

Council Meeting

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 23 February 2022

Time: 6pm

**Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)
13 Mair Street, Benalla**

The *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* enables councils to hold meetings electronically. This measure is intended to ensure the safety of members of the public, Councillors and Council staff.

The Council Meeting Room has limited capacity for public attendance. Accordingly, members of the public are encouraged to watch the live broadcast of the meeting at www.benalla.vic.gov.au

Any person wishing to participate in Question Time in accordance with Rule 7.2 of the *Governance Rules 2020* should contact the Council by emailing council@benalla.vic.gov.au or telephoning Governance Coordinator Jessica Beaton on (03) 5760 2600.

In accordance with the Governance Rule 6.4 an audio recording will be made of the proceedings of the meeting.

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Agenda

Chair Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)

Councillors Councillor Danny Claridge
Councillor Peter Davis
Councillor Don Firth
Councillor Punarji Hewa Gunaratne
Councillor Justin King
Councillor Gail O'Brien

In attendance	Dom Testoni	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Adrian Gasperoni	Manager Assets and Infrastructure
	Cathy Fitzpatrick	Manager Finance
	Nilesh Singh	Manager Development
	Joel Ingham	Planning Coordinator
	Tom Arnold	Community Development Coordinator
	Wayne Rich	Compliance Coordinator
	Jessica Beaton	Governance Coordinator

1. Opening and Acknowledgment of Country

The chair will open the meeting and recite the following Acknowledgement of Country.

We, the Benalla Rural City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders from other communities who may be here today.

2. Statement of Commitment

The Councillors will recite the following Statement of Commitment:

*I declare,
that as a Councillor of Benalla Rural City
I will undertake on every occasion
to carry out my duties in the best interests of the community
and that my conduct shall maintain the standards of our Councillor Code of Conduct
so that I may faithfully represent
and uphold the trust placed in the Council
by the people of Benalla and District.*

Governance Matters

This Council Meeting is conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Benalla Rural City Council *Governance Rules 2020*.

Recording of Council Meetings

In accordance with the *Governance Rules 2020* clause 6.4 meetings of Council will be audio recorded and made available for public access, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the agenda.

Behaviour at Meetings

Members of the public present at a meeting must remain silent during the proceedings other than when specifically invited to address the Committee.

The Chair may remove a person from a meeting for interjecting or gesticulating offensively after being asked to desist, and the chair may cause the removal of any object or material that is deemed by the Chair to be objectionable or disrespectful.

The Chair may call a break in a meeting for either a short time, or to resume another day if the behaviour at the Council table or in the gallery is significantly disrupting the Meeting.

3. Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflict of Interest pursuant to Section 130 of the Act in any items on this Agenda

At the time indicated in the agenda, a Councillor with a conflict of interest in an item on that agenda must indicate they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- the item for which they have a conflict of interest;
- whether their conflict of interest is general or material; and
- the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item in which they have a conflict of interest, a Councillor must indicate to the Meeting the existence of the conflict of interest and leave the Meeting.

4. Apologies

Recommendation:

That the apology/ies be accepted and a leave of absence granted.

5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on the Council website www.benalla.vic.gov.au pending confirmation at this meeting.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 be confirmed as true and accurate record of the meeting.

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6. Public Question Time

The Council's *Governance Rules 2020* provide the opportunity for members of the public to lodge written questions of broad interest to the Council and the community.

Questions of the Council will not be allowed during any period when the Council has resolved to close the meeting in respect of a matter under section 66 (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

A question may be on any matter except if it:

- is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

No more than two questions will be accepted from any person at any one meeting.

All questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and no discussion may be allowed other than by Councillors for the purposes of clarification.

Like questions may be grouped together and a single answer provided.

The Chair may nominate a Councillor, the Chief Executive Officer or another member of Council staff to respond to a question.

Recommendation:

That the question(s) and answer(s) be noted.

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7. Petitions

8. Record of Committees

8.1 Finance and Operations Committee

The reports and recommendations of the Finance and Operations Committee held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 are attached as **Appendix 1**.

Recommendation:

That the report and recommendations of the Finance and Operations Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 be adopted.

8.2 Planning and Development Committee

The reports and recommendations of the Planning and Development Committee held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 are attached as **Appendix 1**.

Recommendation:

That the report and recommendations of the Planning and Development Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 February 2022 be adopted.

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Business**1. Public Question Time**

It is recorded that Sabine Smyth tabled two questions.

Will council consider publicising upcoming council committee and general agenda items in the paper, or on social media?

The General Manager Corporate answered that this was a good idea. Meetings and their agendas have been promoted on social media in the past, however, this has not been the case recently. Regular promotion on social media of upcoming meetings and their agendas will recommence.

What is the standard process of dealing with submissions from the public, who is responsible for dealing with them and acknowledging the issues raised (If you need a specific example, take the two submissions made on the community engagement policy for the finance and operations committee)?

The General Manager Corporate answered that in accordance with the *Benalla Rural City Council Governance Rules 2020*, people making submissions must be advised in writing of the decision made in relation to their submission. In the case of the Community Engagement Policy, the two submitters will be advised of the Council's decision following next week's Council Meeting where adoption of the policy will be considered.

Cr Claridge / Cr Firth:

That the questions and answers be noted.

Carried

2. Draft *Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* – Consideration of Submissions

The report considered submissions received on the on the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and draft *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit*.

Cr Gunarante / Cr Hearn:

That the *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

Carried

Closure of Meeting

The meeting closed at 6.14pm.

Recommendations of the Finance
and Operations Committee meeting
held on Wednesday 16 February 2022

Business**1. Public Question Time**

No questions were submitted to the meeting.

2. Planning Application No. P0133/21 – To Use And Develop The Land For A Dwelling And The Creation Of An Access To A Road Zone Category 1 – 2187 Benalla Tatong Road, Tatong

The report assessed a planning application received for the use and development of land for the purpose of a dwelling at 2187 Benalla Tatong Road, Tatong.

It is noted that the following persons made submissions on the item:

- Mrs Emma Kubeil spoke in support of approving the planning application
- Mrs Sarah Wallis spoke against approving the planning application
- Mr Dennis Scott spoke against approving the planning application
- Mr Trent Hamilton spoke in support of approving the planning application.

Cr Firth / Cr Davis:

That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. P0133/21 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* decides to refuse to grant a Permit under the provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as 2187 Benalla Tatong Road, Tatong, for the use and development of a dwelling in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 7 September 2021 on the following grounds:

1. Adequate justification has not been provided to detail that a dwelling is required on the land for the agricultural use.
2. The proposed dwelling will reduce the availability of land for agricultural production on site.
3. The proposed dwelling will lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area which will reduce the potential for agricultural production.
4. The proposed dwelling will make it difficult for surrounding properties to expand existing farming operations.

