

WANGARATTA RURAL CITY COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING
OF THE WANGARATTA RURAL CITY COUNCIL, HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL OFFICES,
62-68 OVENS STREET, WANGARATTA
ON **TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2012** AT 7.00PM

Doug Sharp
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As at 13/02/12 3:59 PM

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1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS**

2. **OPENING PRAYER**

3. **PRESENT**

Chairman: Councillor R Paino, Mayor
Councillor A Griffiths, Councillor D McPhie, Councillor L McCully, Councillor R Parisotto, Councillor R Webb.

Officers: Mr Doug Sharp (Chief Executive Officer), Mr Adrian Gasperoni (Acting Director – Infrastructure), Mr Ray Park (Director – Sustainability), Ms Ruth Tai (Director Community Wellbeing).

4. **ABSENT**

Councillor L McInerney having previously been granted leave of absence for the period Sunday 1 January 2012 to Saturday 4 February 2012.

Mr Andrew Close, Director Infrastructure.

5. **ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES & GRANTING OF LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

6. **CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY**

No Australian Citizenship ceremony was held.

7. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

(Moved: Councillor R Parisotto /Councillor L McCully)

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 13 December 2011 be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the meeting.

Carried.

8. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE**

Mr Ray Park declared a conflict of interest in Item 11.2.4.3.

9. RECEPTION OF PETITIONS

Nil.

10. HEARING OF DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

11. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

11.1 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

Nil.

11.2 OFFICER'S REPORTS

11.2.1 EXECUTIVE SERVICES

11.2.1.1 REGIONAL WINE INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURE SUPPORT STRATEGY

Wine Industry Development

25.020.034

Introduction

At their meeting of 7 December 2011, Wangaratta Unlimited adopted the Regional Wine Industry Restructure Support Strategy (*refer attachment*) and recommended it be forwarded to Council for consideration and endorsement.

Background

Following representations to Wangaratta Unlimited from both the King Valley Vignerons and the Alpine Valley Grape Growers Association, with regard to the current restructure issues impacting on the viticulture industry a status report was prepared and distributed.

In response to the issues impacting on the industry both nationally and at the regional level, Wangaratta Unlimited has undertaken the development of a support strategy. The strategy acknowledges that structural adjustment is inevitable but also that the viticulture industry holds a pivotal role in the region's economy.

Issues

As an industry sector, the wine industry contributes \$275 million, or 8.9% of the Rural City of Wangaratta's economy and approximately 5% of the fulltime workforce. Given the strong synergies with the accommodation and food

services sector, a large portion of the \$95 million and 7% of our fulltime workforce attributed to this sector is also directly aligned with the viticulture sector.

While there will be some reduction of the area committed to viticulture the industry will continue to be an important contributor to the Rural City of Wangaratta's goal of "realising the sustainable agricultural production potential of the Ovens and King Valleys region as a future food bowl".

The industry is also an example of the Hume Regional Strategy's objective of utilising water closer to the source.

The strategy contains three specific focus areas with relevant actions to be implemented over a three year timetable.

The three focus areas are:

1. realise the Point of Difference (Grow to Strengths);
2. grow the Market; and
3. support the Restructure Process.

Implications

A number of the specific actions nominated in the strategy are already being progressed in conjunction with relevant stakeholders. The adoption of the strategy by Council will ensure other actions are delivered by Wangaratta Unlimited staff over the next three years.

These tasks will be undertaken within existing project budget allocations, however additional resources will be leveraged through relevant State Government agency funding streams.

Consultation

The Regional Wine Industry Restructure Support Strategy was also referred to the Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee who endorsed the strategy and recommended that it be forwarded to Council for formal adoption.

(Moved: Councillor R Webb/ Councillor R Parisotto)

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Regional Wine Industry Restructure Support Strategy.

Carried.

11.2.1.2 FINANCIAL SUPPORT – WANGARATTA SPORTS CARNIVAL

Sports Tourism

25.040.017

Introduction

The Wangaratta Sports Club has sought financial support from Council to assist in staging the Wangaratta Sports Carnival on Saturday 28 January 2012.

Background

The Wangaratta Sports Carnival has a long and proud history having been staged continuously in Wangaratta for in excess of 90 years. The committee has budgeted for in excess of 400 competitors and some 1,000 spectators for the 2012 event.

Issues

The Committee of the Sports Carnival contacted Council in late 2011 seeking financial assistance for the 2012 event.

Council has previously provided financial support for the event through the Special Events Funding Program, however with the implementation of the Sports Tourism initiative, resources have now, more appropriately, been provided through that program. It should be noted that the Wangaratta Sports Club has also successfully secured sponsorship from the ANZ Bank for the event.

Implications

The request for funding support has been assessed utilising the criteria established for sports tourism events. The event met the criteria and the provision of \$2,500 has been accommodated within existing budget capacity. Council's appointed consultants, Complete Sports Marketing, will collaborate with the Wangaratta Sports Club to explore opportunities to enhance future staging of the carnival.

Given the timing of the request and of the staging of the event, the Chief Executive Officer authorised the financial assistance.

(Moved: Councillor D McPhie/Councillor L McCully)

Recommendation

That the provision of financial assistance of \$2,500 to the Wangaratta Sports Club for the 2012 Carnival be endorsed.

Carried.

11.2.2 SUSTAINABILITY

11.2.2.1 REVIEW OF WATER TRADING RULES FOR THE OVENS AND KING SYSTEM

Local Flood Warning Plan

77.040.002

Introduction

Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) has advised of a review of the overall water trading arrangements in the Ovens /King Basin. GMW, on behalf of the Ovens/King Surface Water Diversions Catchment Committee is seeking feedback from the customer community before finalising a decision on the review. The Executive Summary of the review is attached (*refer attachment*).

Background

The Ovens/King Surface Water Diversions Catchment Committee is a local committee, established by GMW, to provide local input into GMW decision making. The Committee requested a change to the water trading rules in respect of a specific class of water. However, because of the national requirements to allow free trade of water, where possible, a complete review was carried out. The review involved the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Catchment Management Authority.

The review recommended three options for discussion and these are being considered by the local committee.

The review found that due to the unique allocation and restriction policies in the Ovens/King system, that there are considerable complexities associated with trade liberalisation.

In all other regulated systems (where allocation is based on water availability and has a high reliability) legislation and business systems have been set up so that once water is allocated, it can be guaranteed to be delivered.

In contrast, Ovens/King system water users are allocated 100% at the start of the season and restricted where there is insufficient storage volume and unregulated flows to meet requirements.

The water trading system does not have a mechanism to restrict use of an entitlement once it is traded out of a system. In other words, water could be traded from the Ovens/King system early in the season, with 100% reliability, but then be subject to restriction later in the season.

Further if there was to be a change to the allocation method in the Ovens/King system, the small storage size compared to the entitlement volume would result in no, or very low allocation, until late in the season in most years.

However, the review did see some value in creating a new lower Ovens trade zone (generally downstream from Wangaratta) and allow trade of water from the

Ovens and King into this zone. However, this would also require accounting of trade from King and Ovens to ensure that any future back-trade could be properly managed. There could also be issues with delivery of water from King to lower Ovens in years of low flow.

Delivery of water from King and Upper Ovens could also have significant environmental impacts. A major consideration is to limit summer flows to ensure that there is no adverse impact on slack water habitat.

The review proposes three recommendations for discussion.

1. Creating a new trading zone downstream of the confluence of the Ovens and King rivers and allow trades of water into that zone from the King and upper Ovens.
2. Use a mechanism called Limited Term Transfers to enable trade of spill water within the mid-Ovens and King zones and between these zones to the new lower Ovens zone.
3. Trade outside of the Ovens/King system is not recommended due to differing characteristics of Ovens/King water shares to water shares in other areas and the resultant complexities and legal impediments of trading into these areas.

