



# Minutes

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Council Meeting held at 12.30 PM on Monday 4 October 2021, online via Microsoft Teams.

## **Present**

Cr Murray Emerson (Mayor)  
Cr Lauren Demspey  
Cr Tony Driscoll  
Cr Kevin Erwin  
Cr Trevor Gready  
Cr Rob Haswell  
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD

Ms Liana Thompson, Chief Executive Officer  
Mr Vaughan Williams, Director Corporate and Community Services  
Mr Trenton Fithall, Director Infrastructure and Amenity

## **Affirmation**

We recognise the traditional owners of the land.  
We are inspired by the early pioneers and by those who gave their lives for our country.  
We now ask God's blessing on our deliberations  
and on our commitment to build a better lifestyle and environment.

Confirmed at the meeting of Council on Monday, 8 November 2021.

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**1. Apologies**

Nil

**2. Confirmation of Minutes**

Council Meeting held on Monday, 6 September 2021

Unscheduled Council Meeting on Monday, 20 September 2021

**RESOLUTION**

**That the minutes as listed, copies of which have been circulated, be confirmed and adopted.**

**Moved: Cr Rob Haswell**

**Seconded: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic**

**Carried**

**3. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Nil

**4. Presentations/Awards**

Nil

**5. Presentation of Petitions and Joint Letters**

Nil

## **6. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting**

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

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

**(ii) intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice-**

- advising of the conflict of interest;**
- explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and**
- detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the-**
  - name of the other person**
  - nature of the relationship with that other person or the date on receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and**
  - nature of that other person's interest in the matter;**

**and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer.**

**The Councillor must, in either event, exclude themselves from the decision-making process, including any discussion or vote on the matter and any action in relation to the matter and leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.**

### **Members of Staff**

**A member of Council staff must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing or contributing to the preparation of a report for a Council meeting. They must immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest and explaining its nature.**

Nil

## 7. Informal Meetings of Councillors

[Liana Thompson, Chief Executive Officer]

Council's Governance Rules require that if there is a meeting of Councillors that-

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- is not a Council meeting, delegated committee meeting or community asset committee meeting

the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The records for the period since the last Council Meeting are listed below.

Date	Meeting Description	Matters Considered At The Informal Meeting:	Conflict Of Interest Disclosures						
20/09/2021	Sustainable Infrastructure Briefing	8.1 Annual Report 2020-21 8.2 Revenue and Rating Plan Details Discussion 8.3 Asset Plan Introduction 8.4 St Arnaud Tennis Club Options 9.1 C4 2021/22 - Grampians Gate Caravan Park Amenities Block Upgrade 9.2 C9 2019/20 - Provision of Public Convenience and Facilities Cleaning 10.1 Council Agenda Review Planning and Building Services Update	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?			Nil	Nil	Nil
Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?									
Nil	Nil	Nil							
13/09/2021	Economic Growth Briefing	8.1 10am Presentation - AusNet 8.2 Business Assistance Package Redesign 8.3 Delegations Update 8.4 Governance Rules	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?			Nil	Nil	Nil
Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?									
Nil	Nil	Nil							
06/09/2021	Lifestyles and Community Briefing	7.1. Revenue and Rating Plan Discussion 7.2. Engagement Overview to Financial Plan 7.3. Lord Nelson Park Multipurpose Clubroom Development - Update 8.1. Council Agenda Review	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?			Nil	Nil	Nil
Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?									
Nil	Nil	Nil							
30/08/2021	Organisational Effectiveness Briefing	8.1 Council Action Plan 2021-22 8.2 Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 8.3 Road Management Plan 2020-21 Compliance 8.4 Planning Application Request 8.5 Audit and Risk Committee - Activity Report, Committee Chair and Honorariums 8.6 Proposed Road Naming - Zebina Lane	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> <td>Nil</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?			Nil	Nil	Nil
Councillor/Officer Item Number Left Meeting?									
Nil	Nil	Nil							

## RESOLUTION

**That the report on Informal Meetings of Councillors be approved.**

**Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin  
Seconded: Cr Rob Haswell**

**Carried**

## 8. Items Brought Forward

Nil

## 9. Consideration of Reports of Officers

### 9.1. Enhance Lifestyle and Community

#### 9.1.1. Appointment of Walkers Lake Advisory Group

**Author/Position:** Tony Dark, Senior Placemaker

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations to appoint new members to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group.