Cr Hearn / Cr Davis:

That standing orders be suspended to allow for discussion on the matter.

Carried

Cr Davis / Cr Hearn:

That standing orders be resumed.

Carried

A division was called.

Votes recorded in favour of the motion:

Cr Peter Davis

Cr Don Firth

Cr Punarji Hewa Gunaratne

Cr Danny Claridge

Votes recorded against the motion:

Cr Bernie Hearn Against

Cr Gail O'Brien Against

The motion was **Carried**.

3. Building and Planning Approvals – November and December 2021

The report detailed planning permit applications and building approvals for November and December 2021.

Cr Hearn / Cr Firth:

That the report be noted.

Carried

4. Draft *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* – Consideration of Submissions

The report considered submissions received on the draft *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*.

Cr Davis / Cr Hearn:

That the *Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

Carried

5. Draft *Road Management Plan 2021-2025* – Consideration of Submissions

The report considered submissions received on the draft *Road Management Plan 2021 – 2025*.

Cr Hearn / Cr O'Brien:

That the *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025* be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

Carried

Closure of Meeting

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

8.3 Assemblies of Councillors, Advisory and External Committees

There were no Assemblies of Councillors, Advisory or External Committee meetings between 1 December 2021 and 31 January 2022.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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9. Reports by Officers

9.1 Authorisation of Signing and Sealing of Documents

Instrument of Delegation from the Council to Council Staff

SF/2035

Jessica Beaton – Governance Coordinator
Robert Barber – General Manager Corporate

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the amended Instrument of Delegation – Council to Council Staff.

BACKGROUND

The Council is a legal entity composed of its members (i.e. the Councillors). Because it is not a 'natural' person, it can act in only one of two ways:

- by resolution; or
- through others acting on its behalf.

The power of a Council to act by resolution is set out in s 59 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- (1) *Where a Council is empowered to do any act, matter or thing, the decision to do the act, matter or thing is to be made by a resolution of the Council.*

Alternatively, a Council can act through others by delegating its powers via written 'instruments of delegation'.

The *Local Government Act 2020* and other acts make express provision for the appointment of delegates to act on behalf of the Council.

The *S6 - Instrument of Delegation* from Council to members of Council staff delegates certain powers directly from the Council to Council staff due to various Acts and Regulations containing specific powers of delegation.

If the delegation is to any member of staff other than the Chief Executive Officer, there is no power of sub-delegation.

Other powers that may not be delegated to staff are:

- the power to declare a rate or charge
- the power to borrow money
- the power to approve any expenditure not contained in a budget approved by the Council
- any prescribed power.

The powers, duties and functions of the Council must be made carefully and reviewed regularly to enable staff to act lawfully on behalf of the Council. In particular:

- Accountability and responsibility for decisions is possible only if decision-makers are identified.
- In delegating responsibility the Council can set conditions, limitations and guidelines for decision-makers, including reporting requirements.
- Council decisions are often subject to legal scrutiny in courts and tribunals. This calls for precision about what decision was made, who made it and when it was made.

DISCUSSION

Authorisations should be reviewed regularly. Accountability and responsibility for decisions is possible only if decision-makers are identified. This calls for precision about what decision was made, who made it and when it was made.

The Council subscribes to the Maddocks Lawyers Delegations and Authorisations Service to assist in incorporating legislative and other changes into its delegations and authorisations instruments.

The Council uses RelianSys to create and maintain delegation registers.

The Council at its Meeting on 26 August 2020 updated the instrument of delegation from the Council to staff. Since that time RelianSys has issued an update to its instrument template to reflect legislative changes as follows:

- the commencement of some changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
- the commencement of some changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.
- The removal of some *Environmental Protection Act 1970* delegations.

The revised *S6 - Instrument of Delegation* has been provided to Councillors via MS Teams and is available for download from the Council's website.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Leadership

- Good governance
- High performance culture

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The implementation of the *S6 – Instrument of Delegation* will be accommodated within the existing budget.

An allocation is made each year in the governance program budget for the Council subscription to Maddocks Lawyers Delegations and Authorisations Service. In 2021/22 the cost will be \$3000 ex GST.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

This review and update will ensure that council's practices remain transparent and that high standards of integrity and accountability are maintained.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

Recommendation:

In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the S6 – *Instrument of Delegation* dated 23 February 2022, the Council resolves:

- 1. That the power delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached *Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff*, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument.**
- 2. That the instrument comes into force immediately when the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument.**
- 3. That on the coming into force of the instrument that all previous delegations to members of Council staff (other than the Chief Executive Officer) are revoked.**
- 4. That the duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.**

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9.2 Financial Report For The Half Year Ended 31 December 2021

SF/1519

Cathy Fitzpatrick – Manager Finance
Robert Barber – General Manager Corporate

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the financial result compared to budget for the quarter ended 31 December 2021 and presents outcomes from the 2021/22 half-year budget review.

BACKGROUND

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that at the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a meeting that is open to the public.

The budget report must include a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to data and an explanation of any material variations. In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required.

OPERATING RESULT

Year to date 31 December 2021 operating result compared to budget

The report contains the Standard Income Statement and Statement of Capital Projects. The operating result for the quarter ended 31 December 2021 was a surplus of \$8.884 million which was \$1.572 million more favourable than the budgeted surplus of \$7.312 million as shown in Table 1 below.

Full Year (30 June 2022) Forecast Operating Result compared to budget

The forecast operating result for the year ending 30 June 2022 has been updated to reflect the half-year budget review.

The forecast operating result for the year ending 30 June 2022 is a surplus of \$0.062 million which is an unfavorable variance of \$1.891 million compared to the budgeted surplus of \$1.953 million as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Net Operating Result For the Period Ended 31 December 2021 and Half-Year Review Forecast Compared To Budget As At 30 June 2022

Operating Statement	Notes	2021/22 YTD Actuals \$'000	2021/22 YTD Budget \$'000	2021/22 YTD Variance \$'000	Full Year Budget \$'000	Half-Year Review Forecast \$'000	EOY Forecast to Budget Variance \$'000
Revenue							
Rates and Charges	1	19,747	19,540	207	19,575	19,878	303
User Charges - Statutory Fees and Fines	2	318	246	72	494	546	52
User Charges	3	2,616	2,070	546	4,196	4,920	724
Operating Grants – Recurring	4	2,468	2,358	110	4,504	4,634	130
Operating Grants – Non-Recurring	5	381	162	219	233	439	206
Capital Grants - Recurring		0	0	0	975	975	0
Capital Grants – Non-Recurring	6	267	365	-98	6,349	4,991	-1,358
Contributions	7	168	52	115	94	194	100
Proceeds on Sale of Assets		0	0	0	25	25	0
Other Income	8	108	37	71	74	122	48
Unearned Income	9	373	0	373	0	0	0
Total Revenue		26,446	24,830	1,616	36,519	36,725	206