Issues

There may be some adverse impacts in the short term because of inability of local landowners to trade-out water entitlements. However, this water will remain available to expanding or emerging water dependent uses.

The possibility of trading into a new lower Ovens zone could assist with the development of the Deep Lead aquifer. However, management rules for the operation of the aquifer are not yet developed. In addition, water users in the proposed lower Ovens zone can currently trade water down from the upper and mid Ovens. The creation of the new zone will therefore only open up trade from the King system.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

The recommendations are consistent with the Council Plan.

Key Strategic Activity: “In conjunction with relevant stakeholders, to realise the sustainable agricultural production potential of the Ovens and King Valleys region as a future food bowl”

In addition, Action 5.2.3.:1 “Advocate to preserve the current protection of the Ovens and King River systems with respect to the trading of water.

Sustainability

The recommendations of the review provide some risk to the local environment in that high level, mid-summer flows would be harmful to riverine environmental assets.

Community Engagement

This report is responding to a request for input by the responsible authority, Goulburn Murray water.

Council's Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee considered this matter at its recent meeting and has no recommendation to make.

Conflict of Interest - This report has been written by the Director Sustainability who is a member of the Ovens/King Surface Water Diversions Catchment Committee and also holds surface water and groundwater extraction permits.

Conclusion

As a consequence of all the above, the recommendations provide for the maximum flexibility for trading water within the Ovens/King systems but without proposing trading out of the system.

(Moved: Councillor R Webb/Councillor A Griffiths)

Recommendation

That:

- 1. Council support the three recommendations for review of water trading rules for the Ovens/King systems; and**
 - 2. Goulburn-Murray Water be advised with completed response attached.**
- Carried.**

11.2.2.2 MOYHU BOWLS CLUB COMMUNITY LOAN

Sports & Recreation Facilities Grants

61.020.001

Introduction

This report provides details of the Moyhu Bowls Club Inc.'s (the Club) green resurfacing project (the Project) and the consequent financial arrangements including a loan by Council of \$36,130 to the Moyhu Bowls Club. Council will be required to endorse the draft loan agreement and resolve to apply the Council seal to that document.

Background

The Club was successful in obtaining \$60,000 funding through the Department of Planning and Community Development's (DPCD) Synthetic Surfaces Program (2008-2009). The project was to replace the grassed greens with a synthetic surface at a cost of \$174,762. This project was completed in December 2009.

The budget for the project is as follows:

- \$60,000 DPCD;
- \$74,000 Moyhu Bowls Club cash contribution;

- \$36,130 Community Loan from RCOW; and
- \$4,632 RCOW.

The Club's request for a loan was supported at the 18 November 2008 Ordinary Council Meeting where the following recommendation was approved:

That Council provide in-principle support to a funding application to be submitted to the Department of Planning and Community Development for the Synthetic Green project at the Moyhu Bowling Club, and support a loan application for \$36,130 in the event it is successful.

Issues

The preparation of the Community Loan and the cash contribution of \$74,000 to Council will proceed following notification of this report to Council. The Moyhu Bowls Club has agreed to repay the \$36,130 loan over a 10 year period with annual instalments. The amount owing to Council has been held by Council in a long term debtors account.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

The Community Wellbeing portfolio overview contains an aspiration to support and work with the community to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of all residents, including:

- working directly with local community groups to support their activities; and
- creating partnerships with community groups, community agencies and other levels of government to plan and develop facilities, services and activities to meet changing needs.

Council's objective is to improve opportunities for all residents to participate in a range of community activities.

Local Community

The financial arrangements proposed in this report will support the local community by providing loan funding to assist the Moyhu Bowling Club Inc. to achieve their Project. The Project will enable year-round activities and reduce the impact on volunteers.

Local Environment

The Project will result in reduced demand for water by the Club. This will have both financial and environmental benefits.

Conclusion

The Project has now been completed and the draft loan documentation prepared. **(refer attachment)**. Council must now approve the documentation to finalise the remaining commercial arrangements associated with this Project.

(Moved: Councillor L McCully /Councillor A Griffiths)

Recommendation:

That:

- 1. Council endorse the draft loan agreement for a loan of \$36,130 to the Moyhu Bowling Club Inc. to be repaid over 10 years; and***
- 2. Council's common seal be applied to the loan agreement when available for signing.***

Carried.

Communication

The members of the Moyhu Bowling Club Inc. will be advised of this outcome.

11.2.2.3 DRAFT 2 RURAL LAND STRATEGY

Draft 2 Rural Land Strategy

73.030.056

Introduction

At its meeting in December 2011 Council considered a report on the review of the Draft Rural Land Strategy and the preparation of a second Draft is continuing. Because work was not going to be completed in sufficient time to enable the proposed review timeframes to be achieved it was resolved:

“That Council defer further consideration of this matter until January 2012 with a view to releasing a second Draft Rural Strategy following the January 2012 Council Meeting.”

Further work has been carried out since the December Council meeting but there are still matters that are not completed to a point where Council consideration could occur prior to the January 2012 Council Meeting.

Background

The timeframes proposed for the review of the Rural Land Strategy were:

- development of a revised draft in consultation with the Agricultural and Agribusiness Advisory Committee (AAAC) – September/October 2011;
- Council consideration and exhibition of revised draft strategy – November – January 2012; and
- Council resolves a position on a revised Draft Rural Land Strategy – February 2012.

Issues

As reported to the December Council Meeting, there are still a small number of matters to be considered by the AAAC. At the time of preparing this report the

Committee was scheduled to meet on 16 January 2012 and further information may be provided.

There are also other matters, which cannot be concluded until late in the revision process, including further discussions with the Department of Planning and Community Development, Peer Review to ensure the appropriateness of the preferred planning options, and the Triple Bottom Line Impact Assessment.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

The implementation of the Rural Land Strategy is an action for 2012 of the Adjusted Council Plan.

Community Engagement

A detailed community consultation plan will be developed as the second Draft is finalised.

Conclusion

This delay will result in a probable exhibition and consultation period of late February and March 2012 for a second Draft with Council resolving a final position, two months later than initially proposed, in April 2012.

(Moved: Councillor D McPhie /Councillor R Parisotto)

Recommendation

That Council defer further consideration of this matter until February 2012 with a view to releasing a second Draft Rural Strategy following the February 2012 Council Meeting.

Carried.

11.2.2.4 **FINANCE REPORTS**

Council Budget 2011/2012

51.060.018

Introduction

Council is required to consider quarterly the budgeted revenue and expenditure and actual revenue and expenditure to date. A report was presented to Council's October 2011 Briefing Forum and unfortunately was not included in November 2011 Council meeting agenda.

The September 2011 financial reports are now provided as a public record of that report. This report is now superseded by the 2011/12 Budget Review report appearing elsewhere in this agenda.

Executive Summary

Council's net rates budget surplus is forecast to decrease from its adopted budget position of \$212,000 to \$194,773. The following table summarises predicted variances for major categories of income and expenditure.

Report item		Adopted Budget 2011/2012 \$	Reforecast Budget 2011/2012 \$	Variance \$
1	Operating income	58,088,756	56,460,964	(1,627,792)
	Operating expenditure	(48,950,661)	(49,368,888)	(418,227)
	Net Operating Result	9,138,095	7,092,076	(2,046,019)
3	Capital Grants and Contributions	4,514,452	5,584,211	1,069,759
2	Capital Expenditure	(16,445,232)	(21,314,126)	(4,868,894)
	Proceeds from sale of assets	1,399,301	1,399,301	0
	Net borrowings	1,070,862	1,070,862	0
	Net transfers from/(to) reserves	367,651	1,285,561	917,910
	Rates surplus(deficit) b/fwd	1,770,176	3,336,162	1,565,986
	Projects carried forward from 10/11	0	3,334,031	3,334,031
	Net Rates Budget Surplus	212,000	194,773	(17,227)

Council's net rates budget surplus is expected to decrease by \$17K. This decrease is a result of projects and other items carried forward from the 2010/11 financial year. The items below provide further details of the variance in the above table.