#### **Summary**

The Walkers Lake Advisory Group (the Group) was formed by Council in 2014 and provides a community view and valuable input into the management of the Walkers Lake Reserve. The Group currently consists of up to seven community members, up to two Councillors (one Councillor will chair meetings), one Council officer and invited government and non-government stakeholders, eg Landcare.

Michelle Clark, who was a community member, has resigned and three members have fulfilled their term with the Group, Trevor Baldock, Colin Coates and Wayne Robbins, creating four vacancies.

The vacancies were advertised in the North Central News seeking expressions of interest in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Seven applications were received for the vacant positions, which were shortlisted by Council's selection panel which included two Council officers and two Councillors.

#### **Recommendation**

##### **That Council:**

- **approves the appointment of Carol Campbell, Debra Meagher, Haviva Perkal and Russell Steel to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group as community members; and**
- **approves the appointment of Andrew Borg, Facilitator of Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, as the Landcare representative to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group.**

#### **RESOLUTION**

##### **That Council:**

- **approves the appointment of Carol Campbell, Debra Meagher, Haviva Perkal and Russell Steel to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group as community members; and**
- **approves the appointment of Andrew Borg, Facilitator of Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, as the Landcare representative to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group.**

**Moved:** Cr Kevin Erwin

**Seconded:** Cr Tony Driscoll

**Carried**

### **Background/Rationale**

The Walkers Lake Advisory Group (the Group) is an advisory committee established in 2014. The Group is guided by its Terms of Reference, which include the structure of the committee, the process for appointments to the Group and review of the Terms of Reference.

The Group comprises of two Councillors (one Councillor will chair meetings) appointed annually, and community members, appointed for four years. The Group has no powers conferred to it by Council. The Terms of Reference require all positions to be advertised publicly. The Councillors designated are responsible for evaluating the applications with regards to the qualities set out in the Terms of Reference, and making a recommendation to Council to appoint the member/s.

The positions were advertised in the North Central News and on Northern Grampians Shire Council social media.

### **Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications**

The objectives of the Terms of Reference align with Council's Council Plan aims of Enhance Lifestyles and Community, Protect and Enhance our Natural and Cultural Environment.

### **Options**

#### **Option 1**

That Council:

- approves the appointment of Carol Campbell, Debra Meagher, Haviva Perkal and Russell Steel to the Walkers Lake Advisory Group as community members; and
- approves the appointment of Andrew Borg, Facilitator of Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network, as the Landcare representative. **[recommended]**

#### **Option 2**

That Council does not approve the recommendation. **[not recommended]**

### **Implications**

This report has considered Social, Heritage/Cultural, Amenity, Human Rights/Privacy, Environmental, Economic and Marketing, Risk Management, Financial and Asset Management implications where applicable. Any identified implications have been addressed within this report.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable

### **Community Engagement**

The Walkers Lake Advisory Group has been consulted.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

The report does not raise any matters of innovation or improvements.

### **Collaboration**

No collaboration with other councils, governments and statutory bodies was sought or provided.

### **Officer's Declaration of Interest**

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Tony Dark, Senior Placemaker

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

### **Attachments**

Nil

**9.2. Boost Economic Growth**  
Nil



**9.3. Providing Sustainable Infrastructure**  
Nil

## 9.4. Improve Organisational Effectiveness

### 9.4.1. Audio-Visual Recording Policy

**Author/Position:** Mary Scully, Manager Governance and Civic Support

#### **Purpose**

To adopt the Audio-Visual Recording Policy for public Council Meetings.

#### **Summary**

Council has agreed to livestream and record public Council Meetings and this policy sets out a framework to provide flexibility in how people participate in Council Meetings.

#### **Recommendation**

**That Council adopts the Audio-Visual Recording Policy.**

#### **RESOLUTION**

**That Council adopts the Audio-Visual Recording Policy.**

**Moved:** Cr Lauren Dempsey

**Seconded:** Cr Rob Haswell

**Carried**

## **Background/Rationale**

Council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide that Council may adopt policies, guidelines, and procedures from time to time relating to public participation including livestreaming or broadcasting and recording of meetings and the use of available technology and systems to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of Council Meetings.