Operating Statement	Notes	2020/21 YTD Actuals \$'000	2020/21 YTD Budget \$'000	2020/21 YTD Variance \$'000	Full Year Budget \$'000	Half-Year Review Forecast \$'000	EOY Forecast to Budget Variance \$'000
Expenses							
Employee Costs	10	7,074	6,862	-212	13,627	14,195	-568
Materials and Services	11	6,663	6,668	5	12,837	14,148	-1,310
Doubtful Debts		0	0	0	15	15	0
Finance Costs	12	41	56	14	111	88	23
Other Expenses	13	135	155	20	421	421	0
Finance Costs Leases		12	17	5	34	34	0
Amortisation Intangible Assets	14	221	288	67	575	575	0
Amortisation Right of Use Assets	15	214	180	-34	360	360	0
Depreciation	16	3,202	3,293	91	6,586	6,827	-241
Total Expenses		17,562	17,519	-44	34,565	36,663	-2,097

Operating Statement	2020/21 YTD Actuals \$'000	2020/21 YTD Budget \$'000	2020/21 YTD Variance \$'000	Full Year Budget \$'000	Half-Year Review Forecast \$'000	EOY Forecast to Budget Variance \$'000
Net Operating Result	8,884	7,312	1,572	1,953	62	-1,891

Income Statement Notes:

1. Rate and Charges favourable variance \$207,211 due to supplementary rate revenue and additional solar farm revenue in lieu of rates contributions \$53,694. Some objections to valuations are yet to be determined and may impact on the final Rates and Charges revenue as at 30 June.

Forecast favourable variance to 30 June overall \$303,000.

2. User Charges - Statutory Fees and Fines: Favourable variance \$72,042 significant items:

Permit Fees	\$57,464
Fines	\$6,353
Certificate Charges	\$8,224

Forecast favourable variance to 30 June overall \$52,800 due to Building Approval Service \$45,000 and Environmental Health Services \$11,000 offset by reduced in Swimming Pool Registration income \$7,000 as legislation changes to associated payment deadline apply to this item.

3. User Charges: Favourable variance \$546,343 due to significant favourable variances:

Landfill Service – Commercial Admission Charges, Gate Fees and Sale of Steel	\$177,237
EPA Levy	\$245,631
Planning	\$37,293
Art Gallery Fees and Sales	\$22,333

Favourable variances were offset by an unfavourable variance of \$37,471 from the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People Brokerage Service.

Forecast results to 30 June are expected to be favourable \$724,241 due to significant favourable variances:

Landfill Service – Commercial Admission Charges, Gate Fees and Sale of Steel	\$249,421
EPA Levy	\$505,000
Planning	\$37,100

Favourable variances were offset by an unfavourable variance of \$80,000 from the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People Brokerage Service.

4. Operating Grants – Recurring: Additional grant funding has increased revenue by \$109,953 due to additional COVID-19-related funded grants for several services.

Youth Programs – L2P Program – Funding renewed and increased	\$67,650
Maternal Projects – Sleep and Settling Initiative	\$22,929
Family Support – Increase in funding	\$19,077
Benalla Library Operations	\$5,366
Freeza – Funding renewed and increased	\$5,500
Seniors Festival Week Activities	\$3,000

Forecast results to 30 June is \$130,066 greater than budget due to continued COVID-19-related funding for various community support focussed service areas.

5. Operating Grants - Non-Recurring: Favourable variance \$219,011 additional grant funding not budgeted for in the 21/22 year:

Working for Victoria Part 2021/22	\$175,034
Roadside Weeds and Pest Program 21/22 Funding Application – Approved post budget	\$40,746
Landfill – Draft transition plan to support implementation of standardised four bin service	\$21,122
Premiers Reading Challenge	\$6,302

Forecast results to 30 June are expected to be favourable \$205,000 recognising additional funding not budgeted for in 2021/22 year and transfer of some grants changing to recurring given renewal of funding agreements.

6. Capital Grants - Non-Recurring: Unfavourable variance \$98,248 caused by delay in commencement of the Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment Building and Art Gallery Redevelopment.

End of year unfavourable \$1.357 million attributed to Building Works Package (\$1.7 million) reduction in grant recognition partly offset by the following new grant unbudgeted grants received:

Outdoor Activation Funding 2021/22	\$300,000
Improvement to emergency water supply points Install high capacity pump upgrade Casey's Weir	\$42,220

7. Contributions: Favourable variance \$115,236 as additional contribution funding received:

Other Contributions Vic Link Package Program	\$81,859
Public Open Space contribution	\$23,900
Australia Day events contributions	\$15,440
Art Gallery – Community Heritage Grant	\$5,458

Unfavourable variance Benalla Festival sponsorship 2021 \$20,000 as event unable to run.

Forecast results to 30 June is not expected to alter significantly.

8. Other Income: Favourable variance of \$71,361 due to reimbursements associated with Workcover \$54,882.

End of year forecast is expected to be favourable \$47,000.

9. Unearned Income: Favourable variance of \$0.373 million attributed to new Capital grant which income cannot be reflected as earned income unless in direct reflection of the project's percentage complete. All capital projects will be reviewed by the Manager Assets and Infrastructure quarterly and capital grant revenue and unearned income adjusted accordingly.

No variance forecast to 30 June as income will be 'earned' under Grants.

10. Employee costs: Overall were unfavourable by \$211,648 due to COVID-19 requiring the reallocation of staff and additional labour requirements to deliver some services impacted by COVID-19. Several grants were received and recognised in 2020/21 financial year however delivery also incurred salary costs in 2021/22.

Services utilising grant funding and impacted by COVID-19 operations were:

Business Development - Working for Victoria Project, Concierge and Hospitality Support Program	\$154,683
Family and Children's Services	\$81,468
Maternal Child Health	\$39,487
Aged and Disability Services	\$17,411
Art Gallery	\$16,487

Forecast results to 30 June is expected to be unfavourable \$567,925 impacted by additional labour costs for services many impacted by COVID-19 operational requirements and additional grant projects requiring employee costs variances offset by some services being lower due to COVID-19 closure. Major variances are detailed below:

Aged and Disability Services	\$250,759
Business Development – Working for Victoria Project	\$196,063
Concierge and Hospitality Support Program	
Maternal Child Health	\$142,804
Art Gallery	\$26,893
Compliance Services	\$15,553

Offset by favourable variance in Economic Development and Sustainability – communications area \$66,000 due to vacancies and maternity leave which will be covered by increases in materials and services.

- 11. Materials and Services:** Forecast results to 30 June is expected to be unfavourable by \$1.310 million. Impacted by carry forward expenditure items from 2020/21 totalling \$1.122 million for services impacted by closure due to COVID -19 restrictions and grant projects delivery delayed due to limited physical access to locations.