Detailed explanations are provided for individual items where the predicted year-end outcome varies from the adopted budget by more than \$20,000 (**refer attachment**).

The decreased surplus is comprised of the following items:

1. Decreased Net Operating Result

	<u>Adopted</u> \$	<u>Reforecast</u> \$
Net Operating Result	9,138,095	7,092,076
Total decrease in operating surplus		(2,046,019)

The decrease in operating surplus is largely due to receiving the first quarter of the 2011/2012 Grants Commission funding totalling \$1.6M in June 2011. Additionally, \$419K of operational projects has been carried forward from 2010/11 as previously reported to Council.

2. Increased Capital Expenditure

	<u>Adopted</u> \$	<u>Reforecast</u> \$
Capital expenditure	16,445,232	21,314,126
Total increase in capital expenditure		4,868,894

3. Increased Capital Income

	<u>Adopted</u> \$	<u>Reforecast</u> \$
Capital grants and contributions	4,514,452	5,584,211
Total increase in capital income		1,069,759

The increase in capital expenditure and income is largely due to the projects and their associated funding being carried forward from 2010/11 of \$3.84 million.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

Council's Governance key result area contains an objective to ensure that Council's plans and budgets are both responsible and sustainable. Council aims to produce accurate, concise and easy to read reports and publications for members of our public.

Sustainability

Council's financial position

Council's budget establishes the financial framework of Council including income and expenditure, rating strategy, borrowings and asset management programs necessary for Council operation.

Local Community

The establishment of the budget is a critical component in the financial management of Council's operations to ensure the delivery of appropriate services and programs to residents and ratepayers.

Conclusion

Re-forecasts for the 2011/2012 financial year confirm that Council's rates surplus is predicted to decrease by a margin of \$17,227.

(Moved: Councillor L McCully/Councillor R Webb)

Recommendation

That Council receive the 30 September quarterly report of Budget and Actual revenue and expenditure.

Carried.

11.2.2.5 **2011/2012 BUDGET REVIEW**

Council Budget 2011/2012

51.060.019

Introduction

Council officers have undertaken a thorough revision of projected income and expenditure for the 2011/12 financial year. The revised targets will become the benchmark for future budget reporting.

Background

It is Council's practice to undertake a budget reassessment midway through each financial year. To this end, a comprehensive review of Council's 2011/12 financial position has been undertaken having regard to the following matters:

- the requirement under the Local Government Act to establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound financial management;
- Council's audited financial position at 2010/11 year end;
- projects and works carried forward from 2010/11 financial year;
- income received in 2010/11 in relation to 2011/12 financial year;
- outcomes of funding applications;
- unbudgeted works undertaken in response to opportunities; and
- known adjustments to income and expenditure.

The attached reports (***refer attachment***) show the following columns:

- Adopted Budget for 2011/12 financial year;
- Budget Review for 2011/12 financial year;
- New Projects;
- Total Budget Review 2011/12 (which is the sum of Budget Review and New Projects); and
- Explanation for Variance from adopted budget.

This review has resulted in an increased budget surplus from \$212,000 to \$354,800.

Summary of financial position

1. Rates Setting Budget 2011/12

	Adopted		Reviewed	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening rates surplus July 2011		1,770		6,041
Expenditure:				
- Operational expenditure	40,313		42,536	
- Capital Expenditure	16,265		21,033	
- Transfers to reserves	4,014		3,928	
- Loan principal redemption	<u>1,603</u>	<u>62,195</u>	<u>1,605</u>	<u>69,102</u>
Income:				
- Operational income	25,195		25,335	
- Rates income	21,826		21,858	
- Capital non-recurrent	6,764		7,698	
- Proceeds on sale of assets	1,399		1,552	
- Transfers from reserves	4,382		5,902	
- New borrowings	<u>1,071</u>	<u>60,637</u>	<u>1,071</u>	<u>63,416</u>
Closing rates surplus June 2012		<u>\$212</u>		<u>\$355</u>

2. Budget adjustments required

Council's rates surplus carried forward from 2010/11 increased from \$1.77M to \$6.04M as a result of projects and works in 2010/11 not achieving forecast expenditure and due to the first quarter of the 2011/12 Grants Commission being received in June 2011. The increased surplus includes funds set aside for those projects which have also now been included in the budget review.

The budget is generally arranged in two sections: operational and capital sections.

2a. **Operational budget**

The net operational budgeted income reduced by \$2.1M following the budget review. The major reasons for this reduction are the early payment of the 1st instalment of the Victorian Grants Commission funding and operational projects carried forward from 2010/11. Refer to the following table for details.

Major operational adjustments:	\$'000
2011/12 Grants Commission funding 1st instalment received 2010/11	(1,565)
Oncost income reduced	(64)
Sports tourism promotion	(30)
Net operational projects carried forward	
Net flood restoration works	(137)
Ned Kelly Touring Route	(29)

Marketing campaign – MICE	(17)
South Wangaratta Urban Renewal	(50)
Rural heritage overlay Planning Scheme amendment	(46)
Domestic wastewater management plan	(25)
Regional Catchment Investment Program	(28)
Open space strategy	(22)
Total major net operational adjustments required	(2,013)

2b. Capital Budget

The net capital budgeted expenditure reduced by \$2M following the budget review. The main reasons for this is an increased surplus carried forward and transfers from reserves, offset by capital projects carried forward from the 2010/11 financial year. Refer to the following table for details.

Major capital adjustments:	\$'000
Increased opening rates surplus July 2011	4,270
Increased other capital grants	933
Increased transfers from reserves	1,520
Increased assets sales	153
Increased transfers to reserves	(86)
Net capital projects carried forward	
Showgrounds redevelopment project	(2,700)
Bowser landfill Cell 8 construction	(780)
Wangaratta Children's Services Centre	(350)
Roads to Recovery projects	(315)
Improvement Newman Street – Bunnings entrance	(80)
Aerodrome restaurant maintenance	(61)
Exhibition Gallery roof	(44)
Drainage improvements Cnr Ford and Murphy Streets	(33)
Saleyards kiosk refurbishment	(25)
Benton Road major culvert alterations	(25)
Storage shed demolition – Grand Central hotel	(23)
Total major net operational adjustments required	2,354

3. New operational and capital works projects

A number of new project submissions have been assessed by management for Councillor's consideration (**refer attachment**).

If these projects are approved by Council, the rates surplus will reduce to \$160,000.

	\$
Current rates surplus	354,800
New projects	<u>194,800</u>
Adjusted budget rates surplus	160,000

4. Assessment:

It is considered prudent for Council to retain the proposed surplus to cover any unpredicted expenditure that may occur. The budget review process has been an important re-examination of Council's financial position and will become the point of reference for future 2011/12 monthly management reports and financial key performance indicators.

The Budget Review will be incorporated into Council's long-term financial plan.

Issues

The Local Government Act requires that a Council must prepare a Revised Budget if circumstances arise which cause a material change in the budget and which affects the financial operations and position of the Council.

It is considered that the revisions made to the 2011/12 budget do not constitute a material change to the budget. As a result it is considered that a formal Revised Budget should not be prepared.

In general terms, the Budget Review proposes the following:

- no additional rates or charges to be raised;
- no additional borrowing be undertaken;
- the cost of servicing the borrowings during the financial year will be \$623,579 – (628,872 at adopted budget);
- the total amount of loans proposed to be redeemed during the financial year will be \$1,605,068 – (1,603,305 at adopted budget); and
- the total amount of borrowings at 30 June 2012 will be \$8,623,181.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

Council's 2009-2013 Council Plan contains objectives to:

- ensure that Council's plans and budgets are both responsible and sustainable; and
- to provide leadership to its communities through the provision of accessible, open and consultative government.

