Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

Disclosures at councillor briefings (and other meetings)

Also under the Governance Rules,<sup>2</sup> a Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered by a meeting held under the auspices of Council at which he or she is present must:

**Councillor form to disclose conflicts of interest Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:

~~Briefing~~ \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting type:

Meeting

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of the conflict of interest (describe):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

~~name of the other person (gift giver):~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other~~

~~person:~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~nature of that other person's interest in the matter:~~ \_\_\_\_\_

If the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person:

## 5. Confirmation of Minutes from previous Council Meetings

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the following Minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting:

- 5.1 Minutes from previous Special Council Meeting dated 31 October 2023
- 5.2 Minutes from previous Statutory Council Meeting dated 21 November 2023
- 5.3 Minutes from previous Council Meeting Dated 28 November 2023



## **DRAFT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, 31 October 2023

6:00pm

Meeting held in person.

Community Room 1, Community Hub,  
Maryborough and livestreamed on the internet.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Councillors:

Grace La Vella (Mayor)

Liesbeth Long

Geoff Lovett

Chris Meddows-Taylor

Gerard Murphy

Wayne Sproull

Anna de Villiers

To be confirmed at the Council  
Meeting scheduled for 19 December  
2023

**1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME**

The Mayor commenced the meeting at 6pm, welcoming all present, with an acknowledgement of country and the Council Prayer.

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors**

Grace La Vella (Mayor

Anna De Villiers

Liesbeth Long (attended electronically)

Geoff Lovett

Chris Meddows-Taylor

Gerard Murphy

Wayne Sproull

**Officers**

Chief Executive Officer Lucy Roffey

General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning Matthew Irving

General Manager Community Wellbeing Emma Little

General Manager Corporate Performance Mick Smith

**2. APOLOGIES**

Nil.

**3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

**4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST Nil**

## 8. OFFICER REPORTS

### 8.1 CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the Central Goldfields Shire Council 2022-2023 Annual Report for Council's consideration.

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>MOTION</b></p> <p>That</p> <p>Council;     1. adopt the Annual Report 2022-23; and<br/>                  2. notes the Annual Report 2022-2023 has been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.</p> <p><b>Moved:</b> Cr Meddows-Taylor<br/><b>Seconded:</b> Cr Murphy</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Carried - unanimous</b></p> |
|--|

Councillors who spoke on the motion: Mayor Grace La Vella, Cr Meddows-Taylor and Cr Gerard Murphy

## 12. MEETING CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.



## **STATUTORY COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday 21 November 2023

6pm

### **MINUTES**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME                            | 2 |
| 2. APOLOGIES  | 2 |
| 3. MAYOR'S REPORT ON THE PAST YEAR                                | 3 |
| 4. ELECTION OF MAYOR  | 4 |
| 5. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO COMMITTEES AND ORGANISATIONS | 6 |

To be confirmed at the Council  
Meeting scheduled for 19 December  
2023

**1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME**

The commencement of the meeting and welcome was conducted by the  
CEO.

**2. APOLOGIES Cr Murphy**

DRAFT

### 3. MAYOR'S REPORT ON THE PAST YEAR

The former Mayor presented a report on the past year in accordance with Governance Rule 22.

#### Motion to Accept Mayors Report

**Motion:**

That Council Accept the Mayoral Report for

2022/23 **Moved:** Cr Meddows-Taylor

**Seconded:** Cr de Villiers

**Carried**

Crs who spoke on the matter: Cr Meddows-Taylor, Cr Sproull, Cr de Villiers, Cr Lovett, Cr Long

DRAFT

#### 4. ELECTION OF MAYOR

In accordance with section 25(3)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the CEO will take the Chair until the Mayoral election concludes.

##### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide for Council to set the Mayoral term at one or two years, and to elect a Councillor to the office of Mayor.

At its meeting on 21 November 2022, Council resolved not to elect a Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the current term.

S26 Clause 3 of the *Local Government Act* states that "Before the election of the Mayor, a Council, other than the Greater Geelong City Council, must determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a 1 year or a 2 year term." As there is only one year left in this term of Council, only a one-year term of Mayor can be determined.

##### Motion for Term of Mayoral term

**Motion:**

That Council determine the length of term of the Mayor to be set at one year. **Moved:** Cr Sproull

**Seconded:** Cr La Vella

**Carried**

##### Election of Mayor

The CEO called for nominations for Mayor.

A nomination for Cr Long was moved by Cr Sproull and seconded by Cr de Villiers. Cr Sproull spoke to the nomination.

The election was carried out in accordance with the *Governance Rules* and Cr Long was declared duly elected unopposed.

**Motion:**

That standing orders be suspended to allow for the incoming Mayor to address the meeting, and for photographs to be taken.

**Moved:** Cr Meddows-Taylor

**Seconded:** Cr Lovett

**Carried**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That standing orders be

resumed. **Moved:** Cr Meddows-

Taylor **Seconded:** Cr Lovett

**Carried**

**Election of Deputy Mayor**

The *Local Government Act 2020* allows Councils to determine whether or not to elect a Deputy Mayor.

At its meeting on 21 November 2022, Council resolved not to elect a Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the current Council term.

## 5. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO COMMITTEES AND ORGANISATIONS

### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

Councillors have the option to be appointed to various committees and statutory or regional bodies.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council regarding current Committees of Council, Council representation committees and to seek appointments to these bodies.

#### Motion

That Council nominate its representatives to the committees and organisations as detailed in the table below.

#### External Committees

| Committee/Statutory Body                  | Proposed Representatives                |
|---|---|
| Municipal Association of Victoria         | Cr De Villiers<br>Cr Long               |
| Audit and Risk Committee                  | (alternative) Cr Murphy, Cr De Villiers |
| Australia Day Committee                   | All Councillors                         |
| Rural Councils Victoria                   | Cr Sproull                              |
| CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee | Cr Long, Cr Meddows-Taylor, Cr Lovett   |
| Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance      | Cr Sproull                              |
| Municipal Emergency Management Committee  | Cr Sproull                              |
| Energy Breakthrough Committee             | Cr Long                                 |
| Climate Action Collaboration              | Cr Long, Cr Sproull                     |
| Walking and Cycling Committee             | Cr La Vella                             |

#### Community Asset Committees (CAC)

| Committee                                      | Proposed Representatives |
|--|--------------------------|
| Daisy Hill Community Centre Committee          | Cr Meddows-Taylor        |
| Adelaide Lead Hall Committee                   | Cr Meddows-Taylor        |
| Talbot Town Hall Committee                     | Cr Meddows-Taylor        |
| Talbot Community Homes Committee               | Cr Meddows-Taylor        |
| Dunolly Historic Precinct Management Committee | Cr Long                  |

**Moved:** Cr Meddows-

Taylor **Seconded:** La Vella

**Carried**

**Meeting ended:** 6:30pm



## **DRAFT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, 28 November 2023

6:00pm

Meeting held in person

Community Room 1, Community Hub, Maryborough  
and livestreamed on the internet.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Councillors:

Grace La Vella (Mayor)

Liesbeth Long

Geoff Lovett

Chris Meddows-Taylor

Gerard Murphy

Wayne Sproull

Anna de Villiers

To be confirmed at the Council Meeting  
scheduled for 19 December 2023

### **1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING AND WELCOME**

## DRAFT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – 28 November 2023

As the Mayor Cr Liesbeth Long was absent for the meeting, the CEO opened the meeting at 6pm, welcoming all present, with an Acknowledgement of Country and the Council Prayer.

The CEO called for a motion to appoint an Acting Chair for the duration of the meeting.

### **MOTION**

That Cr Grace La Vella be appointed Acting Chair for the duration of the meeting.

**Moved: Cr Meddows-Taylor**

**Seconded: Cr Lovett**

**Carried**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Councillors**

Grace La Vella

Anna De Villiers

Geoff Lovett

Chris Meddows-Taylor

Gerard Murphy

#### **Officers**

Chief Executive Officer Lucy Roffey

General Manager Assets Infrastructure and Planning Matthew Irving

General Manager Community Wellbeing Emma Little

General Manager Corporate Performance Mick Smith

**2. APOLOGIES**

- Cr Liesbeth Long (Mayor)
- Cr Wayne Sproull

**3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

**4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Nil

**5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**MOTION**

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held 24 October 2023 be adopted.

**Moved:** Cr Murphy

**Seconded:** Cr Meddows-Taylor

**Carried**

**6. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

Nil.

**7. PETITIONS**

Nil.

## 8. OFFICER REPORTS

### 8.1 COUNCIL PLAN ACTION PLAN REPORT Q1

The report provides Council with an update on the status of the actions identified in the Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2023-24, for the quarter ending 30 September 2023.

#### **MOTION**

That Council note the Council Plan Annual Action Plan 2023-24 Progress Report for Quarter 1.

**Moved:** Cr de Villiers

**Seconded:** Cr Murphy

**Carried**

Crs who spoke to the motion: Crs de Villiers, Murphy, Meddows-Taylor

### 8.2 PRIORITY PROJECTS PLAN REFRESH

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider and adopt the updated Priority Projects Plan to support Councillors and Council staff in their advocacy to the State and Federal Governments to fund projects of significance to the Shire.

#### **MOTION**

That Council:

1. adopt the updated Priority Projects Plan;
2. provide copies to local MPs and relevant Government Ministers and Government Departments; and
3. continue to investigate funding opportunities to support the delivery of these projects.

**Moved:** Cr Meddows-Taylor

**Seconded:** Cr Lovett

**Carried**

Crs who spoke to the motion: Crs Meddows-Taylor, Murphy

### **8.3 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK UPDATE FOR PROPOSAL TO NAME THE OPEN SPACE IN WHIRAKEE RISE AS "CYRIL AND MYRA MARTIN RESERVE**

The report presented the proposal to name the open space in Whirakee Rise as Cyril and Myra Martin Reserve.

#### **MOTION**

That Council:

1. ratifies the proposal to name the section of the land in Whirakee Rise described below, as the Cyril and Myra Martin Reserve;
2. in accordance with section 10 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*, applies to the Registrar of Geographic Names for the registration of the amendment at point 1 to be made; and
3. Thanks the community for its feedback, noting it reflects widely-held respect for Cyril and Myra Martin.

**Moved:** Cr Lovett

**Seconded:** Cr Murphy

**Carried**

Crs who spoke to the motion: Crs Lovett, Murphy

### **8.4 PLANNING APPLICATION D044/23 TWO LOT SUBDIVISION OF LAND AND SUBDIVISION OF LAND ADJACENT TO A ROAD IN A TRANSPORT ZONE 2 AT 42 VICTORIA STREET, CARISBROOK.**

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council determination for planning permit application number D044/23 for the two-lot subdivision of the land at 42 Victoria Street, Carisbrook and subdivision adjacent to a road in Transport Zone 2. Public notice of the application has been given and three objections received.

The Application has been assessed against the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme and it is considered that the proposed subdivision is appropriate.

**MOTION**

That the item be deferred until Councillors have the benefit of the recommendations and outcomes of the report of Hansen Consultants, the town planning experts commissioned by Council to develop a framework for development in Carisbrook.

**Moved:** Cr de Villiers

**Seconded:** Cr Murphy

**Carried**

**8.5 PLANNING APPLICATION D042-23 DEVELOPMENT OF 4 DWELLINGS, AND 4 LOT SUBDIVISION OF LAND AT 19 SMITH STREET, CARISBROOK**

The purpose of this report is to seek a Council determination for planning permit application number D042-23 for the development of the land for 4 single storey detached dwellings and associated 4 lot subdivision of land at 19 Smith Street, Carisbrook.

Public notice of the application has been given and four objections received. The Application has been assessed against the Central Goldfields Planning Scheme and it is considered that the proposed development and subdivision is appropriate.

**MOTION**

That the item be deferred until Councillors have the benefit of the recommendations and outcomes of the report of Hansen Consultants, the town planning experts commissioned by Council to develop a framework for development in Carisbrook.

**Moved:** Cr de Villiers

**Seconded:** Cr Murphy

Cr Lovett moved that the motion be put

A vote was called by the Chair and the motion to close the item was carried.

**9. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS**

Cr Lovett presented a report on the Meet the Neighbours documentary which screened on SBS.

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil.

**11. URGENT BUSINESS**

Nil.

**12. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

Nil

**13. MEETING CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 6.37pm.

## **6. Minutes of Delegated and Advisory Committees**

Nil

## **7. Petitions**

Nil

## 8. Officer Reports

### 8.1 CONTRACT G1854-2023Q - RESEALING WORKS

**Author:** Manager Infrastructure

**Responsible Officer:** General Manager Infrastructure Assets and

**Planning**  
*The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

#### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council award Contract G1854-2023Q Central Goldfields Shire - 2023-24 Resealing Works to Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd for the contract sum of \$682,968.54 (exclusive of GST).

As the value of the recommended awarding of contract is anticipated to be above the CEO's financial delegation, the contract is required to be awarded by Council.

#### RECOMMENDATIO

N That Council:

1. approve the award of Contract G1854-2023Q to Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd) for the 2023-24 Resealing Works in Central Goldfields Shire, at a contract sum of \$682,968.54 (exclusive of GST);
2. note that the provisional roads listed in the contract will only proceed up until the \$640,000 budget allocation is exhausted;
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to take all necessary actions to execute Contract G1854-2023Q, including informing the respondents of Council's decision in this matter.

#### LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Our Spaces and

Places The Community's vision 3. Protection and preservation of heritage

Initiative: Provide community infrastructure to meet community need.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The provision of resealing works is guided by Council's current Road Management Plan (RMP) which was adopted in April 2017.

The sealed road asset is considered as two separate assets - the road pavement and the sealed surface.

The sealed surface typically has a 15-year life span whilst the pavement lasts 45 to 60 years depending on stable ground conditions.

Each financial year council allocates a portion of funding to the renewal of the existing sealed surfaces on the sealed road network.

The existing sealed road network comprises approximately 524km of bituminous sprayed seal valued at \$13.4M, as well as asphalt seals valued at \$3.3M.

The annual sealing list is developed using Council's Asset Management practices, which prioritises reseals based on condition data across the 524km length of sealed roads.

The 2023-2024 budget includes an allocation of \$640,000 (ex. GST).

## REPORT

A schedule of the proposed roads to be resealed in 2023-2024 was compiled.

The program is based on condition reports on the network that identify those priority roads to be resealed.

Request for Quotation documents were published on 9 November 2023 to the following companies within Council's Contract G1459-2020 Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing:

1. Boral Resources Pty Ltd;
2. Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd;
3. Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd; and
4. Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd).

Submissions closing date was 22 November 2023 and Council received submissions from the following companies:

1. Boral Resources Pty Ltd;
2. Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd; and
3. Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd).

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy requirements an Evaluation Panel was established as described in the table below to assess the submissions:

| Position Title                          | Scoring or Non-Scoring Member of the Panel |
|---|--|
| Design & Projects Officer               | Chairperson (Scoring Member)               |
| Coordinator Design & Projects Officer   | Scoring Member                             |
| Coordinator Strategic Assets Management | Scoring Member                             |
| Manager Infrastructure                  | Scoring Member                             |
| Acting Coordinator Procurement          | Advisor                                    |

The quotations were assessed against the following evaluation criteria as set out in the table below:

| Mandatory Criteria  | PASS / FAIL |
|---|-------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ OH&amp;S Requirements</li> <li>➤ Relevant Insurance Covers</li> </ul> <p><i>This criterion was applied to reinforce Council's OH&amp;S requirements and to ensure Council has up to date insurance covers.</i></p> | Pass /Fail  |
| Weighted Evaluation Criteria  | Weighting   |
| Financial Benefit to Council  | 60%         |
| Capability  | 20%         |
| Capacity  | 20%         |

A detailed evaluation process was undertaken by the evaluation panel recommending Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd) be awarded Contract G1854-2023Q.

The contract prices offered by Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd) are the most competitive among all the tenders, and they have demonstrated the capability and capacity to successfully fulfill the works as outlined in the contract.

### CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Prior to the contract sealing works being taken, communications will be provided on social media to advise that sealing works will occur. Affected properties will be notified separately.

### FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Total budget of \$640,000 is included in the 2023-2024 budget for sealing works.

However, the tender response has exceeded the initial budget. As the contract is made up of mix of essential road segments (Valued at \$500,000) and provisional road segments (Valued at \$182,968.54), the provisional projects will only proceed up until the \$640,000 budget allocation is exhausted.

### RISK MANAGEMENT

This report addresses Council's strategic risk, Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs by ensuring that Council's Road Network will be maintained to a safe standard in accordance with asset management objectives.

### CONCLUSION

Tender submissions were invited from the existing Sealing Panel (Contract G1459-2020) to fulfill the contract requirements during the 2023-2024 financial year.

The Tender opened on 8 November 2023 and closed on 22 November 2023.

The evaluation panel recommends the following recommendations to Council :

1. Approve the award of Contract G1854-2023Q to Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd) for the 2023-24 Resealing Works in Central Goldfields Shire, at a contract sum of \$682,968.54 (exclusive of GST).
2. Note that the provisional roads listed in the contract will only proceed up until the \$640,000 budget allocation is exhausted.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to take all necessary actions to execute Contract G1854-2023Q, including informing the respondents of Council's decision in this matter.

## ATTACHMENTS

### **8.1.1. G1854-2023Q confidential evaluation report provided under separate cover.**

The evaluation report is confidential under sections 3(a) and (g) of the Local Government Act as it contains:

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

This section applies because the contract is not finalised and releasing the information prior to decision could prejudice the Council's commercial position in negotiations.

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

*(i) relates to trade secrets; or*

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

This section applies because it contains detailed submission information that could provide an unreasonable commercial advantage to competitors.

## 8.2 CONTRACT G1459-2020 BITUMINOUS SPRAY SEALING PANEL REPORT

**Author:** Manager Infrastructure

**Responsible Officer:** General Manager Infrastructure Assets and

**Planning**  
*The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend Council extend the Contract G1459-2020 Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing for or an additional two-year term starting February 2024 subject to the Panel of Suppliers acceptance.

### RECOMMENDATIO

**N** That Council:

1. extend Contract G1459-2020 (Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing) for an additional 2-year term, commencing February 2024;
2. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all necessary negotiations for the extended terms and conditions of Contract G1459-2020 and to sign the extension of Contract G1459-2020;
3. Grant financial delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to expend up to maximum amount that aligns with the annual Capital Works Resealing Budget, enabling acceptance of quotations and approval of any expenditure under the extended term of Contract G1459-2020.

### LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Our Spaces and

Places The Community's vision 3. Protection and preservation of heritage

Initiative: Provide community infrastructure to meet community need.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The provision of resealing works is guided by Council's current Road Management Plan (RMP) which was adopted in April 2017.

The sealed road asset is considered as two separate assets - the road pavement and the sealed surface. The sealed surface typically has a 15-year life span whilst the pavement lasts 45 to 60 years depending on stable ground conditions.

Each financial year council allocates a portion of funding to the renewal of the existing sealed surfaces on the sealed road network.

The existing sealed road network comprises approximately 524km of bituminous sprayed seal valued at \$13.4M, as well as asphalt seals valued at \$3.3M.

On 27 January 2021 Council made the following resolution:

"Appoint Boral Resources Pty Ltd, Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd, Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd and VSA Roads Pty Ltd to a Spray Sealing Panel for the next 3 years, with an option to extend for a further 2 years;"

## **REPORT**

Following an initial term of 3 years G1459-2020 Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing will expire in January 2024.

However, an option was available for extension of this contract at Council's discretion.

Over the initial term of three years the contract has worked effectively with the annual resealing program carried out efficiently and cost-effective pricing obtained that aligns with market conditions.

Retendering at this stage would not provide any additional benefits that are not already being gained from the current contract.

It is recommended, in accordance with the Council's resolution on 27 January 2021, a Letter of Offer to extend Contract G1459-2020, Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing, for an additional 2-year term starting in February 2024, will be sent to all suppliers on the Panel:

1. Boral Resources Pty Ltd.
2. Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd.
3. Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd; and
4. Primal Surfacing Pty Ltd (as part of the VSA Group Pty Ltd).

To deliver efficiencies when procuring the annual resealing works under this contract, it is also recommended that financial delegation be given to the Chief Executive Officer to expend up to a maximum amount of the annual resealing budget across the two years.

This will reduce administrative work and allow for timely delivery of the resealing program each year.

Subject to the Panel of Suppliers' acceptance, negotiations will follow to define the terms and conditions for the extended term of the contract, involving all relevant parties.

## **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

Prior to the contract sealing works being taken, communications will be provided on social media to advise that sealing works will occur.

Affected properties will be notified separately.

## **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The extension of Contract G1459-2020, Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing, will authorise the Council to obtain competitive quotations for the resealing works from the suppliers over the next 2 years.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk, Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs by ensuring that Council's Road Network will be maintained to a safe standard in accordance with asset management objectives.

## **CONCLUSION**

Tender submissions for Resealing Works were invited from the existing Sealing Panel (Contract G1459-2020) to fulfill the contract requirements during the 2023-2024 financial year. The evaluation recommends Council consider the following:

1. Extend Contract G1459-2020 (Panel of Suppliers for Bituminous Spray Sealing) for an additional 2-year term, commencing February 2024.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all necessary negotiations for the extended terms and conditions of Contract G1459-2020 and to sign the extension of Contract G1459-2020.
3. Grant financial delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to expend up to maximum amount that aligns with the annual Capital Works Resealing Budget, enabling acceptance of quotations and approval of any expenditure under the extended term of Contract G1459-2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

### 8.3 G1826-23 Provision of Trade Services - Panel of Suppliers

**Author:** Coordinator Facilities

**Responsible Officer:** General Manager Infrastructure Assets and

The Officer presenting this <sup>Planning</sup> report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

#### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to recommend Council award contract G1826-23 Provision of Trade Services - Panel of Suppliers following a public tender process.

The contract is a two-year with two options to extend one year each, schedule of rates contract and the anticipated spend over the contract is above the CEO's financial delegation and is required to be awarded by Council.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

Award G1826-23 Provision of Trade Services - Panel of Suppliers to the following companies under a Schedule of Rates Contract, for an initial term of 2 years with two options to extend of one year each.

| No | Company Name  | Services to be Provided.   |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | Troy Walker Electrical Pty Ltd  | Fencing and Welding Services   |
| 2  | Shade 'n' Sails   | Shade Sail Repairs and Membrane Replacement  |
| 3  | The Trustee for Astbury Business Trust t/as Astbury Welding and Contracting | Fencing and Welding Services   |
| 4  | Encore Contracting Pty Ltd  | Test and Tagging   |
| 5  | Joshua Laurence Mockridge   | Plastering   |
| 6  | B. & W.A. Home Furnishings Pty Ltd t/as O'Hallorans Maryborough             | Curtains, Blinds and Window Decorations and Flooring (Carpets, Vinyl, Surfaces, Bonds) |

|    |   |                                |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| 7  | <i>Verminate Pty Ltd t/as Verminate Pest Control</i>                            | <i>Pest Control</i>            |
| 8  | <i>Anthony Jonathan Coyle T/as Tony's Pest Control Victoria</i>                 | <i>Pest Control</i>            |
| 9  | <i>The Trustee for the Beaton Family Trust T/as AB Paint Pty Ltd</i>            | <i>Painting and Decorating</i> |
| 10 | <i>The Lark Family Trust t/as Attention to Detail Painting Services PTY LTD</i> | <i>Painting and Decorating</i> |
| 11 | <i>HQ Building Pty Ltd t/as Heenan Homes &amp; Construction</i>                 | <i>Carpentry and Handyman</i>  |
| 12 | <i>Kepal Building Services Pty Ltd</i>  | <i>Carpentry and Handyman</i>  |
| 13 | <i>Luff Metal Fab Pty Ltd</i>   | <i>Welding Services</i>        |
| 14 | <i>CIS Industrial Services Pty Ltd</i>  | <i>Welding Services</i>        |

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Our Spaces and Places

The Community's vision 4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

*Policy: Central Goldfields Shire Council Procurement Policy 2023*

In accordance with section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* this report advises that there were no opportunities for collaboration with other Councils or public bodies in relation to the recommended contract as this contract is established based on Council's needs and requirements and is a specific contract for Council.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Central Goldfields Shire Council currently has panel of suppliers in place for plumbing and electrical services.