Significant additional expenditure on materials and contract payments are also forecast specifically:

Landfill – EPA levy (income collection offsets)	\$235,288
Kerbside Waste – Garbage and Recycling costs	\$67,828
Communications Services	\$61,000
Animal Management Costs	\$25,000
Transition Plan – Four Bin Service Project	\$21,222

See **Appendix 1** for details of Materials and Services expenditure to 31 December 2021.

- 12. Finance Costs:** Favourable variance of \$4,786 due to reduced interest charges. Forecast to 30 June is not expected to alter significantly.
- 13. Other Expenses:** Favourable variance primarily due to delayed internal audits and community contributions to events delayed by COVID-19.

Forecast to 30 June is is not expected to alter significantly.

- 14. Amortisation Intangible Assets:** Favourable variance of \$66,685 as Landfill - Cell 2 has extended use until March 2022.

Forecast results to 30 June is not expected to alter significantly.

- 15. Amortisation Right of Use Assets:** New Accounting Standard introduced in 2019/20 actual value of lease rates charges are higher than estimated. Unfavourable variance of \$33,910 as required inclusion of new compactor agreement in 2021/22. Several vehicle leases were finalised with the completion of Working for Victoria project.

Forecast results to 30 June is not expected to alter significantly.

- 16. Depreciation:** Favourable variance \$90,889 as some 2021/22 capital works projects were not finalised due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Forecast results to 30 June is unfavorable \$241,000 as capital project will be finalised in 2022 with additional depreciation costs.

CAPITAL PROJECTS PROGRAM RESULT

The Capital Projects Program result for the six months ended 31 December 2021 was expenditure of \$2.689 million which was \$2.732 million less than the budgeted expenditure of \$5.422 million as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Capital Program result for the period ending 31 December 2021 and Mid-Year Review Forecast to 30 June 2022

Asset By Type	2021/22 YTD Budget \$'000	2021/22 YTD Actuals \$'000	2021/22 YTD Variance \$'000	2021/22 Full Year Budget \$'000	2021/22 Full Year Forecast \$'000
Roads	1,431	1,026	405	2,141	2,383
Footpaths	128	12	116	198	236
Drainage	112	96	16	1,144	748
Buildings	366	55	311	4,454	1,808
Plant, Machinery and Equipment - Capital	19	12	7	285	327
Fixtures, IT, Fittings and Furniture, Artworks	265	122	143	275	275
Computers and Telecoms	5	3	2	200	200
Library Stock	96	81	15	96	88
Waste Management	2,212	929	1,283	3,510	2,020
Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscapes	356	226	130	356	446
Off-Street Car Parks	296	89	207	296	375
Other	135	38	97	435	462
Total	5,421	2,689	2,732	13,390	9,368

An update on the status of the Capital Works Program will be presented to the March Planning and Development Committee meeting.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025* IMPLICATIONS*Leadership**

- Good governance
- High performance culture

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Significant additional operating and capital grant income and contributions have been received throughout 2021/22 year. Materials and Services is significantly higher as a result of carry forward expenditure items from 2020/21 \$1.122 million and the additional expenditure required for grant projects (some income part recognised 2020/21) and others in 2021/22.

The forecast result is based on the Council's status as at 31 December 2021 and the impact of COVID-19 service restrictions and ongoing costs are estimated based on available data.

Additional current year capital and operating grants received are forecast to be acquitted in 2021/22.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

Recommendation:**That the report be noted.**

Item 9.2 - Appendix 1

Benalla Rural City Council - as at 31 December 2021

Materials and Services	YTD Actuals	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
04: Vandalism	\$ 73	\$ 4,122	\$ 4,049
05: Contract Staff	\$ 89,048	\$ 79,058	-\$ 9,990
06: Catering & Refreshments	\$ 13,982	\$ 7,868	-\$ 6,114
07: Materials	\$ 343,255	\$ 375,770	\$ 32,515
08: Contract Payments	\$ 2,211,446	\$ 2,088,726	-\$ 122,720
09: Merchandise	\$ 23,590	\$ 15,402	-\$ 8,188
10: Functions & Receptions	\$ 661	\$ 4,776	\$ 4,115
11: Stores Issues	\$ 60,171	\$ 96,246	\$ 36,075
12: Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 123,533	\$ 192,107	\$ 68,574
18: Lease Payments	\$ 37,162	\$ 56,400	\$ 19,238
20: Bank Charges	\$ 26,208	\$ 24,934	-\$ 1,274
21: Advertising & Promotion	\$ 29,393	\$ 27,151	-\$ 2,242
23: Exhibitions	\$ 17,097	\$ 30,000	\$ 12,903
24: Insurance	\$ 534,817	\$ 580,000	\$ 45,183
25: Legal Expenses	\$ 78,624	\$ 82,074	\$ 3,450
26: Consultants General	\$ 84,070	\$ 59,638	-\$ 24,432
27: Membership & Subscriptions	\$ 153,767	\$ 120,238	-\$ 33,529
28: Security Expenses	\$ 16,885	\$ 18,082	\$ 1,197
29: Postage & Freight	\$ 278	\$ 26,454	\$ 26,176
30: Printing, Copying & Stationery	\$ 36,916	\$ 55,852	\$ 18,936
31: Rent	\$ 27,780	\$ 17,624	-\$ 10,156
32: Computer Support/Software	\$ 413,919	\$ 361,662	-\$ 52,257
33: Internal Plant Hire Expense	\$ 192,263	\$ 227,046	\$ 34,783
35: Travel Expenses	\$ 1,756	\$ 15,503	\$ 13,747
36: Meeting Expenses	\$ 211	\$ 1,835	\$ 1,624
37: Staff Training / Courses	\$ 36,094	\$ 54,992	\$ 18,898
38: Vehicle Expenses	\$ 1,831	\$ -	-\$ 1,831
39: Electricity	\$ 126,383	\$ 204,860	\$ 78,477
40: Water Consumption	\$ 16,805	\$ 39,792	\$ 22,987
41: Gas	\$ 12,434	\$ 14,792	\$ 2,358
42: Telephone	\$ 36,243	\$ 69,206	\$ 32,963