Sustainability – Council's financial position

Regular revision and adjustment of Council's budget forecasts is an integral component of Council's financial planning and long term financial viability. The revised budget forecasts will be utilised to update Council's long term financial plan.

Conclusion

The budget review has not identified any matters that will cause a material change, therefore, in accordance with the Local Government Act no formal Revised Budget shall be prepared. As a consequence of the above reassessment, Council should confirm the results of the mid-year budget review.

(Moved: Councillor D McPhie/Councillor R Webb)

Recommendation

- 1. that the Review of the 2011/2012 Budget be confirmed;**
- 2. that no formal Revised Budget be prepared; and**
- 3. the Budget after adjustments set out in this report becomes the point of reference for the remaining 2011/2012 financial reports and financial key performance indicators.**

Carried.

11.2.2.1 **OPERATION OF DROUGHT BORES**

Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee

25.070.006

Introduction

The Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee (AAAC), at its meeting on 16 January 2012 considered arrangements for access to and responsibility for maintenance of, drought bores.

Background

The AAAC requested Council to urgently clarify access arrangements and future management of drought bores.

Issues

Water points for community use, during periods of drought, have been expanded over the last few years. There are a number of factors to be considered in determining access and management arrangements during non-drought periods.

Conclusion

It is proposed that a comprehensive report be prepared and presented to the February Council meeting to enable consideration of all relevant matters.

(Moved: Councillor A Griffiths/Councillor R Webb)

Recommendation

That:

- 1. the recommendation from the Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee be noted; and**
- 2. a report dealing with access and management of drought bores be presented to the February Council meeting.**

Carried.

11.2.3 COMMUNITY WELLBEING

11.2.3.1 WANGARATTA CHILDREN'S SERVICES CENTRE – NEW KINDERGARTEN

Wangaratta Children's & Family Service Centre

30.082.043

Introduction

Wangaratta Children's Services Centre is approaching final sign off on the Stage 2 building project. This project will provide an additional kindergarten service for the Rural City of Wangaratta. Council has not traditionally operated kindergartens however there is a need to fulfil this role for the 2012 year.

Background

The Council of Australian Government's National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education was signed in November 2008, with the aim that by 2013 every child will have access to a preschool program in the year prior to school.

The National partnership recognises the importance of early childhood as contributing to Australia's future prosperity. Victoria is committed to working in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, Local Government, employers and early childhood staff in delivering on this important initiative.

The implementation of universal access to 15 hours of kindergarten in the year before school (universal access):

- recognises that quality kindergarten programs improve children's learning, health and behaviour with positive impacts extending into adult life;
- enables children and families to have access to a high quality developmental program in a range of settings such as public, private and community based kindergartens and childcare services;
- supports a successful transition to formal schooling;
- supports planning of an integrated service system; and
- is a major component of the Commonwealth Government's early childhood reform agenda and is consistent with the Victorian Government's policy direction.

The Commonwealth Government has committed \$970 million over five years for this reform, including \$210.6 million for Victoria. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) is responsible for leading implementation of universal access to 15 hours of kindergarten.

The Rural City of Wangaratta was successful in applying for and receiving a grant of \$200,000 from the 2009-2010 Children's Capital Program. The funding provided is aimed at increasing the infrastructure capacity at the Wangaratta Children's Services to deliver 15 hours of kindergarten to local children the year before formal schooling.

Previous planning undertaken in the Rural City of Wangaratta identified a shortage of opportunities for children to attend kindergarten, this is supported by

experience of a higher than usual demand for kindergarten enrolments for 2012. At present there are twenty children enrolled for a kindergarten place at the new Wangaratta Children's Services Centre Kindergarten in 2012. There are still vacancies which will mean no child will miss out on a kindergarten place in Wangaratta.

Issues

It was always intended that an alternative provider, whether it be a cluster manager or a community committee manage the operations of the new kindergarten.

The North East Regional Preschool Association (NERPSA) is a community based kindergarten cluster management organisation. NERPSA currently manages three kindergartens in Wangaratta, a kindergarten and occasional care service in Moyhu, a kindergarten and occasional care service in Glenrowan and a kindergarten in Violet Town.

Three other community kindergartens are based in the Rural City of Wangaratta – James Tilson Kindergarten, Coronation Kindergarten and Whorouly Kindergarten. The Wangaratta Children's Services Centre also currently manages a kindergarten program that is integrated within the child care centre.

Initially NERPSA was approached to offer them the opportunity to manage the new kindergarten service. Although an initial acceptance was received, NERPSA has since declined this opportunity for the 2012 year only. This was due to limited resources. However they have agreed to reconsider for 2013, if Council can support the establishment and management of the new kindergarten rooms for 2012.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

To ensure the provision of affordable, accessible and high quality children's services.

Policies

It has not been practise for Council to operate Kindergarten services except where it is part of the childcare service. It is agreed by DEECD and considered more aligned with government policy for NERPSA as a cluster manager to undertake the operations of the new kindergarten into the future.

Sustainability

It is intended that the costs for the provision of the new kindergarten will be met within the revenue received from DEECD and user fees however as with many new services this cannot be guaranteed. As a consequence an amount of \$5,600 has been included in councils 2011/2012 budget review to cover any shortfall.

Community Engagement

The provision of the new kindergarten is in direct response to the outstanding need in the community. Previous planning found that 50 young children were unable to access kindergarten. The new kindergarten will accommodate this outstanding need.

Conclusion

Staff are being recruited and equipment ordered to provide the new kindergarten service from the Wangaratta Children's Services Centre commencing the 2012 term. Ongoing discussion is occurring with NERPSA to ensure the service is transitioned under the NERPSA management by the 2013 first term.

(Moved: Councillor L McCully/Councillor R Parisotto)

Recommendation

That Council endorse the proposed auspice of the new kindergarten at the Wangaratta Children's Services Centre to be administered by Council for the 2012 calendar year.

Carried.

Communication

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and NERPSA will be advised of Council's decision.

11.2.3.2 TRAVELLERS AID IN RURAL VICTORIA PROGRAM

Public Transport

66.020.002

Introduction

The Rural City of Wangaratta has been provided with an opportunity to be part of a pilot program to be undertaken by the North East Transport Connections Project's (NTCP) to increase transport options for the aged and people with a disability.

Background

The NTCP is a State Government entity auspiced by an incorporated entity – Community Accessibility Inc. The funding for NTCP is administered by the Department of Planning and Community Development with local government councils as active partners.

The aim of the NTCP is to develop innovative and efficient responses to the needs of people with limited transport options and to improve access to services, resources, employment and community participation opportunities.

It has been identified through Ovens & King Community Health Service and anecdotal reports from other service providers and community members that there is a need for increased transport options in the Rural City of Wangaratta (RCoW).

Elderly and disabled rural residents who use public transport to travel to Wangaratta can experience difficulties with incompatible timetables, resulting in having to wait at inappropriate and uncomfortable locations. These residents may have several appointments to attend on one day but experience difficulty with mobility and access. These reasons present barriers to their independence.

Data available through Council's Profile-Id reports that 1,372 residents (5.3%) require assistance, which is slightly higher than Regional Victoria (4.8%). Currently, Council's Home and Community Care (HACC) program services 142 rural clients (HACC only) and 1326 urban clients (HACC & Full Cost Recovery clients) with the demand for service on the increase this reflects a level of need in the community.

The NTCP Project's Steering Group has identified Travellers Aid (Australia) as a potential service delivery model for the Rural City of Wangaratta and City of Wodonga. The national model includes the following elements:

- free personal care assistance for people with disabilities;
- mobility equipment hire: including strollers, electric scooter, manual and electric wheelchair hire; and
- Internet access, baby-change facilities, accessible toilets, adult-change facilities, safe and comfortable seating areas, luggage storage and tourist information.

The Travellers Aid model fits with the aim of the NTCP and the Steering Group are keen to pilot the program in Wangaratta as stage one of a regional program and in Wodonga as stage two.

