

**LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL**

Notice of an Ordinary Meeting of the Loddon Shire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Serpentine on Tuesday 26 May 2015 at 3pm.

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**1. APOLOGIES**

Nil

**2. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**2.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**SUMMARY**

Seeking approval of the unconfirmed minutes of the previous Council Forum and Meetings.

Author: John McLinden - Chief Executive Officer

Council Plan ref: Core business 8: Compliance

File No: 02/01/001

Attachment: Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council confirm:*

1. *the minutes of the Council Briefing of 28 April 2015*
2. *the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 28 April 2015*
3. *The minutes of the Council Forum of 30 April 2015*
4. *The minutes of the Special Council Meeting of 12 May 2015*
5. *The minutes of the Council Forum of 12 May 2015*

**2.2 REVIEW OF ACTION SHEET**

**SUMMARY**

Approval of Action Sheet.

Author: John McLinden - Chief Executive Officer

Council Plan ref: Core business 8: Compliance

File No: 02/01/001

Attachment: 2.2 Action Sheet

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receive and note the Action Sheet.*

### **3. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

#### **3.1 MAYORAL REPORT**

##### **SUMMARY**

Approval of the Mayoral Report.

Author:	John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
Council Plan ref:	Core business 1: Leadership
File No:	02/01/001
Attachment:	Nil

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.*

#### **3.2 COUNCILLORS' REPORT**

##### **SUMMARY**

Approval of Councillors' Reports.

Author:	John McLinden, Chief Executive Officer
Council Plan ref:	Core business 1: Leadership
File No:	02/01/001
Attachment:	Nil

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receive and note the Councillors' Report.*

## 4. **DECISION REPORTS**

### 4.1 **PARKS AND GARDENS 2015-16 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM**

#### **SUMMARY**

Outlines the list of capital projects proposed for delivery under the Parks and Gardens 2015-16 capital works program.

Author	David Fry, Manager Infrastructure (Program Development)
Council Plan ref:	Strategic Platform 4: Make our towns liveable and memorable
File no:	14/04/013
Attachment:	Proposed Parks and Gardens Capital Program

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council adopts the proposed 2015/2016 Parks and Gardens Capital Works Program.*

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the second year Council has been asked to endorse a Parks and Gardens Capital Works Program.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The projects identified within this program are developed using information collected in the field by the Parks and Gardens Team, and from playground projects information gathered as part of the annual playground audit. Future projects in this area may also be identified by the community, either through the community planning process or representation to Council.

The Parks and Gardens capital works program was established to ensure that renewal, major maintenance and upgrade works could be proactively programed along the same lines as the Infrastructure Capital Works Program.

#### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The Parks and Gardens Program has a number of project categories:

- Irrigation
- Lighting
- Landscaping
- Playgrounds
- Combined
- Other

The projects in the attached program have been prioritised based on project assessments conducted by the Parks Team Leader and the Manager Infrastructure. New scoping documents are being developed for this project to assist with the prioritisation between categories.

A rolling program of projects similar to the infrastructure rolling program has been developed. This is the basis for the attached program.

There are five projects proposed for completion in the 2015 – 2016 financial year. The following is a brief description of each of the projects.

1. Sloans Park Irrigation: This is the park in Inglewood between the tennis courts and the pool. The project involves the extension of the existing irrigation to suit the new playground equipment as well as extend past the front of the pool and into Grant Street to irrigate the garden bed running alongside the pool fence. Also included in this project is the placement of a number of bollards to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the park.

2. Kelly Street Park Upgrade: This project involves the upgrade and enhancement of Kelly Street Park in Pyramid Hill. It will involve the upgrade and extension of the existing irrigation system to cover the whole park area and will also include the renovation and minor relocation of the existing garden beds. This will enhance the look of this park as well as reduce the man hours required to maintain it.
3. Federation Walk Lighting Upgrade: This project involves the replacement of the existing lighting along Federation Walk in Nolans Park Boort between the lake and tennis courts. There will also be some minor pavement and garden bed repairs. The existing lights are becoming unserviceable and energy efficient globes for this style of light cannot be sourced.
4. Memorial Park Upgrade: Memorial Park is in Victoria Street Pyramid Hill. The works will involve the upgrade of the memorial path from sand to concrete, the installation of automatic irrigation to the lawn area and garden beds. Most watering is currently carried out by hand. It will also involve the refurbishment and minor extension of the existing garden beds, and improvements to the current shrub and tree plantings.
5. McKay Street Senior Citizens Pyramid Hill: This project involves the remodelling and enhancement of the garden beds and landscaping around the building, upgrade and improve the pathways and improve the irrigation.

#### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

All the above projects once completed will free up valuable man-hours for the Parks team enabling them to continue to improve the visual aspect of all the towns within the Shire.

#### **RISK ANALYSIS**

All the above projects will improve the useability/accessibility while improving safety for the user.

#### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

There was internal consultation between the Parks Team and Infrastructure prior to the development of this program.

## 4.2 DRAFT DOMESTIC WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

### **SUMMARY**

Presents Council with the draft 2015-2019 Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP). The DWMP has been prepared to meet Council's obligations under the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters of Victoria).

Author	Teresa Arnup, Manager Environmental Health
Council Plan ref:	Strategic Platform 4: Make our towns liveable and memorable
File no:	12/10/001
Attachment:	Draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015-2019

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council exhibit the Draft Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015-2019 and seek public feedback.*

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council adopted its first Domestic Wastewater Management plan on 17 December 2007.

### **BACKGROUND**

Victorian Councils are required to prepare a Municipal Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) to address potential risks to public health and the environment that result from treatment and disposal of wastewater from homes and businesses in unsewered areas. The development of a DWMP is consistent with Government policy direction, including the State Environment Protection Policy (Waters of Victoria) that requires councils to develop such plans.

### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

During the development of this plan Council considered the requirements in order to comply with the revised Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Permit applications in open potable water supply catchments, which would allow increased intensity of development beyond the current 1 in 40 hectare guideline.

The impact of this guideline is however limited to 2% of the total geographic area of the Shire, much of which is comprised of existing developed blocks or crown land.

In consideration of this, Council have determined that the associated potential cost benefit for facilitating increased levels of development within this area, is not proportional to the expected cost in complying with the minimum guideline requirements (i.e. resource requirements for inspection and auditing of systems within the Declared Special Water Supply Catchment (DSWSC) area).

Implementation of this DWMP shall therefore be required to utilise existing resources maintained by Council.

The outcome of this plan provides for various actions across the following priority areas:

- *Communication* – this will include the development of a waste water communication program for existing and new residents.
- *Policy and procedures* – includes the development of policies and procedures for waste water management across the organisation
- *Reporting and reviewing* – which includes the development of a review program that includes reporting to Council.

The introduction and implementation of this DWMP will result in the development of policies and procedures to support council staff when undertaking work in the waste water management area.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

The adoption of this plan is expected to have no direct operational cost impact on Councils Environmental Health Department, as implementation will be reliant on the utilisation of existing resources.

There may however be future financial implications in respect of processing of planning applications which fail to comply with the ministerial guideline in respect to development intensity within the DSWSC area of the Shire. Such cost implications cannot however be quantified at this time, and predominantly relate to preparation and representation for applications which may go before VCAT.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

In deciding not to meet the requirements of the Ministerial Guidelines for Planning Permit applications in open potable water supply catchments, it is likely that no reduction of the current 1 in 40 hectare guideline will be permitted by the Water Authority.

As a result of this decision any planning application for the development of a dwelling on a single parcel of land that is less than 40 hectares within the DSWSC area will be refused by the Water Authority. Under the Loddon Shire Planning Scheme, water authorities (i.e. Coliban, Goulburn Murray Water and Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water) are a determining authority.

Therefore, should the relevant water authority object to any proposed development on the grounds of non-compliance with the Ministerial Guideline, Council will be required to refuse any planning application that is made for such a development within the DSWSC. It should be noted that the townships of Eddington and Laanecoorie are within the DSWSC area.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The action areas identified within the report have been developed as a result of Councils current septic audit program. This program has resulted in over 450 properties being visited by Council officers. The program identified that a key to the effective operation of waste water management systems is education of the community.

It is proposed to advertise this DWMP and seek community feedback prior to it being presented to Council for adoption.

### 4.3 MAY 2015 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

#### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with an overview of the Audit Committee meeting that was held on 7 May 2015.

Author	Jude Holt, Director Corporate Services
Council Plan ref:	Strategic enabler: Effective and efficient operating systems and procedures
File no:	06/02/003
Attachment:	Audit Committee Charter

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. receives and notes:
  - a. the February 2015 Audit Committee Meeting Report
  - b. results of the annual performance survey
  - c. internal audit plan and program analysis
2. endorses Mr Ken Belfrage as Chair of the Audit Committee to 30 April 2016
3. endorses the performance improvement recommendations documented in the Audit Report – Review of induction processes, performance reviews, and performance management processes
4. endorses the amended Audit Committee Charter
5. endorses the External Audit Strategy for the year ended 30 June 2015
6. endorses the Interim Management Letter for the year ended 30 June 2015.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No

If yes, the following details identify the conflict of interest.

Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is: Choose an item.	[Explain the specific circumstances of this person's conflict of interest.]

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council was provided with a summary of the February 2015 Audit Committee Meeting at the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 March 2015.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Audit Committee was created under Section 139 of the Local Government Act 1989, which states that "Council must establish an audit committee".



The committee is made up of four independent community members, and Cr Gavan Holt, as Council's representative. Council's Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services attend the meetings in an advisory capacity.

The primary objective of the Audit Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for:

- the enhancement of the credibility and objectivity of internal and external financial reporting
- effective management of financial and other risks and the protection of Council assets
- compliance with laws and regulations as well as use of best practice guidelines
- the effectiveness of the internal audit function
- the provision of an effective means of communication between the external auditor, internal audit, management and the Council
- facilitating the organisation's ethical development
- maintaining a reliable system of internal controls.