It also has under contract, servicing and maintenance of automatic doors, roof, and gutter cleaning, exit and emergency lighting testing, Inspect, routine maintenance of fire protection and fire equipment, Essential Safety Measures (ESMs) Audit, Reporting and Passive Fire Inspections and Supply Air Conditioning Maintenance and Installation.

To supplement these existing successful panels, it is proposed to form a new panel of suppliers for additional specialised trades.

This arrangement will allow contract managers to have access to a full suite of contractors from multiple trades.

## REPORT

Through the public tender process Council received 19 tender submissions.

The Tender Evaluation Panel consisted of the following members:

| Title                          | Scoring or Non-Scoring Panel Member |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Coordinator Facilities         | Chairperson, Scoring Member         |
| Manager Operations             | Scoring Member                      |
| Senior Project Manager         | Scoring Member                      |
| Acting Procurement Coordinator | Advisor                             |

The request for tender for the provision of trade services panel of suppliers sought submissions for the following list of 23 (twenty-three) trade services categories:

- Rubbish Bin Cleaning
- Appliance Repair Services
- Curtains, Blinds and Window Decorations
- Carpentry, Handyman
- Shade Membrane Repairs and Replacement
- Class 10 Registered Builders
- Registered Commercial Builders
- Pest Controller
- Welding Services
- Tiling, Paving
- Flooring (Carpets, Vinyl, Surfaces, Bonds)
- Cabinet Maker, Painting and Decorating
- Plastering
- Glazing
- Bricklaying
- Fencing
- Asbestos Removal
- Test and Tagging
- Removalists.

The tender responses were assessed against the following criteria:

- Occupational Health & Safety (Pass/Fail)
- Relevant Insurance Covers (Pass/Fail)
- Financial Benefit to Council (Price) (25%)
- Capability (20%)
- Capacity (20%)
- Financial Benefit to Community (10%)
- Environmental Sustainability (5%)
- Social Sustainability (5%)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (5%)

The tender submissions received from most contractors demonstrated proven expertise in their field.

But many trade services categories did not receive tender submissions which may require these categories to be re-advertised at a later stage.

The list of proposed contractors to be included on the trade services panel are as follows:

| <b>No</b> | <b>Company Name</b>   | <b>Services to be Provided.</b>  |
|-----------|---|--|
| 1         | Troy Walker Electrical Pty Ltd  | Fencing and Welding Services   |
| 2         | Shade 'n' Sails   | Shade Sail Repairs and Membrane Replacement  |
| 3         | The Trustee for Astbury Business Trust t/as Astbury Welding and Contracting | Fencing and Welding Services   |
| 4         | Encore Contracting Pty Ltd  | Test and Tagging   |
| 5         | Joshua Laurence Mockridge   | Plastering   |
| 6         | B. & W.A. Home Furnishings Pty Ltd t/as O'Halloran's Maryborough            | Curtains, Blinds and Window Decorations and Flooring (Carpets, Vinyl, Surfaces, Bonds) |
| 7         | Vermin ate Pty Ltd t/as Vermin ate Pest Control                             | Pest Control   |
| 8         | Anthony Jonathan Coyle T/as Tony's Pest Control Victoria                    | Pest Control   |

|    |   |                                |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| 9  | <i>The Trustee for the Beaton Family Trust T/as AB Paint Pty Ltd</i>            | <i>Painting and Decorating</i> |
| 10 | <i>The Lark Family Trust t/as Attention to Detail Painting Services PTY LTD</i> | <i>Painting and Decorating</i> |
| 11 | <i>HQ Building Pty Ltd t/as Heenan Homes &amp; Construction</i>                 | <i>Carpentry and Handyman</i>  |
| 12 | <i>Kepel Building Services Pty Ltd</i>  | <i>Carpentry and Handyman</i>  |
| 13 | <i>Luff Metal Fab Pty Ltd</i>   | <i>Welding Services</i>        |
| 14 | <i>CIS Industrial Services Pty Ltd</i>  | <i>Welding Services</i>        |

### **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

The tender was advertised in line with Council's Procurement Policy

The request for tender was advertised on Council's, procure portal as well as in The Maryborough and District Advertiser as part of Council's weekly advertisement.

The request for tender was also advertised on Council's website and through Council's social media pages.

The request for tender documents was available for public download from 10 August 2023 until closing 13 September 2023.

### **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The Contract G1826-23 will provide Council a panel of contractors for officers to use in both programmed and reactive maintenance and minor upgrade works.

Establishing this panel should allow officers to save time in the procurement process while remaining compliant with the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Procurement Policy.

Engagement with a contractor from the panel will be funded from the annual reactive building maintenance budget established across Central Goldfields Shire Council assets.

The anticipated spend is \$1.2 Million ex GST for the duration of the contract of 2 years plus one year, plus one year.

Each engagement with the recommended contractors will be based on a schedule of rates contract and subject to ongoing quotation processes.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Governance - failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by assisting Officers to access a diverse range of suppliers required for maintenance and minor project work.

All panel members are required to have appropriate insurances.

## CONCLUSION

The introduction of this additional trade services panel will continue to support ongoing maintenance requirements for various buildings across the municipality.

The establishment of an approved panel of trader services suppliers will provide officers with access to a full suite of contractors from multiple

trades. It is recommended that Council;

1. authorise the Chief Executive Officer to take all necessary actions to execute Contract G1826-23, including informing the respondents of Council's decision in this matter;
2. Grant financial delegation to the Chief Executive Officer to expend up to maximum amount of \$600,000 exc GST over an initial two-year period that would be the upper budget limit of the building maintenance operational budget.

## ATTACHMENTS

**8.3.1.** G1826 - 2023 confidential evaluation report provided under separate cover.

The evaluation report is confidential under sections 3(a) and (g) of the Local Government Act as it contains:

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

This section applies because the contract is not finalised and releasing the information prior to decision could prejudice the Council's commercial position in negotiations.

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

*(i) relates to trade secrets; or*

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

This section applies because it contains detailed submission information that could provide an unreasonable commercial advantage to competitors.

**8.4 COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE REPORT AND REVIEW**

**Author: Responsible**                      **Manager Governance Property and Risk**

**Officer:**                                      **General Manager Corporate**

*The Officer presenting this <sup>Performance</sup> report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

**SUMMARY/PURPOSE**

The report presents information about the performance of Council's Community Asset Committees in accordance with section 47(6) of the Local Government Act 2020, and the results of a review of the Committees.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. endorses the use of the attached template of the Instrument of Delegation for all Community Asset Committees, to be amended as required by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 47(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020;
2. acknowledging the convention that Council appoints individual members of the community to Community Asset Committees:
  - a. delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the ability to appoint members to Council's Community Asset Committee's when:
    - i. casual vacancies occur; or
    - ii. it is otherwise necessary for the operation of the Committee for further members to be appointed; and
3. requires the CEO to include in the annual report to Council on the Community Asset Committees, any such appointments made by the CEO under delegation.

**LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT**

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Our Spaces and Places

- The Community's vision      3. Engaging places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.
- and
- 4 Activated, engaged, and informed citizens who have a say, volunteer, get involved in community matters
4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides for Councils to establish Community Asset Committees (CACs).

Section 47(6) of the Act requires the Chief Executive Officer to submit an annual report to the Council in relation to the activities and performance of a Community Asset Committee in respect of which the members have been given a delegation under this section.

The purpose of a CAC is to manage a community asset in the municipal district.

CACs of Central Goldfields Shire Council largely took the place of the former Section 86 Committees under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Due to the distinct and different governance and structural differences of the two forms of committees under the different Acts, Councils were not able to simply translate one type of committee automatically into another.

Instead, each committee, if it was to be continued, needed to be established under its own resolution and be provided with a new instrument of delegation.

Central Goldfields Shire Council had several established section 86 Committees. A number of these were transitioned into CACs through the implementation of the 2020 Act.

A number of committees were not immediately transitioned however for the following reasons:

- Tullaroop Leisure Centre - exploration of external management.
- Talbot Community Homes - to investigate on behalf of the committee, alternative options for managing the properties.

Other committees were exploring the intent to continue due to membership pressures.

Key personnel appointments were also required to continue the transition of CACs, and these appointments have been made in the last twelve months.

## REPORT

A thorough review of former section 86 Committees and current CACs have identified some issues and opportunities to standardise the approach to establishing and supporting CACs.

The work has been undertaken across the Governance Property and Risk and Community Partnerships teams, with oversight from the Property Governance Group.

The Property Governance Group is a cross-directorate internal working group consisting of the General Manager Corporate Performance, General Manager Community Wellbeing, Manager Governance Property and Risk, Manager Community Partnerships, Property and Risk Officer, and other officers seconded according to the business to be considered.

The PGG ensures that property matters include consideration of community need and impact across Council operations.

Some of the issues identified include the need for:

- a standard approach to roles and responsibilities for both Council and CACs

- strengthened governance guidance in Instruments of Delegation, to support Committee operations.
- more support for CACs to understand their reporting and governance requirements.
- better alignment with Council policies around procurement, conflicts of interest, and property lease and license management
- updating committee membership and contact details
- establishing a regular governance program to oversee CACs.

Opportunities identified include:

- The development of a Community Asset Committee Policy to provide certainty and clarity to Council, Committees, and the community on when a CAC will be established, and how it will subsequently be managed.
- Provision of better support to CACs in the form of a consistent contact person in Council, and a handbook for CAC members, including an AGM reporting

pack. Proposal

The following actions are proposed to address the items listed above:

| Activity  | Mechanism          | Date          | Comments   |
|---|--------------------|---------------|--|
| Establish new Community Asset Committees  | Council resolution | December 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition outstanding section 86 committees to CACs under the Act.</li> <li>• Establish new CACs where a need and community intent have been identified</li> </ul> |
| Update appointments to Committees   | Council resolution | December 2023 | Resolution establishes role of CEO in making appointments when casual vacancies occur  |
| Develop updated template of Instrument of Delegation and apply to all new and existing CACs | CEO to issue       | December 2023 | <p>Strengthened governance requirements for meetings and reporting.</p> <p>Alignment with Council Property Leasing and Licensing Policy</p> <p>More detailed information in maintenance schedule</p>         |
| Establish a consistent contact point for CACs   | Council officers   | December 2023 | Communicate with CACs with a consistent Council liaison for CAC matters, who can triage requests accordingly.  |

|                                  |  |              |   |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------|---|
| Community Asset Committee Policy | Council resolution                         | March 2024   | Provide a document that sets out the principles under which Council will establish, resource and support Community Asset Committees.  |
| CAC handbook                     | Council officers in consultation with CACs | March 2023/4 | Provide a user-friendly handbook that sets out roles and responsibilities, provides appropriate forms and information, including an AGM pack for reporting.   |
| CAC information on website       | Council officers                           | March 2024   | Publish a web resource describing CACs, providing contact information for CACs to the community, and linking to resources for CACs.   |
| Schedule CAC review              | Council officers                           | Ongoing      | The CEO is required to present a report on the activities of CACs once a year. Further, Committee Memberships and Instruments of Delegation should, as a matter of good governance, be reviewed each Council term. These activities will be scheduled in Council's governance activities. |

The progress on these activities will be monitored by the Property Governance Group. Committees to be established.

To be established as a Community Asset Committee:

- Tullaroop Leisure Centre  
Council has been engaging with community stakeholders at Tullaroop Leisure Centre, and they have indicated an intent to form a CAC.  
From that point, a formal Expression of Interest Process has been undertaken for further membership.  
A separate report provides more detail on the proposed establishment.

CACs to have updated Instruments of Delegation

- Adelaide Lead Hall
- Daisy Hill Community Hall
- Dunolly Historic Precinct Management

- Talbot Town Hall
- Talbot Community

While the power to provide an Instrument of Delegation resides with the CEO, Council will be invited to endorse a revised template instrument (attached). While it is based on the template provided by Maddocks lawyers, it includes more detail on governance requirements around meetings and committee operations.

The changes are in response to requests from and experiences of Committees.

The template is a base point from which individual committees will be able to discuss specific needs which may require particular explicit provisions or limitations.

Consultation has commenced with Talbot Town Hall CAC and Talbot Community Homes CAC on a review of their instruments of delegation.

Consultation will occur with the remaining Committees to ensure instruments are updated and reflect the objectives of the Committees.

The Draft Instrument of Delegation for Talbot Community Homes CAC is attached for information, and to illustrate the flexible approach to using the instrument template.

#### Committees still in consultation

The following committees are still determining the best way forward, which may mean exploring other outcomes such as leases as incorporated entities:

- Carisbrook Recreation Reserve
- Carisbrook Town Hall

#### **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

All Committees will be consulted on committee membership and the proposed action to update Instruments of Delegation, and in the development of a handbook and associated resources.

Specific consultation, including multiple meetings between Committees, prospective Committee members, and Council Staff, has occurred for:

- Tullaroop Leisure Centre
- Carisbrook Town Hall
- Talbot Community Homes
- Talbot Town Hall

Wider community consultation will occur in the development of a Community Asset Committee Policy.

#### **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The management of Community Asset Committees is funded through existing budgets.

Committees are generally given a financial delegation of \$4,999 to enter into contracts for goods and services for the purposes of the Committee's functions. This is not a budget allocation but a limit on monies which can be expended by the Committee directly.

Committees have the opportunity to raise funds from user fees and other activities to fund cleaning, maintenance and other activities.

In the ongoing consultation with Committees, their specific needs will be identified. The findings of these consultations will inform the Policy under development.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risks:

- Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs by ensuring a standardised approach to Committees delegated to manage certain community assets.
- Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by ensuring the management of CACs aligns with legislation and policy.
- Community engagement - Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision making by ensuring Committee members are included in decisions about managing CACs.
- Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices by providing a structured and transparent approach to managing CACs.

## **CONCLUSION**

The report provides the report on Community Asset Committees as required under the Act and proposes an approach that standardises and gives structure to Council's approach to establishing and managing Community Asset Committees.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

### **8.4.1 Template - Instrument of Delegation**

### 8.4.1

#### *C7 Instrument of Delegation by CEO to Community Asset Committee*

**Central Goldfields Shire Council**

**Instrument of Delegation**

**by the Chief Executive Officer**

**to the ##Committee Name## Community Asset Committee**

In exercise of the power conferred by s 47(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Act)*, I, as Chief Executive Officer of Central Goldfields Shire Council, by this Instrument of Sub-Delegation -

1. delegate to each person who is from time to time appointed as a member of the Community Asset Committee, established by resolution of Council passed on XX December 2023 and known as "##Committee Name##" (Community Asset Committee), each power and/or function and/or duty set out in the Schedule;
2. declare that a delegate can only exercise the delegations contained in this Instrument of Sub-Delegation while acting as a member of the Community Asset Committee at a meeting of the Community Asset Committee;
3. declare that this Instrument of Sub-Delegation -
  - 3.1 comes into force immediately upon its execution;
  - 3.2 remains into force until varied or revoked; and
  - 3.3 is subject to the conditions and limitations set out in paragraph 4 and 5, and in the Schedule;
4. declare that the delegate must comply with specified governance requirements to ensure appropriate standards of probity are met and monitor and report on the activities and performance of the Community Asset Committee;
5. declare that the delegate must not determine the issue, take action or do the act or thing if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation, whether on account of s 47 of the Act or otherwise.

**This Instrument of Sub-Delegation** is dated ##date and is made by the Chief Executive Officer.

**Signed** by the Chief Executive )  
Officer of Council in the presence of: )

.....

Witness

## SCHEDULE

### Powers and functions

a. To manage the following community assets: Asset Name and Location (the Assets). The building asset is identified as ##AssetNumber## (As shown in Appendix 1); and

b. to advise Council in relation to the general improvement and preservation of the asset.

And for that purpose:

1. Develop and maintain the Asset for the overall benefit of the community, and advise Council in relation to any development.
2. Preserve the historical integrity of the Asset.
3. Promote and attract visitors to the Asset.
4. Arrange and manage opening and closing times.
5. Manage bookings.
6. Financial management of the Community Asset Committee.
7. Determine fees and charges.
8. By resolution, reduce or waive fees where appropriate.
9. Arrange general maintenance as detailed in Appendix 2 and the improvement to the development.
  - 9.1 The Committee shall inform Council of major maintenance requirements for the development; <sup>1</sup>
10. Enter into contracts, and to incur expenditure, not exceeding the value of \$4,999 per contract or per contractor in any financial year and for the specific purposes of cleaning, maintenance, hosting events and fundraising.
11. Do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of those functions, duties and powers.

### OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE

12. The Committee members will be appointed by Council resolution. Council may resolve to delegate the appointment to the Chief Executive Officer. In the event of a casual vacancy on the Committee, the Council shall give public notice of

<sup>1</sup> Major maintenance is maintenance which goes beyond a value of \$4,999 limit or is likely to require a building or planning permit, or Heritage Victoria approval.

the vacancy and subsequently resolve to fill the vacancy, unless appointment of members has been delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

13. The Chief Executive Officer of the Council, or his or her nominee may attend Committee meetings as an observer and may be called upon by the Chair or Committee for assistance.
14. If the Council does not do so, the Committee shall elect the following office bearers from among its members:
  - 14.1 a President;
  - 14.2 a Secretary; and
  - 14.3 a Treasurer.

### Requirements

The members of the Community Asset Committee must, when exercising the powers, functions and duties delegated to them:

15. Comply with Council policies and procedures.
16. Comply with any requests and directions or financial rules or requirements made by Council.
  - 16.1 The Committee shall within 30 days of its Annual General Meeting provide Council an audited financial report, including a statement of assets and liabilities and profit and loss statement for the Committee for that financial year.
17. Advise Council if the Committee considers that further members should be appointed to the Committee.
18. Advise Council as soon as practicable of any event which may result in an insurance claim relating to the Asset.
19. Assist Council however necessary with any insurance claim which relates to the Asset.
20. Act in good faith to work with all members of the Committee for the benefit of the community and the Asset.
21. Not appoint elected councillors to office bearer positions, noting that elected Councillors can be appointed by Council to a Committee as a general committee member. If a Councillor is elected as an officer bearer of the Committee, they must resign from their officer bearer position.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICE

### BEARERS Meetings

22. An annual general meeting of the Committee shall be held between 1 July and 30 September annually at which:
- 22.1 the Treasurer shall present a statement of receipts and expenditure for the preceding year ending 30 June. performance of the Committee.
- 22.2 the President shall present a general statement of the operation
23. Publish a public notice of the Annual General Meeting in a newspaper and/or on Council's website not less than seven (7) days prior to the meeting, generally circulating within the district of the facility.
24. The Committee shall convene other meetings at least quarterly.
- 24.1 Minutes of these meetings shall be provided to the Council.
25. The Chair or at least three Committee Members may by a written notice to all members call a special Committee Meeting.
- 25.1 The Notice must specify the date and time of the Meeting and the business to be transacted.
- 25.2 Unless all Committee Members are in attendance and unanimously agree to deal with any other matter, only the business specified in the written notice can be transacted at the special meeting.

### Meeting procedures

26. A quorum of the Committee is at least a majority of the members of the Committee, including no fewer than two office bearers.
27. A meeting may continue in an informal manner if a quorum is not present, however decisions will not be able to be voted on.
28. Each Committee member shall have one vote and in the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a casting vote except in the case of the election of the Chairperson in which case the election shall be decided by lot.
29. In the interests of good governance, it is the responsibility of individual Committee Members to exhibit good conduct in Committee Meetings. Members should listen while others are speaking, avoid interrupting, be aware of their body language and use reasonable and temperate language in debates (no matter how contentious the topic may be).

**Finances**

- 30. The Treasurer shall as soon as possible after the receipt, pay all monies received by the Committee into the Committee's bank account.
  - 30.1 Financial transactions between the Committee and third parties are to be made by direct debit or deposit or other electronic means.
- 31. The Committee is responsible for paying all costs under (9) which are to be recovered from users through fees charged by the Committee for the use of the community asset and associated activities.

**Secretary**

- 32. The Secretary shall keep proper minutes of all meetings and provide them to the Council's Chief Executive Officer within 14 days of every Committee Meeting.

**Entry by Council**

- 33. Council reserves the right to enter the premises.
- 34. Where practicable, Council will exercise its right to enter the premises in consultation with the Committee and by giving reasonable notice.

**Governance**

- 35. Failure to observe the following requirements may result in a Committee member being removed from the Committee.

Misuse of position

- 36. A Committee Member must not intentionally misuse their position—
  - 36.1 to gain or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person; or
  - 36.2 ~~person~~ or attempt to cause, detriment to the Council or another

Confidential Information

- 37. A Committee member must not intentionally or recklessly disclose information that the person knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Conflicts of Interest

- 38. Members of the Committee must, at a meeting, disclose any conflict of interests by advising the meeting of the conflict immediately before the matter is considered and must leave the room until the matter has been resolved.
- 39. The declaration of the conflict must be recorded in the minutes.

**EXCEPTIONS, CONDITIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

- 40. This Delegation does not constitute a permit that the Committee may, from time to time, require for development or use of the Asset, including, but not limited to, development approvals, building approvals, local laws permits and food registration.
- 41. This Delegation does not permit the Committee to undertake alterations, works or improvements that are not considered maintenance obligations without consultation and the written permission of Council prior to obtaining any building or planning permits.
- 42. The Community Asset Committee is not authorised by this Instrument to:
  - 42.1 delegate any of the powers herein delegated to it by the CEO.
  - 42.2 enter into a sub-lease or sub-license with any other group or individual.
  - 42.3 Sub-leases and sub-licenses will be established in accordance with Council's Property Leasing and Licensing policy.

**Insurance**

- 43. Members of Community Asset Committees are covered by the Council's voluntary workers and fidelity guarantee policy.
- 44. Any facilities managed by Community Asset Committees are covered by Council's public liability and building and contents insurance policies.
- 45. Council will indemnify and keep indemnified each member of a Community Asset Committee against all actions or claims whether arising during or after their term of office in respect of anything necessarily done or reasonably done or omitted to be done in good faith.
  - 45.1 In the performance of a duty or a function or the exercise of a power under the Act, the regulations or a local law or any other Act;
  - 45.2 In the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the performance of a duty or a function or the exercise of a power under the Act, the regulations or a local law or any other Act.