The scope of the pilot program would focus on:

- trialling an accessible and air-conditioned space within Wangaratta's central business district which includes tea/coffee making facilities, seating, accessible toilets/showers and storage;
- providing a pool of volunteer companions to support those residents requiring assistance with medical appointments, shopping and other social and/or recreational commitments; and
- providing access to mobility equipment through a hiring arrangement with an appropriate business partner.

Potential partners in the pilot program may include (though not limited to):

- Ovens and King Community Health Service;
- Department of Health;
- agencies with volunteer capacity;
- Travellers Aid (Melbourne);
- NTCP;
- Rural City of Wangaratta;
- Wangaratta Access and Inclusion Group;

- Department of Transport; and
- mobility equipment hire business within the Wangaratta CBD.

Issues

The NTCP Steering Group is seeking support in principle from Council in progressing the pilot program through an application to the NTCP Innovation Fund which can provide up to \$75,000 for new innovative projects. The application funding round closed on the 09 December 2011.

Given the timeline of this application in principle support was provided but can be withdrawn if Council determine to do so.

It is envisaged that stage one of the project, if funded, would commence by June 2012 and be completed in December 2013. The NTCP would be the holder of the funds for the project.

Part of the proposed funding would provide a project worker to explore possible sites for a hub from which Travellers Aid would be conducted. Possible sites may include:

- Wangaratta Library;
- Wangaratta Comfort Station (Cnr Murphy and Ford Streets);
- King George V Gardens Comfort Station; or
- other suitably identified venues including private premises (i.e.) business.

The project worker's role, with support from NTCP Steering Group, Travellers Aid (Melbourne) and Council would be to develop a pilot program for the Rural City of Wangaratta to encompass:

- identifying potential clients to participate in the pilot program and promote through suitable networks;
- identifying a suitable venue to accommodate the Travellers Aid program;
- identifying partnerships with existing volunteer agencies to recruit and train companions; and
- identifying partnerships with businesses and or agencies to provide sustenance, mobility equipment hire, consumables etc.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

To support families, older people and people with disabilities to actively engage and participate in their community.

Sustainability

Should the pilot program be successful, NTCP will investigate recurrent funding from relevant funding bodies.

Community Engagement

The proposed development of a Travellers Aid program is in response to feedback received through a number of community engagement activities.

Conclusion

For the purpose of the proposed project Council is requested to provide input through the involvement of a Council Officer on the NTCP Steering Group. Any other implications for Council would be the subject of a separate discussion, for example the use of a Council facility for the purpose of providing the Travellers Aid program.

(Moved: Councillor R Webb/Councillor D McPhie)

Recommendation

That Council endorse working in partnership with the North East Transport Connections Project Committee to apply for funds for the establishment of a project to explore the potential for a pilot Travellers Aid program to be undertaken in Wangaratta.

Carried.

Communication

The Transport Connections Project Officers will be advised of Council's decision.

11.2.4 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

11.2.4.1 PROGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WANGARATTA PARKING STRATEGY

Parking Areas

83.130.002

Introduction

This report provides Council with a progress report on the implementation of the Wangaratta Car Parking Strategy.

Background

At the Council meeting held on Tuesday 17 May 2011, Council resolved to:

1. *Endorse the Wangaratta Parking Strategy where short term parking spaces are to be provided in a future multi storey car park within the CBD area and long term parking provided in Satellite car parks adjacent to the CBD area.*
2. *Adopt the revised Car Parking Contribution Policy.*
3. *Prepare a parking precinct plan for the Wangaratta Central Activity Area in light of the Wangaratta Parking Strategy looking at both public and private land within the CBD and options to best utilise current and future parking areas to prepare a planning scheme amendment.*

In addressing the predicted need for 300 additional car parking spaces, the Wangaratta Parking Strategy highlighted the following:

1. Provide 160 parking spaces for short term parking in a future multi storey car park within the CBD area.
2. Provide 140 parking spaces for long term parking in Satellite car parks outside but adjacent to the CBD area.

The two sites that were identified in the May 2011 report to Council for satellite car parks were Merriwa Park and Apex Park. The report concluded that upon adoption of the strategy:

1. Plans will be prepared for the extension of the car park within Merriwa Park for inclusion in the proposed 2011-2012 capital budget.
2. Plans and estimates will be prepared for the extension of the car park within Apex Park for inclusion in a subsequent capital budget.
3. Council officers will monitor developments within the CBD area for opportunities to partner with a developer in constructing a multi storey car park.

Issues

Northern Satellite Car Park

Since the adoption of the Car Parking Strategy, the time restriction on an underutilised portion of the Wangaratta Plaza car park have been removed.

The Wangaratta Plaza car park is within the 400m radius of the CBD qualifying for the description of a satellite car park to the north of the CBD area. Fifty parking spaces had the 2 hour parking restriction removed to become un-timed parking spaces.

Merriwa Park Satellite Car Park

The redevelopment of the tennis club has seen the decommissioning of the two easternmost hard courts. These courts were on a reinforced concrete slab which is suitable for use as a vehicular pavement and are adjacent to the car park location identified within the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan.

The concrete slab can be used to extend the car park planned within the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan to provide the untimed parking spaces identified within the parking strategy.

Construction works are planned to commence in March. When complete, a further 40 untimed parking spaces will become available.

Apex Park Satellite Car Park

A proposal to extend the car park on the Bickerton Street road reserve adjacent to Apex Park will be submitted for consideration in the 2012-13 capital works program.

Multi Storey Car Park within Wangaratta CBD Area

Discussions are currently in progress with the owners of a Wangaratta CBD property who are looking to redevelop the site with the addition of a multi-storey car park. Council is investigating how it may be able to provide the short term parking spaces identified within the parking strategy in partnership with this proposed new development.

Car Park Behind Grand Central Hotel

The storage shed on Council land behind the Grand Central Hotel was demolished in 2011. This area is now set aside for car parking and is to be sealed in early 2012 creating up to 10 untimed car parks.

Implications

The creation of the 40 untimed parking spaces on the decommissioned tennis hard courts and addressing access issues into the car park area in Merriwa Park will require a variation to the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan. This is the subject of a further report within this agenda.

Council Plan Outcomes

Plan for and provide infrastructure appropriate to the community's needs.

Plan developments and public spaces that take into account community needs and desires while being practical and responsive to longer term needs.

Conclusion

The conversion of the 50 underutilised parking spaces within the Wangaratta Plaza car park from 2 hour to untimed, the creation of the 40 untimed parking spaces in Merriwa Park and the 10 untimed parks behind the Grand Central Hotel will see a total of 100 untimed bays created toward the 140 long term parking bays as identified in the Parking Strategy.

The most recent community satisfaction survey identified parking supply and location as an area requiring improvement. Progress toward the implementation of the Wangaratta Parking Strategy is expected to address the level of community satisfaction with parking facilities within the Wangaratta CBD area.

(Moved: Councillor R Webb/Councillor D McPhie)

Recommendation

That Council acknowledge the progress in the implementation of the Wangaratta Parking Strategy.

Carried.

11.2.4.2 MERRIWA PARK / KALUNA PARK MASTERPLAN VARIATION

Merriwa Park

7021

Introduction

This report seeks a variation to the original Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan and provides a progress report on its implementation.

Background

The Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan (the masterplan) was adopted by Council at its meeting on 20 September 2005. Council allocated money within its 2010-11 Capital Works budget to construct the parking area across the front of the tennis courts as identified within the masterplan.

Extensive flooding of the parks in September and December 2010 delayed the commencement of the project. In 2011, Council and the Wangaratta Lawn Tennis Club were successful in attracting flood restoration funding that provided for the resurfacing of two of the tennis hard courts, along with the refurbishment of the club rooms, the adjoining parking area, and to provide gates to allow the closure of the park in the event of a flood.