In order to provide a structured approach and ensure that the committee addresses each of its responsibilities, an annual calendar of actions and an internal audit review program are established each year, and these guide the activities of the committee.

## **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

### **Committee members and election of Chair**

At the commencement of the meeting the Chief Executive Officer advised the committee of the recruitment process for two members; one for the usual rotation and the other for a resignation. Mr Rod Poxon has been appointed for the term 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2018, and Mr Ken Belfrage has been appointed for the period 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2019.

He also advised the committee that the election of Chair was required. He called for nominations and received one nomination for Mr Ken Belfrage who accepted the nomination for position of Chair.

Council is being asked to endorse that recommendation in this report.

### **Internal Audit Contract**

The Chief Executive Officer also advised that HLB Mann Judd Pty. Ltd. has been appointed as the internal audit contractor for the period 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2019 after a public tender process.

### **Agenda**

The agenda for this May 2015 meeting was particularly full, with the key points at the meeting being:

#### **Review of induction processes, performance reviews, and performance management**

Council's internal auditor, Mark Holloway of HLB Mann Judd provided a summary of the latest internal audit review. He commented that this was a positive review with very few issues in the area.

Council has good policies and procedures in place; the improvements include:

- tightening controls around what is in place
- training staff in their responsibilities
- developing further procedures.

The report contains six actions; one is a medium risk and five are low risk.

#### **Review of Audit Committee Charter (Charter 5.4(b))**

The Audit Committee Charter is reviewed annually. The committee recommended changes to the following clauses:

- 5.1(c): change the committee name from Internal Audit Committee to Audit Committee
- 5.2(m): shift this clause to 5.1 General
- 5.3(3): change of wording from "At one meeting per year" to "At the committee's discretion"

- 5.5(ix): change of wording from “significant adjustments” to “explanations for significant adjustments”
- 5.5(xii): delete clause as the Performance Statement is no longer a valid statement of Council
- 5.5(xiv): remove the wording “national competition policy” from the clause as it is no longer valid for Council
- 5.7: change the wording from “The committee may obtain information from any employee and any relevant external party in a way that is consistent with the Council’s Corporate Governance Manual / agreed procedure” to “Should the committee wish to obtain information from any employee and any relevant external party it will do so by requesting such information from the Chief Executive Officer or Director Corporate Services”.

Other housekeeping changes will be:

- 6.1: Insert Ken Belfrage as the Chair
- 6.2 Insert Rod Poxon and Ken Belfrage as committee members and insert their term dates.
- 7 Update the dates of approval and endorsed to reflect 2015 dates.

Council is being asked to endorse the amended Charter in this report.

#### Results of annual performance survey (Charter 5.8)

The results of the annual performance survey were presented to the committee.

There are 28 questions, and with four committee members undertaking the survey, 112 responses.

Of the 112 responses, 63 (56%) were returned as meeting expectation, 42 (38%) returned as exceeding expectation, and 7 (6%) returned as unsure.

Explanatory notes were provided for the unsure responses. These were designed to provide the respondent with evidence that the committee is undertaking its responsibilities in the areas of concern.

#### Review the scope of internal audit plan and program Charter 5.5(i)

Normally at the May meeting the Audit Committee recommends an internal audit plan for the next year. As there is a new contract in place a new risk identification process will be undertaken with key staff that will inform a new four year program which is the life of the contract.

Instead, the committee was provided with an analysis of the risks that staff identified four years ago at the commencement of the previous contract, and how those risks had been addressed over the four years.

There were 50 risks identified, and over the period 35 of those risks have been treated in some way, most by an internal audit review. The remaining 15 will be considered in the next risk analysis to ascertain whether they are still valid risks and need some treatment in the future.

#### External Audit Strategy for the year ended 30 June 2015

Council’s newly appointed external auditor, Martin Thompson of Crowe Horwath, addressed the committee to provide an overview of the external audit strategy for 2014/2015, and the process that his firm will undertake for the external audit.

#### Interim Management Letter for the year ended 30 June 2015

Martin Thompson also provided the committee with the interim management letter which resulted from an interim audit undertaken in the lead up to the end of financial year.

This visit looked mainly at systems, processes, and internal controls, whereas the audit later in the year will focus on the preparation of the financial statements.

The interim management letter identified eight risk areas, and Martin Thompson provided the committee with a commentary on each, and management’s responses in relation to addressing each risk.

### Risk Management Policy

The Risk Management Policy was provided to the committee for review. Although it is not due for review, it has been amended due to the development of a Risk Management Framework which now incorporates some of the policy's former elements.

There has been no change to the risk matrix in the policy, and the policy is now a short statement of "what Council will do and why it will do it" in relation to risk management.

Council is being asked to endorse the amended policy in a separate report.

### Risk Management Framework (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

The Risk Management Framework has been developed due to a requirement of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework. The benefit of the framework is that it clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of every member of Council in identify and managing risk, and contains a reporting framework that ensures that all aspects of risk are ultimately reported to Council.

Council is being asked to endorse the framework in a separate report.

### Council's Strategic Risks (Local Government Performance Reporting Framework)

Under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework Council must have produce a six-monthly report of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies.

As the Audit Committee also has risk responsibilities, this report is provided to Audit Committee first, and then to Council.

An update of Council's strategic risks, which Council identified last year, was provided to the committee.

Council is being asked to receive and note the strategic risks in a separate report.

### Review of Outstanding Action List

The Outstanding Action List showed 43 actions at the commencement of the reporting period. There were 16 actions added from the Review of Contract Management Report, while 13 were completed during the reporting period, leaving 46 outstanding.

Of the 46 actions, three are high risk, 33 are medium risk, and 10 are low risk.

### Other agenda items

Other agenda items, some of which are standard items included:

- an overview of the 2015/2016 draft budget
- risk management report, which now incorporates more detail in line with the new risk management framework
- fraud report
- major lawsuits report
- monthly finance report.

### Next review

The next review will be a revisit to a previous review in relation to town planning which was undertaken in 2012. This review will focus on revisiting the recommendations to ensure that they have been implemented and are still effective and relevant.

It will be presented at the next meeting of the committee; the date is yet to be determined, but will be held in a timeframe that ensures the external auditor can provide the committee with draft financial statements and his end of year management letter.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

There are costs associated with the audit committee and internal audit function.

However, in most cases, actions resulting from audit reviews do not bear any new costs as they are undertaken by current staff.

The benefits that the internal audit function provides Council are:

- business improvement relating to the audit review areas
- standard policy and procedure documents which are developed through the action list
- improvement in knowledge management that will assist with succession planning over time
- a reduction in risk in areas relating to audit reviews.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

The internal audit program has been created and is annually updated on a risk basis, ensuring that Council's program addresses the areas of highest risk or greatest concern to audit committee members and Council officers.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Nil

#### 4.4 REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND ADOPTION OF RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

##### **SUMMARY**

This report seeks approval of the updated Risk Management Policy and newly developed Risk Management Framework.

Author	Jude Holt, Director Corporate Services
Council Plan ref:	Strategic enabler: Effective and efficient operating systems and procedures
File no:	08/07/006
Attachment:	Risk Management Policy Risk Management Framework

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the:

1. Risk Management Policy v4
2. Risk Management Framework v1.

##### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No

If yes, the following details identify the conflict of interest.

Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is: Choose an item.	[Explain the specific circumstances of this person's conflict of interest.]

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council's current Risk Management Policy was adopted on 25 February 2014.

##### **BACKGROUND**

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework which is now mandated for all councils includes an indicator on its Governance and Management Checklist of Risk Management Framework and asks whether Council has a "Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations".

Council has had a risk management policy for some time, and is proactive in risk management, however, has not had a document to support the approach taken to risk management.

The Risk Management Framework has been developed to overcome this.

##### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Risk Management Framework

The Risk Management Framework documents that Council will manage risk management in line with the International Risk Management Guidelines and Principles (ISO 31000) which outlines the principles and processes for achieving best practice in risk management.

It articulates how Council will identify and record risks, and the roles and responsibilities associated with risk management throughout the Council.

It also documents the reporting structure to ensure that the Council, as the authority with ultimate responsibility for risk at Council, is provided with information at all levels of the risk management process.

#### Risk Management Policy

As the Risk Management Framework has been developed, the Risk Management Policy has been amended to delete references to ISO 31000 which are now documented in the framework.

There has been no other change made to the policy, as it appears to be relevant and effective in stating Council's position in relation to risk management.

#### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

There are no direct costs associated with the adoption of the documents.

The benefit is the clearer documentation of every member of Council's responsibility in relation to the risk management function.

#### **RISK ANALYSIS**

The adoption of the documents restates Council's commitment to proactive risk management.

#### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The documents have been subject to Council's internal approval process outlined in Council's Strategic Document, Policy and Procedure Framework, which includes approval by Management Executive Group, Management and Leadership Group, Risk Management Committee, and Audit Committee.

#### 4.5 REVENUE AND DEBT COLLECTION POLICY

##### **SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council's approval of the Revenue and Debt Collection Policy.

Author	Duncan Campbell, Acting Manager Financial Services
Council Plan ref:	Core business 6: Financial stability
File no:	06/02/005
Attachment:	Revenue and Debt Collection Policy

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council approves the Revenue and Debt Collection Policy.*

##### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No
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Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is:	

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The draft policy was presented to the Council Forum on 12 May 2015.

##### **BACKGROUND**

Council has a number of policies and procedures in relation to financial and debt management. This policy gives authority and emphasis to staff to approach recalcitrant debtors, in the knowledge that their approach to those debtors has the weight of a specific Council policy as support.

##### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Generally debtors pay their accounts within a 30 to 60 day timeframe. However there is a number who do not pay the amount owing to Council within reasonable expectations. This is not acceptable, and to some degree affects cash flow.

##### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

The policy demonstrates that Council is serious about collecting debts in a reasonable but determined manner.

##### **RISK ANALYSIS**

There is a risk of alienating some members of the community who do not think that there is any urgency in paying debts to Council.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The policy has been developed by discussion with Director Corporate Services, Director Community Wellbeing, and other managerial staff in both departments. It has been taken through the internal approval process outlined in Council's Strategic Document, Policy and Procedure Framework.



#### 4.6 FINANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 APRIL 2015

##### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with financial information for the period ending 30 April 2015.

Author	Lorraine Jackson, Finance Officer
Council Plan ref:	Strategic enabler: Sound financial management protocols
File no:	08/06/001
Attachment:	Finance Report for Period Ending 30 April 2015

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *receives and notes the 'Finance Report for the period ending 30 April 2015*
2. *approves budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only*
3. *approves the supplementary valuations of rateable and non-rateable properties in respect of the 2014/15 financial year, as returned by the Shire Valuer, LG Valuations Pty Ltd, and endorses them being incorporated into the Register of Rateable and Non Rateable Properties and Rate Book for 2014/15.*

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council is provided with Finance Reports on a monthly basis.

##### **BACKGROUND**

The Finance Report for the period ended 30 April 2015 includes standard monthly information about budget variations, cash, investments, interest, debtors and creditors, and provides a comparison of year-to-date actual results to year-to-date budget (by dollars and percentage) and total revised budget (by percentage).

The information is in the format provided in the 2014/15 Budget, and includes operating results, capital expenditure and funding sources.

This Finance Report also includes supplementary valuations. Each year Council makes a number of additions, subtractions and alterations to the valuations contained in the annual rate book. These changes arise from various sources including:

- splitting of parcels into new rateable assessments
- development of vacant or unproductive land (urban and rural)
- consolidation of separate rateable assessments into one assessment
- re-assessment of property valuations arising from objections to the initial valuation
- additions and cancellations of licences (grazing and water frontages)
- change of use
- covenant on Title
- area amendment
- change of Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC)
- supplementary valuation correction.

##### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Nil

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

The benefit to Council and the community is that accurate and regular financial reporting is being disclosed along with an accurate representation of property valuations is reflected in Council's rating system and the distribution of rate notices for the year 2014/15.

Provision of financial reports on at least a quarterly basis is a requirement of the Local Government Act.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

The provision of regular and accurate finance reports to Council minimises the risk of Council not delivering projects within the approved budget. Council's risk exposure is also increased if the rating system does not reflect the valuation changes associated with supplementary valuations as Council will not be aware of the changes, which can alter the rate revenue in the current year and in future rating years.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

There has been considerable consultation internally with respective managers in understanding their budget responsibilities and keeping within budgetary constraints.

Consultation with ratepayers and authorities that act on behalf of ratepayers occurs when a change to a property is required or occurs by virtue of a sale.

External engagement with the community was undertaken during the submission period of the budget, and regular reporting provides a mechanism of monitoring the financial outcomes of Council against that expectation.

#### 4.7 PROPOSED LOCAL LAW NO. 4 - ENVIRONMENT

##### **SUMMARY**

Seeks Council approval to prepare and exhibit a new local law.

Author	Tyson Sutton, Manager Planning and Local Laws
Council Plan ref:	Core business 9: Regulation
File no:	04/01/001
Attachment:	Draft Local Law No. 4 - Environment

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

4. *Resolve to make a new local law being local law No. 4 – Environment.*
5. *Place draft local law No. 4 – Environment on exhibition for a period of 28 days in accordance with Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989*

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council initially discussed this matter at its forum on 12 May 2015.

##### **BACKGROUND**

Local Law No. 4 (Environment) has expired and a new Local Law is required. A new local law has been drafted and is based on the previous document, with amendments made to simplify enforcement and ensure it satisfactorily achieves its goals.

Section 119 of the Local Government Act 1989 provides the procedure for making a Local Law. The Act states that Council must give public notice of the proposed Local Law. The public notice must state that any person affected by the Local Law may make a submission in accordance with Section 223 of the Act. The public notice must include an end date for the receipt of any submissions.

##### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Proposed Local Law No. 4 – Environment seeks to achieve a number of objectives.

- 1) To provide a safe and healthy environment in which the residents of the municipal district may enjoy a quality of life that meets the general amenity expectations of the community.
- 2) To control activities or land use which may be hazardous, unsafe or detrimentally impact upon quality of life or the environment within the municipal district.
- 3) To control nuisances which may adversely impact upon health, safety or welfare of any person within the municipal district, or be detrimental to an individual's quality of life.
- 4) To facilitate regulation and enforcement action so as to protect the environment and general amenity within the municipal district.
- 5) To provide for the peace order and good government of the municipal district.
- 6) To provide for the administration of the Council's powers and functions under relevant legislation.

To achieve these objectives the proposed local law addresses 27 separate issues across 4 themes. The themes are safety, people and property, environment, animals and disposal of waste.

The proposed local law seeks to regulate the following:

- dangerous or hazardous properties
- untidy or unsightly properties
- chimneys
- fires in the open air

- recreation vehicles
- use of a motorised vehicle on any land
- advertising, bill posting and junk mail
- audible bird scaring devices
- camping
- circuses, carnivals and festivals
- camping on private property
- temporary dwellings
- keeping animals
- animal housing
- European wasps and bees
- location of poultry houses
- control of noisy animals and birds
- removing or interfering with recyclable material
- domestic waste
- trade waste and waste hoppers
- transportation of waste
- use of tip by residents and ratepayers
- use of tip by non-residents and ratepayers
- depositing of waste at municipal tip
- dumping of ice chests, trunks or similar containers
- scavenging at municipal tip
- drainage tapplings.

Local Law No. 4 – Environment is largely based on the previous local law with refinements to improve clarity and enable authorised officers to better respond to issues. The most significant changes proposed from the previous local law are the inclusion of provisions relating to fires in the open air and for the impounding of items. Penalties have also been adjusted to better reflect the nature of the offence.

The inclusion of regulation on burning in the open air is designed to control nuisance behaviour associated with smoke from campfires/bonfires in residential areas. The local law is not intended to restrict the common practice of residents burning small amounts of green or timber waste.

Complaints are currently dealt with in accordance with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. The complainant is required to co-operate with a lengthy investigation to obtain sufficient evidence against the accused, usually a neighbour. Complainants often withdraw from the legal process without cessation of the complaint. The inclusion of a clause that directly refers to nuisance smoke will empower authorised officers to act unilaterally and in a timely manner, to abate the nuisance.

The enforcement provisions of the proposed local law are designed to guide the compliance process. The previous local law established a process when items were impounded, however, did not provide power to seize or impound. Including sub-section 10.2.5 will provide a clear interpretation of powers to seize and impound in accordance with the objective of the local law.

#### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

The proposed local law will assist in the good governance of the municipal district. It will facilitate the regulation of activities and processes that may be detrimental to the amenity of the Shire.

#### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Failure to regulate the issues addressed by the proposed local law may result in detrimental impacts on the quality of life for residents of the Loddon Shire.

#### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The process of drafting the proposed local law included consultation with relevant internal stakeholders. This report seeks Council approval to provide notice of the preparation of a local law to the wider Community, and subsequently seek further feedback prior to finalisation and adoption.

**4.8 LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2015 - 2019**

**SUMMARY**

The report provides council with an economic development strategy in line with the strategic actions stated within the Council Plan

Author	Bryan McEwan, Director Economy and Community
Council Plan ref:	Core business 4: Economic development
File no:	211707
Attachment:	Loddon Shire Council Economic Development Strategy 2015 - 2019

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Approve the draft Economic Development Strategy*
2. *Authorise the release of the Strategy for public comment for a period of 2 weeks.*

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No
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If yes, the following details identify the conflict of interest.

Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is: Choose an item.	[Explain the specific circumstances of this person's conflict of interest.]

[Refer to the Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct for definitions of conflict of interest.]

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council has previously considered the content of the Loddon Economic Development Strategy at its May 2015 Forum.

**BACKGROUND**

The current Economic Development Strategy has been in existence since January 2008. The Strategy identified core objectives which still resonate today, including that of population; orderly and compatible development; creating the climate for investment and the provision of leadership in economic development.

The provision of a revised and updated strategy has taken into account the findings of previous work, but has also more closely examined the current and future influences on the Loddon economy into the foreseeable future.

The 2015 Strategy has provided for community input, but equally important has been its development in light of changes and key influences from a regional, national and international perspective.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The Loddon Shire Council Economic Development Strategy 2015 – 2019 provides direction for council in economic development over the next 5 years.

The Strategy recognises that we are a part of a more globalised, urbanised and mechanised economy and notes that while it is important to manage the negative consequences of these changes, it is also important to recognise and take advantage of the opportunities which these changes create.

Population is recognised as a key issue and also confirms the importance of agribusiness, tourism and lifestyle living to the Shire's future. The Shire's advantages over other Shires is also highlighted including proximity to Bendigo and Echuca, which provides our residents good access to regionally based services including health and education but also highlights the quality of our road network and access to passenger rail services.

Our favourable location coupled with affordable land will, with appropriate marketing and development, be attractive to both investors and to new residents.

The importance of our agribusiness and food production sector is particularly highlighted; however growth will require '*...investment in employment catalysts; better information flows; well-maintained infrastructure and investment in people*'.

The Strategy also recognises Loddon's place within the region and the importance of frameworks such as the Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth plan.

Leadership and clear strategic direction are also seen as a prerequisite for success.