## APPENDIX 1- MAP OF LOCATION AND ASSETS

**Appendix 2 - Maintenance Obligations**

Committees are required to maintain the community asset in accordance with these Maintenance Obligations. Committees are responsible for keeping the land and/or buildings clean, in good condition and perform incidental maintenance not requiring a skilled tradesperson.

Committees must report maintenance concerns to Council in a timely manner to ensure appropriate action is taken. Please direct all non-urgent requests to the Building Maintenance Team on the relevant form titled 'Building Maintenance Request' and send by email [mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au) or by post;

Building Maintenance Request  
Central Goldfields Shire Council  
PO BOX 194  
MARYBOROUGH VIC 3465

For any urgent maintenance concerns, please call 03 5461 0610.

| Obligation                | Committee Responsibilities  | Council Responsibilities  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <b>CLEANING</b>           |   |   |
| <b>Cleaning</b>           | If inspections or interactions indicate an issue with tenants maintaining cleanliness, inform Council.  | No responsibility.  |
| <b>Garbage collection</b> | Ensure Council is notified if bins are missing or damaged.  | Council to provide bins for general waste, recycling and green waste as per garbage charge. Removal of rubbish from Council provided bins as per garbage collection schedule. |
| <b>Graffiti</b>           | Report graffiti to Council.   | Removal of graffiti.  |
| <b>Grease traps</b>       | The committee is responsible for obtaining and maintaining Trade Waste Agreements with Central Highlands Water/ Coliban Water and the costs associated. A copy of the agreement is to be provided to Council. | Repair defects.   |

| Obligation                           | Committee Responsibilities  | Council Responsibilities  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Pest control</b>                  | Take proper precautions to keep Premises free of rodents, pests and vermin. Employ pest exterminators providing service report to Council (if necessary). Report termite damage to Council.   | Repair structural termite damage.   |
| <b>BUILDING MAINTENANCE</b>          |   |   |
| Electrical wiring                    | Unless required by statutory regulation, new wiring required by Committee is at Committee's expense.<br><br>Note: All works are to be carried out by Council approved licensed tradespersons. | Repair and replace any existing wiring where required by a statutory regulation.  |
| <b>Hazardous Materials</b>           | Council approval is required for any works planned to be undertaken at the Premises. Report defects to Council.   | Conduct mandatory asbestos audits in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 and provide information on the location of asbestos as required.<br><br>Ensure maintenance works are carried out at the premises using methods which will ensure compliance with statutory requirements and public safety. |
| <b>Hazardous Materials (Storage)</b> | All chemicals, cleaning products and hazardous materials must be stored in a secure location and safety data sheets (SDS) must be accessible at all times.                                    | Copies of SDS should be stored in the Council ESM cabinet.  |
| <b>Inspections/audits</b>            | The Committee is required to undertake an annual inspection checklist of the Premises and provide a copy of the report to Council.  | Inspections will be conducted as determined by the relevant Asset management or Asset maintenance plans. Any inspections will be arranged with the committee  |

| Obligation   | Committee Responsibilities  | Council Responsibilities   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Other Hazards - Activities of a hazardous nature</b>            | Any planned works to the Premises must be approved by Council and comply with Council's requirements.   | Council control and monitor building maintenance activities which are of a hazardous nature including hot work, working at heights, work, working at heights, disconnection or isolation of services, confined space and asbestos. |
| <b>Plumbing</b>  | Report defects to Council.<br><br>Unless required by a statutory regulation or building regulation, any new plumbing will be at the Committee's expense.<br><br>Purchase and installation of water tanks and water saving devices must be in consultation with Council.<br><br>Note: All works are to be carried out by Council approved licensed trades persons. | Repair and replace existing installations, including toilets, sinks and taps as determined by Council.   |
| <b>Signage - statutory</b>   | Maintain in good condition.   | Repair and replace as required and within Council's budget requirements.   |
| <b>Signage - other</b>   | Clean, maintain, replace and repair.  | No Responsibility.   |
| <b>Structural</b>  | Report defects to Council.  | As determined by Council's Asset management plan   |
| <b>ESSENTIAL SAFETY MEASURES (Undertaken on a quarterly basis)</b> |   |  |
| <b>Emergency exits</b>   | Keeping the exits clear at all times.   | Maintain exit function and door furniture including signage and lighting.  |
| <b>Fire protection</b>   | Report defects to Council. Maintain kitchen range hood filters in a clean condition as required for food handling and fire prevention.  | Refill or replace equipment if inappropriately damaged, discharged or stolen.  |

| Obligation                             | Committee Responsibilities   | Council Responsibilities  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Essential services</b>              | <p>Immediately report to the Landlord any Essential Services equipment in obvious need of repair or replacement.</p> <p>Immediately report to the landlord any incidents involving fire or use of Essential Services equipment.</p> <p>Repair due to misuse by tenant (or sub-tenant)</p> <p>Ensure all exits and passageways are clear of obstacles</p> <p>Develop evacuation plan for the premises.</p> <p>Provide access as required for the contractors that Council organises to undertake the above inspections. Contractors will generally liaise directly with the Committee of Management on access arrangements.</p> | <p>All essential services maintenance checks, servicing and repairs are to be carried out every six months by Council at its expense, Essential Services being Fire extinguishers, fire blankets, hose reels, fire detection equipment and alarm systems.</p> <p>Provide Essential Safety Measures Logbook.</p> |
| <b>FIXTURES AND FITTINGS</b>           |  |   |
| <b>Air conditioning and/or heating</b> | <p>New and additional installations at Committee expense and only in consultation with the Council.</p> <p>Note: All works are to be carried out by an approved licensed trades persons.</p> <p>Gas heating to be inspected and tested for carbon monoxide annually.</p>   | <p>Repair and replace existing installations as determined by Council and within budget requirements.</p>   |

| Obligation  | Committee Responsibilities   | Council Responsibilities   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Cupboards, benchtops, shelving, etc.</b>   | Ensure they are kept clean, repair and replace.<br><br>Note: All works are to be carried out by Council approved licensed trades persons.  | Repair and replacement of inbuilt cupboards, benchtops and shelving of existing installations as determined by Council and within budget requirements. |
| <b>Curtains/ drapes/ blinds</b>   | Ensure they are kept clean and in good condition.  | Council will repair and replace as required, only as a result of fair wear and tear and within Council's budget requirements.                          |
| <b>Doors</b>  | Ensure they are kept clean and maintain in good condition.   | Repair and replacement as required and within Council's budget requirements.   |
| <b>Electrical fittings and lights</b><br><br>(incl. external lighting except training lights) | Replacement of light globes and tubes for standard ceiling heights. Report defects to Council.   | Repair and replace existing installations, includes replacement of light globes and tubes in main hall or areas that exceed standard ceiling height.   |
| <b>Electrical appliances</b>  | Full responsibility including Testing and Tagging of appliances by Council approved licensed trades persons.   | No Responsibility.   |
| <b>Floor surfaces and coverings</b>   | Ensure they are kept clean, maintain.  | Repair, maintain and replace as determined by Council and within budget requirements.  |
| <b>Fly screens &amp; security grills</b>  | Ensure they are kept clean and in good condition.  | Repair and replacement as required.  |
| <b>Furniture</b>  | Clean, repair and replace.   | No responsibility.   |
| <b>General equipment and Committees Property</b>  | Clean, maintain, inspect, service, repair and replace all fixtures, fittings, portable plant and equipment and make good any damage as a result of installing or removing such property. | No responsibility.   |
| <b>Hot water system</b>   | Report defects to Council.   | Repair and replace as required.  |

| Obligation  | Committee Responsibilities   | Council Responsibilities   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Keys and locks</b>                                 | Control of keys issued to Committee via a key register. Report any lost or damaged keys to Council immediately.  | Repair and replace existing installations. Provision of keys to Committee. Maintain copies of keys in a secure location. |
| <b>Painting - interior and exterior wall surfaces</b> | Ensure they are kept clean and in good condition. The Committee may undertake painting, subject to Council approval.   | Repainting as deemed required and within Council's budget requirements.  |
| <b>Security system and related fittings</b>           | Additional installations at Committee expense.<br><br>Note: All works are to be carried out by Council approved licensed trades persons.   | No responsibility.   |
| <b>Storage</b>  | Keep passageways clear and egress maintained at all times. Committee to pay cost of removal of inappropriately stored items. Maintain storage containers in good condition for aesthetics and public safety. | Removal of inappropriately stored items (at Committee's cost).   |
| <b>Telephones/intercom systems/Internet</b>           | Install, repair and replace.   | No responsibility.   |
| <b>Whitegoods</b>                                     | Keep clean Council's Fixtures.<br><br>Purchase, repair and replacement of new or replacement commercial whitegoods to standards as specified in the Food Health Act.   | Approval of any new installations.   |
| <b>Windows and glazing (incl. plate glass)</b>        | Ensure they are kept clean and in good condition.  | Repair and replacement as required.  |
| <b>OUTDOOR SPACES</b>                                 |  |  |
| <b>Car park and driveway</b>                          | Keep clean and free of litter.   | Repair and replace as required.  |

| Obligation                                  | Committee Responsibilities  | Council Responsibilities  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Fences and gates</b>                     | Keep clean and report to Council if damage  | Repair and replace existing installations as required and within Council's budget requirements. |
| <b>Garden beds</b>                          | Ensure garden beds are kept tidy and safe.  | As determined by Council and within budget requirements.  |
| <b>Loose litter / leaves / softfall</b>     | Pathways to be cleared regularly.   | No responsibility.  |
| <b>Paving and paths</b>                     | Keep clean and in good condition. Report defects or damage to Council.  | Repair and replace existing as required and within Council's budget requirements.               |
| <b>Retaining, walls, outdoor steps. etc</b> | Keep clean and in good condition.   | Repair and replace as required and within Council's budget requirements.                        |
| <b>Shade sails</b>                          | Installations to be arranged in consultation with Council.<br>Report defects or damage to Council.                            | Repair and replace as required and within Council's budget requirements.                        |
| <b>Trees</b>                                | New and additional plantings in consultation with Council.  | As determined by Council's Tree management plan.  |
| <b>Water tanks</b>                          | New installations to be arranged in consultation with Council. Committee to maintain and report defects or damage to Council. | Repair and replace as required and within Council's budget requirements.                        |

## 8.5 ESTABLISHMENT OF TULLAROOP LEISURE CENTRE COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

**Author: Responsible**                      **Manager Governance Property and Risk**

**Officer:**                                      **General Manager Corporate**

The Officer presenting this <sup>Performance</sup> report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The report presents actions to be undertaken to establish the Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION

In exercise of the power conferred by s 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*, Council resolves that:

1. from the date of this resolution, there be established as a Community Asset Committee the Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee (Committee);
2. the purpose of the Committee is set out in the Schedule to this resolution;
3. the members of the Committee are:
  - 3.1 Ian Fetting - Maryborough Squash Club
  3. representative Greg Butler - community member
  - 2 Rowena Butler - community member
  3. Lewis Cain - community member
  - 3 Carisbrook Primary School representative (to be determined);
4. the Chairperson of the Committee is Ian Fetting;
5. a quorum of the Committee is a whole number that is an absolute majority, which is greater than half the total number of members of the Committee including no fewer than two office bearers;
6. all members of the Committee have voting rights on the Committee; and
7. the Councillor representative for the Committee is Cr Anna de Villiers.

### LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Our Spaces and Places

The Community's vision    3. Engaging places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.

4 Activated, engaged, and informed citizens who have a say, volunteer, get involved in community matters

4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

Section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides for Councils to establish Community Asset Committees (CACs).

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The purpose of a CAC is to manage a community asset in the municipal district.

Tullaroop Leisure Centre, which offers facilities for netball, basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, and tennis, was previously managed by a section 86 Committee established under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

When the LGA 2020 was enacted, Section 86 Committees were automatically disestablished.

While a number of Council's Committees were established as CACs in October 2020, the Tullaroop Leisure Centre Committee was not.

Committee members who had been involved for a very long time indicated they were to make way for a new membership, and so a public EOI process was undertaken in July 2021.

The former section 86 Committee was also appointed the Committee of Management to administer the lease on the DEECA land currently occupied by the Department of Education, adjacent to the centre.

The lease, which has a value of \$15,000 per annum, is due to expire in 2024.

The Carisbrook Primary School currently has a lease agreement for use of the building during school terms.

Currently, the facility is entirely managed by Council, with facilitation of casual bookings and regular cleaning, and the rest of the facility remains under-utilised.

The facility, with high quality courts, a function room, and spacious amenities, has great potential to be well-used by community groups and attract users from outside the Shire.

## **REPORT**

Council officers have had a series of meetings with the community members who have continued to engage around the establishment of a TLC Committee to facilitate greater use of TLC for the benefit of the community.

The meetings have entailed establishing an understanding of the needs of the users, the roles and responsibilities of a CAC, and discussions around broader community engagement. Alternative options have also been explored such as merging with other Committees.

However, generally the conclusion has been that a CAC is the best option for the management of the facility.

Prospective members have expressed concern that with such small numbers involved, they may not be able to acquit the responsibilities of a CAC, such as managing bookings,

fundraising activities, coordinating fee setting and collection, promotion, and Committee administration.

They believe it will be easier to attract nominations through a further EOI if the Committee is established and the Instrument of Delegation granted to enable the community to understand the role and responsibilities of a CAC.

Accordingly, officers recommend the establishment of the Tullaroop Leisure Centre, and to appoint the following individuals as members:

- Ian Fetting - Maryborough Squash Club representative
- Greg Butler - community member
- Rowena Butler - community member
- Lewis Cain - community member
- Carisbrook Primary School representative (to be determined)

### **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

A public EOI process was undertaken in 2021 to identify community members who were interested in establishing a CAC, and officers have met regularly with the prospective Committee to determine the best way forward.

### **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The management of Community Asset Committees is funded through existing budgets.

Committees are generally given a delegation of \$4,999 to enter into contracts for goods and services for the purposes of the Committee's functions.

Committees have the opportunity to raise funds from user fees and other activities to fund general maintenance, cleaning and other activities.

In this case, there is also the opportunity to negotiate the proportion of the lease revenue from the Education Department to be returned to the CAC.

Council is currently holding \$68,247 funds from the previous section 86 Committee activities.

When the Committee is established, it will be in a position to investigate and make proposals for the expenditure of those monies for the development and improvement of the Leisure Centre.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risks:

- Property and Assets - Failure to maintain, renew and expand our assets in a timely and robust way, that considers service and delivery needs by establishing a Community Asset Committee to oversee maintenance and promotion of the asset
- Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by ensuring the management of CACs aligns with legislation and policy.

- Community engagement - Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision making by ensuring Committee members are included in decisions about managing CACs.

## **CONCLUSION**

The report provides a proposal to establish the Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee in accordance with the outcome of community consultation and the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**8.5.1** Schedule – Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee

### 8.5.1

#### Schedule – Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee

##### Powers and functions

a. To manage the following community assets: Tullaroop Leisure Centre and land located at 15 Landrigan Road, Carisbrook, Victoria 3464 (the Asset). The building asset is identified as H070 (As shown in Appendix 1); and

b. to advise Council in relation to the general improvement and preservation of the asset.

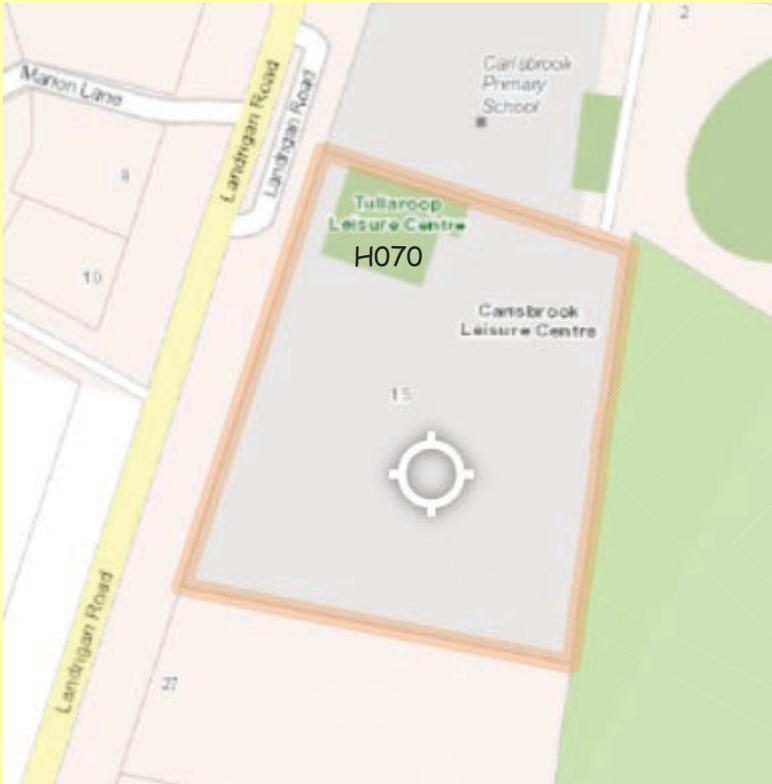
And for that purpose:

1. Develop and maintain the Asset for the overall benefit of the community and advise Council in relation to any development.
2. Preserve the historical integrity of the Asset.
3. Promote and attract visitors to the Asset.
4. Arrange and manage opening and closing times.
5. Manage bookings.
6. Financial management of the Community Asset Committee.
7. Determine fees and charges.
8. By resolution, reduce or waive fees where appropriate.
9. Arrange general maintenance as detailed in Appendix 2 and the improvement to the development.
  - 9.1 The Committee shall inform Council of major maintenance requirements for the development; <sup>1</sup>
10. Enter into contracts, and to incur expenditure, not exceeding the value of \$4,999 per contract or per contractor in any financial year and for the specific purposes of cleaning, maintenance, hosting events and fundraising.
11. Do all things necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of those functions, duties and powers.

<sup>1</sup> Major maintenance is maintenance which goes beyond a value of \$4,999 limit or is likely to require a building or planning permit, or Heritage Victoria approval.

APPENDIX 1- MAP OF LOCATION AND ASSETS

Tullaroop Leisure Centre, 15 Landrigan Road, Carisbrook 3464.



## 8.6 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE'S BIENNIAL REPORT TO COUNCIL DECEMBER 2023

**Report author:** **Manager Governance Property and Risk**

**Responsible** **General Manager Corporate**

**Officer:** **Performance**

*The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

### **SUMMARY**

As required under Section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, an Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) report must be prepared and presented to Council on the outcomes of the Committee meetings on a biennial basis.

This report which covers the six months to 30 November 2023, was considered at the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 5 December 2023, and was endorsed by the Committee for presentation to the Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council

1. receive and note the report; and
2. thank Cr Geoff Lovett for his contribution and commitment during his time as Councillor Representative on the Audit and Risk Committee.

### **LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT**

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Leading Change

The Community's vision 4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

Section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires an Audit and Risk Committee to report to the Council on the outcomes of the Committee meetings on a biennial basis.

### **COMMITTEE'S REPORT TO COUNCIL**

#### **Membership and Attendance**

##### Membership

- John Watson, Independent Chair
- Robert Tommasini, Independent Member
- Richard Ainio, Independent Member
- Anna de Villiers, Councillor
- Gerard Murphy, Councillor

During the reporting period, Independent Member Linda O'Neil resigned, and a recruitment process was undertaken for a new member.

That process culminated in the appointment of Richard Ainio at the September Council Meeting.

At the Statutory Council Meeting held on 21 November 2023, Cr Gerard Murphy and Cr Anna de Villiers were appointed as Councillor representatives.

The Committee expresses its gratitude and appreciation to Cr Lovett's for his contribution to the Committee over the last several years and his commitment to its mandate and purpose.

Although not mandatory under the Act, the Independent Audit and Risk Committee members completed personal interests returns.

### **Meetings**

- 29 June - Scheduled Meeting
- 25 September - Scheduled Meeting - consideration of the financial and performance statements.

### **Matters Considered**

This report provides a summary of regular matters which are actively considered by the Committee during each of its meetings. These items are listed on the agenda and include the following:

- Chief Executive Officer's (CEO's) Report including updates on legal and regulatory compliance matters.
- Central Goldfields Shire Council (CGSC) Internal Audit Progress Report (provided by AFS Chartered Accountants, Council's contracted internal auditor).
- Quarterly finance report
- Outstanding Audit Recommendations Register
- Defined Benefits Superannuation Scheme Update
- Management reports on a variety of matters such as the results of internal audits
- CEO credit card and Councillor expenses
- The Committee's annual work plan
- Sector related agencies and integrity reports

Additionally, the Committee has received reports on:

- 2023/24 Budget
- Consideration of financial and performance statements and draft VAGO Management Letter
- Appointment of internal auditors through public tender
- Audit and Risk Committee annual self-assessment
- Risk Management Framework Project update

- Reviews of Procurement Policy, Property Leasing and Licensing Policy, Disposal or Sale of Council Assets, and Governance Rules
- Draft Project Management Framework

### **Members Only discussion**

At each meeting, the Committee sets aside time for a Members only discussion if required. During the Members only meeting the members can raise any matter without management or auditors being present.

Members can also invite the CEO and or Internal or External Auditors to join them to discuss matters without others being present.

### **Internal Audit**

#### Internal Auditors

The contract for AFS Chartered Accountants to provide internal audit services expired on 31 October 2023.

Council undertook an open tender for the contract in August. The Chair, CEO and General Manager Corporate Performance evaluated the tenders, prior to presenting a recommendation to the Committee.

The Committee subsequently recommended the appointment by Council, which appointed RSD Audit at its October meeting.

#### Internal Audit work Plan

The Committee approves a rolling three-year internal audit plan and monitors progress against the plan at each meeting.

The timing of some internal audits was adjusted to accommodate operational requirements for both Council and AFS.

A new internal audit plan will be developed with RSD Audit.

#### Internal Audit Reports presented

- Customer Service Requests and Complaints
- Past Issues Review
- Environmental Health Operational Review
- Emergency Management

#### Planning documents reviewed:

- Assets Management - Infrastructure Assets

#### Internal Audit Recommendations

Following the rollover to 2023/24 financial year, the current statistics for Audit Action Items are as follows:

| <b>Risk rating:</b>        | Minor | Moderate | Major | N/A | Total   |
|----------------------------|-------|----------|-------|-----|---------|
| Open as at 30 Nov 2023     | 26    | 32       | 5     | 2   | 65 (+5) |
| New added this period      | 6     | 5        | -     | -   | 11      |
| Completed this period      | -     | 5        | -     | -   | 5       |
| Deferred as at 30 Nov 2023 | 7     | 6        | -     | -   | 13 (+2) |

Council maintains a register of outstanding actions of prior audit recommendations. The register tracks the status of outstanding actions in order to ensure that all actions requested by various auditors are completed by the assigned action officers. Once an action officer considers that an action has been completed it is marked as such.