Materials and Services	YTD Actuals	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
43: Contributions & Reimbursements	\$ 5,349	\$ 16,204	\$ 10,855
47: Green Waste Mulching	\$ 706	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,294
49: Machine Hire	-\$ 1,752	\$ 55,000	\$ 56,752
51: E.P.A. Levy	\$ 392,974	\$ 357,356	-\$ 35,618
52: Domestic Animals Levy	\$ -	\$ 6,532	\$ 6,532
53: Management Committees	\$ 100,520	\$ 67,808	-\$ 32,712
54: Cleaning Expenses	\$ 69,882	\$ 92,554	\$ 22,672
103: Vehicle Fuel	\$ 127,543	\$ 126,348	-\$ 1,195
104: Vehicle Maintenance - Standard	\$ 36,152	\$ 42,718	\$ 6,566
105: Vehicle Lease Payments	\$ 28,824	\$ 13,696	-\$ 15,128
109: Canteen Trading Purchases	\$ 2,416	\$ 2,508	\$ 92
110: Performing Fees	\$ 16,000	\$ 15,000	-\$ 1,000
126: Landfill Daily Cover	\$ -	\$ 12,374	\$ 12,374
127: Landfill Rock Supplied	\$ 11,847	\$ 11,250	-\$ 597
128: Gas Monitoring - Landfill	\$ 8,968	\$ 9,000	\$ 32
130: PAG Meal Costs	\$ 1,206	\$ 8,950	\$ 7,744
131: Diesel Rebate (Negative Expense)	-\$ 22,303	-\$ 20,000	\$ 2,303
140: Carry Forward Expenditure	\$ 21,687	\$ -	-\$ 21,687
144: Vehicle Maintenance - Repairs	\$ 59,126	\$ 57,500	-\$ 1,626
145: Tyres Purchased for Plant	\$ 11,245	\$ 8,370	-\$ 2,875
146: Registrations	\$ 21,597	\$ -	-\$ 21,597
16: Services (Non Contract) To Council	\$ 503,428	\$ 270,699	-\$ 232,729
160: Audit / Monitoring costs Landfill	\$ 17,023	\$ 67,500	\$ 50,478
170: Museum Fees	\$ 831	\$ 500	-\$ 331
171: Volunteer (Internal Charge) expenses	\$ 632	\$ -	-\$ 632
199: Internal Charge - Expense	\$ 495,458	\$ 452,604	-\$ 42,854
34: Goods Delivered (Contractual)	\$ 6,842	\$ 31,142	\$ 24,300
Grand Total	\$ 6,662,893	\$ 6,667,823	\$ 4,930

9.3 Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025

SF/2564

Wayne Rich – Compliance Coordinator
Nilesh Singh – Manager Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents for consideration and adoption of the *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*.

BACKGROUND

That the Planning and Development Committee on 3 November 2021, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolved:

1. *That the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 be endorsed for community consultation.*
2. *That the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.*

Public notice of community consultation for the draft *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* (the Plan) was given on the Council's website on 4 November 2021 and in the *Benalla Ensign* on Wednesday 10 November 2021.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and the Plan promoted on social media.

Public listening posts were conducted in the central business district on 19 November 2021, at Churchill Reserve on 24 November 2021 and the Benalla Lakeside Craft and Farmers Market on 27 November 2021.

The submission period closed Thursday 2 December 2021. At the close of the submission period 104 submissions were received.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters were invited to address the Planning and Development Committee meeting on 8 December 2021 in support of their submissions.

Submissions were considered by Council at the Planning and Development Committee meeting on 16 February 2022, where the Council resolved:

That the Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

DISCUSSION

Following the consideration of submissions, Councillor and Council staff input, the following change is proposed to the *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*:

- Inclusion of a Council Order under *Section 25(2)* and *Section 26(2)* of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* for the secure confinement of cats to the owners premises at all times and the restraint of dogs by way of chain, cord or leash, whilst in a public place.

The *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* has been provided to Councillors under sperate cover and is available for download from the Council's website.

The Council Order under *Section 25(2)* and *Section 26(2)* of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* is attached as **Appendix 1**.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- A healthy, Safe and resilient community
- A connected, involved and inclusive community

Livability

- Vibrant public spaces and places

Leadership

- Good governance
- High performance culture
- Engaged and informed community
- Effective and responsive advocacy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no material financial implications with the development or implementation of the *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*.

While there are currently no financial impacts associated with the Plan, some of the identified future initiatives may have cost implications that will need to be considered.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

The adoption of the *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* will ensure the Council complies with its responsibilities under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

It is considered that the Plan is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* has been developed following extensive consultation in 2021. The work of the community and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Plan is acknowledged.

Recommendation:

1. That the *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* be adopted.
2. That the *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* be forwarded to the Secretary of the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions.
3. That a letter of acknowledgement to be sent to public submitters thanking them for their contribution and informing them of the decision made in relation to their submission on the *Benalla Rural City Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025*.

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Notice is hereby given that the Rural City of Benalla at its Council Meeting held on 23 February 2022, resolved to make the following orders under Section 25 and Section 26(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* ("the Act").

Cat Curfew

Pursuant to Section 25 of the Act, cats within the municipality are to be securely confined to the owners property, or the property where they are kept for the time being, at all times.

Control of Dogs

Pursuant to Section 26 of the Act, dogs and cats within the municipality must be kept under effective control by means of a chain, cord, or leash, not exceeding 3 metres in length, held by the owner and attached to the animal whilst the animal is in a reserve or public place.

Owners Obligations: A dog may be exercised off leash in a Designated area if the owner:

- Carries a chain, cord, or leash, not exceeding 3 metres in length, sufficient to bring the dog under effective control if the dog behaves in a manner which may worry, threaten or harass any person or animal, and
- remains in effective control of the dog by voice and/or hand command to promptly bring the dog under control by chain, cord, or leash if it becomes necessary, and
- does not allow the dog to worry, threaten or harass any person or animal.

Exceptions: If a dog is being exercised off leash in a Designated area, it must be brought under effective control of the owner by means of chain, cord, or leash if within:

- 30 metres of the principal location of an organised sporting event
- 30 metres of the principal location of an organised public meeting
- 30 metres of a permanent barbecue or picnic area when in use
- 10 metres of the perimeter of a playground
- 5 metres of a shared pathway.

Prohibited Areas: Areas where dogs and cats are not permitted at any time:

- Dogs and cats, restrained or otherwise, are prohibited within the perimeter of any playground at any time.
- Dogs and cats, restrained or otherwise, are not permitted within any prohibited area declared by Council.

Definitions:

Effective Control means that an owner of a dog or cat can immediately recall the animal by use of voice or hand control, keeps the animal within 50 metres of themselves in audio and visual range at all times and does not allow the animal to threaten, worry or harass another person or animal.

Designated Area means a reserve or other place that has been declared in a Council Order under Section 26(2) of the Act to be a place where dogs may be exercised off leash whilst under effective control.

Owner has the same meaning as in the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Public Place has the same meaning as in the *Summary Offences Act 1966* and includes all Council reserves and municipal places.

Review: Council may, by order of resolution and after giving public notice inviting submissions on the proposal:

- remove a reserve or part of a reserve; and/or
- add a reserve or part of a reserve to the list of designated reserves.