A revised vision statement has been developed that reflects the objectives of council and of the Strategy:

*By 2019, Loddon's population will be steady and new jobs will exist in agribusiness, tourism and local services. We will be an important part of Greater Bendigo's economy with strong, daily links to our towns, with commuters moving in both directions.*

*Our lifestyle will have attracted new residents and a thriving tourism sector focusing on food and heritage experiences. Our towns will have started seeing the benefits of streetscape improvements that have encouraged new investment. We will recognise our three distinct regions and no one will be more than 45 minutes from the services and facilities they seek. Amongst tourists, we will be known as one of regional Victoria's NBN and Wi-Fi hotspots and, more generally, for excellence in food production.*

The strategy is structured in recognition of two critical factors:

- There are real global food market opportunities for Loddon and a central focus will be leveraging this into value-adding activities.
- Local action is more effective when it complements a national or regional perspective and the future of Loddon is tied to how successfully it can build on its links with its neighbours in the Loddon Mallee South region.

Four key objectives are identified within the Strategy:

1. Identify and initiate the catalysts for growth and diversification.
2. Build the conditions for growth of the economy through effective marketing and information flows between Council, business, government and the community.
3. Ensure there is good, well-located infrastructure to attract investment.
4. Attract and retain both workers and residents.

To support these key objectives, a number of actions have been developed and are consistent with the Council Plan 2013-2017, which outlines the broader strategic directions for the Shire and to support growth and diversification of the economy based on areas of competitive advantage.

These actions are detailed within the Strategy.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

The Strategy provides clear direction and enables Council to actively demonstrate leadership in economic development within the Shire over the next 5 years. The Strategy will involve the allocation of \$75,000 annually to fund projects identified within strategy actions.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

The Strategy notes the consequences of council not being active in economic development including potential further decline in population and the effect on the viability of communities and the provision of services. A number of Strategic Actions within the current Council Plan note the need for the development of a new economic development strategy.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Strategy has been developed based on business and community feedback, as well as comments from councillors and council officers. State and local governments from adjacent Shires, Non – Government Organisations have also contributed to the development of the Strategy.

**4.9 WEDDERBURN STREETScape PROJECT – COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND COUNCIL AUTHORISATION TO COMMENCEMENT OF WORKS**

**SUMMARY**

This report describes the public consultation process and contains recommendations to the community responses. It also outlines the current funding situation and the total cost of the works for Stages 2 & 3.

Author	Bryan McEwan, Director Economy and Community
Council Plan ref:	Strategic Platform 4: Make our towns liveable and memorable
File no:	211711
Attachment:	Public Consultation Summary; Wedderburn Streetscape – Project costs and income

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Confirms responses to community submissions in accordance with the recommendations contained in this report*
2. *Authorises commencement of project works including undergrounding of overhead power assets between Godfrey and Reef Streets and construction of streetscape works including improved drainage between the southern end of the Shire Office and the northern end of the retail precinct near Soldiers' Park*
3. *Approves the allocation of \$584,400 from Council's Major Projects Reserve to the project*

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No

If yes, the following details identify the conflict of interest.

Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is: Choose an item.	[Explain the specific circumstances of this person's conflict of interest.]

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Initial discussions were held on this subject at the Council Forum on the 12 May 2015. Discussion focused on the public consultation process, submissions received and project funding.

**BACKGROUND**

The project has been an initiative of the Wedderburn Development Association, Community Plan Committee and residents in partnership with the Loddon Shire Council. Initial public consultation was held on the early concept plans prepared by Hansen Landscaping in 2011 and feedback from this consultation was incorporated into these plans for adoption.



The plans were again modified during 2014 to further enhance the amenity of High Street and during this time, a contract was awarded to Tomkinson Group for the civil engineering design of the streetscape including improved drainage, kerb and channel, footpaths, paving and garden beds.

At that time a streetscape design was prepared for the section of High Street from the Korong Creek through to Reef Street. The consultants then prepared costs estimates for this scope of works which totalled \$1.94M. In addition to the engineering design, undergrounding of the overhead power lines was proposed and Powercor provided tender prices for this work for the above length of streetscape and this cost totalled \$1M.

The total estimated cost of streetscape works for the initial scope was \$3M including Project Management and contingencies.

With available funding for the project at \$1.7M, the scope has been further revised to reduce cost in an effort to address the shortfall in funding. The extent of works was reduced to the central area of the streetscape between the Shire Office and the northern end of the retail precinct between Chapel and Reef Streets, concentrating on the main activity area of High Street.

The revised project scope comprises three main components:

1. Undergrounding of overhead power assets between Godfrey and Reef Streets
2. Construction of civil engineering works including drainage improvements between south of Shire Office and north end of retail precinct between Chapel and Reef Streets
3. Landscaping within the civil construction scope

### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Given the revised scope, a second round of public consultation early in 2015 attracted fourteen responses which mainly centred on the removal of the low level fence at Soldiers' Park, the number and placement of trees and the loss of car parking spaces.

The current design allows for 25 new trees in car parking spaces as well as 20 at Soldiers Park. Refer to the attachment "Public Consultation Summary".

Five responses related to the removal of the fence at Soldiers Park and six considered that there were too many trees in the current design and that some of these should be removed from the scope.

Three responses suggest that the car parking spaces be maintained and not lost to tree planting and that the angle of the parks be reduced from 45 degrees to 30 degrees.

Three responses discussed the species of trees proposed for the streetscape and suggested alternative species.

One response expressed concern at the removal of the two car parks immediately north of the school crossing.

Additional individual responses received are summarised below:

Additional car parking

Streetscape will deter people from stopping and shopping

Provision of irrigation in gardens and lawns

Consider the inclusion of root barriers for pavement protection

Provide more lawns than garden beds

Pavers could become tripping hazards especially with the elderly

Proposed trees attract pests and drop seeds – consider other species

Street furniture inconsistent with heritage values in the main street

Allow for bus passenger access at the gallery

A request for inclusion in the development of town entrances (not in the current scope of works)

Alternate street tree species

Consider provision of a signalised pedestrian crossing

Council commissioned a streetscape design comprising landscaping and civil engineering design and therefore should consider retaining the intent of these designs, subject to any significant public opposition and suggested amendment. This rationale supports the retention of most of the intent of the proposed streetscape design with some minor exceptions as contained in the "Public Consultation Summary" attachment.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

Project cost estimates are detailed in the 'Project Cost Components and Income' attachment. Taking into consideration the overall cost of the revised project; a shortfall of \$584,000 remains.

The options for funding this shortfall are as follows:

- |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Australian Government  | Unlikely in the short term                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2: RDV Regional Jobs Plan | Unclear                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3: Roads to Recovery      | Much of the civil works in this project would be eligible for funding under the R2R program. This is not new money but would be at the expense of Council's current works program |
| 4: Council Funds          | Council's Major Projects Reserve                                                                                                                                                  |

It is recommended that the \$584,400 shortfall be funded from Council's Major Projects Reserve.

While VicRoads have been consulted during project planning, it should be noted that VicRoads has not made a formal response to the final draft at this time. This may involve some alteration to the project scope at a later stage; however, any change is not expected to have a significant impact on design or cost.

Should Council approve this funding, it is anticipated that the project will commence in August 2015 and be delivered by around mid-2016.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

The major risk of not proceeding with this project is community and government concern regarding Council's intention to implement a project which has been in the making for a number of years. It would be likely to jeopardize government funding on future applications by Council and be seen by the community as a long proposed project being shelved.

The risk of proceeding with the project as proposed is that there may be community concern/disquiet around the most common themes of removal of the Soldiers' Memorial Park fence as well as the provision of too many trees and loss of car parking. Responses to these issues are contained in the recommendations.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The results and recommendations from public consultation are as stated above and the engagement of Council in authorisation of these recommendations has also been discussed.

The project has also been discussed with relevant council officers and authorities (including VicRoads) who have also provided their input.

#### 4.10 REQUEST TO SUPPORT A MINISTERIAL PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT

##### **SUMMARY**

Goulburn Murray Water has requested that Council support the preparation of a Ministerial Amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme. The proposed amendment will incorporate a new document into the planning scheme that will negate the need for landowners or the authority to obtain individual planning permits for proposed on farm works as part of the Connections Program.

Author	Tyson Sutton, Manager Planning and Local Laws
Council Plan ref:	Core business 9: Regulation
File no:	13/01/003
Attachment:	Request for support letter, Draft GMWCP incorporated document

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council support the preparation of a Ministerial Amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme to incorporate the Goulburn Murray Water Connections Project – Incorporated Document.*

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) presented this proposal to Council at a forum on 12 May 2015.

##### **BACKGROUND**

In April 2015 GMW wrote to the Loddon Shire Council requesting support for a Ministerial Amendment to the Loddon Planning Scheme.

The Goulburn Murray Water Connections and Modernisation Project (GMWCMP) is in its seventh year of implementation, having commenced in 2007 as the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP).

The Project is being developed in two phases:

- Phase 1 - Automation and upgrade of the backbone channel system
- Phase 2 – Connections including on farm, and river connections

The GMWCMP extends across seven municipalities (Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Loddon, Campaspe, Moira, Greater Shepparton and Greater Bendigo) covering a geographic area of approximately 27,000 square kilometres between Yarrawonga in the east to Nyah in the west.

Backbone works associated with Phase 1 of the project have been facilitated by a number of Ministerial planning scheme amendments, including the insertion of an Incorporated Document into each of the seven councils planning schemes. Phase 2 of the project involves the implementation of the associated Connections Program, most of which involves works on private land.

The current Incorporated Document (2012) specifically notes that there are further works to be undertaken by private landowners, or contractors on their behalf, as part of the Project. These works are not encompassed by the current Incorporated Document, as it was originally envisaged that the bulk of the on farm works associated with the connections program would be delivered by individual landowners.