This policy sets out the framework for livestreaming and audio-visual recording of public Council Meetings to encourage wider community involvement in Council Meetings and provide transparency and accountability. Providing flexibility in how people participate in Council Meetings creates genuine opportunity and access for all people to make meaningful and constructive contributions to Council decision-making and increase public trust in Council decisions.

Implications considered in the policy include the protection of personal and sensitive information, gender equality and inclusion by providing more flexible access to and participation in meetings, compliance with recordkeeping compliance and the risks to council from defamation and copyright and privacy breaches.

## **Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications**

Council Plan – Improve Organisational Effectiveness – Being a better Council

### **Options**

#### **Option 1**

That Council adopts the Audio-Visual Recording Policy. **[recommended]**

#### **Option 2**

That Council adopts the proposed policy with amendments. **[not recommended]**

#### **Option 3**

That Council does not adopt the Audio-Visual Recording Policy. **[not recommended]**

### **Implications**

Any identified sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications have been addressed in this report.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable

### **Community Engagement**

Recording of Council Meetings will be actively promoted to the community via council's website, advertising, and on social media. Appropriate signage and notices on Council papers will inform the community that their personal information will be recorded and only used for a related purpose.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Livestreaming and audio-visual recording of Council Meetings are recognised as promoting and implementing the democratic process at the council level and will provide the public, including those unable to attend meetings in person, with access to Council decision-making and increase public awareness of the decision-making process.

Livestreaming and audio-visual recording of Council Meetings will assist in the preparation of complete and accurate minutes and enable verification of minutes where specific issues of accuracy are raised.

### **Collaboration**

Not applicable

**Officer's Declaration of Interest**

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Mary Scully, Manager Governance and Civic Support

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

**Attachments**

1. Audio- Visual Recording Policy [9.4.1.1 - 6 pages]

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# Audio-Visual Recording Policy



October 2021

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# Audio-Visual Recording Policy



## Council Policy

<b>Responsible director</b>	Director Corporate and Community Services
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Manager Governance and Civic Support
<b>Functional area</b>	Governance
<b>Date adopted by Council</b>	4 October 2021
<b>Review date</b>	October 2025

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### Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for livestreaming and audio-visual recording of public council meetings to encourage wider community involvement in council meetings and provide transparency and accountability. Council believes that providing flexibility in how people participate in council meetings creates genuine opportunity and access for all people to make meaningful and constructive contributions to council decision-making and increase public trust in council decisions.

### Background

Council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide that council may adopt policies, guidelines, and procedures from time to time relating to public participation including livestreaming or broadcasting and recording of meetings and the use of available technology and systems to ensure the smooth and efficient conduct of council meetings.

### Scope

This policy applies to all public council meetings, councillors, council officers and members of the public as visitors in the public gallery and as participants in the public meeting.

The policy applies to the recording of virtual council meetings to the extent that it complies with the *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* and *Ministerial Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meeting*

This policy does not apply to the audio-visual recording of council meetings by the media or any other person.

### Policy Objective

Livestreaming and audio-visual recording of council meetings are recognised as promoting and implementing the democratic process at the council level and providing the public, including those unable to attend meetings in person, with access to council decision-making and increasing public awareness of the decision-making process.

Livestreaming and audio-visual recording of council meetings will assist in the preparation of complete and accurate minutes and enable verification of minutes where specific issues of accuracy are raised.

The policy is supported by the following guidelines:

***Livestreaming and audio-visual recording***

Council officers will livestream and record public council meetings that can be viewed on council's YouTube channel or via a link on the council's website.

Cameras will be utilised to capture the council table where councillors and officers sit during the council meeting. During Public Question Time members of the community may have their image captured and recorded.

In the event of identification and treatment of problematic content or the unlawful disclosure of personal, health or sensitive information about individuals which is likely to harm a person's reputation or cause offence to a reasonable person, the Mayor reserves the discretion to ask that the audio-visual recording of the meeting be stopped or the recording to be not published on the council's website or made available in any form until the content had been removed.

***Public notification***

There will be signage visibly displayed at the entrance to the council chamber to inform members of the public gallery that the meeting is being recorded and livestreamed to council's YouTube channel. Signage will include that the recording of the meeting will also be made available on council's website.

The council's website will also include notification on its council meetings page to notify the public that meetings are now being recorded and livestreamed.

While all care will be taken to ensure the privacy of members of the public gallery is maintained, council will inform them that their presence may be captured on the recording.