The Committee closely monitors management's progress on the implementation of internal audit recommendations and encourages their completion in a timely manner.

#### Internal Auditors Performance Review

The Committee annually undertakes a review of the performance of the internal auditors.

#### **Strategic Risk Register and Risk Management**

The Committee receives regular reports on the status of the strategic risk register and the management of risk within the organisation. Council's Risk Appetite and Strategic Risk register have recently been reviewed as part of the Risk Management Project. These documents and a revised Risk Management Policy will be presented to Council in early 2024.

#### **Committee Charter**

The Committee is governed by the ARC Charter adopted by the council as required by the Local Government Act. The Charter was reviewed at its September Meeting and will be presented to Council for adoption.

#### **Committee Annual Work Plan**

The Committee adopts an annual work plan setting out all the known matters it needs to consider at each of its quarterly meetings. The plan includes all the matters included in the Committee Charter together with matters under the Local Government Act and any other matter the committee considers necessary. The Work Plan is reviewed at each meeting and has achieved completion of the activities as scheduled.

#### **Annual Self-Assessment**

The Committee undertook its annual self-assessment as required under the Act, which was reported to the June Audit and Risk Committee meeting. The process resulted in a recommendation to improve the committee member induction process, which was implemented in time for the appointment of the new Independent Member. Skills and training were also subsequently addressed in the Charter review.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by presenting the report required under the Local Government Act 2020. The report is scheduled in the Committee's Annual Work Plan.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Biannual Report provides the Audit and Risk Committee the opportunity to report to Council a summary of the outcomes of the Audit and Risk Committee over the reporting period.

The Committee works proactively and constructively with Management to support continuous improvement in the identification and management of risk and audit matters.

Members participate actively and avail themselves of the opportunities to engage with internal and external auditors.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 8.7 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CHARTER – 2023 REVIEW

**Author: Responsible**                      **Manager Governance Property and Risk**

**Officer:**                                      **General Manager Corporate**

The Officer presenting this <sup>Performance</sup> report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The report presents the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter to Council, for consideration for adoption at the December 2023 Council Meeting.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter fulfils Council's obligation under section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the amended Audit and Risk Committee Charter as attached.

### LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Leading Change

The Community's vision    4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

Section 54(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

Under 54(2), the Audit and Risk Committee Charter must specify the functions and responsibilities of the Audit and Risk Committee including the following:

- a. monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with—
  - (i) the overarching governance principles; and
  - (ii) this Act and the regulations and any Ministerial directions;
- b. monitor Council financial and performance reporting;
- c. monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls;
- d. oversee internal and external audit functions.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Council adopted the latest version of the Charter at the 22 February 2022 Council Meeting.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter notes in item 8.3 that 'the Committee shall review and assess the adequacy of the Charter annually and submit requests to Council through the Chief Executive Officer for revisions and improvements for approval'.

This annual review is the opportunity for the Audit and Risk Committee to identify any such amendments or enhancements deemed required to the Charter for the next 12 months to submit to Council for consideration.

The Audit and Risk Committee considered the proposed changes at its meeting on 25 September 2023 and recommended that the *Audit and Risk Committee Charter - 2023 Review* be presented to the Council for consideration for adoption.

**REPORT**

**Proposed changes**

The changes below reflect:

- deliberations of the Committee
- alterations to ensure the Charter is clearly consistent with the limitations of the Committee under the Act, particularly related to the limitations on decision-making.
- responsive to current practice or requirements for clarity which have arisen over the

Red text indicates changed or added

| Section                       | Proposed change  | Rationale   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| 2 Authority                   | Provide advice and make recommendations to Council on matters within its areas of responsibility, <b>including new and revised policies relevant to the work of Audit and Risk;</b>  | Reflects the feedback of the Committee from its 12 September 2022 meeting.  |
|                               | <b>Request the CEO to retain counsel</b> of relevant independent experts where it considers that is necessary in order to execute its <del>responsibilities</del> <b>subject to prior agreement with the Chief Executive Officer.</b>  | The Audit and Risk Committee has no delegation for procurement, and as such the act to retain legal Counsel would have to come through the CEO.       |
| 4 Membership and Tenure       | The Committee will consist of five <b>voting</b> members appointed by Council,   | Clarifies the role of the appointed members, as opposed to any Councillors who may be observing   |
| 4.2 Recruitment and selection | <b>Added the provision for Council to directly recruit a Chairperson, and that current independent members are eligible to be considered for the role.</b><br><br><b>Council will develop maintain a skills matrix to identify the skills and/or experience required by the Committee.</b> | Articulates Council's responsibility to provide a skills matrix, which is an important tool to support the Committee's annual Performance Evaluation. |

Including it at this point ensures

| Section                               | Proposed change   | Rationale   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                       | On the retirement or resignation of an Independent Member, the skills matrix will be considered to identify the skills and/or experience to be sought in a new Independent Member;  | the Committee is well prepared when vacancies arise.  |
| 3. Functions and responsibilities     | Provide a Biannual Report of its activities to Council;   | Required under the Act.   |
| 4 Membership and tenure - Chairperson | Council will appoint the Chairperson of the Committee;<br>The Committee will provide a recommendation for the appointment of Chair to the Council. Council will appoint the Chairperson of the Committee and determine the term;  | Articulates more clearly the role of the Committee and the Council in determining appointment and term of the Chairperson.  |
| 4.2 Recruitment                       | An advertisement seeking a new Independent Member will be published in an appropriate public market in a newspaper generally circulating in Victoria identifying any specific skills and experience sought by the Committee;  | Reflects the feedback of the Committee from its 12 September 2022 meeting.  |
| 4.2 Recruitment                       | A panel will be convened to interview and recommend to Council the Committee for endorsement a candidate's appointment. The panel will comprise of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair, or an independent member if the Chair is unavailable;</li> <li>• One or more Councillor member of the Committee; and</li> <li>• The CEO or delegate(s).</li> <li>• The panel may recommend a single candidate or a short list for the Committee's consideration.</li> </ul> The Committee will provide its recommendation of a candidate's appointment to the next practicable Council Meeting. | The recent recruitment raised questions that highlighted some lack of detail in the Charter's position on the process for recruitment and selection. These changes provide some clarity without being overly prescriptive and reflect the actual practice undertaken. |
| 4.4 Role of the Chair                 | Participate in the evaluation for the appointment of the internal auditor;  | The Act retains the appointment of the internal auditor to the Council as the ARC is not a delegated committee. Clarifies that members cannot appoint.  |

| Section                                 | Proposed change   | Rationale   |
|---|---|---|
| 6<br>Committee<br>Member<br>Obligations | Committee Members must <b>act in accordance with the confidentiality provisions in sections 3 and 125 of the Local Government Act 2020 as if a member of a delegated committee*</b> . <del>comply with Council's Confidentiality Policy.</del> <b>Additionally</b> Committee members shall not directly or indirectly release or make available to any person any information relating to the work or discussions of the Committee, except in accordance with any direction of the Council. | Council does not have a Confidentiality Policy. The Act however is quite specific in the identification and management of confidential information. While the Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee for the purposes of the Act, given its role and the sensitivity of the information with which it deals, it is appropriate for the same standards to apply (albeit without the application of statutory penalties).  |
| 6<br>Committee<br>Member<br>Obligations | Failure to comply with the provisions of the Act with regard to conflicts of interest <b>and other offenses carrying a statutory penalty</b> may result in the Member's appointment being terminated.   | This has been expanded to include failure to comply with provisions of the Act which are an offense carrying a penalty. This covers confidentiality, declarations of conflicts of interest and personal interest declarations.  |
| 8.1<br>Performance<br>Evaluation        | <b>As part of the annual performance evaluation, the Audit and Risk Committee will consider the skills matrix (4.2) to ensure the Committee can effectively undertake its role.</b><br><br><b>Committee members may request through the Chair for appropriate training to be sourced to assist them to fulfil their role.</b>   | An up-to-date skills matrix is recommended in the management of skills gaps and board performance. - [Governance and the Practice of Directorship - Australian Institute of Company Directors]. Evaluating this regularly concurrently with performance ensures the Committee will be well prepared in the event of a planned or casual vacancy.<br><br>Additionally, it is good practice to ensure a mechanism exists for Committee members to <del>access appropriate training.</del> |

## CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

No public consultation is required for the Audit and Risk Committee Charter. The adopted Charter will be published on Council's website.

## **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The annual review of the Charter is covered under existing budgets.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk *Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements* by ensuring the Audit and Risk Committee Charter is meeting the requirements of sections 54(1) and (2) of the Act.

## **CONCLUSION**

The attached Audit and Risk Committee Charter - 2023 Review is compliant with the Local Government Act 2023 and has been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee. The Committee recommends the Charter as reviewed be considered for adoption by the Council.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**8.7.1** Audit and Risk Committee Charter - 2023 Review

## 8.7.1 Audit and Risk Committee Charter

### 1 Background

Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (“the Act”) requires all councils to establish an audit and risk committee. Central Goldfields Shire Council (“Council”) has constituted an Audit and Risk Committee (“the Committee”) to meet this requirement. Section 54 of the Act requires that councils must prepare and approve an Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

This Charter has been developed to comply with the Act and facilitate the operation of the Committee and sets out its functions and responsibilities, authority, composition, remuneration, meetings, responsibilities, publicly available information and review.

### 2 Authority

The Committee is directly responsible to Council for discharging its responsibilities as set out in this Charter. The Committee has no delegated authority from Council.

The Committee has the authority to:

- Endorse key documents and reports that must be approved by Council, including annual financial reports, annual performance statements, new or revised policies and other documents that assist in maintaining a strong internal control environment;
- Approve internal and external audit plans, including internal audit plans with an outlook of greater than one year;
- Provide advice and make recommendations to Council on matters within its areas of responsibility, including new and revised policies relevant to the work of Audit and Risk;
- Request the CEO to retain counsel of relevant independent experts where it considers that is necessary in order to execute its responsibilities;
- Seek any relevant information it requires from Council, Council Officers (who are expected to co-operate with the Committee’s requests) and external parties;
- Meet with Council Officers, internal and external auditors and other parties as required to discharge its responsibilities.
- The Committee will, through the Chief Executive Officer, have access to appropriate management support to enable it to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

### 3 Functions and Responsibilities

The Committee’s functions and responsibilities are to:

- Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with:
  - The overarching governance principles;
  - The Act and the regulations and any Ministerial directions.
- Monitor Council financial and performance reporting;
- Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls;

- Have an annual work program (detailed in section 7 below);

Undertake an annual assessment of its performance against the Charter, and provide a copy of the assessment to the CEO (for tabling at the next Council meeting);

- Provide a Biannual Report of its activities to Council;
- Enhance the credibility and the objectivity of the financial reporting of Council;
- Support the identification and management of enterprise wide material risks of Council;
- Advise Council on systems and processes designed to ensure compliance with the Act and other relevant laws and regulations and consistency of best practice guidelines;
- Advise Council on the establishment, effectiveness and maintenance of controls and systems to safeguard financial and physical resources, and mitigation of risks that may adversely affect achievement of Council objectives;
- Advise Council on the establishment, effectiveness and maintenance of controls and systems to safeguard its governance obligations and promote a culture of accountability and transparency;
- Advise Council on the systems and processes which protect against fraud, corruption and irregularities.

The Committee has no executive role. It is independent of management and reports to the Council providing advice to facilitate Council decision making.

## 4 Membership and tenure

The Committee will consist of five voting members appointed by Council, three of whom must be independent members. Council employees cannot be members of the Committee.

### Independent Members

- Independent members will be appointed for three-year terms;
- Independent members may be reappointed for two additional three-year terms subject to satisfactory performance, that is, a maximum of nine years;
- Independent members must collectively have expertise in financial management and reporting and risk management and also experience in public sector management;
- Independent members' terms of appointment will be set so that as far as possible only one member retires at a time in order to minimise the loss of knowledge of Council's business that may occur on change of membership;
- Remuneration will be paid to independent members as approved by Council from time to time;<sup>1</sup>

### Councillor Members

- Councillor members will be appointed to the Committee by Council annually;
- Should an appointed Councillor member not be able to attend a Committee meeting, Council can appoint an alternate member to act in such circumstances, either on a meeting by meeting basis or for the entire year;

### Chairperson

- The Chairperson of the Committee must be an independent member;

<sup>1</sup> Further detail at part 4.6 of the Charter.

- When a vacancy arises in the position of Chair, Council undertake recruitment to appoint the Chairperson of the Committee, in accordance with 4.2, and determine the term;
- Current independent members will be eligible to be considered in the recruitment for a Chairperson;
- If the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, the members in attendance at the meeting will appoint a Chairperson for that meeting from among the attending members;

#### 4.1 Quorum for Meetings

- A quorum shall comprise at least one Councillor member and two independent members;

#### 4.2 Recruitment and Selection

- Council will develop maintain a skills matrix to identify the skills and/or experience required by the Committee;
- On the retirement or resignation of an Independent Member, the skills matrix will be considered to identify the skills and/or experience to be sought in a new Independent Member;
- An advertisement seeking a new Independent Member will be published in an appropriate public market identifying any specific skills and experience sought by the Committee;
- Applications for the vacancy will be reviewed and shortlisted by the CEO or delegate, in consultation with the Chair or, if the Chair is not available, an Independent Member of the Committee;
- A panel will be convened to interview and recommend to the Committee for endorsement a candidate's appointment. The panel will comprise of the following:
  - The Chair, or an Independent member if the Chair is unavailable;
  - One or more Councillor member of the Committee; and
  - The CEO or delegate(s).
- The panel may recommend a single candidate or a short list for the Committee's consideration.
- The Committee will provide its recommendation of a candidate's appointment to the next practicable Council Meeting.

#### 4.3 Induction

All Independent Members are to be provided with an induction to Council and the Committee. The induction material must include, but is not limited to:

- Relevant financial reports;
- Audit reports;
- Minutes of the last four Committee meetings;
- The internal auditors reports from the previous 12 months;
- Reports on any relevant investigations;
- Council's risk registers;
- Relevant Council policies and procedures; and
- The Committee Charter.

If the Independent Member/s require a one on one induction, Council officers, as directed by the CEO, will undertake the induction for the new Independent Member/s.

All Councillors are provided with the Committee Charter, Minutes of the last four Committee Meetings and details of the qualifications and experience of the Independent Members of the Committee as part of the Councillor induction program.

#### 4.4 Role of the Chair

The role of the Chair is to:

- In consultation with the CEO, or delegate, set the matters to be included on the agenda for each meeting of the Committee;
- Chair all meetings of the Committee and oversee how the meetings are conducted;
- Determine the actions to be taken in relation to items discussed at the meeting;
- Participate in the evaluation for the appointment of the internal auditor;
- Lead the annual assessment of the performance of the Committee and provide a copy of the annual assessment to the CEO for tabling at the next Council Meeting.

#### 4.5 Decision making out of session

The Chair of the Committee has authority to refer any matter for a discussion and decision making out of session, e.g. via email. Any decisions made out of session will need to be ratified at the next Committee Meeting.

#### 4.6 Remuneration

Section 53(6) of the Act allows for the payment of a fee to Independent Members of the Committee.

Council will pay a sitting fee to the Chair and Independent Members of the Committee. This fee will be reviewed as part of Council's annual budget process, and will be subject to annual CPI indexation.

In addition, each Independent Member will be entitled to claim up to \$500.00 per annum in travel expense based on the per kilometre rate set by the Commissioner of Taxation.

#### 4.7 Insurance and Indemnity

Council must indemnify and keep indemnified each member of the Committee, exercising any function or power on behalf of a Council against all actions or claims (whether arising during or after the term of office or employment of that Councillor or member) in respect of any act or thing done or omitted to be done in good faith in the exercise or purported exercise of any function or power conferred on the Committee or member of the Committee under this or any other Act.

Council's insurance policies shall cover members of the Committee while engaged in the business of the Committee.

## 5 Meetings

- The Committee will meet at least four times a year, with the authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require;
- All Committee members are expected to attend each meeting, in person or via teleconference;
- The Committee may invite members of management, auditors or others to attend meetings and provide pertinent information, as necessary;
- The Committee may hold private meetings with the auditors if required;
- Committee members and the internal and external auditors can request the Chairperson to convene additional meetings if they feel that is justified to address unexpected matters that may have arisen;
- Meeting agendas and related papers will be prepared and provided to members, five days in advance of meetings (wherever possible);
- Minutes of meetings will be kept and action items recorded and monitored;
- The CEO, General Manager Corporate Performance, General Manager Infrastructure Assets and Planning, General Manager Community Wellbeing and Manager Governance Property and Risk will attend the meetings in an “ex officio” capacity. On the direction of the CEO, other Council officers may attend the Committee in an “ex officio” capacity, or at the request of the Committee;
- Any Councillors may attend meetings in an “ex officio” capacity.

## 6 Committee Member Obligations

Committee members are expected to be aware of their obligations under Section 53 of the Act. These obligations relate to misuse of position as a member of the Committee (Section 123), confidential information (Section 125) and conflict of interest (Sections 126 to 131). Details about these obligations are included in Appendix 1 to this Charter.

Upon appointment, Independent Members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix 2).

Committee Members must act in accordance with the confidentiality provisions in sections 3 and 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Additionally Committee members shall not directly or indirectly release or make available to any person any information relating to the work or discussions of the Committee, except in accordance with any direction of the Council.

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Act with regard to conflicts of interest and other offenses carrying a statutory penalty may result in the Member’s appointment being terminated.

The Committee members are also required to complete Personal Interest Returns within 30 days of becoming a Member of the Committee and Biannual Personal Interest Return every six months.

In addition to any declarations made in a Return of Interest, members of the Committee must declare any past or current relationships that may or may be perceived to, impair their independence. This is required even if these relationships would not be considered a conflict of interest under the relevant sections of the Act. Such relationships include (but are not limited to) employment, consulting, advisory, supplier or contractual roles or relationships.

## 7 Responsibilities of the Committee

The Committee will carry out the following responsibilities.

## 7.1 Financial and Performance Reporting

- At least annually review significant accounting and external reporting issues, including complex or unusual transactions, transactions and balances in areas where judgement is required, changes to accounting policies, recent accounting, professional and regulatory pronouncements and legislative changes, and understand their effect on the annual financial report and the audit thereof;
- At least annually review changes to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and understand the impact of those changes on Council's performance indicators;
- Review the annual financial report and annual performance statement and consider whether they are complete, consistent with information known to Committee members, reflect appropriate accounting treatments and adequately disclose Council's financial performance and position;
- Review with management and the external auditors the results of the audit, including any difficulties encountered by the auditors and how they were resolved;
- Recommend the adoption of the annual financial report and annual performance statement to Council; and
- Review the appropriateness of the format and content of periodic management financial reports and performance statements to Council as required.

## 7.2 Internal Control Environment

- Review the adequacy and effectiveness of key policies, systems and controls for providing a sound internal control environment. This should be done on a rotational basis over a three to four year period;
- Determine whether systems and controls are reviewed regularly and updated where required;
- Monitor significant changes to systems and controls to assess whether those changes significantly impact Council's risk profile;
- Ensure that a programme is in place to test compliance with systems and controls;
- Assess whether the control environment is consistent with Council's Governance Principles.

## 7.3 Risk Management

- Review annually the effectiveness of Council's risk management framework;
- Review Council's risk appetite statement and the degree of alignment with Council's risk profile;
- Review Council's risk profile and the changes occurring in the profile from meeting to meeting;
- Review Council's treatment plans for significant risks, including the timeliness of mitigating actions and progress against those plans;
- Review the insurance programme annually prior to renewal; and
- Review the approach to business continuity planning arrangements, including whether business continuity and disaster recovery plans have been regularly updated and tested.

## 7.4 Fraud Prevention Systems and Controls

- Review Council's Fraud Prevention policies and controls, including the Fraud Control Plan and fraud awareness programmes at least very two years;
- Receive reports from management about actual or suspected instances of fraud or corruption including analysis of the underlying control failures and action taken to address each event; and
- Review reports by management about the actions taken by Council to report such matters to the appropriate integrity bodies.

## 7.5 Internal Audit

- Review the Internal Audit Charter annually to determine that it provides an appropriate functional and organisational framework to enable Council's internal audit function to operate effectively and without limitations;
- Review and approve the three year strategic internal audit plan, the annual internal audit plan and any significant changes to them;
- Review progress on delivery of annual internal audit plan;
- Review and approve proposed scopes for each review in the annual internal audit plan;
- Review reports on internal audit reviews, including recommendations for improvement arising from those reviews;
- Meet with the leader of the internal audit function at least annually in the absence of management;
- Monitor action by management on internal audit findings and recommendations;
- Review the effectiveness of the internal audit function and ensure that it has appropriate authority within Council and has no unjustified limitations on its work;
- Ensure that the Committee is aware of and appropriately represented with regard to any proposed changes to the appointment of the internal audit service provider, including being appropriately briefed on the need for any proposed change;
- Recommend to Council, if necessary, the termination of the internal audit contractor.

## 7.6 External Audit

- Annually review and approve the external audit scope and plan proposed by the external auditor;
- Discuss with the external auditor any audit issues encountered in the normal course of audit work, including any restriction on scope of work or access to information;
- Ensure that significant findings and recommendations made by the external auditor, and management's responses to them, are appropriate and are acted upon in a timely manner;
- Review the effectiveness of the external audit function and ensure that the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) is aware of the Committee's views;
- Consider the findings and recommendations of any relevant performance audits undertaken by VAGO and monitor Council's responses to them; and
- Meet with the external auditor at least annually in the absence of management.

## 7.7 Compliance Management

- Review the systems and processes implemented by Council for monitoring compliance with relevant legislation and regulations and the results of management's follow up of any instances of non-compliance;
- Review the processes for communicating Council's Employee Code of Conduct to employees and contractors and for monitoring compliance with the Code;
- Obtain briefings on any significant compliance matters; and
- Receive reports from management on the findings of any examinations by regulatory or integrity agencies (whether related to investigations at Council or other agencies), such as the Ombudsman, IBAC, Victoria Government Inspectorate, etc. and monitor Council's responses.

## 8 Reporting of ARC activities

- Minutes of Committee meetings will be provided to Council at the first available opportunity after Committee approval;
- The Chairperson will prepare a report to Council through the Chief Executive Officer on the Committee's activities twice per annum. The report will be endorsed by the Committee (out of session) before being provided to the Chief Executive Officer. One of these reports will be prepared after the meeting at which the annual financial report and the annual performance statement have been considered and recommended to Council for adoption, such report indicating how the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out in this Charter for the previous year.

### 8.1 Performance Evaluation

- The Committee shall undertake a process to evaluate its performance annually and report the outcomes of the evaluation process to Council through the Chief Executive Officer, including recommendations for any opportunities for improvement. The evaluation will include feedback from both Committee members and senior officers who have regular interactions with the Committee.
- As part of the annual performance evaluation, the Audit and Risk Committee will consider the skills matrix (4.2) to ensure the Committee can effectively undertake its role.
- Committee members may request through the Chair for appropriate training to be sourced to assist them to fulfil their role.