An analysis of the zones, overlays and other provisions of the seven planning schemes across which phase 2 of the program spans, indicates that there is likely to be thousands of planning triggers across the project area. Any project triggering a planning permit would require application and assessment through each individual councils planning system.

This requirement has the potential to place a significant burden on local municipalities, in the receipt, assessment and issuing of planning permits associated with each individual connections project. It is these works (included in Phase 2) that the proposed amendment seeks to manage through the implementation of a new Incorporated Document.

## **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

GMW has approached all municipalities affected by the project, requesting support for a Ministerial Amendment to each of the planning schemes. In respect to the Loddon Shire, GMW's proposal is to incorporate a document under Clause 52.03 (Specific Sites and Exclusions) of the Loddon Planning Scheme; similar to what occurred for the Solar Systems facility at Bridgewater and previously for NVIRP.

The inclusion of an incorporated document would exclude the project from the need to obtain multiple planning approvals for the proposed works. This would allow for a high level of co-ordination of the works across municipal boundaries and flexibility in timing for project delivery.

A draft incorporated document (Goulburn-Murray Water Connections Project – Incorporated Document) has been provided and is attached for information. This document is considered to be of a suitable form for incorporation into the Loddon Planning Scheme.

A Ministerial Amendment will minimise the commitment of Council resources to the amendment process and is considered the best way to progress the proposal.

The inclusion of an incorporated document under Clause 52.03 of the Planning Scheme provides a number of benefits to the Shire for a project of this scale. An incorporated document will allow works to proceed without tying up Council resources through the need to assess multiple planning permit applications, provides a surety of outcomes and provides a single reference point for the approval of the project.

## **COSTS/BENEFITS**

It is not envisaged that there will be any additional operational costs to Council as a result of supporting the proposed Ministerial Amendment. Preparation of the amendment is being undertaken by GMW and therefore Councils involvement in the establishment of the incorporated document should be minimal.

Support for the incorporated document offers a number of benefits to Council as detailed above, least of which includes the avoidance of an increased demand on planning resources within the Shire, in relation to the requirement to receive and assess numerous permit applications for on farm works.

## **RISK ANALYSIS**

By supporting the incorporated document, responsibility for ensuring that works performed as part of the connections program comply with the policies and objectives of the planning scheme shall rest GMW as the responsible authority for the project.

Whilst it is envisaged that consultation shall still occur with Councils planning and infrastructure department in respect to proposed works, the ability to assess each planning application, and where required impose specific project conditions, will be reduced.

Given the tight environmental and project governance controls proposed by GMW; and required by the Minister to support the proposed amendment; the level of risk posed by the reduced influence over project planning is considered minimal.

By implementing the incorporated document, the ability for individuals (e.g. neighbours or special interest groups) to object to any proposed works being undertaken through the connections program shall be reduced. It is considered however that adequate protection shall remain in place through the Ministerial requirement that the incorporated document address with such matters as local floodplain management, vegetation removal and heritage related assets.

## **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Loddon Shire currently has a representative on GWM's Agency Liaison Group (ALG). This group meets regularly to discuss various operational and planning matters associated with the Connections Program. The ALG broadly support the proposed planning scheme amendments.

**4.11 APPROVAL OF PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION 5057**

**SUMMARY**

Recommends approval of planning permit application 5057, seeking the use for and works related to, a pet cemetery and the use of the land for leisure and recreation (occasional garden tours and workshops).

Author	Amy Lanfranchi – Planning Officer
Council Plan ref:	Strategic Platform 5: Grow and diversify our economy
File no:	13/02/004
Attachment:	Application documents, objection and proposed permit conditions

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council approve planning permit application 5057 subject to conditions.*

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council has not previously discussed this application.

**BACKGROUND**

The subject site is 2310 Wedderburn-Dunolly Road in Rheola. The site is the former Rheola schoolhouse.

The site is located on Wedderburn-Dunolly Road, approximately 1.5km from Rheola. It has a number of structures on it, including a dwelling, and numerous established trees. There is an empty dam/depression in the south-east corner of the site.

The broader area is typically utilised for agricultural pursuits, with some dwellings in relatively close proximity.

The owners of the land wish to undertake a range of uses on the site. They wish to produce a permaculture landscape (“food forest”), a non-commercial nursery, occasional tours and workshops of these niche agricultural aspects, and a pet cemetery.

Of the proposed uses, planning permission is required for the use and development of a pet cemetery, and the use of the land for tours and workshops.

A planning permit is required under the following provisions of the Loddon Shire Planning Scheme:

- Clause 35.07-1 For the use of a pet cemetery
- Clause 35.07-1 for the use of recreation and leisure (tours and workshops)
- Clause 35.07-4 Works related to the use of a pet cemetery



**Figure 1: Subject site**

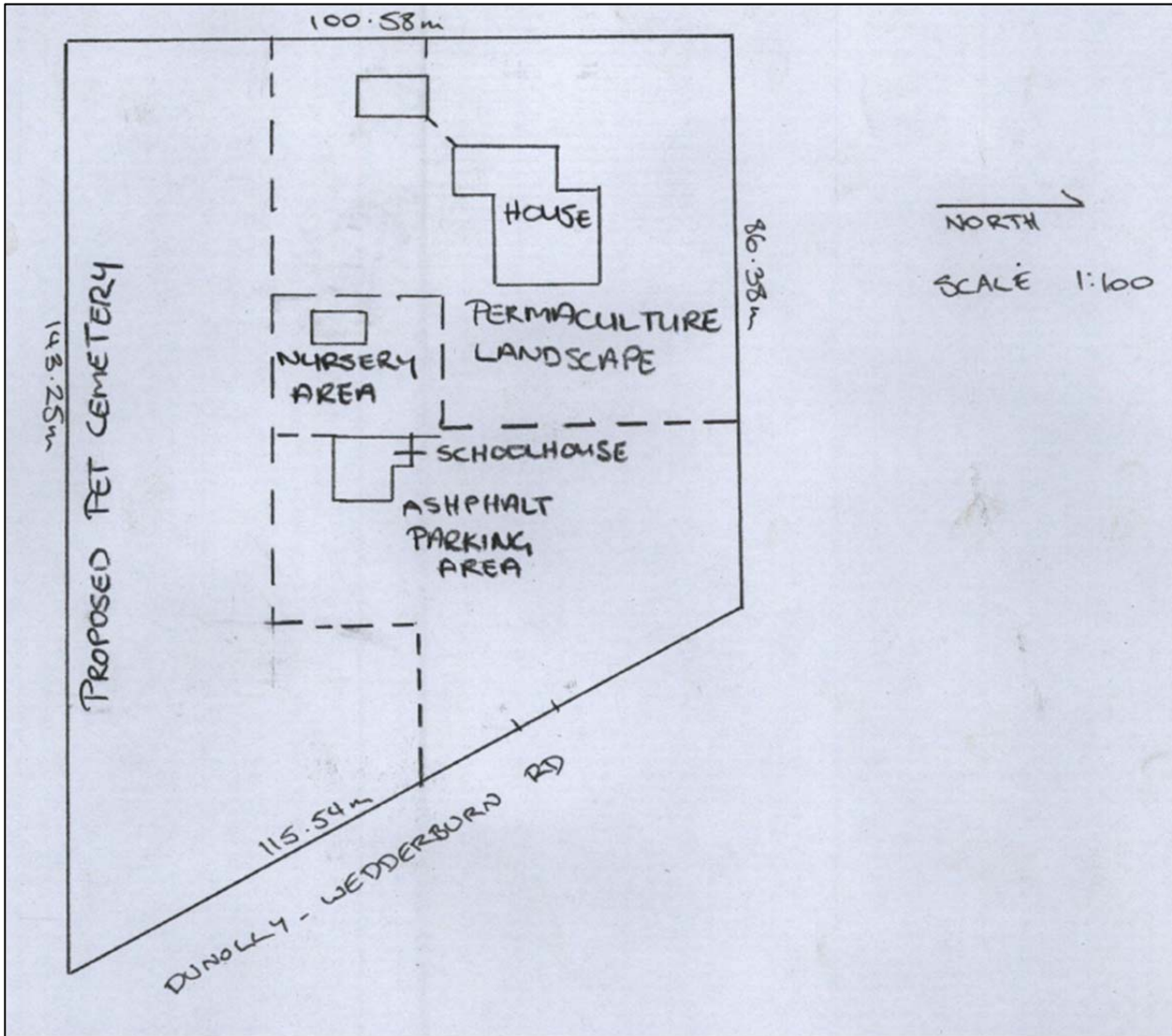


Figure 2: Proposed site plan

The applicant seeks to use a portion of the site for the burial of animals; the use for and works related to a pet cemetery. The applicants provided the following detail to describe the proposal:

- The type of animals will typically be small animals such as dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, reptiles; however they would consider the burial of other animals such as sheep, goats and horses in some cases.
- The site will support 1000 burial plots over a five year period.
- The animals will be transferred from clients or vets in industrial style sealed cooler containers, and buried promptly on site, with no on-site storage.
- Animals are to be buried at a depth of 0.9m-1.2m depending on size of the animal.
- Services/funerals will not be held on site.
- Clients can visit burial plots on select weekends of the year; anticipated to be five weekends that the site is open.
- The animals will be buried in bio-degradable calico shrouds.
- The proposal is funded in part by the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme.

There is minimal detail provided regarding the intention to offer tours and workshops to clients, apart from that it is to be an occasional use, to enable people to view the permaculture landscape and gain insight into organic gardening.

## **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The proposal requires planning approval in accordance with the provisions of the Farming Zone.

The responsible authority must decide whether the proposal will produce acceptable outcomes in terms of the State Planning Policy Framework, the Local Planning Policy Framework, the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone and any of the other relevant decision guidelines in the Loddon Planning Scheme.