At the commencement of the council meeting the Mayor will remind members of the public gallery that the council meeting is being livestreamed and recorded and made public on the council's website.

***Meetings closed to the public***

If during the council meeting council resolves to close the meeting (whole or in part) to the public in accordance with section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, all livestreaming will be switched off. Recording of the meeting will continue and the viewers informed via a notice that the meeting is closed and will resume at the end of closed council. At the conclusion of the closed council meeting the livestreaming will re-commence to screen the part of the meeting where the Chief Executive Officer reports on the outcome of any decision made during the closed meeting.

***Public participation in council meetings***

The council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide for council to respond to questions from the community and for the public to make submissions to council. At each meeting there is an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions and address the meeting which includes them stating their names and addresses and these will be recorded.

In the exceptional circumstances that render an individual unable to be recorded, it is at the Mayor's discretion to call for a motion to close the meeting to the public provided that the request complies with the grounds set out in section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide that a person in the gallery must not operate film, photograph or use tape-recording or other equipment to reproduce sound and/or images at any meeting without first obtaining the consent of the Chair. The consent of the Chair may be revoked at any time during a meeting by the Chair stating that consent has been revoked and ordering that the recording ceases.

### ***Editing of meeting recordings***

Due to the instantaneous nature of livestreaming the council meeting there will be no editing of its contents.

Audio recordings of council meetings will only be edited before being made available on council's website in the following circumstances:

- when a member of the public who is addressing council has advised that they do not wish for their comments to be included in the audio recording
- to prevent the publishing of material that is offensive, defamatory, breaches copyright or breaches an individual's privacy, health or sensitive information

Audio recordings of council meeting will not be edited:

- because a speaker regrets their remarks
- to save embarrassment regarding comments made
- to edit out meeting procedural errors

A register of edited recordings will be maintained and record the date of the meeting, the matter edited and the reason why the editing was required.

### ***Recordkeeping***

All council meeting recordings can be downloaded from the council's website. Recordings of the livestream will be made available on council's website within 48 hours (two working days) of the council meeting. Audio-visual recordings can be accessed by the public free of charge.

All audio-visual recordings of council meetings will remain publicly available on the council's website for a period of two years.

Council meeting recordings will be kept for a period of two years and retained/destroyed in accordance with the *Northern Grampians Shire Council's Records Management Policy* and Public Record Office of Victoria Retention and Disposal Standards and Authorities.

### ***Disclaimers***

Personal and/or sensitive information may be collected about persons during council meetings, particularly where they are participating in the public participation section of the meeting.

If personal/sensitive information is disclosed during the meeting, either by the person directly or by a third party, this information will form part of the audio recordings which will be able to be accessed by members of the public.



By participating in council meetings, individuals consent to the use and disclosure of the information that they share during the meeting (including any personal/sensitive information) for the purposes of council carrying out its functions. Individuals also consent to the disclosure of that information to any person/s who access the recordings of the meeting online.

The opinions or statements made during the council meeting are those of the individual and not the opinions or statements of council.

Council takes no responsibility for technical issues beyond its control which hinder or prevent the production and/or publishing of audio-visual recordings, such as, failure of the recording device, power outages or website unavailability.

### **Legislation and Standards**

This policy supports the *Council Plan 2021-25* Goal to Improve Organisational Effectiveness and Be a Better Council by being a more communicative, collaborative and customer-focused council.

### **Responsibilities**

The Director Corporate and Community Services and Manager Governance and Civic Support are responsible for the development of and compliance with the policy and guidelines.

### **Review**

Monitoring and regular assessment of this policy are necessary to ensure it remains current with the council's goals, processes, aims and requirements.

Assessment of the policy will be undertaken every four years to align with the council term to ensure it remains current with the council's goals, processes, aims and requirements and as a means by which to reduce council's exposure to risk. Triggers for an earlier assessment include legislative changes and introduction of new systems or procedures.

### **Communication and implementation**

The policy will be communicated to the public via signage and council's website. It will be made available to councillors and council offices via the councillor portal, electronic document records management system and the GovernanceMatters Channel and referred to in councillor and staff induction and/or training.