A consequence of these works was that the two easternmost tennis hard courts were decommissioned which provided the opportunity for Council to make use of the reinforced concrete pavement to extend the car park proposed under the masterplan and provide some additional untimed parking in line with the Wangaratta Parking Strategy.

Issues

The works under the funding grant are progressing well with the resurfacing of the two tennis hard courts completed and the restumping of the clubrooms and refurbishment of the kitchen nearing completion. The works on the car park immediately adjacent to the clubrooms are planned to be undertaken with the works proposed under the original masterplan.

The availability of the decommissioned tennis hard courts for parking has required Council's engineers to reassess the access and parking configuration as shown within the masterplan.

Discussions held with some community groups in relation to options that were being considered revealed that there was some concern regarding the intention within the masterplan to remove the vehicular access to the foot of the levee bank. This access also provides vehicular access to the parking area adjacent to the all-abilities toilet within Merriwa Park.

Following the engineering review and consultation the proposed variations to the masterplan are as follows and shown on the ensuing extract from the plan:



The variations to the master plan are recommended for the following reasons:

1. The access road to the levee also provides vehicular access to the all-abilities toilet that services the park area. Discussions with the Wangaratta Access & Inclusion Group highlighted the need to retain vehicular access adjacent to the toilet. Under the masterplan, the distance from the car park to the toilet would be over 100m and is considered too far for a person with a disability to have to travel from their car to access the toilet.

The Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group also expressed a desire to maintain vehicular access to the levee bank to facilitate their work within Kaluna Park.

2. The playground is currently bounded by the tennis courts and the two roads. The masterplan looked to remove the roadway on the eastern side of the playground so that it would open out onto grassed parkland. The proposed works remain faithful to this concept only that it is the roadway on the west side of the playground that is to be removed.
3. The pavement on the eastern side of the playground that was intended to be removed under the masterplan is proposed to be retained to maintain status quo for vehicles heading down to the all-abilities toilet. This way, vehicles driving down to the toilet block will not be required to snake their way through a car park.
4. The masterplan contained a recommendation for a two hour restriction on all parking within Merriwa Park to discourage non- recreational users of the park. The proposal is to provide a mix of short (2hr), medium (3-4hr) and long term (untimed) parking. Two hours is considered too short for people who are in the park to play tennis and bays with a three or four hour restriction would be more appropriate.

The additional bays installed on the decommissioned tennis hard courts will be untimed, contributing to the stock of untimed parking spaces within easy walking distance of the CBD as identified in the Wangaratta Parking Strategy. These untimed bays will also be available for those cycling tourists who wish to park their car for the day in Wangaratta and take advantage of the Oxley rail trail.

The existing sealed park area within the park has 31 marked bays on the paved area and undefined, untimed parking on the unsealed area adjacent to the tennis club. The proposed works will provide 23 short term parking spaces adjacent to the playground area, 39 medium term spaces adjacent to the tennis clubrooms and 40 untimed spaces on and immediately adjacent to the decommissioned tennis hard courts.

Comfort Station Redevelopment

Funding is being sought to redevelop the comfort station at the entry to Merriwa Park into a cycle station. The cycle station will have provision for secure storage of bicycles and shower facilities. A viewing deck overlooking Merriwa Park is also planned.

A successful funding application will also allow for the current ramp down under the comfort station which does not comply with disability access guidelines to be replaced with a ramp that would comply with the disability access codes. A new ramp will also allow easy access for cyclists from the cycle station through the park to join the shared path in Murdoch Rd that links to the Oxley Rail Trail.

Future Planning

Investigations are being undertaken to improve the entrance to the park for vehicles turning left into the Park from Ryley Street. These improvements may allow buses and tourists towing a caravan entry in to the Park and would be subject to there being sufficient room for these vehicles to be able to turn around and park within the park and VicRoads approval for any works in Ryley Street.

Preliminary calculations indicate the current paved area used for car parking may have sufficient width to allow these turning movements.

If the funding application for the Comfort Station is successful allowing for the all-abilities compliant ramp to be constructed, discussions will take place with the Wangaratta Access & Inclusion Group to determine whether this would remove the need for public vehicle access to the all-abilities toilet adjacent to the levee bank. If this can be achieved then some of the pavement will be able to be removed with the remaining pavement available as a shared path and for service vehicles, including the Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group who would still require access for their works within Kaluna Park.

Council Plan Outcomes

Plan for and provide infrastructure appropriate to the community's needs.

Plan developments and public spaces that take into account community needs and desires while being practical and responsive to longer term needs.

Community Engagement

The following community groups were consulted in relation to the proposed works within Merriwa Park:

- Wangaratta Access & Inclusion Group
- Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group
- Wangaratta Lawn Tennis Club
- Business Wangaratta

Sustainability

An area of some 650 square metres of reinforced concrete will be able to be reused for car parking rather than being torn up and carted to the Bowser Landfill.

The community has invested in the sealed pavement assets that exist within Merriwa Park. The condition of these assets is generally good and if they can be put to a use that increases the accessibility of the park by the community then there is an argument they should be retained for that purpose.

Implications

Under the masterplan some lawn area and playground was to be lost in the construction of the access road and the car park area and some areas of lawn were to be gained through the removal of paved areas no longer required.

Comparing the current situation within the park, the proposed works will see an increase in the lawn area with the removal of access road on the west side of the playground.

The removal of the paved areas has been deferred for the time being to:

1. Allow the continued vehicle access down to the all-abilities toilet and the levee bank, and,
2. To provide time for Council engineers to determine whether the existing car park area is able to be reconfigured to allow buses and cars with trailers to be able to manoeuvre and park within the reserve.

Item 2 above is considered an important exercise for Council to pursue as it would make the park more accessible to the community and tourists to visit and enjoy.

The length of the proposed car park (neglecting the decommissioned tennis hard courts) is shorter (18m) than in the masterplan due to the need to maintain the access to the all-abilities toilet. The number of parking spaces that could have been provided in this area is 14 spaces and while 4 spaces are gained with the changed point of access, the net loss is 10 spaces.

Section 17E of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act requires an application to the Minister should the Committee of Management for a reserve wish to install car parks for use by persons who are not using the reserve for the intended purpose of the reserve.

The Wangaratta Car Parking Strategy identifies the untimed parking created in Merriwa Park to be available to address long term parking requirements for people using the CBD.

While the long term parking will be available for park users or as a launching place for other activities such as the Oxley rail trail, it will also be available for those wanting to park for extended periods for business or employment in the CBD thereby triggering the application under the Act.

The untimed parking is planned for the decommissioned tennis hard court area and works will not commence on integrating this area into the new car park until approval has been received from the Minister.

Conclusion

The recommended variations to the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan are still considered to meet the original objectives of the masterplan and allow Council to take advantage of the decommissioned tennis hard courts to provide the additional untimed spaces identified within the Wangaratta Parking Strategy.

The variations will:

- Result in more parkland than currently exists through the removal of the west access road;
- Enable Council to meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act by maintaining vehicular access to the all-abilities toilet adjacent to the levee bank;

- Give time to undertake the necessary work around improving access into the park for buses and tourists with caravans; and
- Provide parking facilities for people who wish to use the park as a launching place for other recreational pursuits such as the Oxley Rail Trail.

The construction of the car park will see the major civil works associated with the implementation of the masterplan completed. These works are planned to commence in March while the extension of the car park onto the decommissioned tennis hard court will be constructed upon receipt of approval from the Minister.

Recommendation

That:

- 1. Council approve the proposed variations to the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan as outlined within the report; and***
- 2. Council endorse an application to the Minister under Section 17E of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act for the use of reserved land for car parking.***

(Moved: Councillor L McCully/Councillor R Parisotto)

That:

- 1. Council approve the proposed variations to the Merriwa Park / Kaluna Park Masterplan as outlined within the report;***
- 2. Council endorse an application to the Minister under Section 17E of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act for the use of reserved land for car parking***
- 3. all stakeholders including major users of the park be advised in writing of the variations to the Merriwa Park/ Kaluna Park masterplan as outlined within this report.***

Carried.