The Loddon Shire Planning Scheme is absolutely silent (meaning no guidance/consideration is given) on the use of pet cemeteries, however the below assessment is considered a relevant review of the legislation.

### State Planning Policy Framework

The State Planning Policy Framework exists in planning schemes to inform responsible authorities of those aspects of State planning policy which they are to take into account and give effect to in administering the Scheme. The State Planning Policy Framework provides a context for spatial planning and decision making for responsible authorities.

- Clause 17.03-1 Facilitating tourism

The objective is to encourage tourism development to maximise the employment and long-term economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the State as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination.

The proposal offers a niche interest market in the tours and workshops surrounding organic food production and permaculture.

Clients travelling to the subject site for both grave visitation and for leisure purposes would generate economic activity for the local and surrounding communities.

### Local Planning Policy Framework including the Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is a concise statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and the strategies and actions for achieving the objectives. It furthers the objectives of planning in Victoria to the extent that the State Planning Policy Framework is applicable to the municipality and local issues. It provides the strategic basis for the application of the zones, overlays and particular provisions in the planning scheme and decision making by the responsible authority. The following clauses are considered relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Clause 22.05 Development in rural areas

This clause applies to the Farming Zone and provides a range of objectives, largely surrounding the protection of agricultural uses and ensuring new use and development does not compromise significant landscape.

It is considered that the proposal does not contradict this policy as it proposes the reuse of land which is historically fragmented from agricultural use. There were no objections received that identified concerns that this use would impact farming practice. The proposal was referred to the Loddon Shire Infrastructure Department, for guidance on access and parking.

Environmental and landscape considerations are important in this proposal due to the potential risk of pests and impacts on water/soil that comes with the decomposition of animal carcasses. The application was referred to the Loddon Shire Environmental Health Department, the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning and the Environmental Protection Authority. There were minimal concerns from these authorities, with the EPA giving some recommended conditions, which are considered largely appropriate.

It is considered that with appropriate conditions, environmental and amenity impacts such as, odour and dust discharge, pest infestation and visual impact can be minimised to an acceptable level. The proposed conditions do include a requirement to bury carcasses at an appropriate depth, to protect the water table, and that only small domestic animals may be buried on site.

If the application is approved an amended site plan will be requested, to ensure animals are not buried in the dam to the south-east corner of the site.

### Farming Zone

The subject land is contained within the Farming Zone of the Loddon Planning Scheme. Planning approval is required for the proposed use under the provisions of the zone. The purpose of the zone is as follows:

- *To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies.*
- *To provide for the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.*
- *To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.*
- *To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.*
- *To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*

This land has already been irrevocably removed from agriculture, due to its historic use as a school house and a dwelling, the number of structures on the site and the small size of the allotment.

Whilst the application for a pet cemetery does not support the primary intention of the zone, being agriculture, it does not contradict the purpose of the zone or decision guidelines. The lack of significant impact on surrounding farming pursuits, the fragmented nature of the area, the proximity of land to townships and access to a good road network will ensure that the proposal does not adversely affect agricultural activities in the surrounding area.

The use of the land for tours and workshops related to small scale agricultural pursuits (being permaculture) raises the public awareness of niche farming practice, which supports the idea of obtaining local and organic produce.

Visitation to the site for both tours/workshops and grave visits will be limited by way of permit condition, as a reflection on the detail provided in the application.

### Submissions

An objection was received by an owner of an opposite property. Concerns raised, and how they have been addressed, are as follows:

- The deceased pets will not be adequately covered. Wild foxes will dig up the animal and carry decaying bodies onto adjoining properties. Advises that burial under cement is an appropriate outcome to prevent this.

Pest prevention is highly relevant to this proposal, due to the nature of the use. Both written and verbal instruction from EPA suggested that provided the animals are buried at an appropriate depth (no suggestion as to what this level is was given) that there should not be an increase in pest infestation. It is considered that a condition regarding burial depth, and a separate condition dictating that pest prevention measures must be taken, satisfies this concern.

- Will adequate car parking be provided?

It is considered that the designated car parking area will be sufficient, given the intermittent use of the land by the public.

- Public toilets including a disabled toilet will need to be provided.

Discussion with the Municipal Building Surveyor, David Turner, indicated that no public toilets are required to be provided on site. It would be considered onerous to request public toilets be provided given the intermittent access to the site by members of the public.



- That there is risk surrounding the visibility of vehicles exiting the site, and queries if speed restrictions will be put in place.

Review by the council Design Engineer, Graeme Smith, did not raise particular concerns, and has provided conditions to ensure the appropriate construction of the property access. A condition to ensure all vehicles exit the site in a forward motion is proposed.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

There is potential economic benefit to the Shire, by way of tourism and associated local spending. However no study has been undertaken to unequivocally state such benefit.

There is no anticipated cost related to this proposal.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

There is a risk that the use of a pet cemetery could inadvertently cause an increase in pest activity within the localised area. Permit conditions have been proposed to prevent, to such reasonable extent as possible, such a scenario. The applicant must ensure such conditions are met or risk enforcement action from the responsible authority.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Notice was given, by way of letter, to surrounding neighbours.

Some enquiries were made to understand the scope of the application better, and one objection was received.

#### 4.12 RECREATION STRATEGY 2015-2020

##### **SUMMARY**

Presents Council with the draft 2015-2020 Recreation Strategy. The Recreation Strategy has been prepared to guide Council in its decision making processes in respect to the provision of sport and recreation facilities and services throughout the Shire.

Author	Allan Stobaus, Manager Community and Recreation
Council Plan ref:	Strategic Platform 4: Make our towns liveable and memorable
File no:	16/02/002
Attachment:	Recreation Strategy 2015-2020

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council exhibit the draft Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 and seek public comment.*

##### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The current Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy was adopted by Council in 2007.

Council was presented with a summary of the replacement draft strategy for 2015-2020 at its forum held on 12 May 2015.

##### **BACKGROUND**

The draft Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 has been prepared following a review of; and is intended to replace; the current Recreation Strategy 2007-2017. The new strategy has been prepared to assist Council in making informed and strategic decisions, in respect of its ongoing investment in sport and recreation services and facilities across the Shire.

The aim of the Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 is to develop a framework to guide Council and its partners to ensure that their investment in sport and recreation facilities, services and programs will achieve the most effective outcomes possible for the community.

At its very core is the desire to increase the number of people participating in sport and physical activities, improve general health and wellbeing of the community, ensure existing facilities meet the needs of the community, maximise facility usage and support the sustainability of local clubs and organisations

##### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Over the last 7 years extensive upgrade and improvement works have occurred at many of the sporting facilities provided throughout the Shire. Such upgrades have greatly improved the quality and efficiency of physical sport and recreation infrastructure across the municipality.

Given that the majority of facility upgrades, as identified within the current Recreation Strategy, have now been completed, it was considered prudent to review the strategy with the aim of ensuring that Councils efforts in this area are focused towards the most relevant and pressing needs of the local community.

The review of the recreation strategy commenced in January 2014 following the appointment of a consultant, Community Vibe, to undertake the review of all relevant documentation as well as coordinate a program of community engagement and consultation so as to inform the review and ensure local community priorities were adequately considered.

A project steering committee was also established, comprising of key stakeholder representatives from the local community and sporting organisations.

Through an extensive consultation process the needs and demands of the general community have been identified and an assessment of gaps and opportunities has been undertaken. An assessment of the latest trends within the sport, recreation and physical activity environment has also occurred.

Specific community needs have subsequently been incorporated into an action plan that contains a series of costed and prioritised recommendations.

The draft Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 contains 17 recommendations that have been developed to address the following 8 key priority areas:

1. Support for sport and recreation clubs and organisations
2. Promoting participation in physical activities
3. Facility development
4. Climate proofing sports facilities
5. Economic development
6. Strategy development and implementation
7. Promotion
8. Communication

The draft strategy, inclusive of the proposed 17 action recommendations, is now being presented to Council for initial endorsement before being exhibited for public comment.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

Based upon preliminary costing detailed within the draft strategy, implementation of the recommended actions will require an ongoing financial commitment from Council.

Year 1 of the strategy requires a budget allocation of \$56,000. It is proposed that this funding would continue through the life of the strategy however be subject to indexation in accordance with the applicable CPI rate.

It is therefore estimated that adoption of this plan will require a 5 year financial commitment as identified in table 1.

**Table 1: Required 5 year financial commitment to implement strategy**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
<b>Annual Budget Required</b>	\$56,000	\$58,800	\$61,740	\$ 64,827	\$ 68,068	<b>\$309,435</b>

\*Assumes application of a 5% CPI indexation rate

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

Risks associated with not implementing the recommendations contained within the draft strategy have been identified as follows:

- continued low levels of physical inactivity potentially leading to various diseases, cancers, depression, poor self-esteem and obesity
- decreased life expectancy
- higher health care costs
- poor sense of community
- limited social opportunities and opportunities to develop friendships
- increased anti-social behaviour and vandalism
- greater financial costs as people have to travel to other areas for sport and recreation
- less employment opportunities locally through clubs, events.
- less attractive communities for investment and relocations.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The action areas identified within the strategy have been developed as a result of a thorough consultation process. Consultation mechanisms or points of reference utilised during the development of the new recreation strategy included:

- a review of other relevant internal and external reports, plans and strategies
- assessment of local, regional and national sport and recreation trends and issues
- undertaking of a demographic analysis
- interviewing of key stakeholders
- sporting and recreation club surveys
- two workshops for clubs and State Sporting Associations (SSA's)
- community surveys (156 surveys)
- conducted 5 community listening posts

Further opportunity for community feedback is being provided via public exhibition of the draft strategy document.