### **References**

[Northern Grampians Shire Council Governance Rules 2020](#)

[Victorian Ombudsman Investigation into the transparency of local government decision making 2016](#)

[Ministerial Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meetings.](#)

### **Compliance**

This policy requires relevant State Government legislative compliance:

- Local Government Act 2020*
- Gender Equality Act 2020*
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- Public Records Act 1973*

**Privacy and Data Protection compliance**

This policy has considered council’s legal obligations, implications, and exposures. It ensures compliance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) to the extent that council will be collecting the personal information of people attending the council meetings. The policy also considers the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Framework* that adopts a risk-based approach to protective data security and provides governance arrangements to protect identified information security risks across the domains of information, personnel, ICT and physical.

**Gender Equality compliance**

Councils must consider where relevant gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the policies, programs, and services it delivers.

Council believes that flexibility in how people can attend and participate in council meetings will enable greater access for members of the community who may have barriers that prevent regular attendance in person at a meeting.

As required under Part 3 of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, officers have completed a gender impact assessment as the policy impacts the public. Gender impact assessments assess the effects that a council policy or program may have on people of different genders to ensure the policy better supports Victorians of all genders.

**Charter of Human Rights compliance**

It is considered that this policy has a positive impact on the following Human Right identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*

Taking part in public life – every person has the right to take part in public affairs

**Definitions**

*Council meeting* means a meeting of the council at which all the councillors are, subject to the Local Government Act 2020, entitled to attend and vote, no other person is entitled to vote and a decision to do an act, matter or thing is made by a resolution of the council

**Review history**

Date	Review details	Action
21 September 2021	Reported to ELT	
27 September 2021	Reported to Councillor Briefing	
4 October 2021	Reported to Council	

#### 9.4.2. Formal Road Naming - Ezard Lane

**Author/Position:** Mary Scully, Manager Governance and Civic Support

**Purpose**

To formally name an unnamed road as Ezard Lane.

**Summary**

Council is asked to consider the formal naming of an unnamed road between Gordon Street and Kimberley Street, St Arnaud as Ezard Lane. To meet with statutory requirements for naming places in Victoria, Council recently gave public notice of its intention to name the unnamed road as Ezard Lane.

**Recommendation**

**That Council names the unnamed road between Gordon Street and Kimberley Street, St Arnaud as Ezard Lane.**

**RESOLUTION**

**That Council names the unnamed road between Gordon Street and Kimberley Street, St Arnaud as Ezard Lane.**

**Moved:** Cr Tony Driscoll

**Seconded:** Cr Eddy Ostarcevic

**Carried**

### Background/Rationale

Council is the road naming authority for local roads in accordance with Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* which empowers Council to name roads. Any road naming must be in accordance with *Geographic Place Names* legislation.

Members of the St Arnaud community requested that Council considers the naming of the unnamed road as Ezard Lane in honour of Mr William "Bill" Ezard, who was a well-respected and admired member of the community.

At its meeting on 2 August 2021, Council resolved to commence the formal naming process and to give public notice of its intention to name the unnamed road as Ezard Lane in recognition of the contribution that Mr Ezard provided the town of St Arnaud.



### Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

*Local Government Act 1989*

*Geographic Place Naming Act 1998*

Naming rules for places in Victoria

### Options

#### Option 1

To name the unnamed road between Gordon Street and Kimberley Street, St Arnaud as Ezard Lane.

**[recommended]**

#### Option 2

To take no further action. **[not recommended]**

### Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

### Procurement

Not applicable

### **Community Engagement**

Community consultation is an important part of the place naming process, providing any interested persons an opportunity to comment prior to the road being formally named. Public notice was given in the North Central News, on social media and on council's website inviting comment. Letters were also sent out to all nearby residents inviting feedback on the proposal.

No formal submissions were received but 19 comments from social media were received and circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

Council officers also sought and received support from the Ezard family on the proposal.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Nil

### **Collaboration**

Nil

### **Officer's Declaration of Interest**

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Mary Scully, Manager Governance and Civic Support

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

### **Attachments**

Nil

## 10. Notices of Motion or Rescission

Nil

## 11. Reports from Councillors/Committees

St Arnaud Recreation Advisory Group Minutes – 15 September 2021.

Councillors provided brief reports on their activities on behalf of Council since the last Council meeting.