### 8.2 Committee Member Regulatory Obligations

- Committee members are expected to be aware of their obligations under Section 53 of the Act. These obligations relate to misuse of position as a member of the Committee (Section 123), confidential information (Section 125) and conflict of interest (Sections 126 to 131). Details about these obligations are included in Appendix A to this Charter.

### 8.3 Review of Charter

- The Committee shall review and assess the adequacy of the Charter annually and submit requests to Council through the Chief Executive Officer for revisions and improvements for approval.

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## 9 Control Information

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Author</b>                   | Manager Governance, Property and Risk   |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>      | General Manager Corporate Performance   |
| <b>Date adopted by Council:</b> |   |
| <b>Revision History</b>         | <p>March 2011<br/> November 2013<br/> June 2015<br/> March 2017 (Version 2)<br/> March 2019<br/> March 2020<br/> July 2020<br/> February 2022<br/> September 2023</p> |
| <b>Next Review</b>              | September 2024  |

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# Appendix 1

## Guidance to Members

| LGA Section  | LGA Requirement   |
|--|---|
| <b>Misuse of Position</b>  |   |
| 123(1)   | A Committee member must not intentionally misuse their position to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain or attempt to gain, directly or indirectly, an advantage for themselves or for any other person; or</li> <li>Cause, or attempt to cause, detriment to the Council or another person</li> </ol>  |
| 123(3)   | Circumstances involving misuse of a position by a member of the Committee include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making improper use of information acquired as a result of being a member of the Committee; or</li> <li>Disclosing information that is confidential information; or</li> <li>Directing or improperly influencing, or seeking to direct or improperly influence, a member of Council staff; or</li> <li>Exercising or performing, or purporting to exercise or perform, a power, duty or function that the person is not authorised to exercise or perform; or</li> <li>Using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised; or</li> <li>Participating in a decision on a matter in which the member has a conflict of interest.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Confidential Information</b>  |   |
| 125  | A member of the Committee must not intentionally or recklessly disclose information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information. There are some exemptions to this requirement, the key one being that if the information disclosed by the member has been determined by Council to be publicly available.  |
| <b>Conflicts of Interest</b>   |   |
| 126  | A member of the Committee has a conflict of interest if the member has: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A general conflict of interest as described in Section 127; or</li> <li>A material conflict of interest as described in Section 128.</li> </ol>  |
| 127  | A member of the Committee has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the members private interests could result in that member acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty as a member of the Committee.   |
| 128  | A member of the Committee has a material conflict of interest in a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.   |
| <p><b>Please Note</b></p> <p><i>The above guidance is not verbatim from the Act and does not include all details as explained in Part 6, Division 1 of the Act. For a full understanding of the requirements of the Act in relation to the matters summarised above, members are expected to make themselves fully aware of the requirements of the Act.</i></p> |   |

# Appendix 2

## Appendix 2

### AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT is made the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_\_

BETWEEN .....

AND CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

I herewith agree that I must not, whether during or after my membership of the Central Goldfields Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee, unless expressly authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or in accordance with the law, make any disclosure or use of:

- a. Any information or trade secrets of the Council;
- b. The position of the Council or any Councillor or Council Officer on any confidential matter;
- c. Any other information whatsoever, the disclosure of which may be detrimental to the interest of the Council or of any other person who has provided it to the Council on a confidential basis; unless I am required to disclose the information by law.

The termination or expiry of my membership of the Committee, for whatever reason, does not affect or derogate from my obligations of confidentiality set out above.

Signed by:

.....

Name: .....

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEMBER

Signed for and on behalf of Central Goldfields Shire Council

.....

Lucy Roffey

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## 8.8 SETTING COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2024

**Author: Responsible**                      **Governance Officer**

**Officer:**                                      **General Manager Corporate**

*The Officer presenting this <sup>Performance</sup> report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

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### **SUMMARY/PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to set the proposed dates and times for meetings of Council for the 2024 calendar year.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council;*

Adopt the proposed Council Meeting dates for

2024:

- Tuesday 23 January

- Tuesday 27 February
- Tuesday 26 March
- Tuesday 23 April
- Tuesday 28 May
- Tuesday 25 June
- Tuesday 23 July
- Tuesday 20 August
- Tuesday 17 September
- **No Council Meeting Scheduled for October**
- Wednesday 6 November (due to Tuesday 5 November being a public holiday) Statutory Meeting - Newly elected Councillors to take the Oath of Office, to elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- Tuesday 26 November
- Tuesday 17 December

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Leading Change

The Community's vision 4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council to hold meetings open to the public.

Council has by recent convention done this eleven times per year, on the fourth Tuesday of each month commencing at 6pm and held in the Community Hub.

It is accepted best practice for councils to set meetings for the full calendar year in advance.

Council is required to give reasonable public notice of Council meetings.

Details of public notice of meetings are contained in Rule 12 of Council's Governance Rules.

The 2024 Local Government Elections will be taking place on 26 October 2024 and there will be an election period (or caretaker period) from 24 September 2024 to 26 October 2024.

This will influence the Council Meeting dates for September and October 2024.

**REPORT** The 29 October 2024 meeting would be three days after election day and a result may not be declared, therefore it is recommended that there be no Council Meeting scheduled in October 2024.

- As the 24 September council meeting would be in the middle of the election period which heavily constrains the decisions which can be made, it is recommended that the August Council Meeting and the September Council meeting be scheduled a week earlier in the month, that is, on 20 August 2024 and 17 September 2024, respectively.
- The November Statutory Council Meeting to be held on 6 November 2023 (due to 5 November 2023 being a public holiday) to include in the agenda, the swearing in of newly elected Councillors, the election of Mayor, and, if required, election of Deputy Mayor.

## CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

An annual calendar of Council meetings will be published on Council's website and in the Maryborough Advertiser following the dates being adopted by Council.

## **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Advertising of the adopted schedules will be accommodated within the existing Governance budget.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Governance - Failure to transparently govern and embrace good governance practices.

Public notice of council meetings is also required. By setting the meeting dates for the upcoming calendar year, publishing those dates on Council's website, and publishing upcoming meetings in the regular Council advertisement in the Maryborough Advertiser throughout the year, Council is complying with the Governance Rules, and is effectively informing the community of the Council Meeting dates.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is recommended that Council resolve to set the schedule of Council meetings for 2024.

The proposed meeting dates and advertising meet Council's commitments to good governance and transparency.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 8.9 UPDATE OF S5 INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION FROM COUNCIL TO CEO

**Author: Responsible**                      **Manager Governance Property and Risk**

**Officer:**                                      **General Manager Corporate**

*The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

**SUMMARY/PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to recommend Councillors adopt the updated S5 Instrument of Delegation under which Council delegates its powers under various Acts to the CEO.

**RECOMMENDATION**

In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Central Goldfields Shire Council (Council) resolves that:

1. there be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attached *Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer*, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;
2. the instrument comes into force immediately upon this resolution being made and is to be signed by the Council's Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor;
3. on the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked; and
4. the duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.

**LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT**

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Leading Change

The Community's vision    4. Good planning, governance, and service delivery

The *Local Government Act 2020*, and a variety of other legislation, make express provision for the appointment of delegates to act on behalf of Council and delegation of powers is essential to enable day to day decisions to be made and for the effective operation of the organisation.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Instruments of Delegation are how Council delegates many powers to its staff.

Updates have been made to the S5 - Instrument of Delegation from the Council to the CEO which sets out the extent and limits of the powers, duties, and functions of the CEO.

Maddocks Lawyers provide a twice-yearly update of its instruments of delegation, and appointment and authorisation.

While a number of instruments under the CEO's delegation have been updated internally, only the S5 is required to be presented to Council for adoption in this round of updates.

## REPORT

The template previously provided by Maddocks for the S5 Instrument of Delegation to the CEO has considered only "expenditure" in the financial transactions to be limited under the instrument of delegation, and this is set at \$500,000.

Councils regularly engage, however, in statutory and other financial transactions over \$500,000 which are not expenditure, and which would not be practicable to take to Council for decision. Such transactions include payroll sign off, superannuation transfers, and the Fire Services Protection Levy.

The updated Maddocks template reflects that it is appropriate to acknowledge these large transactions in the instrument to the CEO and any limitations to them.

Accordingly, the revised Instrument proposes the Conditions and Limitations in the Delegation to the CEO in relation to finance be listed as follows:

~~The delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing~~  
 1. ~~if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which involves~~

- 1.1. entering into a contract exceeding the value of \$500,000.00 (ex GST);
- 1.2. making any expenditure that exceeds \$500,000.00 (ex GST),  
~~unless it is~~ expenditure:
  - 1.2.1. made under a contract already entered into; or
  - 1.2.2. which Council is, by or under legislation, required to make; or
  - 1.2.3. made to pay salaries, wages, allowances and associated amounts to members of Council staff;
  - 1.2.4. is for insurance premiums
 in which case it must not exceed \$2,000,000 (ex GST));
- 1.3. making funds transfers between Council bank accounts that exceed \$2,000,000 (ex GST);

## CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Community consultation is not required for this change; however, instruments of delegation are made available for inspection to members of the public.

## FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Council subscribes to the Delegations and Authorisations service provided by Maddocks Lawyers, the cost of which is provided for in Council's budget.

There are no other financial implications in reviewing the Instrument of Delegation, as it does not change financial delegations but clarifies the status quo.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Legislative compliance - Failure to manage our compliance with relevant legislative requirements by meeting the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is recommended that the attached Instrument be adopted by Council to ensure it reflects best practice and supports the continued delivery of services.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

**8.9.1** S5 Instrument of Delegation from Council to CEO.

**8.9.1**

***S5 Instrument of Delegation to Chief Executive Officer***



**Central Goldfields Shire Council**

**Instrument of Delegation**

**to**

**The Chief Executive Officer**

## Instrument of Delegation

In exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)* and all other powers enabling it, the Central Goldfields Shire Council (**Council**) delegates to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the position of Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the Schedule to this Instrument of Delegation,

AND declares that

- 1. this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a Resolution of Council passed on 19 December 2023;
- 2. the delegation
  - 2.1 comes into force immediately it is signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor are affixed to the Instrument;
  - 2.2 is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in the Schedule;
  - 2.3 must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and
  - 2.4 remains in force until Council resolves to vary or revoke it.

**Signed** by the Chief Executive Officer of )  
Council in the presence of: )

.....  
Witness

Date: .....

**Signed** by the Mayor in the presence of: )  
)

.....  
Witness

Date: .....

## SCHEDULE

The power to

1. determine any issue;
2. take any action; or
3. do any act or thing arising out of or connected with any duty imposed, or function or power conferred on Council by or under any Act.

### Conditions and Limitations

The delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing

1. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which involves
  - 1.1 entering into a contract exceeding the value of \$500,000.00 (ex GST);
  - 1.2 making any expenditure that exceeds \$500,000.00 (ex GST), unless it is expenditure:
    - 1.2.1 made under a contract already entered into; or
    - 1.2.2 which Council is, by or under legislation, required to make; or
    - 1.2.3 made to pay salaries, wages, allowances and associated amounts to members of Council staff;
    - 1.2.4 is for insurance premiums
 in which case it must not exceed \$2,000,000 (ex GST));
  - 1.3 making funds transfers between Council bank accounts that exceed \$2,000,000 (ex GST);
  - 1.4 appointing an Acting Chief Executive Officer for a period exceeding 28
  - 1.5 days; electing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor;
  - 1.6 granting a reasonable request for leave under s 35 of the Act;
  - 1.7 making any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the Chief Executive Officer;
  - 1.8 approving or amending the Council Plan;
  - 1.9 adopting or amending any policy that Council is required to adopt under the
  - 1.10 Act; adopting or amending the Governance Rules;
  - 1.11 appointing the chair or the members to a delegated committee;
  - 1.12 making, amending or revoking a local law;

- 1.13 approving the Budget or Revised Budget;
  - 1.14 approving the borrowing of money;
  - 1.15 subject to section 181H(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, declaring general rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and specified rates and charges;
- 2. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which is required by law to be done by Council resolution;
  - 3. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council;
  - 4. if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a
    - 4.1 policy; or
    - 4.2 strategyadopted by Council;
  - 5. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation, whether on account of s 11(2)(a)-(n) (inclusive) of the Act or otherwise; or
  - 6. the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff.

## 8.10 COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - ANNUAL REVIEW

**Author:** Manager Community Engagement

**Responsible Officer:** Chief Executive Officer

*The Officer presenting this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.*

### SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider and adopt a review of the Communications and Engagement Strategy to continue to benchmark excellent communications and engagement with the Central Goldfields community.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the review of CGSC Communications and Engagement Strategy.

### LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Central Goldfields Shire Council's Council Plan 2021-2025 - Leading Change

The Community's vision 4. Activated, engaged, and informed citizens who have a say,  
volunteer, get involved in community matters

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Communications and Engagement Strategy ('the Strategy') was adopted by Council in March 2021.

The Strategy is underpinned by a range of improvements and key strategies across several themes to benchmark excellent communications and engagement.

The Community Engagement Team (CET) auspices the Strategy and several departments have direct delivery responsibilities.

The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and to support our staff in the application of organisational values to provide:

*"...our community with clear, transparent and targeted communications and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned and accessible to all community members".*  
p8, Communications and Engagement Strategy

Through the Strategy, the organisation has committed to monitoring and evaluating progress with implementation.

The review delivers on this commitment by providing an overview of achievements to date, as well as a detailed breakdown of items which will be carried over into the next review period.

## REPORT

This section provides an overview of the improvements we've achieved since adoption of the Strategy including lessons learnt and next steps to inform future activities.

### Improvements to date

- Delivery of a deliberative engagement process for the Community Vision and Council Plan
- There is greater representation of the diverse community in Council's decision making (see Table two - Engagement activities)
- We have seen a steady increase in collaborative engagement practices with the community (see Table two - Engagement activities)
- We have introduced a fit for purpose online engagement platform ([www.engage.cgoldshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.engage.cgoldshire.vic.gov.au))
- We have a highly effective relationship with the local media.
- We are making progress with use of plain language through our narrative development work.
- We are making progress with putting a human face to the organisation through including photos of Council staff in our publications and websites and, also being more visible in the community through face-to-face meetings and workshops.
- Our emerging use of video and the refresh of our photo library is also evidence of our continuing commitment to putting a human face to the organisation.
- We have clarified the roles and responsibilities of Township champions through the Community Planning Review project.
- The Communications WIP (Work in Progress) continues to be a valuable tool in planning a breadth of stories for the organisation according to key content pillars.
- The Priority Projects plan has been reviewed and refreshed.
- A Customer Request System is currently being scoped to ensure frontline workers can log requests for information for specialist staff.
- Community feedback and data is securely stored through the online engagement platform.
- A work program is being maintained to capture all engagement activities across the organisation, including areas for ongoing

### improvement. Lessons and insights

- From April 2021 until September 2023 the organisation has delivered over 37 community engagement projects, with a strong focus on approaches to engagement that highly facilitate levels of community influence (i.e. involve/ collaborate) under our Community Engagement Policy
- From April 2021 until September 2023 the organisation has established a range of mechanisms to work closely with the community on complex needs (such as committees, advisory groups, etc.).

These groups further amplify the organisation's commitment to approaches to engagement that facilitate higher levels of community influence

- (collaborate/empower) under our Community Engagement Policy
- Our quarterly Community News Update is the community's preferred communications channel and further investment in editorial innovation to meet community need is warranted.
- There is an opportunity to get better at collecting basic data to understand the relevance of communications, community perceptions and levels of participation in engagement activities.

The commencement of a Community Engagement Officer in November will help to facilitate this work.

There is also an opportunity to work more closely with our Customer Service Team to collect data in 2024.

- There is also an opportunity to start to forward plan the deliberative engagement process for the creation of a Council Plan in 2025, to ensure meaningful community participation (in June - December 2024)
- The current engagement platform will be migrated to a new platform as part of the website refresh to improve search functions and delivery on more useable and useful content (to launch in early to mid-2024)

### **Next steps**

There are 17 further process improvements to be completed (and or are ongoing) across 2024/2025.

The next review for the Communications and Engagement Strategy will be the end of 2024, with a report to be published early in 2025.

The Strategy will be re-written at the end of 2025 (if required).

### **CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION**

Our Customer Service Team and our Community Partnerships Team have contributed to the preparation of this review.

### **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial and resource implications for this review.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

This report addresses Council's strategic risk Community engagement - Inadequate stakeholder management or engagement impacting brand reputation and community satisfaction in Council decision making by facilitating continuous improvement and benchmarking excellent communications and engagement.

### **CONCLUSION**

This review demonstrates significant progress with process improvements and with adequate resourcing now in place, the Community Engagement Team and broader organisation is well placed to deliver on the further 17 improvements listed for 2024/2025.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**8.10.1** *Communications and Engagement Strategy, March 2021*

**8.10.2** *Communications and Engagement Strategy Annual Review*

8.10.1



# Communications & Engagement Strategy

March 2021



## Acknowledgement of First Nations peoples and communities in Central Goldfields Shire

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges the ancestors and descendants of the Dja Dja Wurrung. We acknowledge that their forebears are the Traditional Owners of the area we are on and have been for many thousands of years. The Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.



## Translating and Interpreting Service

### English:

If you need an interpreter, please call TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to call Central Goldfields Shire Council on 03 5461 0610. Our business hours are Monday to Friday 9am-4pm. You can also visit the TIS National website for translated information about the service TIS National provides. Visit: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

### Greek:

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα, καλέστε την TIS National στο 131 450 και ζητήστε να καλέσουν το Central Goldfields Shire στον αριθμό 03 5461 0610. Οι ώρες λειτουργίας μας είναι Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Σχετικά με τις υπηρεσίες που παρέχονται από την Εθνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνείας και Μετάφρασης, μπορείτε να επισκεφθείτε και τον ιστότοπο της υπηρεσίας στη διεύθυνση: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

### Tamil:

உங்களுக்கு ஒரு மொழி பெயர்த்துரைப்பாளர் தேவைப்படின 131 450 ல் தேசிய மொழிபெயர்ப்பு மொழி பெயர்த்துரைப்புச் சேவையை அழைத்து. (இளைச்சவ லழரச யபநஉல யெஅந) (இளைச்சவ லழரச யபநஉல phழநெ ரெஅடிநச) அழைக்கும்படி கூறவும். ஏங்கள் பணியக நேரங்களாவன (இளைச்சவ லழரச டிரளநெளள ஹழரசள).

நீங்கள் எமது தேசிய மொழிபெயர்ப்பு மொழி பெயர்த்துரைப்புச் சேவையின் இணையத் தளத்தில் தேசிய மொழிபெயர்ப்பு மொழி பெயர்த்துரைப்புச் சேவை வழங்கும் சேவையின் தகவல்களைப் பெறலாம். றறற.வளையெவழையெட.பழள.யர

### Traditional Chinese:

若你需要口譯員，請撥打TIS National電話131 450並請他們轉接 Central Goldfields Shire 的電話03 5461 0610。我們的工作時間是 Monday to Friday 9am-4pm。你也可以瀏覽TIS National 網站瞭解TIS National 的服務資訊，網址：[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

### Dutch:

Als u een tolk nodig hebt, bel dan TIS National (nationale vertaal- en tolkendienst) op 131 450 en vraag hen om de Central Goldfields Shire Council (raad van het zelfstandig gebied van Central Goldfields) te bellen op 03 5461 0610. Onze openingstijden zijn maandag tot vrijdag van 09.00 tot 16.00 u. Op de website van TIS National staat ook vertaalde informatie over de diensten die TIS National levert. Ga naar: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

### German:

Wenn Sie eine Verdolmetschung brauchen, rufen Sie bitte TIS National unter 131 450 an und fragen Sie nach der Central Goldfields Shire Council, Rufnummer 03 5461 0610. Unsere Geschäftszeiten sind montags bis freitags 9:00 bis 16:00 Uhr. Übersetzte Informationen über die Dienstleistungen von TIS National finden Sie auf der Website von TIS National. Besuchen Sie [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au).

### Tagalog:

Kung kailangan mo ng interpreter, mangyaring tawagan ang TIS National sa 131 450 at hilingin sa kanila na tawagan ang Central Goldfields Shire Council sa 03 5461 0610. Ang aming mga oras ng opisina ay Lunes hanggang Biyernes 9:00 ng umaga hanggang 4:00 ng hapon. Maaari mo ring bisitahin ang website ng TIS National para sa naisalin na impormasyon tungkol sa serbisyong ibinibigay ng TIS National. Bisitahin ang: [www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

## Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Mayor's message  | 2         |
| CEO message  | 2         |
| <b>What is the current situation?</b>                      | <b>3</b>  |
| Reasons for the Strategy                                   | 3         |
| Who we are   | 4         |
| What informed this Strategy                                | 4         |
| What you told us   | 5         |
| The audience   | 6         |
| <b>What is the purpose of this strategy</b>                | <b>7</b>  |
| Our situational analysis                                   | 7         |
| Our purpose  | 8         |
| Our guiding principles                                     | 8         |
| <b>What are our aspirations, functions and priorities?</b> | <b>9</b>  |
| Media  | 9         |
| External communications                                    | 10        |
| Digital communications                                     | 12        |
| Community engagement                                       | 14        |
| Public relations   | 16        |
| Business process improvements                              | 17        |
| Insights and evaluation                                    | 18        |
| <b>How will we monitor, measure and report progress?</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Glossary</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <hr/>  |           |
| <b>Directorate:</b>  |           |
| Chief Executive Officer                                    |           |
| <b>Responsible manager:</b>                                |           |
| Manager Community Engagement                               |           |
| <b>Implementation date:</b>                                |           |
| April 2021   |           |
| <b>Date adopted:</b>                                       |           |
| TBA  |           |
| <b>Review date:</b>  |           |
| April 2022   |           |



## Mayor's message

We know that the return of an elected Council means that expectations are higher than ever before.

We also have a new Local Government Act (2020) which raises requirements of Councils in setting goals, priorities and budgets and the need for genuine transparency in Council actions and decision-making.

It's a time of real opportunity for us as a Councillor group.

There is an absolute need for us to focus on and understand what our community wants us to achieve.

The development of this Communications and Engagement Strategy is one of the first steps towards achieving that.

Thank you to the many members of the community who took the time to provide us with invaluable feedback on our Draft Strategy.

We've listened to what you told us and we've made changes to the Strategy to reflect the feedback and your priorities.

There's no doubt this Strategy is underpinned by strong community feedback and we're confident it's going to be a key mechanism for developing strong relationships between Council and the community over the next four years of our Council term.

My Councillor colleagues and I look forward to being part of this renewed approach to communications and engagement.

**Cr Chris Meddows-Taylor**  
Mayor



## CEO message

The community feedback process has given us a better understanding of our community and their desired relationship with Council.

Councillors and staff met with people in our community and feedback was also provided to Council via online surveys and emails.

More than 100 people were involved in the process and it is your feedback that has helped us shape this document and its supporting action plan, to ensure it addresses what our community wants and needs.