**5. INFORMATION REPORTS**

**5.1 INWARDS CORRESPONDENCE**

**SUMMARY**

Relevant correspondence received by Council since previous meeting.

Author: John McLinden - Chief Executive Officer

Council Plan ref: Strategic enabler: Transparent communication

File No: various

Attachment: Copies of inwards correspondence

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receives and notes the Inwards Correspondence.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Subject</b>
27/4/15	The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP	Forwarding a letter from Victorian Minister for the Environment Climate Change and Water, Lisa Neville Regarding dry climatic conditions in the Wedderburn area.

**5.2 ROAD NETWORK DEFECT RECTIFICATION COMPLIANCE SUMMARY REPORT**

**SUMMARY**

Provides a summary of Loddon Shire’s compliance against its Road Management Plan for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015, being the third quarter of the 2014 - 2015 financial year.

Author	Steven Phillips, Manager Works
Council Plan ref:	Core business 5: Providing quality infrastructure
File no:	14/01/022
Attachment:	Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receive and note the road network defect rectification compliance summary report.*

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

This is the third report for the 2014 - 2015 financial year presented to Council, summarising road network defect rectification compliance against requirements specified within the Loddon Shire Road Management Plan.

**BACKGROUND**

This report is produced quarterly and provides Council with evidence of the Loddon Shire’s performance against requirements specified within the Loddon Shire Road Management Plan.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The following Defect Compliance Summary Report outlines Council’s compliance against requirements specified within the Road Management Plan to the end of the most recent quarter. The report indicates compliance by percentage for each of Council’s road patrol areas.

**Date Imposed Works Action - Compliance Summary Report**

Date Range: 01/01/2015 to 31/03/2015

<b>Number of Works Actions</b>	<b>Number Completed By Due Date</b>	<b>Number Completed After Due Date</b>	<b>Number Not Completed</b>	<b>Compliance %</b>	<b>District</b>
29	29	0	0	100.0%	Boort
105	105	0	0	100.0%	Newbridge
127	126	1	0	99.2%	Pyramid Hill
103	103	0	0	100.0%	Wedderburn

**DEFINITIONS**

Number of Works Actions - Within the date range, count the defects that were due for action

Number Completed by Due Date - From those defects in Column A to be rectified, how many were rectified by the due date

Number Completed After Due Date - From those defects in Column A to be rectified, how many were rectified outside the due date

Number Not Completed - Column A - Column B - Column C

Compliance % - Column B Divided by Column A

District - Grouped By The AssetAsyst District

During the third quarter of 2014 - 2015, 99.8% of all date imposed defects were completed before their due date. This is below the target of 100%. It is noted however that all defects have now been completed and there are no outstanding date imposed defects.

**COSTS/BENEFITS**

The benefits to the community in complying with the Road Management Plan are that it ensures a safe road network.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

Repairing 100 % of all date imposed defects before their due date limits Council's liability for any claims for damage made against Council.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

No internal or external consultation is required in the formation of this report.

### 5.3 DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

#### **SUMMARY**

A review of Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan has been conducted. The review finds that the majority of activities required by the plan have been implemented.

Author	Tyson Sutton, Manager Planning and Local Laws
Council Plan ref:	Core business 8: Compliance
File no:	04/02/004
Attachment:	Nil

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receive and note the Domestic Animal Management Plan review report.*

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council adopted the Loddon Shire Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013 – 2016 at its ordinary meeting in June 2013.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) at 4 year intervals and to review the plan annually. This report provides a review of Council's performance in addressing the objectives of the DAMP.

#### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The DAMP identifies seven action areas being:

- Registration and identification
- Nuisance
- Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs
- Dog attacks
- Overpopulation and high euthanasia rates
- Domestic animal businesses
- Emergency management

Each of these areas contains objectives and activities designed to achieve specific goals in respect to effective domestic animal management practices within the Shire. A total of 40 separate activities have been identified within the plan.

The review of the DAMP has been undertaken using data for the 2014 calendar year. It identifies that 31 activities have been achieved and 9 remain outstanding (one outstanding activity has been partially met).

The following tables set out the identified activities and provide a comment on actions undertaken to date. The activities that are yet to be implemented are highlighted in blue.

#### **Registration and identification**

Objective 1: Increase dog and cat registration compliance

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Mail out of registration renewal forms.	Annually (Feb/Mar)	Pets registered by 10 April	Renewal notices are mailed out in March each year in conjunction with rates notices.



Media releases notifying residents of the requirement to register dogs and cats	February	Record of media releases	An article containing information on the requirement to register dogs and cats was included in the 3 March 2015 Mayoral Column
Conduct an annual doorknock and follow up outstanding registrations to gain compliance.	June/July annually	Number of unregistered dogs and cats detected	Outstanding registrations were followed up in July/August 2014. The results indicated that a substantial number of non-renewals related to deceased animals.
Use Council's website to provide information to residents on dog and cat registration.	Review annually	Increased registration numbers	Information has been provided on Council's website and can be found at <a href="http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Live/Your-home/Your-pets/Animal-registration">http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Live/Your-home/Your-pets/Animal-registration</a>

Objective 2: Promote the benefits of micro chipping all dogs and cats

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Media releases advising residents of the benefits of micro chipping	Annually	Record of media releases	This objective has not been met. Content should also be developed for Council's website.
Review the cost benefit to holding free micro chipping days	Annually	Review completed	A review of free micro chipping days identified a cost to Council of approximately \$55.00 per animal. Given the potential cost and relatively high level of compliance with micro chipping requirements for new registrations, the benefit of conducting free micro chipping days is considered to be negligible.
Consider the benefit of all AMOs being trained to microchip dogs and cats	Annually	Staff trained	This objective has been partially met. No staff have been trained to implant microchips. One AMO has completed the pre-requisite qualifications and will be trained to implant microchips once a relevant course has been identified.

**Nuisance**

Objective 1: Ensure dogs and cats are confined to their property

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Treat incidents of dogs wandering at large as a priority issue	Ongoing	Number of reports received and actioned	In the 2014 calendar year 48 reports of wandering dogs and 159 reports of wandering cats were received and actioned. The majority of wandering cat reports related to feral/unowned cats.
Promote awareness of the need for dogs and cats to be confined to their property	2014	Decrease in the number of complaints of wandering dogs and cats	The requirement to confine dogs and cats is promoted on Council's website. During the 2013 calendar year 37 reports of wandering dogs and 41 reports of wandering cats were received. These

			numbers increased for the 2014 calendar year to 48 dog reports and 159 cat reports. The significant increase in the number of cats reported is considered to be as a response to a greater awareness of Council's cat trap program and more proactive enforcement of this matter.
Pursue appropriate enforcement action against owners who fail to confine animals to their property	Ongoing	Type and frequency of enforcement action	First time offences are generally addressed by providing advice and education to animal owners. Ongoing or repeat offenders are issued with a Notice to Comply or an infringement notice as circumstances dictate. During the 2014 calendar year 2 dogs were declared to be menacing dogs with specific confinement requirements.

Objective 2: Prevent nuisance caused by barking dogs

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Investigate all barking dog complaints within a timely manner.	Ongoing	Decrease in the number of complaints	The low number of complaints (1 in 2013 and 0 in 2014) indicates barking dogs are not a significant issue within the Loddon Shire.
Encourage owners of barking dogs to seek advice from Council/professional dog trainer/animal behaviourist on how to reduce their dog's barking.	When a barking dog complaint is received.	Reduction in complaints	The low number of complaints (1 in 2013, 0 in 2014) indicates barking dog are not a significant issue within the Loddon Shire.
Consider the purchase of dog barking collars to assist in resolving complaints	2014	Reduction in complaints	Given the low number of complaints the purchase of dog barking collars is not considered necessary

Objective 3: Prevention of dog faeces in public places

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Advise dog owners of legal requirements relating to cleaning up dog excrement via education material on Council website, media reports and signage in public places	2014	Reduction in complaints	No complaints relating to dog excrement were received during the 2014 calendar year.
Consider the merits of providing more dog excrement bag	2014	Reduction in complaints	No complaints regarding dog excrement have been received.

dispensers in recreation and shopping areas			
Audit existing dispensers for location and usage	2014	Audit results	This objective has not been met. An audit of dispensers is to occur in the second half of 2015.

### Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs

Objective 1: Identify and regulate dangerous, menacing in the Loddon shire

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Develop procedures for dealing with declaring dogs dangerous or menacing	2014	Procedure developed	This objective has not been met. A procedure for declaring dogs to be dangerous or menacing needs to be developed.
Review registration fee schedule to reflect the cost of managing dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs	2014	Review completed	Registration fees were reviewed for the 2014/2015 financial year. The maximum fee was raised to \$103.00. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs attract the maximum fee which is reflective of the anticipated cost of monitoring compliance with the Domestic Animals Act.

Objective 2: Identify Restricted Breed Dogs (RBD's) within Loddon Shire

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Regular inspection of premises	Annually	Inspection completed	There are currently no restricted breed dogs registered within the Loddon Shire.
Investigate all reports of suspected RBD	Ongoing	Record of investigations	Council officers investigated 3 suspected restricted breed dogs during the 2014 calendar year. The investigations identified that the dogs were not RBD's
Audit registration data base for known or suspected RBDs	Ongoing	Audit completed	A review of Council's animal registration database identified one dog registered as a Pit Bull Terrier. An assessment of the dog revealed that it was not a Pit Bull Terrier as it did not meet the assessment criteria of the State Governments breed standard.
Educate the community about what is a Restricted Breed dog	2014	Information available on web sites and media releases.	This objective has not been met. Content needs to be developed for Council's website.