Designated Areas:

- Little Casey Island
- Big Casey Island (signed areas only)
- Psaltis Parade Reserve
- U.F.S. Sports Reserve (signed areas only)

Prohibited Areas:

- Willis Little Conservation and Resource zone

Dom Testoni
Chief Executive Officer
Benalla Rural City Council

9.4 Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025

SF/2494-02

Adrian Gasperoni – Manager Assets and Infrastructure

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents for consideration and adoption the *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021–2025*.

BACKGROUND

At its Council Meeting on 23 June 2021, the Council resolved:

1. *That the draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be endorsed for public exhibition.*
2. *That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to give public notice that the Council has prepared its draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025.*
3. *That the draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be placed on public exhibition in accordance with Section 7.3 of the Council's Governance Rules 2020 for a period of at least 28 days from Thursday 24 June 2021.*
4. *That submissions relating on the draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be heard at an additional meeting of the Planning and Development Committee on Wednesday 15 September 2021.*
5. *That the adoption of the Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be considered at the Council meeting on Wednesday 6 October 2021.*

The Planning and Development Committee Meeting on 29 September 2021, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolved :

1. *That submissions relating on the draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be heard at the Planning and Development Committee meeting on Wednesday 29 September 2021'; and*
2. *That adoption of the Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be considered at the Council meeting on Wednesday 10 November 2021'.*

Public notice of the draft *Road Management Plan 2021-2025* was given on the Council's website and Benalla Ensign on Wednesday 30 June 2021.

Feedback was also sought via the Council's website and promoted on social media.

The submission period closed Thursday 23 September 2021. At the close of the submission period eight submissions were received.

In accordance with the Council's *Governance Rules 2020*, submitters were invited to address the Finance and Operations Committee meeting on 6 October 2021 in support of their submissions. Mr Brian Vial and Mr Colin Squires spoke in support of their submissions.

Submissions were considered by Council at the Planning and Development Committee meeting on 16 February 2022, where the Council resolved:

That the Road Management Plan 2021-2025 be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

DISCUSSION

Following the consideration of submissions, Councillor and Council staff input, the following major changes are proposed to the *Road Management Plan 2021–2025*:

- That Kilfeera Road (Service Road), Benalla be added as an Access Road for a length of 190 metres, from Kilfeera Road to Kilfeera Road.
- That Yellum Track, Swanpool be added as an Access Road for a total length of 640 metres, from the Midland Highway.
- The Midland Highway (Service Road), Lima South be added as an Access Road for a length of 450 meters, from the Midland Highway to the Midland Highway.

The *Road Management Plan 2021-2025* has been provided to Councillors under separate cover and is available for download from the Council's website.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- A healthy, Safe and resilient community
- A connected, involved and inclusive community

Livability

- Vibrant public spaces and places
- Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking

Leadership

- Good governance
- High performance culture
- Engaged and informed community
- Effective and responsive advocacy

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications. Maintenance on additional road segments will be managed within existing operational budgets.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the Plan is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Road Management Plan 2021-2025* has been developed following extensive consultation in 2021. The work of the community and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Plan is acknowledged.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021–2025* be adopted.**
- 2. That a letter of acknowledgement to be sent to public submitters thanking them for their contribution and informing them of the decision made in relation to their submission on the *Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025***

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9.5 Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit

SF/1604

Tom Arnold – Community Development Coordinator

Jane Archbold – Manager Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents for consideration and adoption the *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit*.

BACKGROUND

At the meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee on 27 October 2021, the Committee, acting under its delegated authority of the Council, resolved:

That the draft Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and draft Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

Public notice of the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and draft *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* was given via the Council's website on Thursday 28 October 2021 and in the Benalla Ensign on Wednesday 3 September 2021.

Feedback was sought via the Council's website, through Councils networks and promoted on social media.

The submission period closed Thursday 25 November 2021. At the close of the submission period two submissions were received.

In accordance with the Council's Governance Rules 2020, submitters were invited to address the Finance and Operations Committee on 1 December 2021. Submitters did not request to speak in support of their submissions.

Submissions were considered by the Council at the Finance and Operations Committee meeting on 16 February 2022, where the council resolved:

That the Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.

DISCUSSION

Following the consideration of submissions, Councillor and Council staff input, there are no proposed changes to the draft *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit*.

The *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* are attached as **Appendix 1**.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Leadership

- Good governance
- High performance culture
- Engaged and informed community

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with reviewing and updating the *Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* have been accommodated within the existing budget allocations.

LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the Policy is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

The Policy and supporting document have been redeveloped to align with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

The *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* has been developed to support and strengthen Councils operations in partnership with the community. All stakeholders who participated in the process are thanked for their valuable contribution.

Recommendation:

1. That the *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit* be adopted.
2. That a letter of acknowledgement to be sent to public submitters thanking them for their contribution and informing them of the decision made in relation to their submission on the *Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy* and *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit*.

CP 30 Community Engagement Policy

Responsible Officer:	Manager Community
Document Type:	Council Policy
Reference:	CP 30
Adopted by:	Council
Date Adopted:	23 February 2022
Date of Next Review:	February 2024

Policy Objective

Council is committed to undertaking genuine, purposeful engagement with our community to reflect our diverse communities views, aspirations, and experiences.

“Our community will be recognised for its strong leadership, collaborative partnerships, extensive networks, and high level of community engagement and participation.”

– Benalla Rural City Council Community Vision 2036

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) has an increased focus on embedding robust community engagement practices into Council's strategic planning and decision making.

The *Community Engagement Policy* outlines the Council's commitment to encourage civic participation and identify the needs of the community through the use of deliberative, effective and inclusive engagement practices.

The policy, in conjunction with the *Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit*, will guide community engagement across the organisation to support decision-making, build relationships and strengthen communities.

Policy Scope

Community engagement is an organisation wide responsibility. The community engagement policy applies to all Councillors, Council staff, consultants and contractors acting on behalf of the Council.

Definition of Community Engagement

Community engagement is often depicted as a spectrum, ranging from low-level engagement strategies such as providing information to high-level strategies such as empowerment.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) specifies five levels of ‘best practice’ public participation:

- **Inform:** to provide balanced and objective information to assist the public in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- **Consult:** to obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- **Involve:** to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate:** to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution.
- **Empower:** to place the final decision in the hands of the public.

Why Engage?