Our community is diverse both geographically and in the make-up of its population, so we are mindful that there is no one size fits all approach – a diverse approach to communications and engagement is needed.

It's a challenge we will work hard to respond to and we'll do it with our organisational values at the forefront.

Our community has told us transparency is important to them – and it's important to our organisation too. Our corporate values position all staff to value quality communication and engagement.

Being community and customer focussed; collaborative and inclusive; and challenging the status quo is central not only to this Strategy but to everything that we as an organisation strive to do.

This Strategy will be reviewed annually and we understand that it won't be a 'quick fix'. Some of the items will be immediate whilst we know others will take longer for us to achieve.

We are proud to present this Communications and Engagement Strategy and we hope that it's successful implementation will result in high-level communications and best practices engagement – and most importantly a more open, transparent and improved relationship between Council and our community.

**Lucy Roffey**  
Chief Executive Officer

# What is the current situation?

## Reasons for the Strategy

**With the election of a new Council in October 2020, and with the Local Government Act 2020 requiring Councils to adopt a Community Engagement Policy by March 2021, the development of this Strategy provides a framework for Council's new and improved approach to communications and engagement.**

Building on the communications and community engagement activities that have been undertaken in previous years, the Strategy provides guidance and support to Councillors and Council staff in the performance of their duties in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

Our community feedback process has allowed us to better understand what our community wants and needs and the barriers to participation that exist.

With this feedback front of mind, this Strategy establishes shared expectations for communications and engagement and features a detailed action plan for how we will further develop, improve and evaluate our activities moving forward.

The Strategy aligns with the following:

### Staff values:

- Community and customer focused
- Collaborative and inclusive
- Challenge the status quo

### Related legislation and policies:

- Council Plan
- Community Engagement Policy
- Open Data Policy
- Media Policy
- Online Communications Policy
- Public Transparency Policy
- Customer Service Charter
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Planning and Environment Act 2007
- Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Local Government Act 2020
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

### Related Council direction:

- 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan – Deliver a Strategic Communications Plan



## Who we are

Around 12,995\* people call Central Goldfields Shire home with the municipality spread across an area of 1,532 square kilometres.

61% of the population live in Maryborough with the remaining population living in the surrounding townships of Carisbrook, Dunolly, Talbot, Majorca and Bealiba as well as surrounding farming districts. Each township is characterised by a unique vision, culture and interests.

According to the Census, 6,412 of the Shire's population is male with 6,580 female. Our Shire's population is ageing with 50 years as the median age and 65-69 years being the highest age bracket with 1,120 people or 8.6 percent. This is well above the national average of 5.1 percent. A total of 190 people, or 1.5 percent, are Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander.

Our residents' weekly gross income is significantly less than the rest of the nation with 38.2 percent of local households earning less than \$650 per week, compared to 20 percent Australia-wide. In contrast, only 2.7 percent of local incomes earn more than \$3000 in gross weekly outcome, compared to 16.4 percent nation-wide. The median local income (personal) is \$452 (compared to \$662 nationally).

Our residents also have barriers to education as 812 community members have a Bachelor Degree or higher and 650 residents possess an advanced diploma or diploma. These are below the national average of 22 percent and 8.9 percent respectively.

\* 2016 Census estimate

## What informed this Strategy

In developing this Strategy we have undertaken a number of initiatives to better understand our community.

### Timeline:

- March 2020**  
Community Voice Panel and staff survey
- July 2020**  
Analysis and research
- September 2020 to December 2020**  
Development of Draft Strategy
- December 2020 to January 2021**  
Community consultation process
- January 2021 to February 2021**  
Analysis of community feedback and updates to the Strategy

## What you told us

The responses we received from the community gave us four key insights:

### KEY INSIGHT 1

*The bigger barrier to participation is knowing who to talk to in Council.*

Our community values relationships and 'relational' interactions. They want Council to have a 'human' face and for staff to be more visible and active in the community.

### KEY INSIGHT 2

*Our community is diverse so communication needs to be targeted.*

More market research is needed to better understand our target audiences and their preferred communications. What was clear is that our community wants two-way communication, storytelling and plain language in all communications and interactions.

### KEY INSIGHT 3

*Our community is diverse so there is no one size fits all approach to engagement.*

A balance of face-to-face place based engagement and online activities is the best approach and people want feedback throughout the process. It's important to some community members that they feel empowered to participate through training, peer support, mentoring and financial remuneration.

### KEY INSIGHT 4

*Our community wants transparency from Council.*

Our community wants communication from Council that is timely, and transparent. They would like to see promotion of what Council does and where Council's responsibilities begin and end. Hearing about Council's role in advocating with industry, service providers and potential partners is also important to them. They are interested in understanding the processes of the Council, rather than just the outcomes.

## The audience

This Strategy has many audiences, and each will use this Strategy in different ways to drive excellence in communications and engagement. They are:

### Councillors

Councillors are the community's elected representatives and are required to make decisions on the community's behalf. Councillors play a vital role in engaging with the community and representing their interests. This Strategy will help guide Councillors on the best methods to engage with our community, particularly those who are hard to reach and have limited contact with Council.

### Council staff

Our staff are in regular contact with our community and it is essential we are engaging with our residents effectively and efficiently. All tiers of government are required to be transparent, open and honest. This Strategy sets out the best methods in being transparent with our community which will help restore residents' trust in Council's engagement processes.

### First Nations peoples and communities

Our Indigenous community, the Dja Dja Wurrung, is one of our key stakeholder groups and a group we are committed to effectively engage with. The Dja Dja Wurrung possess a wealth of knowledge and play a significant role in Council's decision making. A strong relationship with the Dja Dja Wurrung is essential to our ongoing engagement with our community. Engaging with our Indigenous community is a core component in this Strategy.

### People living at the intersection of social issues and disadvantage

Our community is made up of different people with different abilities and our role is to know who they are and what they need so that everyone living in our community has equal access to information, influence and services.

### Community groups

Our Shire possesses a rich network of social infrastructure with many highly valued and established community, support, sports, charitable and interest groups. Many of these groups represent key interests of people in our community. Interest groups are important for Council to access diverse viewpoints and ideas.

### Business owners

Business owners and small business operators are an important demographic of our Shire. We seek to continue our strong relationship with our business community and identify ways we can boost our local economy together. Through this Strategy, we have identified ways to effectively engage with our local business owners and operators to deliver positive outcomes for the community.

### Townships

Central Goldfields Shire is made up of numerous townships with the key centres being Bealiba, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Maryborough and Talbot. Each township is unique in its identity and has different needs. Community feedback and engagement from each township is crucial to Council's plans and overall vision for the Shire.

Without ongoing feedback and communication with each township, Council would not be able to effectively deliver services or new projects for the community. Strong communication and engagement with our community is an overarching theme in this Strategy which provides different platforms and methods of reaching the different demographics in our community.

## What is the purpose of this strategy

### Our situational analysis

Our research, together with conversations with the community, has helped inform this Strategy. We've identified the following as key learnings:



#### Strengths

- Council's commitment to community engagement is supported by having a dedicated Community Engagement team
- Community engagement is not new to our Council, our existing Community Engagement Framework was adopted in 2018 and we have carried out extensive engagement since its introduction
- Council already uses an extensive range of communication tools and engagement methods in delivering this work
- This new Strategy aims to improve and strengthen the current activities that exist



#### Weaknesses

- Our research tells us that there are a number of barriers to communication and engagement for our community. These include trust and access to the internet and technology
- Further market research is needed to gain a clearer picture for how we can ensure targeted and effective communication



#### Opportunities

- Conversations with more than 100 community members has given us a better understanding of our community's expectations in terms of communication and engagement
- In developing this Strategy we now have a communications and community engagement approach that is strategic and achievable and will strengthen the relationship between Council and our community



#### Threats

- Whilst listening to the wants and needs of our community is central to this Strategy, there will be some instances when Council is required to make difficult decisions that not all community members will agree with
- Council's commitment to the community is that a transparent process, that meets the requirements of the Victorian Local Government Act 2020, will be used in all decision making processes in order to provide clarity to the community

## Our purpose

We will provide our community with clear, transparent and targeted communications and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned and accessible to all community members.

## Our guiding principles

There are a number of areas for improvement as shared by the community, staff and according to government legislation. To bring meaning and coordination to these, they are informed by these overarching principles:

### Media / communications

1. Communications are planned and proactive
2. We engage through a storytelling approach
3. Our delivery is targeted and cost effective
4. We write about things that are important to people
5. Our messaging is positive and two way
6. Our language is direct and transparent
7. Our process is consistent and strategic

### Community engagement

1. Engagement is planned, fit for purpose and proactive
2. Our research is objective and provides actionable insights to inform key business decisions
3. Our feedback process is transparent and robust
4. Our organisation process improvement is diligent and continuous
5. Our community interactions are genuine and bottom up
6. We comply with all legislative requirements
7. We are committed to working with First Nations people
8. Our engagement is targeted to reach those who have experienced barriers to participation

# What are our aspirations, functions and priorities?

## Media

### Strategic aim

To deliver clear, consistent and factual information to the media that will result in positive and accurate coverage of Council decisions and activities.

### Key functions

- To promote the good work of Council
- To plan media contact wherever possible
- To produce regular media releases that are well written in plain language
- To identify positive publicity opportunities through strong internal communication
- To respond to media requests in a timely and appropriate way
- To maintain strong and effective relationships with media
- To maintain consistent messaging across all media channels

### Our areas for improvement

| Current state   | Key strategies   | Future state   |
|---|--|--|
| Out of date internal Media Policy   | Media policy to be updated   | Better coordination and understanding of media enquiry process |
| Regular liaison with local media in the form of media releases, media enquiries and advertising | Review the relationships with local media to ensure the information they receive from us is what they need | Targeted, effective and efficient communication                |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Amount of positive coverage in the media
- Media reports are factual and are balanced
- Community awareness of the good things we do in the community
- Level of trust between the organisation and media
- Positive community perceptions of the organisation



## External communications

### Strategic aim

To deliver planned and effective communications by using multiple digital and print mediums that are cost-effective, innovative and wide reaching.

To seek out opportunities to communicate the many services, events and initiatives that Council provides to raise awareness within the community.

### Key functions

- To inform the community of the projects, initiatives and services that Council delivers
- To meet legislative obligations of informing the community about public notices
- To plan, advise and deliver succinct and transparent communications
- To report regularly and honestly on Council's performance to the community
- To disseminate communications across multiple mediums in a cost effective way
- To utilise communications through appropriate channels that meet the needs of the community
- To put a 'human face' to Council

### Our areas for improvement

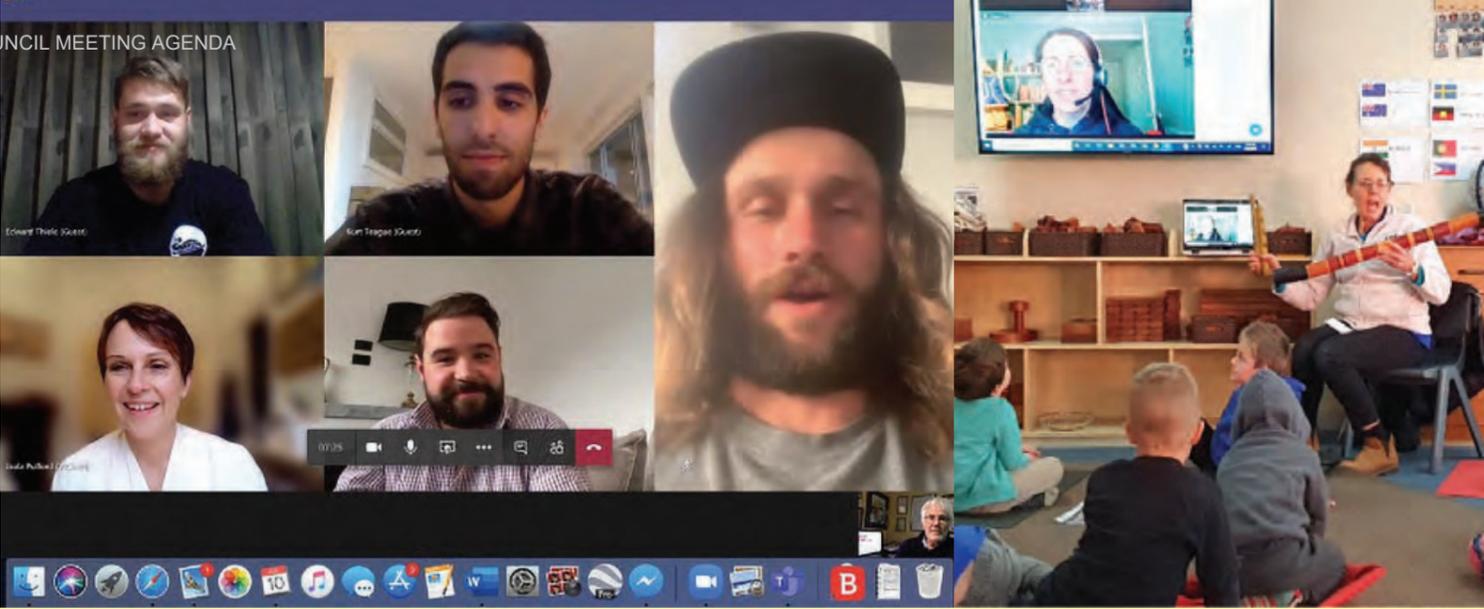
| Current state  | Key strategies  | Future state  |
|--|---|---|
| Range of communication platforms currently used – email, paid advertising, radio, digital, social media, direct mail | More market research required to understand the needs of diverse audiences and most effective communication methods<br><br>Develop community personas to better understand areas of interest and facilitate targeted communications | Effective communication to all residents in the community – including those who have been harder for Council to reach in the past |
| Two editions of the Community Update magazine have been well-received by the community                               | Evaluate continuation of the community magazine to become a quarterly publication and one of Council's key communication platforms  | A key Council communication tool for all residents – including those experiencing barriers to services and participation          |
| Dis-connect between Council communications and the community   | Make sure all communications are in plain language<br><br>Put a 'human face' to Council   | Communication that is more accessible and digestible for diverse audiences  |
| Review effectiveness of Council e-newsletters  | Work with relevant Council departments on strategies to improve current e-newsletters   | Targeted effective communications to target audiences   |

| Current state  | Key strategies  | Future state  |
|--|---|---|
| No guide to communication and engagement with First Nations people and communities | Develop Dja Dja Wurrung and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communications and Engagement Guide | More welcoming and respectful engagement with our First Nations peoples and communities |
| No translator interpreter information in public documents                          | Inclusion of translator interpreter information in public documents                                   | Greater representation and language equity  |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Participation in Council services, events and activities
- Community use of Council services
- Awareness of Central Goldfields Shire branding
- How the community perceives the accessibility of our information
- Customer service satisfaction



## Digital communications

### Strategic aim

To connect with and foster relationships online by developing opportunities for engaging and valuable two-way conversations.

### Key functions

- To create a dedicated community engagement platform
- To develop and manage Central Goldfields Shire social media platforms
- To develop a strategy for social media
- To provide training to help facilitate and moderate conversations on social media platforms
- To administer, develop and maintain Council’s website
- To ensure online content for Council’s website is relevant, accurate, timely and easily accessible on Council’s website
- To create an online community directory for local community groups

### Our areas for improvement

| Current state  | Key strategies   | Future state  |
|--|--|---|
| Under utilised social media platforms and non-strategic approach to existing accounts            | Create a social media strategy   | Increased participation, awareness and use of Council’s social media channels   |
| Outdated information or missing policies and documents on website                                | Ensure information and policies are up to date on the website                        | Website with information that is accurate, timeline and easily accessible<br><br>Regular training and communication to internal Web Champions group |
| Out of date Online Communications Policy   | Updated and current Online Communications Policy                                     | Cohesive approach to digital platforms for staff across the organisation  |
| Weekly Council news bulletin currently accessible via social media, website and the local papers | Development of a weekly email newsletter to the community                            | Communication to those who prefer email communication from Council  |
| Community directory currently only available in static PDF form on website                       | Develop Online Community Directory – to replace the currently Leisure Services Guide | More comprehensive, current and accessible online listing of community groups and organisations which is community led                              |

| Current state  | Key strategies  | Future state   |
|--|---|--|
| Limited number of online forms on Council’s website for customers to conduct Council business online | Broader roll-out of online forms accessed via Council’s website   | Increased accessibility and payment options for community – so that Council business can be done 24/7 and in the comfort of own home |
| Further improve functionality of Council’s website   | Introduction of OpenCities MyCity module where residents can search their address to find out what community facilities are close by, bin collection dates and events happening near them | Improved accessibility   |
| Sectors of the community with limited or no access to internet                                       | Explore opportunities for funding to introduce iPad kiosks at our Customer Service Centre, Goldfields Family Centre, Library and Gallery  | Improved access to technology and therefore some barriers to participation   |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Number of visits to Council’s website
- Follows and engagement on social media
- How the community perceives the accessibility of our information
- Customer service satisfaction



## Community engagement

### Strategic aim

To work with the community on relevant projects to ensure all stakeholders are informed, and where appropriate, create meaningful engagement opportunities whereby community input and feedback is sought and considered as part of the decision making process.

### Key functions

- To up-skill the organisation in community engagement
- To increase community capacity so that the community can participate
- To increase diversity in engagement activities
- To identify a model for representative engagement on major projects
- To comply with the requirements of the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 (s55, s56)

### Our areas for improvement

| Current state  | Key strategies   | Future state   |
|--|--|--|
| We know who community groups are, but we need up to date information about office bearers                                  | Establishment of online community directory portal on Council's website  | Targeted engagement can be developed quickly as Council will have better picture of the community  |
| Engagement activities are too broad and not capturing enough diversity   | Upskill organisation in how to create stakeholder maps   | People have an opportunity to influence decisions that affect them   |
| Lack of participation and representation by First Nations people and communities   | Develop culturally safe and appropriate engagement activities  | Diverse representation in Council decision making  |
| Community Voice Panel not effective  | Identify a model for representative engagement on major projects   | A model for a deliberative engagement approach for the development of a Community Vision and the Council and Financial Plan                  |
| Absence of internal tool to assist council staff to design, development and evaluate their community engagement activities | The Community Engagement Policy will incorporate a step by step guide to planning community engagement<br><br>Use the rural engagement toolkit to plan, deliver and evaluate community engagement activities | An organisation that demonstrates consistent and high quality community engagement practice and a community that participates and is engaged |

| Current state   | Key strategies   | Future state   |
|---|--|--|
| Township champions are underutilised                    | The role and responsibilities of Township champions are evaluated and redesigned   | Through a collaborative approach involving Councillors, the organisation and the community, the community plans are activated in each of the townships |
| Limited number of staff trained in community engagement | Deliberative engagement training for Councillors and the leadership team<br><br>IAP2 community engagement training for Councillors and staff | Staff educated and upskilled to facilitate community engagement best practice  |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Participation in engagement activities
- Level of community input in decision making
- Community Satisfaction Survey results
- Council reputation

## Public relations

### Strategic aim

To increase public awareness of Council's objectives, activities and services as well as the advocacy role of Council. An increase in awareness of Council operations will help strengthen relationships between Council and the community.

### Key functions

- To promote the projects, initiatives and services that Council delivers
- To promote Council's advocacy role
- To build strong and meaningful relationships with the various stakeholders in our community
- Provide a more targeted approach to education and awareness of Council services

### Our areas for improvement

| Current state  | Key strategies   | Future state  |
|--|--|---|
| Limited knowledge and understanding within community of Council services | Implementation of a communication plan to build awareness of Council services and projects | Increased community awareness of Council services   |
| Staff are office based   | Staff to spend more time in the community to put a human face to the organisation          | Better relationships between Council staff and community  |
| Council advocacy activities are not effectively communicated             | Better promotion of Council's advocacy activities  | Community has a better understanding of the Council's role in advocacy. Strengthened relationships between Council, community and service providers and delivery of projects and services that are what the community want. |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Participation and awareness of Council services, events and activities
- Community Satisfaction Survey results
- Positive community perception of the organisation

## Business process improvements

### Strategic aim

To provide best practise customer service in terms of delivery method, approach and standards.

### Key functions

- To ensure continued improvement of all customer service standards across the organisation
- To ensure community is clear about how to lodge requests with Council

### Our areas of improvement

| Current state  | Key strategies   | Future state  |
|--|--|---|
| Low responsiveness to phone calls and emails   | Undertake journey maps of all calls including complaints<br><br>Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in the Customer Service Charter<br><br>Upskill customer service so they have capacity to assist with diverse customer enquiries | An organisation that is responsive to the community and follows up with community members to ensure that their inquiry has been resolved (and to capture their level of satisfaction) |
| Community unclear about the steps to lodge issues and requests   | Clearly identified communication channels for the community to get the answers they need   | Feedback is responded to in a timely manner   |
| Staff with limited capacity  | Training delivered to staff including:<br>▪ Conflict resolution, cultural safety and awareness   | Increased capacity of staff to manage challenging requests and conversations  |
| Up-skill and educate front line workers e.g. Operations team to assist community when out and about in townships | Provide a central point where front line workers can log requests for information for specialist staff to follow up  | Front line workers are able to assist community   |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- Participation and awareness of Council services, events and activities
- Community Satisfaction Survey results
- Positive community perception of the organisation
- Council reputation
- Level of trust between organisation and community

## Insights and evaluation

### Strategic aim

To collect relevant feedback and research from the community in a meaningful and independent way in order to inform Council’s service delivery priorities; understand and improve customer experience and assist with making fiscally responsible decisions.

### Key functions

- Develop and undertake community engagement activities to assist with Council’s key decision making requirements
- Ensure Council is ‘closing the loop’ and reporting back on outcomes of all engagement processes

### Our areas for improvement

| Current state  | Key strategies   | Future state   |
|--|--|--|
| No central point for data  | Consultation data stored in the one place<br>Ensure data is secure | Council to have quality insights of community and better understanding of challenges, goals and ideal experience<br><br>Data is securely stored  |
| Lacking a coordinated approach to engagement                     | Engagement activities that are coordinated and considered          | Reduced risks of engagement fatigue<br><br>Better use of limited resources<br><br>Start to understand the best times and locations for engagement<br><br>Reach a broader representation of the community |
| No process for reporting back on community engagement activities | Commitment to evaluation on all engagement activities              | Community members feel heard and valued and understand what is being done with the feedback they have provided   |

### Evaluation

We will measure community satisfaction with:

- People feel as though their views have been heard and valued
- Level of trust between organisation and community
- People feel empowered to participate

## How will we monitor, measure and report progress?

### Key initiatives

Whilst the Strategy section of this document provides us with a detailed action plan, we’ve outlined six key initiatives that we will deliver within the next 12 months:

1

#### Undertake deliberative engagement

Deliberative engagement process to be undertaken for the development of the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Budget.

2

#### Model for representative engagement

Disband the Community Voice Panel and identify a model for representative engagement to be used in developing the Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan.

3

#### Community Engagement Toolkit

Roll-out a community engagement toolkit to ensure Council meets the requirements of the Local Government Act and that best practice community engagement initiatives are embedded across the organisation.