**Dog attacks**

Objective 1: Decrease number of dog attacks

<b>Activity</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Continue to investigate all reports of dog attacks	Ongoing	Decrease in number of attacks	Council officers continue to investigate all reports of dog attacks. During the 2014 calendar year officers investigated 22 reported attacks. The majority of substantiated attacks involved attacks on livestock. No earlier data is available to enable comparison with previous years.
Continue to attend all reports of dogs wandering at large	Ongoing	Decrease in number of attacks	48 reports of wandering dogs were investigated in the 2014 calendar year. No earlier data is available to enable comparison with previous years.
Develop procedures to declare dogs Dangerous or Menacing as required	2014	Decrease in number of attacks	This objective has not been met. A procedure for declaring dogs to be dangerous or menacing needs to be developed.

Objective 2: Improve reporting of dog attacks

<b>Activity</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Improve public awareness of the need to report dog attacks	2014	Web site and media reports	This objective has not been met. Web content needs to be prepared.

**Overpopulation and high euthanasia rates**

Objective 1: Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population and reduce the number of wild cats in Loddon

<b>Activity</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Identify any cat colonies in Loddon, try to identify "feeder" and coordinate a trapping program.	Ongoing	Number of cats trapped	One significant cat colony was identified in Mason Drive, Moliagul. In excess of 70 cats were trapped at this property.
Use web and media to promote the benefits of de-sexing your cat	2014	Increase in the number of de-sexed cats registered	This objective has not been met. Web content needs to be prepared.
Encourage cat owners to adopt a night time curfew	Ongoing	Number of cats trapped	Encouragement for owners to confine cats during night time has occurred on a case by case basis. A broader campaign should be undertaken.
Review of registration fee schedule to consider rewarding the owners of	2015	Review completed	Review to be undertaken in the second half of 2015.

de-sexed cats			
Promote awareness and use of Council cat traps	2014	Number of residents using traps	The use of Council cat traps has been informally promoted. Increased demand for this service has seen the acquisition of an additional 6 cat traps.

Objective 2: Remove unwanted dogs from Loddon

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Review of registration fees schedule to consider rewarding the owners of de-sexed dogs	2015	Review completed	Review to be undertaken in the second half of 2015.
Use web and media to promote the benefits of de-sexing your dog	2014	Proportion of impounded dogs which are desexed	This objective has not been met. Web content needs to be prepared.
Record whether or not impounded dogs are sterilised	2014	Review pound records	A review of Council's pound register has identified that the majority of dogs impounded are not sterilised.

**Domestic animal businesses**

Objective 1: Annually inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) and investigate any suspected unregistered business.

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Conduct annual audit of all registered DABs located within the municipality.	Annually	Audit report	All registered DABs are inspected annually. An inspection of a registered DABs has resulted in the prosecution of a number of parties for breaches of the Domestic Animal Act and the Planning and Environment Act.

Objective 2: Investigate any suspected unregistered DABs

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Investigate all reports of suspected unregistered DAB's	Ongoing	Investigation reports	A number of suspected DABs are subject to ongoing investigations.
Ensure all known DAB's are registered and comply with the statutory requirements of the Planning Scheme and Codes of Practices	Ongoing	Number of notices to comply issued  Number of notices of contravention issued	Notice to comply has been issued to one registered domestic animal business for braches of the code of practice.

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Objective 1: Promote emergency planning to ensure the welfare of animals in emergencies

Activity	When	Evaluation	Comment
Liaise with DABs about their emergency plans	2014	Number of visits to discuss emergency management	Emergency plans are routinely discussed with DABs during annual audits
Discuss emergency animal welfare plans and Council Policy for evacuation/ relief centres with MERO	2014	Item considered by Council Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	The inclusion of emergency animal welfare plans in the Council emergency Management Plan has been discussed with the MERO and needs to be tabled for discussion with the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.
Provide education to residents regarding planning for their pets in emergencies	2014	DPI information distributed and link available on website	Information about planning for pets in an emergency has been included on Council's website with links to the RSPCA and Emergency Management Australia.

The annual review of the DAMP identifies that the majority of the listed activities have been completed. Further work is required to develop procedures for the declaration of dangerous and menacing dogs, undertake awareness campaigns and to undertake an audit of the provision of excrement collection bags.

The DAMP has been successful in raising awareness of domestic animal issues with particular regard to domestic animal businesses and wandering animals. This is evidenced by the increased reports of wandering animals and ongoing compliance actions with regard to domestic animals businesses.

The increase in reports of wandering cats and dogs between the 2013 and 2014 calendar years indicates that more can be done to raise awareness for residents to contain their pets. Increased awareness can be driven by better use of existing avenues such as the Council website, mayoral column and media releases.

The review identifies a small number of grammatical errors in the DAMP that should be corrected through an amendment to the document. In addition more up to date statistics should be incorporated to ensure that it provides the most relevant and up to date data available.

Revisions to the DAMP as identified are to be undertaken and will be presented to Council for consideration at a future date.

### **COSTS/BENEFITS**

Promotion of responsible pet ownership should enhance community wellbeing, reduce the potential for physical harm to people and other animals, the environment and reduce financial cost to the community of domestic animal management.

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

No specific risks have been identified as being associated with the review of the DAMP.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Key issues in the DAMP were determined by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, service requests from residents of Loddon Shire, networking with Animal Management Officers from other Local Government areas and Council's register of Local Law activities.

## 5.4 STRATEGIC RISKS REPORT

### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with an update on actions in relation to identified strategic risks.

Author	Jude Holt, Director Corporate Services
Council Plan ref:	Core business 8: Compliance
File no:	08/07/006
Attachment:	Nil

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council receives and notes the Strategic Risks Report.*

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Are there any conflicts of interest for any council staff involved in writing this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report?

No
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If yes, the following details identify the conflict of interest.

Officer name	Nature of interest	Reason for conflict
Click here to enter text.	Choose an item. If indirect, the type of indirect interest is: Choose an item.	[Explain the specific circumstances of this person's conflict of interest.]

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Council was provided with a Strategic Risks Report in November 2014 Audit Committee Report at the 16 December 2014 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework which is now mandated for all councils includes the indicator Risk Reporting which requires "Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies."

Early in the 2014/2015 financial year Council identified three strategic risks, which are:

1. Reliance on ageing volunteers: which could lead to a reduction in numbers and a requirement for Council to take over these roles (this risk has been assessed as a MEDIUM Risk)
2. Council's workforce is ageing: which could lead to a reduction in long term knowledge due to retirement and resignations (this risk has been assessed as a HIGH risk)
3. The impact of a natural disaster event: which could impact Council's ability to deliver services and projects (this risk has been assess as a HIGH risk).

The likelihood and consequence of each risk has been assessed against Council's Risk Management Policy, which has resulted in the risk ratings attached to each risk (as per above).

### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

The following table outlines the risk mitigations strategies that have been identified in order to reduce or eliminate each risk, and their progress to date:

Risk	Risk mitigation action/strategy	Progress
<p><b>MEDIUM RISK:</b> Reliance on ageing volunteers: which could lead to a reduction in numbers and a requirement for Council to take over these roles (this risk has been assessed as a MEDIUM Risk)</p>	<p>Volunteer section on the new website to encourage volunteerism generally, and recruit new volunteers.</p>	<p><b>Complete:</b> The volunteer section is now present on Council's website</p>
	<p>Development of a Recreation Strategy, including addressing the volunteer shortage issue and strategies for succession.</p>	<p><b>Work in progress:</b> The draft Recreation Strategy was presented to Council at the Forum held on 12 May 2015.  One focus in the strategy is development of community groups and their volunteers, and supporting volunteers.</p>
	<p>Development of governance guidelines to support S86 Committees.</p>	<p><b>Work in progress and ongoing:</b> A number of governance guideline information sheets have been developed and placed on Council's website. This will be an ongoing process.</p>
<p><b>HIGH RISK:</b> Council's workforce is ageing: which could lead to a reduction in long term knowledge due to retirement and resignations (this risk has been assessed as a HIGH risk)</p>	<p>Development of a Knowledge Management Strategy</p>	<p><b>Work in progress:</b> The draft Knowledge Management Strategy has been developed and is awaiting review by the Management Executive Group.</p>
	<p>Development of a Workforce Strategy</p>	<p><b>Not started:</b> Development of this document will commence in August 2015.</p>
<p><b>HIGH RISK:</b> The impact of a natural disaster event: which could impact Council's ability to deliver services and projects (this risk has been assess as a HIGH risk)</p>	<p>Development of an IT Disaster Plan</p>	<p><b>Not started:</b> Development of this document will commence in July 2015.</p>
	<p>Finalise and adopt the Business Continuity Plan</p>	<p><b>Complete:</b> The Business Continuity Plan has been adopted by Council.</p>

**COSTS/BENEFITS**

The benefit of identifying strategic risks is to prepare Council for their occurrence.

There have been external costs for some actions (for example, consultant to develop Knowledge Management Strategy). Other actions will be completed with internal resources.



**RISK ANALYSIS**

The identification and monitoring of Council's strategic risks should reduce the impact of those risks should Council encounter them in the future.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The Council, with assistance from the Management Executive Group, identified the strategic risks.

## **6. COMPLIANCE REPORTS**

### **6.1 DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING AND SEALING**

#### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with a list of documents signed and sealed during the month.

Author:	John McLinden - Chief Executive Officer
Council Plan ref:	Core business 8: Compliance
File No:	02/01/001
Attachment:	Nil

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

- 1. receive and note the 'Document for Signing and Sealing' report*
- 2. endorse the use of the seal on the documents listed*

#### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

Nil

#### **BACKGROUND**

N/A

#### **ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Contract 329 Deed between Loddon Shire Council and H Huebner and D Sturgess for Bridgewater Public Caravan Park Management Services – 12 Month Term

**7. GENERAL BUSINESS**

**8. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

Closing of Meeting to the Public

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That the meeting be closed to the public.*

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on 23 June at Serpentine commencing at 3pm.