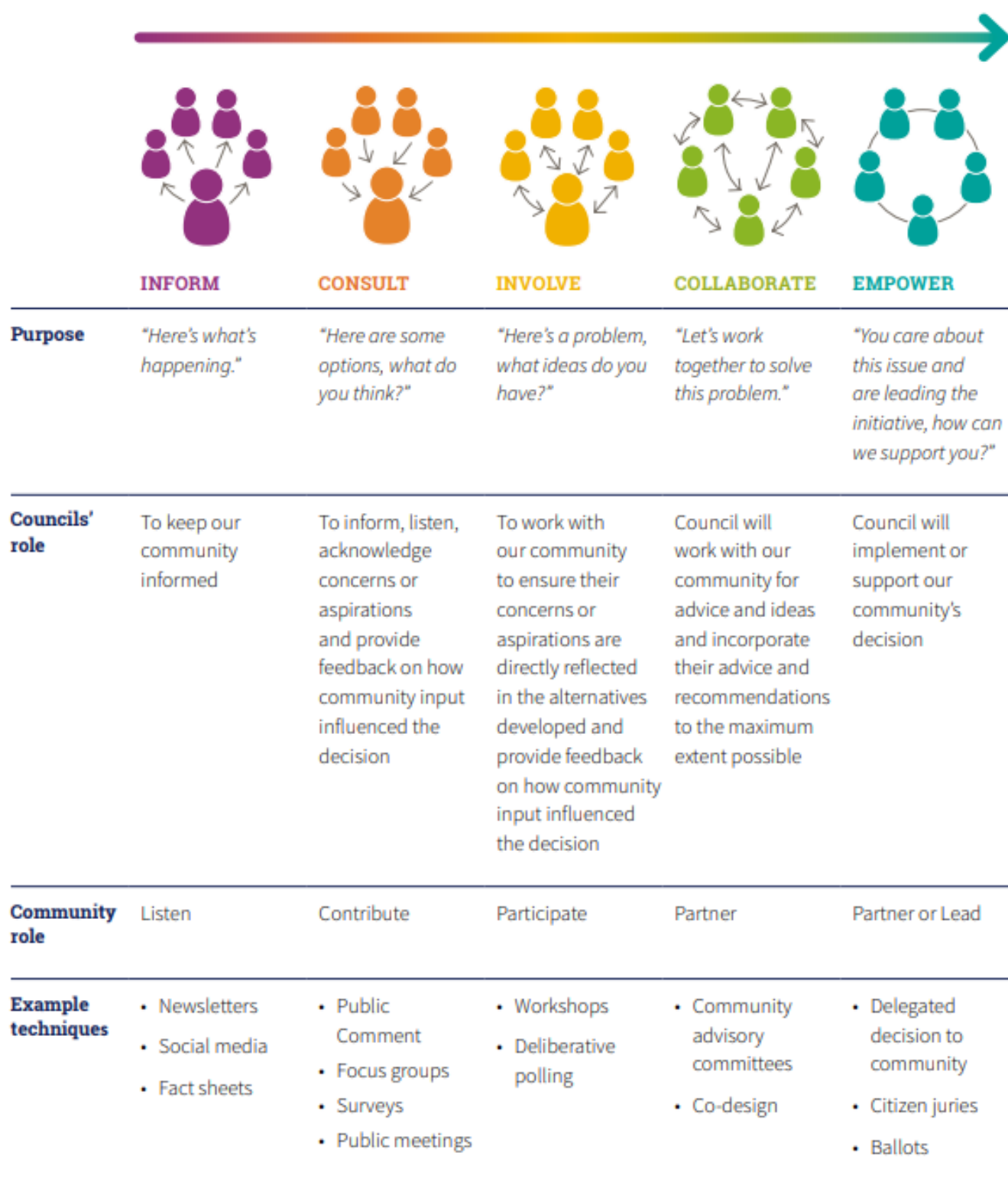
The Council is committed to working with the community and considers community engagement an essential element of good governance.

The *International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum* of community engagement (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower) demonstrates that different levels of community engagement are appropriate for different scenarios or types of issues.

Some community engagement processes are undertaken to share information or support decision making, some are about relationship building whilst others are focused on community capacity building.

There are times when the Council’s level of engagement with the community may be limited. In these circumstances, engagement may focus on informing the community of the Council’s decisions and actions.

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum



The 'empower' level on the spectrum has limited application within the Local Government context as the elected Council are the decision-making body. However, there may be occasions where non-financial empowerment may occur.

Guiding Principles For Community Engagement

Community Engagement Principles as set out in the *Local Government Act 2020* include:

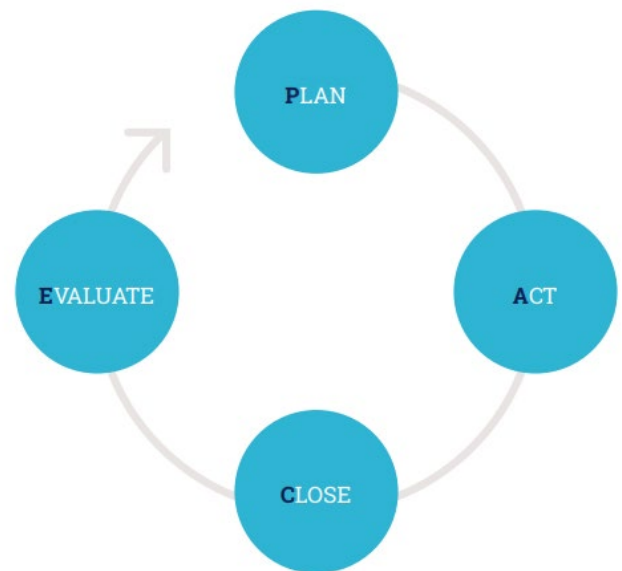
- a community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope;
- participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation;
- participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement;
- participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement;
- participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision making.

Our Model For Community Engagement

The Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit (the Framework) sets out the processes, tools and resources to achieve this.

The Framework articulates an easy to use four step community engagement model to guide and support all Council departments when planning and implementing community engagement.

The *PACE* (Plan, Act, Close, Evaluate) community engagement model is informed by best practice evidence for effective community engagement and is underpinned by the Council's community engagement principles.



A summary of the four phases of the PACE model:

1. Plan

Good planning is crucial. This plan phase steps out the who, what, why, how and when of engagement activities with the community. A *Community Engagement Plan Template and planning checklist* has been developed to assist.

2. Act

This is the action or consultation phase where the community engagement plan will be implemented. Key steps in this phase are:

- preparing resources and sharing information
- inviting participation; and
- conducting consultation activities.

3. Close

Closing the feedback loop is an essential step in the community engagement process. It is important for community members to see their involvement has made a difference by the Council sharing the outcome with the community.

4. Evaluate

Evaluating community engagement can be critical for informing future work with the community. Undertaking an evaluation will help the Council to improve its community engagement processes, celebrate success and learn from past experiences.

Expenses

In certain circumstances the Council is legally required to consult with the community. In these cases, the Council will treat the legally required level of community engagement as the minimum standard.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) sets out that Councils must include deliberative engagement practices within its community engagement processes. The Act identifies key Council plans and strategies requiring deliberative engagement:

- Community Vision
- Council Plan,
- Financial Plan
- Asset Plan

The Policy must also be able to be applied to the development of local laws and policy development.