4

#### New Online Community Directory

Develop an Online Community Directory on Council’s website to provide a central point for information and contact details for community groups, sporting clubs and organisations.

5

#### Communication methods market research

Undertake market research to understand the community’s preferred methods for communication.

6

#### Fit for purpose engagement platform

Develop an online engagement platform to better facilitate two-way conversation with the community through a range of participatory engagement and content tools.



## Monitoring and evaluation

As detailed in the Key Initiatives section we've committed to delivering on the following items in the first 12 months:

- Undertake deliberative engagement
- Identify a model for representative engagement
- Community Engagement Toolkit
- New Online Community Directory
- Communication methods market research
- Fit for purpose engagement platform

Our Action Plan is what we will monitor and report against in our yearly review.

We've also included an evaluation section against each of the key areas of our Action Plan – which outlines how we'll measure effectiveness and community satisfaction.

The first review of this Strategy will be carried out in April, 2022.

## Glossary

| Term                     | Definition   |
|--------------------------|--|
| Community                | Refers to the people who have a stake and interest in the Central Goldfields Shire and includes people who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Live, work, study or conduct business or are involved in local community groups or organisations in the municipality</li> <li>■ Visit, use or enjoy the services, facilities and public places located within the municipality</li> </ul> |
| Community engagement     | Community engagement is a planned process with the specific purpose of working with individuals and groups to encourage active involvement in decisions that affect them or are of interest to them  |
| Committees               | A delegated committee, jointly delegated committee or community asset committee under section 63, 64 and 65 of the Act, respectively   |
| Consultation             | The activity of seeking input on a matter  |
| Council                  | The Central Goldfields Shire Council including Councillors and its Delegated Committees  |
| Deliberation             | Deliberation is an approach to decision-making in which citizens consider relevant facts from multiple points of view, converse with one another to think critically about options before them and enlarge their perspectives, opinions, and understandings  |
| Deliberative engagement  | Deliberative engagement is a process of engagement that brings participants closer to the decision makers than other forms of engagement; where participants are provided with a clear task or question, have access to appropriate resources and information, and are given the time and space required to deliberate and reach their consensus   |
| Participatory engagement | Participatory engagement involves information exchange either from Council to community or community to Council. Participatory engagement typically occurs when feedback is invited on ideas, alternatives or draft documents  |
| Process                  | A relationship between key steps, activities, tasks, policies and / or resources   |
| Public participation     | A term used by IAP2 meaning the involvement of those affected (interested or impacted) by a decision in the decision-making process. We use the term interchangeably with Community Engagement, Stakeholder Engagement or Consultation   |
| Stakeholder              | An individual or group with a strong interest in the decisions of Council and are directly impacted by their outcomes  |

## 8.10.2



# Central Goldfields Shire Council Communications and Engagement Strategy Review

Prepared by the Manager Community Engagement  
October 2023

## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Snapshot

- Improvements to date
- Lessons and insights
- Next steps

Detailed progress report

- Key initiatives
- Progress with improvements (by Category)
- Our future priorities

Next steps

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Central Goldfields Shire Council acknowledges and extends appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the land that we are on.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual, and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

## INTRODUCTION

The Communications and Engagement Strategy ('the Strategy') was adopted by Council in March 2021.

The Strategy is underpinned by a range of improvements and key strategies across several themes to benchmark excellent communications and engagement.

The Community Engagement Team auspices the Strategy and several departments have direct delivery responsibilities.

The purpose of the Strategy is to bring the organisation into compliance with legislative requirements and to support our staff in the application of organisational values to provide:

*"...our community with clear, transparent and targeted communications and engagement opportunities that are bottom up, planned and accessible to all community members."*

- p8, Communications and Engagement Strategy

The improvements and key strategies in the Strategy, are informed by several underlying principles:

### **Media / communications**

1. Communications are planned and proactive
2. We engage through a storytelling approach
3. Our delivery is targeted and cost effective
4. We write about things that are important to people
5. Our messaging is positive and two ways
6. Our language is direct and transparent
7. Our process is consistent and strategic

## Community engagement

1. Engagement is planned, fit for purpose and proactive
2. Our research is objective and provides actionable insights to inform key business decisions
3. Our feedback process is transparent and robust
4. Our organisation process improvement is diligent and continuous
5. Our community interactions are genuine and bottom up
6. We comply with all legislative requirements
7. We are committed to working with First Nations people
8. Our engagement is targeted to reach those who have experienced barriers to participation

## Our review

Through the Strategy, the organisation has committed to monitoring and evaluating progress with implementation.

This review delivers on this commitment by providing an overview of achievements to date, as well as a detailed breakdown of ongoing items and, those to commence.

The period for this annual review is April 2021 until September 2023.

## SNAPSHOT

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the improvements that the organisation has achieved since adoption of the Strategy including lessons learnt and next steps.

## Improvements to date

- Delivery of a deliberative engagement process for the Community Vision and Council Plan
- There is greater representation of the diverse community in Council's decision making (see Table two – Engagement activities)
- We have seen a steady increase in collaborative engagement practices with the community (see Table two – Engagement activities)
- We have introduced a fit for purpose online engagement platform ([www.engage.cgoldshire.vic.gov.au](http://www.engage.cgoldshire.vic.gov.au))
- We have a highly effective relationship with the local media.
- We are making progress with use of plain language through our narrative development work.

- We are making progress with putting a human face to the organisation through including photos of Council staff in our publications and websites and, also being more visible in the community through face-to-face meetings and workshops.
- Our emerging use of video and the refresh of our photo library is also evidence of our continuing commitment to putting a human face to the organisation.
- We have clarified the roles and responsibilities of Township champions through the Community Planning Review project.
- The Communications WIP (Work in Progress) continues to be a valuable tool in planning a breadth of stories for the organisation according to key content pillars.
- Priority Projects document has been reviewed and updated.
- A Customer Request System is currently being scoped to ensure frontline workers can log requests for information for specialist staff.
- Community feedback and data is securely stored through the online engagement platform.
- A work program is being maintained to capture all engagement activities across the organisation, including areas for ongoing improvement.

## Lessons and insights

- From April 2021 until September 2023 the organisation has delivered over thirty-seven community engagement projects, with a strong focus on approaches to engagement that highly facilitate levels of community influence (i.e. involve/collaborate) under our Community Engagement Policy
- From April 2021 until September 2023 the organisation has established a range of mechanisms to work closely with the community on complex needs (such as committees, advisory groups, etc.). These groups further amplify the organisation's commitment to approaches to engagement that facilitate higher levels of community influence (collaborate/empower) under our Community Engagement Policy
- Our quarterly Community News Update is the community's preferred communications channel and further investment in editorial innovation to meet community need is warranted.
- There is an opportunity to get better at collecting basic data to better understand the relevance of communications, community perceptions and levels of participation in engagement activities. The commencement of a Community Engagement Officer in November will help to facilitate this work. There is also an opportunity to collaborate more closely with our Customer Service Team to collect data in 2024.
- There is also an opportunity to start to forward plan the deliberative engagement process for the creation of a Council Plan in 2025, to ensure meaningful community participation (in June – December 2024)
- The current engagement platform will be migrated to a new platform as part of the website refresh to improve search functions and delivery on more useable and useful content (to launch early to mid- 2024)

## Next steps

There are seventeen further process improvements to be completed (and or are ongoing) across 2024/2025. These improvements will be better resourced through the appointment of a Community Engagement Officer as part of the Community Engagement Team (CET).

The next review for the Communications and Engagement Strategy will be the end of 2024, with a report to be published early in 2025. The Strategy will be re-written at the end of 2025 (if needed).

## DETAILED PROGRESS REPORT

The purpose of this section is to provide a detailed breakdown of the process improvements we have achieved since adoption of our Strategy.

### Key initiatives

Through our Strategy, we have committed to six 'high value' initiatives to be delivered. While COVID-19 and staffing challenges impacted on delivery, the table below shows that we generally delivered on our short-term promises:

**Table one - Key initiative outcomes**

| Short term initiative               | Description   | Progress  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Undertake deliberative engagement   | Deliberative engagement process to be undertaken for the development of the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Annual Budget  | <b>Completed</b>  |
| Model for representative engagement | Disband the Community Voice Panel and identify a model for representative engagement to be used in developing the Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan                                       | <b>Completed</b>  |
| Community Engagement Toolkit        | Roll-out a community engagement toolkit to ensure Council meets the requirements of the Local Government Act and that best practice community engagement initiatives are embedded across the organisation | <b>In progress</b><br><br>A 'pilot' toolkit is being assessed and refined with staff across 2023.<br><br>A final toolkit will be delivered by June 2024 |

|                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Online Community Directory            | Develop an Online Community Directory on Council's website to provide a central point for information and contact details for community groups, sporting clubs and organisations | <p><b>To commence</b></p> <p>This project was put on hold in 2022 (to focus efforts on the Capital Works Program) however, the directory is listed for delivery as part of the website refresh project (June 2024)</p>  |
| Communication methods market research | Undertake market research to understand the community's preferred methods for communication  | <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>The Community Satisfaction Survey continues to show the preferred channels for communications by age.</p> <p>A survey in 2023 also provided deeper insight into the community's preferred approach for the Community News Update (the preferred channel for communication)</p> <p>There is an opportunity to gather further research data to ensure all communications are relevant for the audience and to better measure community perceptions</p> |
| Fit for purpose engagement platform   | Develop an online engagement platform to better facilitate two-way conversation with the community through a range of participatory engagement and content tools                 | <p><b>Completed</b></p>   |

### Model for representative engagement

Through the Shaping Central Goldfields Community Advisory Group (the deliberative engagement process for the Community Vision and Council Plan delivery in 2021), we successfully engaged diverse groups in local decision making.

Since this process, we have continued to engage diverse representation through multiple projects such as Welcome to Central Goldfields, the Indigenous Gardens project at the Central Goldfields Art Gallery, the activities of the Climate Action Stewarding Group and the activities of the Volunteers Stewarding Group among others (see below).

It is anticipated that engagement with Traditional Owners and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will continue to increase with the adoption of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

We will also see an increase in engagement with those traditionally hard to reach through the Volunteering Stewarding Group.

Further work is required to engage farmers however, the Climate Action Stewarding Group has had some success with this group.

**Table one – Life cycle, key social determinants, and themes**

| Life cycle, key social determinants   | Engaged   | Thematic  | Engaged |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---------|
| Infants and children                  | Yes   | Volunteers  | Yes     |
| Young people                          | Yes   | Tourism operators                                     | Yes     |
| Families                              | Yes   | Artists   | Yes     |
| Older people                          | Yes   | Business community                                    | Yes     |
| People living with disabilities       | Yes   | Farmers   | Limited |
| LGBTIQA+                              | Yes   | Climate change  | Yes     |
| CALD community                        | Yes (Welcome to Central Goldfields)                                       | Townships   | Yes     |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander | Limited (but further improvement anticipated through adoption of our RAP) | Community groups and interest-based community leaders | Yes     |
| Broader community                     | Yes   | Traditional owners (Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation)      | Yes     |

The table below captures the breadth and depth of engagement activities that we have undertaken since the adoption of our Strategy including who was engaged and the extent of influence that each of these groups has had on the outcome (in accordance with our Community Engagement Policy).

As is evident by the table, we are not only complying with the requirements of our Policy but exceeding it in terms of the breadth of collaborative approaches to engagement that are being facilitated by the organisation.

**Table two - Engagement activities**

|   | Who   | Spectrum of public participation |         |         |             |         |
|---|---|----------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
|   |   | Inform                           | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
| <b>Groups</b>                                       |   |                                  |         |         |             |         |
| Shaping Central Goldfields Community Advisory Group | Young people, families, older people, people living with disabilities, LGBTIQA+, CALD, Volunteers, townships, businesses, artists, community groups |                                  |         | x       | x           |         |

|  |   |  |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|---|
|  | and interest-based community leaders and broader community                    |  |  |   |   |   |
| Carisbrook Community Conversations (Now a Ward Councillor lead initiative) | N/A   |  |  |   |   |   |
| Climate Action Collaboration (now Climate Action Stewarding Group)         | Climate change, young people, broader community                               |  |  |   | x |   |
| Go Goldfields Leadership Table   | Families, volunteers, businesses, community groups                            |  |  |   | x |   |
| Maryborough Aerodrome Taskforce  | Community groups and interest-based community leaders                         |  |  |   |   | x |
| Maryborough Aerodrome Advisory Group                                       | Community groups and interest-based community leaders                         |  |  | x |   |   |
| Tullaroop Leisure Centre Community Asset Committee (under establishment)   | Townships (Carisbrook), community groups and interest-based community leaders |  |  |   |   | x |
| Carisbrook Town Hall Community Asset Committee (under establishment)       | Townships (Carisbrook), community groups and interest-based community leaders |  |  |   |   | x |
| Walking and Cycling Community Advisory Group (ongoing)                     | Community groups and interest-based community leaders                         |  |  | x |   |   |
| Volunteer Stewarding Group   | Community groups (Maryborough Volunteer Resource Centre)                      |  |  |   | x |   |
| Heritage Advisory Group  | Interest-based community leaders (Heritage)                                   |  |  | x |   |   |
| Children and Young people First committee                                  | Young people, families  |  |  |   | x |   |
| Youth Council  | Young people  |  |  |   |   | x |
| Talbot Community Homes Community Asset Committee (under establishment)     | Townships (Talbot), community groups and interest-based community leaders     |  |  |   |   | x |
| Welcome to Central Goldfields  | Community groups and interest-based community leaders,                        |  |  |   | x | x |

|  |  |          |          |          |          |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| Community Reference Group                              | businesses, CALD community   |          |          |          |          |  |
| <b>Projects</b>  |  |          |          |          |          |  |
| Asset Plan 2022-2023                                   | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |          | <b>x</b> |          |          |  |
| Annual Budget (2021, 2022, 2023)                       | <b>Broad</b><br>All  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |          |  |
| Art Gallery Strategic Plan                             | <b>Targeted</b><br>Artists<br><b>Broad</b><br>All  |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |  |
| Central Goldfields Planning Scheme – Amendment C34 Gol | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |          | <b>x</b> |          |          |  |
| Climate Action Plan                                    | <b>Targeted</b><br>Climate change, community groups and interest-based community leaders, businesses<br><b>Broad</b><br>All  |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |  |
| Community Vision                                       | <b>Targeted</b><br>Young people, families, older people, people living with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, CALD, Volunteers, townships, businesses, artists, community groups and interest-based community leaders and broader community.<br><b>Broad</b><br>All |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |  |
| Community Planning Review project                      | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships, community groups and interest-based community leaders  |          |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |  |
| Council Plan   | <b>Targeted</b><br>Young people, families, older people, people living with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, CALD, Volunteers, townships, businesses, artists,   |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |  |

|   |  |  |          |          |          |          |
|---|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|   | community groups and interest-based community leaders and broader community.<br><b>Broad</b><br>All      |  |          |          |          |          |
| Daisy Hill Community Plan                                   | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships (Daisy Hill)  |  |          |          | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |
| Disability Action Plan                                      | <b>Targeted</b><br>People living with disabilities   |  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |
| Disposal and Sale of Council Assets and Land Policy         | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Domestic Wastewater Management Plan                         | <b>Targeted</b><br>People affected by the proposal.<br><b>Broad</b><br>All                               |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Domestic Management and Animal Plan                         | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |          |
| Dunolly Wayfinding Signage                                  | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships (Dunolly)   |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Governance Rules  | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Health and Wellbeing Plan                                   | <b>Targeted</b><br>Service providers<br><b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |          |
| Industrial Land and Demand Assessment and Strategy          | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Leasing and Licensing Policy 2023                           | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Long Term Financial Plan                                    | <b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Maryborough Flood Study                                     | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships (Maryborough)   |  | <b>x</b> |          |          |          |
| Maryborough Heritage Review                                 | <b>Targeted</b><br>Heritage Advisory Group<br><b>Broad</b><br>Townships (Maryborough)                    |  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |
| Maryborough Major Sports and Recreation Reserves Masterplan | <b>Targeted</b><br>Community groups and interest-based community leaders (Sports)<br><b>Broad</b><br>All |  | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> | <b>x</b> |          |

|   |   |  |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Maryborough Retail Recovery Program                                 | <b>Targeted</b><br>Businesses   |  | x | x | x |  |
| Motorised Mobility Scooter Strategic Plan                           | <b>Targeted</b><br>People living with a disability, people using scooters   |  | x | x |   |  |
| Mayoral and Councillor Allowances                                   | <b>Broad</b><br>All   |  | x |   |   |  |
| Planning for a Growing Central Goldfields (Land Use Framework Plan) | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships (Carisbrook, Flagstaff, Maryborough)   |  | x | x |   |  |
| Philips Garden Landscape Plan                                       | <b>Targeted</b><br>Neighbouring properties<br><b>Broad</b><br>All   |  | x |   |   |  |
| Playspaces Strategy   | <b>Targeted</b><br>Community groups<br><b>Broad</b><br>All  |  | x | x |   |  |
| Princes Park Cultural Management Plan                               | <b>Targeted</b><br>Community groups and interest-based community leaders (Heritage)<br><b>Broad</b><br>All                  |  | x |   |   |  |
| Positive Ageing Strategy  | <b>Targeted</b><br>Older people   |  | x | x | x |  |
| Procurement Policy  | <b>Broad</b><br>All   |  |   |   |   |  |
| Revenue and Rating Plan 2021 - 2025                                 | <b>Broad</b><br>All   |  | x |   |   |  |
| Talbot Futures  | <b>Targeted</b><br>Townships (Talbot)   |  |   | x | x |  |
| Waterway Management Plan for Carisbrook                             | <b>Targeted</b><br>Township (Carisbrook),<br>Community groups and interest-based community leaders (Environment)            |  | x | x |   |  |
| Welcome to Central Goldfields                                       | <b>Targeted</b><br>Community groups and interest-based community leaders, businesses, CALD community<br><b>Broad</b><br>All |  |   | x | x |  |
| Whirrakee Rise Quinn Street Reserve upgrade                         | <b>Targeted</b>   |  | x |   |   |  |

|                                       |   |  |   |   |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|
|                                       | Townships<br>(Maryborough -<br>Whirrakee Rise)  |  |   |   |   |  |
| Volunteer Strategy<br>and Action Plan | <b>Targeted</b><br>Community groups<br>and interest-based<br>community leaders<br>(Volunteers)<br><b>Broad</b><br>All |  | x | x | x |  |

## Progress with process improvements

The Strategy is underpinned by a range of improvements across several themes to benchmark excellent communications and engagement at Council. See the tables below for the full review.

**Table one – Progress with improvements to media**

| Key strategy   | Desired future state   | Progress   |
|--|--|--|
| Media policy to be updated   | Better coordination and understanding of media enquiry process | <b>In progress</b><br><br>An updated Media Policy (to include social media) will be adopted by Council (By December 2024)  |
| Review the relationships with local media to ensure the information they receive from us is what they need | Targeted, effective and efficient communication                | <b>Completed</b><br><br>We have a relationship with our local media outlets that is respected and valued. We are in contact with our local media contacts on a regular basis |

Measures of community satisfaction and progress:

- Amount of positive coverage in the media
  - Articles in The Maryborough Advertiser are balanced, fair and positive.
- Media reports are factual and are balanced.
  - Articles in The Maryborough Advertiser are balanced, fair and positive.
- Community awareness of the good things we do in the community.
  - We commit to communicating about the work of the organisation across several channels including our quarterly Community News magazine, a weekly full-page advertisement in The Maryborough Advertiser, a weekly Councillor column in all local papers and our social media channels.
- Level of trust between the organisation and media
  - The Maryborough Advertiser is balanced and fair in the publishing of letters to the editor and regularly grants permission for use of their photos and articles. They are highly responsive to our media releases and photo opportunities. The broader

Central Victorian media (Bendigo Advertiser, Ballarat Courier, North Central News) are also responsive to our communications.

- Positive community perceptions of the organisation
  - As per the Community Satisfaction Survey

**Table two – Progress with improvements to external communications**

| <b>Key strategy</b>   | <b>Desired future state</b>  | <b>Progress</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>More market research required to understand the needs of diverse audiences and most effective communication methods.</p> <p>Develop community personas to better understand areas of interest and facilitate targeted communications</p> | <p>Effective communication to all residents in the community – including those who have been harder for Council to reach in the past</p> | <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>The Community Satisfaction Survey continues to show the preferred channels for communication by age.</p> <p>A survey in 2023 also provided deeper insight into the community’s preferred approach for the Community News Update (the preferred channel for communication)</p> <p>However, there is an opportunity to gather further research data to ensure all communications are relevant for the audience and to better measure community perceptions (Due December 2024)</p> |
| <p>Evaluate continuation of the community magazine to become a quarterly publication and one of Council’s key communication platforms</p>   | <p>A key Council communication tool for all residents – including those experiencing barriers to services and participation</p>          | <p><b>Completed</b></p>   |
| <p>Make sure all communications are in plain language.</p> <p>Put a ‘human face’ to Council</p>   | <p>Communication that is more accessible and digestible for diverse audiences</p>  | <p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>We continue to use plain language across our communication channels and will increase our effectiveness through implementation of our narrative development work.</p> <p>To help put a ‘human face to Council’ we introduced the ‘Meet the Team’ page in our</p>   |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   |   | <p>Community News magazine as well as Council staff photos alongside projects.</p> <p>Our use of video, particularly on social media, and the refresh of our photo library is also evidence of our progress with putting a human face to the organisation.</p> <p>Photos and contact details for staff are also listed online for engagement items</p> |
| Work with relevant Council departments on strategies to improve current e-newsletters                 | Targeted effective communications to target audiences                                   | <p><b>To commence</b></p> <p>This has not been completed due to staffing challenges (Due June 2024)</p>  |
| Develop Dja Dja Wurrung and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communications and Engagement Guide | More welcoming and respectful engagement with our First Nations peoples and communities | <p><b>On hold</b></p> <p>On hold while we wait for the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to be finalised (Unknown)</p>  |
| Inclusion of translator interpreter information in public documents                                   | Greater representation and language equity  | <p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>The inclusion of this information has been patchy and requires a more consistent approach and process (Due June 2024)</p>   |

### External communications

At the time of writing this annual review, appropriate data is not available to provide a response to the first four dot points. Improvements to data collection in 2024 will help to better capture the measures below.