### RESOLUTION

**That the reports be received.**

**Moved: Cr Kevin Erwin**

**Seconded: Cr Lauren Dempsey**

**Carried**

# Northern Grampians Shire Council

## St Arnaud Recreation Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

The scheduled meeting held at 6 pm on 15 September 2021 via virtual Microsoft Teams

**Chair:** Cr Driscoll

**Attendees:** Cr Driscoll, Nicole Amos, Tara Lowe, Sharlene Bertalli, Peter Knights, Mark MacTaggart, Kaye Boyd, Tony Dark (NGSC)

**Apologies:** Bruce Hando, Kim Birthisel

### 1. Business arising from the previous meeting:

Notes from 10 March 2021 meeting

### 2. General Business:

Item	Topic	Discussion	Action/ Outcome
1.1	Multipurpose Facility Design	<p>Project update</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Project Timeline – Original applied by Council the expected finish date was 1 March 2022 now 18 March due to weather. This date includes NGSC external works.</li><li>2. Schedule of works for the final stages as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Structural steel assembly and external wall framing 2 September to 19 October</li><li>· Roof cladding 20 October to 10 November</li><li>· External cladding and internal framing 28 October to 25 November</li><li>· Internal painting 21 January to 3 February 2022</li><li>· Fit out February/March 2022</li></ul></li><li>3. Fire services plan is estimated to cost \$150k and showed that the 144,000l tanks are to currently be recommended to be positioned near the traffic island at the side of</li></ol>	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Tony Dark to discuss playground with Nathan from the Sporting Club</li><li>2. Tony Dark to arrange for umbrella holes for the tables</li></ol>

		<p>the car park. Discussions about making sure the traffic has a good view and circulates well for the site.</p> <p>4. Playground – Tony advised the proposed playground offered by the Sporting Club from Bendigo office at \$15k which is approx half price to a new one. It has been assessed and is compliant and in good order. Concerns about position and access as it depends on use but could be locked and only used at events. Members asked if we could look at a simpler option or a more open design.</p> <p>Tables and chairs - Steel with timber tops suitable but need to have a hole for umbrellas. Can we look at having it movable so it may be stored to look after it when not in use plus it can be moved for suitable positioning for specific purposes or events.</p> <p>5. Site viewing and walk through (Council 4/10) Group to be organised for when daylight saving arrives and we can have a meeting afterwards.</p> <p>6. Canteen arrangements for 2021 season and outcomes - Whilst not perfect it served a purpose and the sporting club were very helpful. It was difficult running a canteen during Covid but they got by.</p> <p>7. Schedule for demolition of Old Football Changerooms and Toilets end of March 2022 - As planned the buildings would be demolished as they are past their use by date. The removal was also part of discussions with harness for safety as this is a dangerous corner and if they ever wanted to extend the track then it could.</p> <p>8. Agreement – Future use and agreement/s will be reviewed over the next few months and is a shire wide perspective.</p>	<p>3. Site viewing to be arranged</p>
<p>1.2</p>	<p><b>Football and Hockey Lighting</b></p>	<p>Lighting for the football has been well below the minimum levels for training even with some new lights last year. Since the LNP Clubroom development has started with demolition of the TOTE building there was a need to remove one of the towers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project process includes stakeholder input, Harness, AFL and Hockey to ensure all options and ideas are covered.</li> <li>• Timeline - Design Sep/Oct, Tender for completion by April 2022</li> <li>• Budget - \$350k funding through State Government</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b> Tony Dark to liaise with group once concept received</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lighting design options - Detailed with a 50 lux (training) or 100 lux (games) outcome. Discussed the plans provided as a part of the precinct planning and also looked at the designs for Charlton.</li> <li>Council will engage a lighting expert to design what we need and clubs will be consulted as well as AFL, Hockey and Harness.</li> <li>Netball needs its lighting looked at as some of the lights do not work adequately. Tony Dark will include a review of the lighting.</li> </ul>	
1.3	User Fees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020/21 User fees waived by Council for a second year.</li> <li>Future user fees to be reviewed shire wide over the next couple of months. Consultant engaged to consult and provide recommendations.</li> </ol>	<b>Action: Nil</b>
1.5	Fundraising	Update from fundraising group representative. Nicole provided an update and explained it was difficult through Covid. Will be doing a letter drop and there have been sponsors committing and the video in the shop has been well received. They have raised \$24k so far and have not received the Bendigo bank funds yet.	<b>Action: Tony Dark to provide cost estimates</b>

## 2. Other discussed:

Chook cages – Peter advised we need to get them out and store in the sheep pavilion in the interim.