Communication

A copy of a plan showing the proposed will works will be put on display in the foyer of the Wangaratta Government Centre.

11.2.4.3 COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT FOR THE OVENS RIVER SHARED PATH

C1112/008 - Design & Construct Two Pedestrian Bridges across the Ovens River in Wangaratta

30.073.008

Introduction

The proposed Ovens River Shared Path is a shared path linking Sydney Beaches with the Showgrounds.

The proposed route for the shared path is shown below:

river between the two bridges and the strip between the second bridge and the railway bridge.

Council would then be responsible for maintaining the shared path.

Conclusion

In order to achieve the construction of the shared path between the Sydney Beaches area to the railway bridge, it is proposed that Council form one Committee of Management to take control of the land from DSE.

(Moved: Councillor R Webb/Councillor L McCully)

Recommendation

That Council accept an extension of its Committee of Management to include the land between Sydney Beaches and the railway crossing for the Ovens River shared path from the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Carried.

11.2.4.4 PETITION: PEDESTRIAN CROSSING – DOCKER STREET, WANGARATTA

Bus Routes / Issues

83.040.001

Introduction

This report details the action proposed to be undertaken in response to a petition received regarding the provision of a safe pedestrian crossing from the bus stop in Docker Street to the GOTAFE campus and the Wangaratta Library.

Background

A covering letter from the Advocacy Access Council and a supporting letter from the High Country Library Corporation together with a petition containing some 137 signatures from students and carers of GOTAFE Wangaratta Certificate II Community Services and Yooralla was received seeking provision of a safe pedestrian crossing. The petition was tabled at the 13 December 2011 Council meeting with the following recommendation ratified:

“That the petition regarding provision of a safe pedestrian crossing in Docker Street, Wangaratta from the bus stop to the GOTAFE campus and the Wangaratta Library be received and a report about the issues raised be considered at Council’s January 2012 meeting.”

Issues

A bus stop is currently located on the northern side of Docker Street opposite the Wangaratta Library.

Passengers disembarking from the bus wishing to access the Wangaratta Library or the GOTAFE on the southern side of the road then need to negotiate between parked cars, a busy roadway leading to and from the Wangaratta train station with no dedicated pedestrian crossing point in the immediate area.

Furthermore, the Docker Street roadway is very wide with pedestrians feeling vulnerable having to walk over twenty metres between kerbs and a minimum of ten metres between parked vehicles, with no refuge in between.

Users and in particularly the elderly and others that are less mobile would greatly enhance their safe crossing ability with a pedestrian refuge mid-span. The refuge would provide a safe haven for the users to cross Docker Street between traffic movements.

Council received a request for a formal crossing point at this location early in 2011. Some preliminary work was undertaken to look at possible configurations that could provide a refuge while minimising the number of lost car parks.

With the establishment of all day car parks adjacent to the IGA Supermarket via an agreement with the owners, the loss of two car parks will have less of an impact.

Implications

Council Plan Outcomes

Plan for and provide infrastructure appropriate to the community's needs.

With the high level of utilisation of this area by pedestrians, there currently exists a high risk of conflict with vehicles travelling along Docker Street.

It is estimated that the costs to provide two new pedestrian crossovers and a mid-span pedestrian refuge will be \$20,000 and the loss of two car park spaces.

Conclusion

To provide a safer crossing point for pedestrians and other users the recommendation would be to construct suitable pedestrian crossovers at either side of Docker Street and mid span pedestrian refuge to provide further protection for the users, however this will need to be submitted as a project for consideration for the 2012/2013 Capital Works Program.

(Moved: Councillor R Parisotto/Councillor L McCully)

Recommendation

That a project to construct a formalised crossing point in Docker Street in close proximity to the Wangaratta Library and existing Bus Stop be considered in the 2012/2013 budget deliberations.

Carried.

Communication

The first named signatory of the petition will be advised on Council's determination on this matter.

11.3 SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

(Moved: Councillor R Parisotto/Councillor L McCully)

Recommendation

That item 11.3.1.1 and 11.4.1.1 be noted.

Carried.

11.3.1.1 FRIENDS OF LACLUTA SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Lacluta East Timor Friendship

42.070.020

The Friends of Lacluta Special Committee (FOL) held meetings on 3 November 2011 and 12 December 2011.

Meeting 3 November 2011

Attendees: John Ambrosia, Barbara Broz, Bernadette Fraser, Margaret Brickhill, Beth Walpole, Elizabeth Walpole

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

Items discussed at the meeting held on 3 November 2011 included:

- Joint FOL Committee and Rotary Club of Appin Park project to refurbish building as the Lacluta Friendship House – team travelled to Lacluta on 26 October 2011. A banner has been produced to be displayed at the building depicting the partners involved;
- Two Timor Leste Local Government Officers hosted by RCoW from 14.11.11 to 7.12.11 – Diolinda da Costa (Lauten) and Clara de Carvalho Ximenes (Manatuto);
- Juans Family Bicycle Ride on 18 September 2011 raised \$600 for FOL Committee;
- Volunteer insurance cover for FOL Committee members whilst travelling to East Timor is valid if Council is notified in advance of the travel arrangements;
- Submission sent for the Aus AID East Timor Community Assistance Scheme;
- Kindergarten equipment (\$400) purchased for Lacluta Friendship House.
- Financial report presented;
- The regional network of Timor Leste Friendship Groups is planning a meeting in Beechworth on 04 December 2011 to unite the Timor Leste Local Government Officers;
- Schools in Myrtleford to be approached regarding future involvement in activities with FOL Committee & Galen College have included Timor Leste in the immersion program; and
- Website, letterhead and logo development.

Meeting 12 December 2011

Attendees: Councillor Rozi Parisotto, Leonie Painter, Andy Kimber, John Ambrosia, Bernadette Fraser, Margaret Brickhill, Beth Walpole, Elizabeth Walpole, Joy Ramsey, John Bradford

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

Items discussed at the meeting held on 12 December 2011 included:

- Joint FOL Committee and Rotary Club of Appin Park project – new roof constructed and made weather proof, next stage to occur in March/April 2012;
- The regional network of Timor Leste Friendship Groups had a successful meeting in Beechworth on 4 December 2011 to unite the Timor Leste Local Government Officers. RCoW commended for excellent organisation of the visit;
- The Aus AID East Timor Community Assistance Scheme. EOI has progressed to application stage;
- Website, letterhead and logo development – drafts to be approved by FOL Committee and RCoW;
- Myrtleford Schools involved with fundraising activities and interaction with Lacluta School;
- A fundraising musical event to involve Galen College is progressed.
- Planning workshop to be held on 9 January 2012 to develop a strategic plan and budget;
- Special Committee meeting dates for 2012 scheduled; and
- Financial report presented.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

11.4 ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.4.1.1 AGRICULTURE AND AGRIBUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee

25.070.006

Background

Council's Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee (AAAC) held a meeting on Monday 16 January 2012.

Attendees: Councillor R Paino, Mayor; Graham Nickless, Ray Park, Director – Sustainability, Michelle Grainger, Manager – Planning & Customer Services Rosey Bennett; Vincent McKenzie; David Maples; Harvey Benton; Geoff Bussell; and Joe La Spina and Graeme Norman.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

The following items were discussed:

- Draft 2 Rural Land Strategy – Significant Landscape Overlays (King Valley & Glenrowan);
- Murray Darling Basin Authority – Draft Plan (Outcome for Ovens);
- Review Trading Rules – Ovens & King Rivers;
- Regional Wine Industry Restructure Support Strategy;
- Future opportunities for agriculture; and
- Access and maintenance – “Drought Bores”.

The Committee recommended that:

1. Council support the Regional Wine Industry Restructure Support Strategy. This recommendation has been considered elsewhere in this agenda; and
2. Council urgently clarify access arrangement and future management of drought water bores. This recommendation has been considered elsewhere in this agenda.