Measures of community satisfaction and progress:

- Participation in Council services, events, and activities
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this review.
- Community use of Council services
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this review.
- Awareness of Central Goldfields Shire branding
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this review.
- How the community perceives the accessibility of our information

- Data is unavailable at the time of writing this review.
- Customer service satisfaction
  - As per Community Satisfaction Survey

**Table three – Progress with digital communications**

| <b>Key strategy</b>  | <b>Desired future state</b>  | <b>Progress</b>   |
|--|--|---|
| Create a social media strategy   | Increased participation, awareness, and use of Council's social media channels   | <b>In progress</b><br><br>An updated Media Policy (to include social media) will be adopted by Council (Due December 2024)  |
| Ensure information and policies are up to date on the website                                      | Website with information that is accurate, timeline and easily accessible.<br><br>Regular training and communication to internal Web Champions group | <b>In progress</b><br><br>The website refresh project will establish a Governance Model and responsibilities for the maintenance of the website (Due June 2024)   |
| Updated and current Online Communications Policy   | Cohesive approach to digital platforms for staff across the organisation   | <b>In progress</b><br><br>This Policy is being rolled in with the Media Policy  |
| Development of a weekly email newsletter to the community  | Communication to those who prefer email communication from Council   | <b>On hold</b><br><br>On completion of the website refresh project (Due June 2024) we will consider a weekly community email newsletter   |
| Develop Online Community Directory – to replace the currently Leisure Services Guide               | More comprehensive, current, and accessible online listing of community groups and organisations which is community led                              | <b>To commence</b><br><br>This project was put on hold in 2022 (to focus efforts on the capital works program) however, the directory is listed for delivery as part of the website refresh project (Due June 2024) |
| Broader roll-out of online forms accessed via Council's website                                    | Increased accessibility and payment options for community – so that Council business can be done 24/7 and in the comfort of own home                 | <b>To commence</b><br><br>This action will be completed as part of the website refresh (Due June 2024)  |
| Introduction of OpenCities MyCity module where residents can search their address to find out what | Improved accessibility   | <b>To commence</b>  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| community facilities are close by, bin collection dates and events happening near them   |  | This action will be considered as part of the website refresh (Due June 2024)                          |
| Explore opportunities for funding to introduce iPad kiosks at our Customer Service Centre, Goldfields Family Centre, Library and Gallery | Improved access to technology and therefore some barriers to participation | <b>On hold</b><br><br>This action is dependent on grant funding (start to scope options December 2024) |

### Digital communications

Measures of community satisfaction:

- How the community perceives the accessibility of our information
  - Through the Website Content Strategy project (March – September 2023) we heard about a range of improvements which would increase the accessibility of our website. These will be implemented through the website refresh work (Due June 2024)

**Table four – Progress with community engagement**

| Key strategy  | Desired future state  | Progress  |
|---|---|---|
| Establishment of online community directory portal on Council's website | Targeted engagement can be developed quickly as Council will have better picture of the community                           | <b>To commence</b><br><br>This project was put on hold in 2022 (to focus efforts on the capital works program) however, the directory is listed for delivery as part of the website refresh project (Due June 2024) |
| Upskill organisation in how to create stakeholder maps                  | People have an opportunity to influence decisions that affect them  | <b>In progress</b><br><br>Continue to build skills through an internal skill sharing network (Due December 2024)  |
| Develop culturally safe and appropriate engagement activities           | Diverse representation in Council decision making   | <b>On hold</b><br><br>This action will get further traction through the adoption of the Reconciliation Action Plan (Due December 2024)  |
| Identify a model for representative engagement on major projects        | A model for a deliberative engagement approach for the development of a Community Vision and the Council and Financial Plan | <b>Completed</b><br><br>Start to forward plan for the creation of the Council Plan (in 2025) through preparing the community to meaningfully  |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | participate and refining deliberative engagement processes meet the needs of the community (Due December 2024)  |
| The Community Engagement Policy will incorporate a step-by-step guide to planning community engagement.<br><br>Use the rural engagement toolkit to plan, deliver and evaluate community engagement activities | An organisation that demonstrates consistent and high-quality community engagement practice and a community that participates and is engaged.          | <b>In progress</b><br><br>A 'pilot' toolkit is being assessed and refined with staff across 2023.<br><br>A final toolkit will be delivered by June 2024 |
| The role and responsibilities of Township champions are evaluated and redesigned  | Through a collaborative approach involving Councillors, the organisation and the community, the community plans are activated in each of the townships | <b>Completed</b><br><br>Extensive work has been understood to review the Community Plans and to clarify roles and responsibilities for implementation   |
| Deliberative engagement training for Councillors and the leadership team IAP2 community engagement training for Councillors and staff   | Staff educated and upskilled to facilitate community engagement best practice  | <b>To commence</b><br><br>Organise alongside forward planning for the deliberative engagement process for the Council Plan creation (Due December 2024) |

## Community engagement

Measures of community satisfaction:

- Participation in engagement activities
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.
- Level of community input in decision making
  - As shown in table two: Engagement activities, we are not only complying with the requirements of our Community Engagement Policy, but exceeding in terms of the breadth of collaborative approaches to engagement which are being facilitated by the organisation.
- Council reputation
  - As per Community Satisfaction Survey

**Table five – Progress with public relations**

| <b>Key strategy</b>  | <b>Desired future state</b>   | <b>Progress</b>   |
|--|---|---|
| Implementation of a communication plan to build awareness of Council services and projects | Increased community awareness of Council services   | <b>Completed</b><br><br>The Communications WIP continues to be a valuable tool in planning a breadth of stories for the organisation according to key content pillars                       |
| Staff to spend more time in the community to put a human face to the organisation          | Better relationships between Council staff and community  | <b>Ongoing</b><br><br>Staff are more visible in the community through face-to-face meetings and workshops   |
| Better promotion of Council's advocacy activities  | Community has a better understanding of the Council's role in advocacy.<br>Strengthened relationships between Council, community and service providers and delivery of projects and services that are what the community want | <b>Ongoing</b><br><br>The preparation of a refreshed Advocacy strategy is in progress.<br><br>Advocacy items are being communicated through the Community News Update and the Annual Report |

**Public relations**

Measures of community satisfaction:

- Participation and awareness of Council services, events, and activities
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.
- Positive community perception of the organisation
  - As per Community Satisfaction Survey

**Table six – Progress with business process improvements**

| <b>Key strategy</b>   | <b>Desired future state</b>   | <b>Progress</b>        |
|---|---|------------------------|
| Undertake journey maps of all calls including complaints.<br><br>Ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in the Customer Service Charter<br><br>Upskill customer service so they have capacity to assist | An organisation that is responsive to the community and follows up with community members to ensure that their inquiry has been resolved (and to capture their level of satisfaction) | <b>To be confirmed</b> |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| with diverse customer enquiries   |  |   |
| Clearly identified communication channels for the community to get the answers they need                            | Feedback is responded to in a timely manner                                  | <b>To be confirmed</b>  |
| Training delivered to staff including:<br>-Conflict resolution, cultural safety, and awareness                      | Increased capacity of staff to manage challenging requests and conversations | <b>In progress</b><br>Continue to build skills through an internal skill sharing network (Due December 2024)  |
| Provide a central point where front-line workers can log requests for information for specialist staff to follow up | Front line workers are able to assist the community.                         | <b>In progress</b><br>A Customer Request System is currently being scoped to ensure frontline workers can log requests for information for specialist staff |

### Business process improvements

Measures of community satisfaction:

- Participation and awareness of Council services, events, and activities
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.
- Positive community perception of the organisation
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.
- Level of trust between organisation and community
  - As per Community Satisfaction Survey

### Table seven – Insights and evaluation

| Key strategy  | Desired future state  | Progress  |
|---|---|---|
| Consultation data stored in the one place.<br><br>Ensure data is secure | Council to have quality insights of community and better understanding of challenges, goals, and ideal experience.<br><br>Data is securely stored | <b>Completed</b><br><br>Data is securely stored through the engagement platform   |
| Engagement activities that are coordinated and considered               | Reduced risks of engagement fatigue   | <b>Ongoing</b><br><br>A work program is being maintained to capture all engagement activities across the organisation, however, |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   |  | further work is needed to understand how to do this more efficiently (Due June 2024)   |
| Start to understand the best times and locations for engagement | Reach a broader representation of the community  | <b>Ongoing</b><br><br>Times and locations will be different for different groups and a diversity of ways to participate is important   |
| Commitment to evaluation on all engagement activities           | Community members feel heard and valued and understand what is being done with the feedback they have provided | <b>In progress</b><br><br>There is an opportunity for further sophistication in gathering research data to ensure communications are relevant for the audience and to better understand community perceptions and other key measures of performance. It would be advantageous to work with our Customer Service Team on this endeavour (Due December 2024) |

**Insights and evaluation**

Measure of community satisfaction:

- People feel as though their views have been heard and valued.
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.
- Level of trust between organisation and community
  - As per Community Satisfaction Survey
- People feel empowered to participate.
  - Data is unavailable at the time of writing this annual review.

**Our future priorities**

The following actions will be progressed and or completed in 2024/2025:

| JANUARY – JUNE 2024 |   |                                 |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------------|
|                     | Action  | Who                             |
| 1                   | Deliver a Final Community Engagement Toolkit                        | CET (Community Engagement Team) |
| 2                   | Create a Community Directory as part of the website refresh project | CET                             |

|                             |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 3                           | The current engagement platform will be migrated to a new platform as part of the website refresh and to improve the search function and navigation   | CET  |
| 4                           | Inclusion of translator interpreter information in public documents   | CET  |
| 5                           | The Website Refresh project will establish a Governance Model and responsibilities for the maintenance of the website. This project will also address the need for online forms and will consider a MyCity Search function on the home page of the site | CET  |
| 6                           | A work program is being maintained to capture all engagement activities across the organisation, however, further work is needed to understand how to do this more efficiently  | CET  |
| <b>JULY – DECEMBER 2024</b> |   |  |
| 7                           | Ensure that engagement with hard-to-reach audiences is increased through the activities and insights of the Volunteering Stewarding Group   | CET<br>CDO (Community Development Officer) |
| 8                           | Prepare an updated Media Policy (to include social media)   | CET  |
| 9                           | Support increased engagement with Traditional owners and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the adoption of the Reconciliation Action Plan  | CET<br>CP (Community Partnerships)         |
| 10                          | Start to forward plan for the creation of the Council Plan (in 2025) through preparing the community to meaningfully participate and, refining deliberative engagement processes meet the needs of the community  | CET<br>CDO                                 |
| 11                          | Add further sophistication in gathering research data to ensure all communications are relevant for the audience and provide insight into community perceptions   | CET<br>(CST) Customer Service Team         |
| 12                          | Continue to collaborate with relevant Council departments on strategies to improve current e-newsletters  | CET  |
| 13                          | Scope potential opportunities for funding to introduce iPad kiosks at our Customer Service Centre, Goldfields Family Centre, Library and Gallery  | CET  |
| 14                          | Continue to build skills through an internal skill sharing network  | CET  |
| 15                          | Organise deliberative engagement training for Councillors and the leadership team and IAP2 community engagement training for Councillors and staff  | CET  |
| 16                          | Undertake journey maps of all calls including complaints, ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in the Customer Service Charter and upskill customer service so they have capacity to assist with diverse customer enquiries             | CST  |
| <b>JANUARY – JUNE 2025</b>  |   |  |
| 17                          | Develop Dja Dja Wurrung and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communications and Engagement Guide   | CET<br>CP<br>CDO                           |

## NEXT STEPS

There are seventeen further process improvements to be completed (and or are ongoing) across 2024/2025.

These improvements will be better resourced through changes to the Community Engagement Team (CET) notably the appointment of a Community Engagement Officer.

The appointment of a Community Development Officer role will also support the team, by picking up major projects currently on their portfolio.

It is recommended that the next review for the Communications and Engagement Strategy is end of 2024, with a report to be published early in 2025.

It is also recommended that the Strategy is to be rewritten and significantly updated at the end of 2025 (if required).

## 9. Councillor Reports and General Business

### 10. Notices of Motion

The Governance Rules provides that Councillors May Propose Notices Of Motion, Chapter 2, Division 4:

Councillors may ensure that an issue is listed on an agenda by lodging a Notice of Motion.

#### 22. Notice Of Motion

22.1 A notice of motion must be in writing signed by a Councillor, and be lodged with or sent to the Chief Executive Officer at least one week before the Council meeting to allow sufficient time for him or her to include the notice of motion in agenda papers for a Council meeting and to give each Councillor at least 48 hours notice of such notice of motion.

22.2 The Chief Executive Officer may reject any notice of motion which:

22.2.1 is vague or unclear in intention 22.2.2 it is beyond Council's

power to pass;

or

22.2.3 if passed would result in Council otherwise acting invalidly but must:

22.2.4 give the Councillor who lodged it an opportunity to amend it prior to rejection, if it is practicable to do so; and

22.2.5 notify in writing the Councillor who lodged it of the rejection and reasons for the rejection.

22.3 The full text of any notice of motion accepted by the Chief Executive Officer must be included in the agenda.

22.4 The Chief Executive Officer must cause all notices of motion to be numbered, dated and entered in the notice of motion register in the order in which they were received.

22.5 Except by leave of Council, each notice of motion before any meeting must be considered in the order in which they were entered in the notice of motion register.

22.6 If a Councillor who has given a notice of motion is absent from the meeting or fails to move the motion when called upon by the Chair, any other Councillor may move the motion.

22.7 If a notice of motion is not moved at the Council meeting at which it is listed, it lapses

## 10. Notice of Motion

### 9.1 NOTICE OF MOTION, NO. 11 FROM CR CHRIS MEDDOWS TAYLOR

The following motion was received as a notice of motion in accordance with Central Goldfields Shire Council Governance Rules:

- 23 Councillors May Propose Notices of Motion
- 24: Notice of Motion.

#### MOTION

That

Council Note the published objectives by the producers and distributors of the recent three-part documentary *"Meet the Neighbours"* focused on Maryborough in Central Goldfields Shire included to *"shine a light on what is a divided, two speed and unequal Australia, and what some of the solutions to this disparity might be"* and that in turn may *"kickstart an important national conversation about the challenges facing parts of regional Australia;"*

2. Resolve to write to the Prime Minister in terms of the draft letter attached, seeking his support and leadership for this important national conversation to commence within National Cabinet, with a view to developing a strategy to redress key challenges facing regional Australian towns, and through more focussed and strategic investment and better infrastructure and services provision, create a fairer and more equal Australia;
3. Agree to copy of this letter being sent to the Premier of Victoria with a covering letter seeking her own support for this action within National Cabinet as well as copies being sent to Members of Parliament representing our Shire at Commonwealth and State levels; and
4. Request the CEO to incorporate this real opportunity for Maryborough and Central Goldfields Shire into Council's advocacy program, targeted and focused to specific Ministers, government bodies and funding agencies and actual grant streams.

#### Explanatory Comments:

1. This Notice of Motion deals entirely with the stated purposes which led to the investment and making of *"Meet the Neighbours."* It does not deal in any way with the viewing of the documentary or reactions to it.

The sole purpose of the Motion is to build on the opportunity the documentary and the national spotlight which it has created, to generate attention to the challenges of regional towns like Maryborough.

Through this an informed national conversation should commence with National Cabinet, enabling the development of meaningful solutions within a comprehensive strategic national framework.

2. The participation in "*Meet the Neighbours*" followed a Council study which showed that over two-thirds of employers within Central Goldfields Shire expressed difficulty in attracting and retaining staff.
3. Advice to Council from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute was that in order to provide a long-term sustainable solution to the challenges we face in our early years through *Go Goldfields*, Council needs to create added prosperity.  
That can only be achieved through added Government investment.
4. At its November 2023 Ordinary Meeting Council adopted its refreshed Priority Projects Plan.  
The implementation of that Plan and its critical objectives will be dependent on further Government investment.
5. Within that refreshed Priority Projects Plan under the heading "*Our Proven Track Record*" Council recognises that "*we are not just local government but are champions of change.*"
6. While Central Goldfields Shire is the second lowest ranked local government area for socio-economic disadvantage, our Community Vision for 2031 envisages that we are not just surviving but thriving.
7. A wide range of business and community leaders have engaged with Council in the work with "*Meet the Neighbours*" and are passionate and motivated to continue that work with Council, to ensure we achieve the important outcomes needed which will make a difference.
8. The national spotlight which the documentary has provided enables Council to champion change and advocate for that important national conversation to commence in order to create better opportunity for Maryborough and Central Goldfields Shire but hopefully also for many other Australian towns facing similar challenges.  
Targeted advocacy will follow over time.

## 10.1.1

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

To the Hon Anthony Albanese MP,

**RE: REDRESSING DISADVANTAGE AND LACK OF INVESTMENT  
IN REGIONAL AUSTRALIA - A NATIONAL CONVERSATION**

This letter to you follows a recent three-part documentary program "*Meet the Neighbours*" produced by Blackfella Films and televised nationally by SBS in November 2023, featuring Maryborough within Central Goldfields Shire Victoria.

As Screen Australia has stated the documentary unveils "the challenges faced by regional Australian towns."

This reflects the key intention of Blackfella Films to "shine a light on what is a divided, two speed and unequal Australia, and what some of the solutions to this disparity might be."

Council believes this is a matter of real and deep significance and has decided to write to you seeking your commitment to raise this issue within National Cabinet.

This would enable a national conversation to commence about the challenges facing regional Australia, in line with SBS commentary, enabling the development of a comprehensive strategy between the Commonwealth and state governments working in partnership with local governments to create a fairer and more equal Australia.

"*Meet the Neighbours*" followed a Council study which demonstrated that over two-thirds of employers within Central Goldfields Shire had difficulty or serious difficulty in attracting and retaining staff.

Key challenges include a lack of housing, under-investment in crucial services and infrastructure including public transport, telecommunications, and digital connectivity.

Despite some unique regional and local issues which are reflected in the SEIFA index of disadvantage, Council recognises that other towns like Maryborough are facing similar challenges across the nation.

Therefore, rather than simply seek solutions which may assist Maryborough and our Shire, it seemed opportune to share the focus our national program has achieved, with a view to commencing a national solution implemented over time which we would gladly and actively participate in.

The documentary follows eight households from diverse cultural backgrounds as they leave the city to live and work in Maryborough for three months.

This followed the pandemic and was a particularly challenging time to recruit staff given national border closures and major skill-shortages in major cities.

However even with the valuable expertise of the Australian Migrant Employment Service, (AMES) it was clear that visa and state regulatory requirements worked against employment offers in some cases.

There is an important opportunity to provide more targeted support to facilitate regional employment and settling of migrants, migrant communities and their families and enable speedier regulatory management at both the Commonwealth and State level.

The shortage of regional housing is critical issue, and unsurprisingly housing and accommodation was a major challenge in effecting the placement of migrants within the documentary and remains a key barrier to regional employment generally.

A range of housing investments are needed ranging from social and affordable housing to enabling infrastructure to provide key services to encourage private housing investment.

Council would strongly encourage your Government to ensure that sufficient funding is made available to regional Australian towns from the current Commonwealth housing initiative.

This would be an early and positive action within a broader regional redress strategy, which could commence now and have major impact on a key priority need.

Public transport investment is also an important area for regional towns as it can offer workers and residents connectivity and access to major regional and capital cities and the opportunities they offer, and in that way work against perceptions of isolation and distance.

Continuing improvements in telecommunications and mobile reception and digital connectivity are essential both in terms of lifestyle expectations but especially the needs of the New Economy workforce.

Better access to affordable childcare and medical and rural GP services are important needs in regional towns.

More broadly the opportunity to strategically target regional development investment to create a longer term more level playing field for regional Australian towns would be welcome and create an opportunity to partner in lasting improvement and sustainable change, based on the individual needs and opportunities regional towns possess.

Skills training for regional Australia continues to represent a major challenge and there is a need to accelerate investment in areas of identified skills shortages.

Local government is able, working in partnership with its community and business leaders, to drive needed change in regional towns like Maryborough, but needs long term focused investment and partnership with Commonwealth and State governments to enable this, including resourcing the processes to manage that change.

There is no immediate fix for the disparity which has arisen over generations, but the need is critical as "*Meet the Neighbours*" focused on Maryborough, Victoria has shown.

Council has undertaken a comprehensive evaluation of participation in the documentary and plans more targeted advocacy ahead.

Some key results from that evaluation with other local relevant data is shared in the attachment dealing with our specific priorities and needs.

We do feel that, in the first instance, we should share the efforts in which the residents and employers in Maryborough contributed to, in the documentary with you, state Premiers within National Cabinet, on behalf of regional Australia.

Our hope is that the needed national conversation can commence, and we can look forward to a future where the two speed Australia will be a topic for the history books.

Yours sincerely,

Mayor Liesbeth Long

cc

Premier of Victoria

Commonwealth and State MPs for Central Goldfields Shire

## **Attachment – Council Documentary Evaluation and Key Data – Maryborough and Central Goldfields Shire – Challenges and Government Funding Priorities and Partnerships**

The “*Meet the Neighbours*” evaluation report which was endorsed by Council made recommendations to progress the project based on the key learnings.

Recommendations that need Government funding support are:

**Facilitate a coordinated approach to recruiting migrant employees** - Government funding is sought to employ migrant liaison officers located in regional areas to support employers with visa requirements, interpreter services, cultural support, and related needs.

**Seek funding for an ongoing project liaison role to support local collaboration** - Government funding is also needed to employ a project liaison officer to support community co-ordination for short term housing, community mentor program and to build volunteer capacity to support migrants to join volunteer groups.

### **Advocate on housing and childcare needs with all levels of government**

- Central Goldfields Shire Council has a shortage of housing and is currently completing work to support housing development in Maryborough, Carisbrook, and Talbot.

We have completed a business case for Talbot confirming that it can accommodate up to 600 new homes if seweraged.

We are seeking funding through the **Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program** of up to \$30M to support this enabling infrastructure.

- We have recently adopted an Early Years Masterplan identifying the need for an integrated Early Years Centre - while there is a commitment from the State Government to build a low-cost centre in Maryborough, we have waiting lists for 100 children across the Shire right now.

This is impacting all our major employers who cannot fill shifts and ongoing positions due to lack of childcare.

Investment is required from both the Commonwealth and State Governments to provide infrastructure to support the growing demand for childcare for key workers.

### **Building skills and capacity locally -RUSH**

Our employers and community have also identified the need for more place-based education.

While an hour from Bendigo and Ballarat, which provide tertiary facilities, the public transportation to these regional cities from Central Goldfields Shire is poor.

We need place-based solutions, and have run a series of workshops with employers, schools, and community members to address the problem.

One identified solution is to establish a **Regional University Study Hub** in Maryborough, and we will be looking for Federal Government support to do so through the **RUSH** funding program, with an application to be prepared in 2024.

## Tackling disadvantage

### The Facts:

- Persistently high levels of disadvantage and poverty across Central Goldfields.
- One of the lowest SEIFA scores in Victoria.
- **33.3%** of Central Goldfields children are living in poverty.
- Children starting school with levels of vulnerability (in language, cognition, emotion, communication, and physical health) **twice as high** as Victorian average.
- Fragmented early years system that is hard to navigate, many programs and organisations providing services without an anchor or coordination.
- Children with intellectual disability, developmental delay or learning disability in Central Victoria **13%** compared with the Victorian average of **8.2%**
- Alcohol or drug related problem in the family in Central Goldfields **9.3%** compared to **3.6%** in the rest of Victoria.
- Child witness to violence in Central Goldfields **14%** compared to **3.5%** across the rest of Victoria.

## **11.Urgent Business**

The Governance Rules provide for urgent business as follows:<sup>1</sup>

If the agenda for a Council meeting makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of Council and only then if it:

1. 1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
2. 2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.

## **12.Confidential Business**

**NIL**

## **12.Meeting Closure**