Nicole asked when will the door for netball club will be shifted.

3. Close: 6.50pm

4. Next Meeting: TBC

## 12. Urgent Business

Nil

## 13. Public Question Time

### **Karen Hyslop, 7 Clifton Street Stawell**

The following three questions were submitted in writing by Mrs Hyslop prior to the meeting.

Q1. Is the Northern Grampians Shire aware the agricultural landholders in this shire have been continually burdened by major rate increases, some in the vicinity of 15% - 22% in one year? The cumulative effects of continuous rate increases is causing rate shock in farming communities and makes budgeting farm expenditure difficult. The burden of rates is forcing farmers to redirect operating expenditure away from local agribusiness retailers who are important to rural centres. We fear this unfair rate burden on the agriculture sector will inevitably contribute to increased mental health issues, especially during times of drought.

Q2. Will the Northern Grampians Shire consider changing the way it collects rates to a model that achieves fairness and consistency in sharing the rate burden across all ratepayers such as; "that every year all rated sectors in the Northern Grampians Shire are indexed at the same amount"?

Q3. Will the Northern Grampians Shire support the 'rate your rates' campaign (which has been sent to all councillors) and help advocate the state government to change the rating system to the model proposed in our campaign?

At the meeting Mrs Hyslop asked the following questions:

Q1. Will the Northern Grampians Shire look at changing its rating system so that every year each rate sector is indexed at the same amount?

Q2. Will the Northern Grampians Shire support our plan and take that plan to local government? We think this needs to be a local government change, they need to mandate that change as it is not just our shire, it is other shires that have the similar problem.

Q3. Is the Northern Grampians Shire going to do something about the problem? Are they going to listen to the ratepayers and make some change?

The Mayor responded to the written questions as follows:

A. Council understands the impact of valuations on farming properties in the shire, we are fully aware of the impact on not only our farming community but specifically our farming community.

A. Council does this quite often but we are a fair bit more serious about it now with the large valuations. A review of the options regarding calculating rates is underway. We have had three sessions so far in regard to how we might go about our rating system because we genuinely believe it is not fair and equitable.

A. In regards to the rate your rates campaign, Council is taking advice from lots of organisations throughout the Northern Grampians Shire in regard to how we might change our rating system. We have had conversations with the VFF which have an idea that they can come up with a system. So at the moment, we are unable to commit to any of the suggestions until we source more information and deal more closely with the ideas people are bringing up. We are certainly guided by what our community is telling us and we will be looking at your rates campaign in conjunction with, in particular, the VFF's campaign, Dynamic Rating Process. At this stage, we are acknowledging what people are saying but not supporting any particular campaign right now.

Q4. Do you have a timeframe, are you prepared to have a new system in place before the next financial year and the next budget?

The Mayor said responded:

Council has to have our rating plan in place by the time we start to deal with the budget and called on Mr Williams, Director Corporate and Community Services who confirmed it will all have to be finalised by May 2022 so that it can be put to the public.

**Linda Taylor, 252 Soldiers Road, Marnoo West**

Q1. Is the Northern Grampians Shire aware the agricultural landholders in this shire have been continually burdened by major rate increases, some in the vicinity of 15% - 22% in one year? The cumulative effects of continuous rate increases is causing rate shock in farming communities and makes budgeting farm expenditure difficult. The burden of rates is forcing farmers to redirect operating expenditure away from local agribusiness retailers who are important to rural centres. We fear this unfair rate burden on the agriculture sector will inevitably contribute to increased mental health issues, especially during times of drought.

A. The Mayor responded and said Council is very aware of the impact of valuations on rating and farming properties. We are very aware of the effects it might have on people, mental health and other things, we are more than aware of all of that and we are taking lots of advice on board to see if we can come up with a fair and equitable system of rating.

Q2. Will the Northern Grampians Shire consider changing the way it collects rates to a model that achieves fairness and consistency in sharing the rate burden across all ratepayers such as; "that every year all rated sectors in the Northern Grampians Shire are indexed at the same amount"?

A. The Mayor responded and said we review this quite often and a review is underway regarding calculating rates. It is a very involved process and we have to try and make sure we have a fair and equitable view over the whole shire, it is not fair and equitable at the moment and we are certainly taking plenty of advice from all organisations and people within our community on better ways of doing it.