The Committee did not have a recommendation in regard to the Review of Water Trading in the Ovens and King systems.

The next meeting of the Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee is scheduled for 13 February 2012.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

12. RECORDS OF ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS

An “Assembly of Councillors” is a meeting at which matters are considered that are intended or likely to be the subject of a Council decision and is either of the following:

- A meeting of an advisory committee where at least one Councillor is present; or
- A planned or scheduled meeting that includes at least half the Councillors and at least one Council officer.

At an assembly of Councillors, a written record is kept of:

- a) The names of all Councillors and members of the Council staff attending;
- b) The matters considered;
- c) Any conflict of interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending; and
- d) Whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the assembly.

The written record of an assembly of Councillors is, as soon as practicable:

- a) Reported at an ordinary meeting of the Council; and
- b) Incorporated in the Minutes of that Council meeting.

DATE	MEETING DETAILS	REFER
18/01/2012	Conciliation Meeting	Attachment
17/01/2012	Draft Agenda and Deputations Meeting	Attachment
16/01/2012	Agriculture and Agribusiness Advisory Committee	Refer item 11.4.1.1
20/12/2011	Tour of Facilities	Attachment
20/12/2011	Councillors Briefing Forum	Attachment
13/12/2011	Prior to Ordinary Meeting of Council	Attachment
3/11/2011 and 12/12/2011	Friends of Lacluta Special Committee Meeting	Refer item 11.3.1.1

(Moved: Councillor R Parisotto/Councillor R Webb)

Recommendation

That:

1. ***Council receive the reports of Assemblies of Councillors, and***
2. ***the items listed below remain confidential in accordance with S.77 of the Local Government Act on the grounds that they relate to one or more of the following matters:***
 - a. ***Industrial matters;***
 - b. ***Contractual matters;***
 - c. ***Proposed developments; and***
 - d. ***a matter that would prejudice the Council***

(i) Councillor’s Briefing Forum dated 20 December 2011:

- 4.2.1.1 Key Performance Indicators**
- 4.2.1.2 Works And Activities Progress**
- 4.2.1.4 Planning & Subdivision Reports**
- 4.2.1.5 Implementation Of Council Decisions**
- 4.2.1.6 Council Planning Calendar 2011**
- 4.2.2.1 Councillors Retreat**
- 4.2.2.3 Councillor Participation – Australia Day 2012**
- 4.2.2.4 Financial Support – Wangaratta Sports Carnival**
- 4.2.3.1 North East Victorian Firewood Strategy**
- 4.2.4.2 Wangaratta Children’s Service Centre Final Stage**
- 4.2.4.3 Wangaratta Community Pride Committee – Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Membership**
- 4.2.4.4 Wangaratta Museum Concept**
- 4.2.4.5 Variation To The Timelines Of The Open Space And Recreation Strategies**
- 4.2.4.7 Australia Day Review**
- 4.2.5.1 Government Roads And Register Of Public Roads**
- 4.2.5.3 Bourke Road Railway Crossing**
- 4.2.5.4 Wangaratta Equine Centre**
- 4.2.5.5 Request To Impose Parking Restriction**

Carried.**13. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil.

14. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

15. AUTHORISATION OF SIGNING AND SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

Authorisation of Signing & Sealing of Documents

50.010.004

(Moved: Councillor A Griffiths/Councillor R Parisotto)**Recommendation*****That Council sign and seal the Moyhu Bowling Club Inc. Loan Agreement for the amount of \$36,130.*****Carried.**

16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Public Question Time

10.020.004

Elaine Jacobsen – Wangaratta

Ms Jacobsen referred to the proposed car parking arrangements for Merriwa Park and asked if Council was aware that it has a responsibility to maintain and improve the park for the purpose it was reserved? Ms Jacobsen asked how the 40 all day spaces meet with Council's obligations?

Mr Sharp responded that the timed and untimed car parks can be used for whatever purpose and that Council is not predetermining or putting conditions on how the spaces will be used.

Kieran Klemm - Londrigan

Mr Klemm asked if Council would be spraying the blackberries in Klemm Road.

Ray Park responded that Council has spent \$300,000 over the past 3 years in spraying weeds on roadsides and that there is a backlog of work Council is trying to catch-up on. Mr Park explained that Council is currently working on the targeted areas identified and Mr Klemm would be advised if his area was one of the targeted locations.

Jim Lewis – Wangaratta

Mr Lewis asked if Council is making any real attempts to discourage the need for parking in the CBD? Is it true that previously Council were in discussion with a firm that would build a multideck central car park but was abandoned because it was going to be \$50 a day?

Mr Sharp responded that Council's 2030 vision aspires to have less cars and one of those measures is to increase rural and urban bus services. Council is progressing the approach to cycle paths and shared paths and one of the latests is the showgrounds to Sydney beaches, all designed to offer an alternative to vehicles.

Mr Sharp also advised that a consultant's report suggested that 300 additional spaces short term and long term were needed by 2030. In addition the community satisfaction survey always identifies car parking as a major issue and Council is rightfully responding to that.

Dr Peter Curtis – Wangaratta

Dr Curtis disputed Council officers statement that the Wangaratta Urban Landcare Group require access to Kaluna Park to continue work.

Dr Curtis asked how long the plan would be on exhibition for public comment?

Mr Gasperoni responded that he would suggest 28 days. However, Council still needs to apply to the Minister and until we receive a response we can continue to advertise. Mr Gasperoni noted that he would try to make it available this week.

Dr Curtis suggested the plan include disabled toilet access in the comfort station.

Gary Nevin – Bobinawarrah

Mr Nevin asked if the Local Policy Framework is being reviewed as part of the Rural Land Strategy review.

Mr Park responded that it would be reviewed.

Doug Sunderland – Wangaratta

Mr Sunderland expressed an opinion that Council shouldn't remove the comfort station.

Mr Sharp responded that Council does not intend to remove the comfort station.

Di Farmer – Wangaratta

Ms Farmer referred to the dumping of rubbish at 15 Mile Creek previously reported to Council 4 months ago. Ms Farmer asked if someone from Council could contact Vic Roads and find out whether they will do anything as she has had no response from them.

Mr Gasperoni responded that a Local Laws office will be in contact with Vic Roads and if they don't clean it up, Council will.

Elaine Jacobsen – Wangaratta

Ms Jacobsen asked if Council has investigated Speering Street as a potential parking area.

Ms Jacobsen also asked why Council doesn't start the rail trail at the Rail Station.

Mr Sharp responded that the Comfort Station at the Railway Station defeats the purpose. Mr Sharp noted that research indicates that limits distances for people that are prepared to walk

Kieran Klemm – Londrigan

Mr Klemm congratulated Council on its efficient hand dryers in the public toilets and asked if when Council is ready to upgrade the dryers if the purchasing officer could look at buying the best hand dryers possible.

Mr Sharp responded that we would investigate hand dryers when ready to upgrade.

Mr Jim Lewis – Wangaratta

Mr Lewis referred to the rate notices now being available electronically and asked whether Council will make it clear that you can now receive notices by email.

Mr Park responded that we need to provide people with the option to receive their notices by email.

Dr Peter Curtis – Wangaratta

Dr Curtis stated that Council treats public land as if they own it. Plenty of land available in areas around the city

Mayor responded that officers are looking at it all the time.

Gary Nevin - Bobinawarrah

Mr Nevin asked if it were possible and what would be the process to reintroduce ridings.

Mr Sharp responded that periodically, the VEC undertakes an electoral review to assess ratios in Council making sure its representation is accurate. The next one is in 2016.

Mr Kieran Klemm – Londrigan

Mr Klemm asked why there was no Council meeting advertisement in the Wangaratta Chronicle last Friday.

Mr Sharp responded that he would take on board.

17. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Nil.

18. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.