Q3. Will the Northern Grampians Shire support the 'rate your rates' campaign (which has been sent to all councillors) and help advocate the state government to change the rating system to the model proposed in our campaign?

A. The Mayor responded and said it is the opinion of Councillors that we were not fully aware of what the rate for rates campaign is about. We are seeking advice from many other organisations in regard to other types of campaigns that might well help us move forward in the future. The direct answer is that we would not be supporting any of the campaigns at the moment until we are fully aware of what those campaigns are all about and which ones we think might be best for the wellbeing of the Northern Grampians Shire. He said that doesn't mean at a later time we might not think that the rate for rates campaign is a very good one; there are a number of other ideas being put forward.

**Tania Walter, Burrum, 396 Raluana Road, Marnoo West**

Q1. Our farm received a rate increase of 22% this year on top of an 18.3% increase in the previous 2020/21 period. The jump from paying \$14,560 to \$21,028 in only two years has come as a shock. Will Council be allowing this trend to continue?

A. The Mayor responded and said Council's opinion is that we are reviewing the options for calculating rates, that is underway at the moment, we have had several discussions with officers and other people who are not happy with the large increases in the agricultural field and we are looking at that right at the moment.

Q2. In two years our rate bill has increased by \$6,468. This has forced our farm to reassess our expenditure with a local business. This is a disheartening experience. Would Council consider sending rate notices out earlier than it usually does to the agricultural community so we can spend more time making these difficult budgeting decisions?

A. Council is required under the Local Government Act to issue rates notices 14 days before the due date. Our process is to get rate notices issued as soon as possible after the new financial year. This year the first notices went out in mid-August leaving five to six weeks to pay. He said we will take the question on board and have some discussion with Mr Williams in the future to see what we might be able to do.

Mr Williams said the issue is that we have to wait for the valuations to come through and then we have to do a bunch of cross-checking in the system. We try and get it out as early as we can after the valuations are in and that around mid-August is about the earliest that we can get that out. He said we will have a look and see if we can review processes to try and bring it forward. We are constrained by the valuation data.

The Chief Executive Officer reported that she would respond to the other questions submitted, in writing.

#### **14. Closure of Meeting Pursuant to Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020**

A Council or delegated committee may resolve that the meeting be closed to members of the public if it considers it necessary because a circumstance specified below apply:

The circumstances are-

- (a) the meeting is to consider confidential information; or
- (b) security reasons; or
- (c) it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.

If the circumstances specified in subsection (b) or (c) apply, the meeting can only be closed to the public if the Council has made arrangements to enable the proceedings of the meeting to be viewed by members of the public as the meeting is being held.

- 14.1. C9 2019/20 - Provision of Public Convenience and Facilities Cleaning
- 14.2. C7 2018/19 - Banking and Bill Payment Services
- 14.3. C4 2021/22 - Grampians Gate Caravan Park Amenities Block Upgrade
- 14.4. C5 2021/22 - Great Western Oval Sports Lighting
- 14.5. C3 2021/22 - Plant Replacement Program

#### **RESOLUTION**

That items 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.4 and 14.5 be considered in Closed Council as they deal with confidential information as detailed in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved: Cr Rob Haswell  
Seconded: Cr Kevin Erwin Carried

#### **RESOLUTION**

That the meeting be closed to consider the item listed pursuant to section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Moved: Cr Rob Haswell  
Seconded: Cr Kevin Erwin Carried

#### **OPEN COUNCIL**

The Chief Executive Officer reported on the item discussed in Closed Council.

14.1 Council extended Contract No. C9 2019/20 - Provision of Public Convenience and Facilities cleaning for the first one year option.

14.2 Council approved the extension of Contract No. C9 2018/19 - Provision of Banking and Bill Payment Services for a period of 12 months.

14.3 Council did not award Contract No. C4 2021/22 - Grampians Gate Caravan Park Amenities Block upgrade to any tenderer and uses in-house depot staff and contracted panel contractors to complete the works.

14.4 Council awarded Contract No. C5 2021/22 - Great Western Oval Sports Lighting.

14.5 Council awarded Contract No C3 2021/22 - Plant Replacement Program to multiple tenderers.

**15. Close**

**There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 1.21pm.**

Confirmed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CR MURRAY EMERSON', written in a cursive style.

CR MURRAY EMERSON  
MAYOR

Date: 8 November 2021