Community engagement must also be undertaken in line with other relevant legislation and other statutory requirements. This may include but is not limited to:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Planning and Environment Act 2007*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Building Act 1993*
- *Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards*

Related Policies

Benalla Rural City Council Plan 2021-2025

Benalla Rural City Council Community Vision 2036

Benalla Rural City Community Plan 2016-2036

Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit

International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

Related Legislation

Local Government Act 2020

Road Management Act 2004

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Planning and Environment Act 2007

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Building Act 1933

Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND TOOLKIT

2022 UPDATE



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ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK AND TOOLKIT

The Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Framework outlines Benalla Rural City Council's commitment to genuine and purposeful engagement of the local community.

This framework has been developed as a resource for both Council and community to support the delivery of thoughtful and deliberative community engagement. Benalla Rural City Council's engagement principles and process have been informed by the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) core values and spectrum. It is based on principles that respect the right of all community members to be informed, consulted, involved and empowered.

The Community Engagement Framework provides a clear, consistent four step approach to community engagement: Plan, Act, Close, Evaluate (PACE). It also offers an understanding of the different forms of engagement, some helpful tools and an awareness of other available resources.

Commitment to community engagement

The Benalla Rural City Council is committed to engaging the community in a meaningful way. We will provide clear, objective, user-friendly information and offer opportunities for community members to participate in decision making that affects them.

Benalla Rural City Council is committed to working with the community and considers community engagement an essential element of good governance. The Council will engage the community on key matters which affect them and whenever it believes that community engagement will result in a better outcome for the community and better-informed decisions.

2019 Benalla Rural City Community Engagement Policy

Our community will be recognised for its strong leadership, collaborative partnerships, extensive networks, and high level of community engagement and participation.

COMMUNITY VISION 2036

The Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit builds on Council's policy, bringing it to life as a working document, supported by the toolkit.

THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a core responsibility of local government. At times this responsibility to seek community input is deemed as 'statutory consultation' and at other times community views are sought to support balanced decision making and incorporate community aspirations.



OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

We commit to:

- open, honest and accountable community engagement
- well-planned and accessible community engagement
- information being shared in a timely and balanced way so the community understands engagement aims, processes and outcomes
- treating all community members with respect and valuing diversity, ensuring feedback from a wide variety of voices
- empowering community members to participate, build capacity and contribute to decision making
- being flexible and looking for new and innovative ways to listen to and engage with community members.

Legislative requirements

At times, Council is legislatively and/or legally required to engage with the community. In these cases, we will treat the legally required level of community engagement as the minimum standard.

Undertaking community engagement beyond the legally required levels will occur:

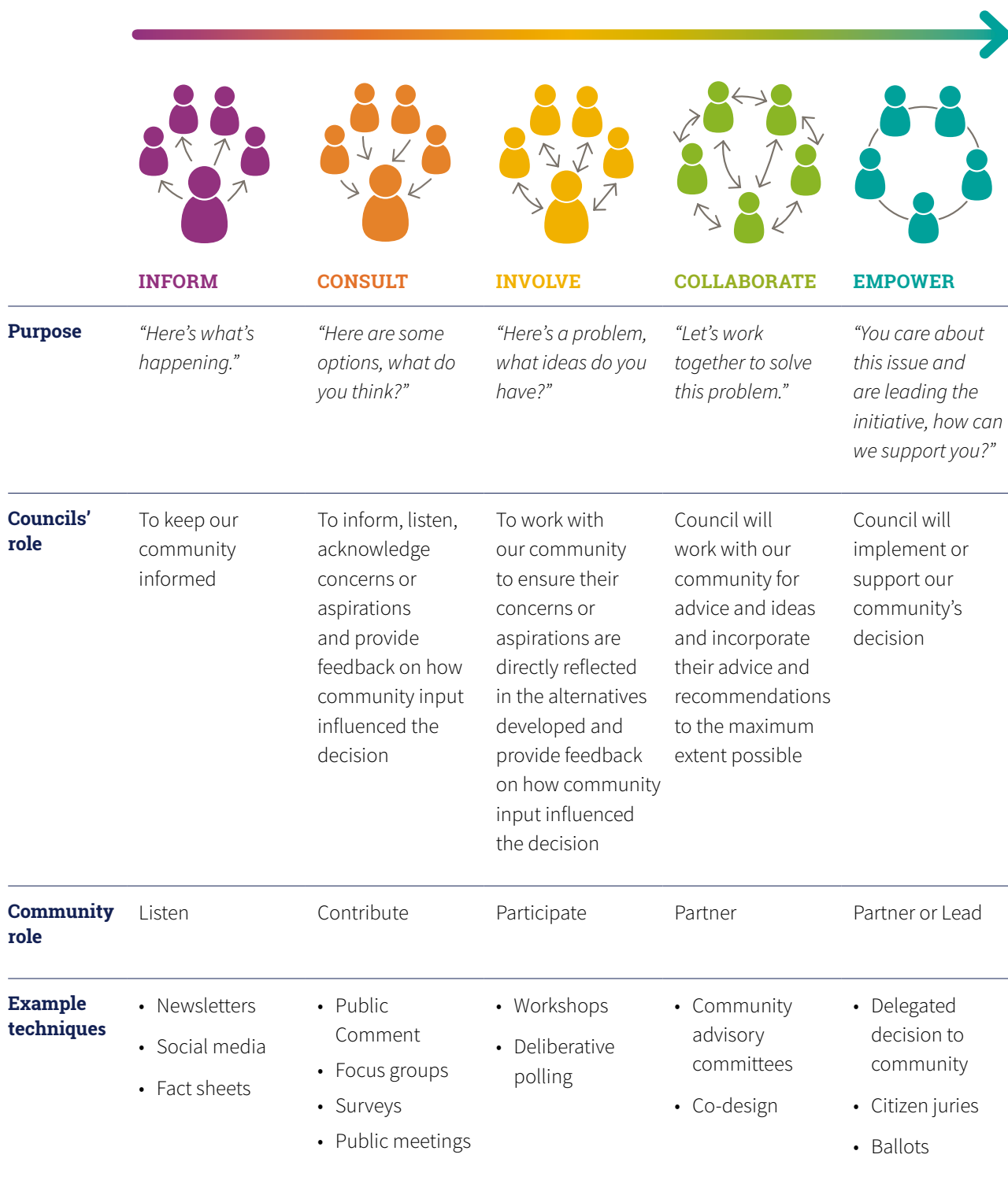
- where community input can improve a project or enhance decision making
- to help identify community needs and aspirations
- in response to community interest, and
- where Council resolves to consult the community.

Community engagement must be undertaken in line with relevant legislation and other statutory requirements.

This may include but is not limited to:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Planning and Environment Act 2007*
- *Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

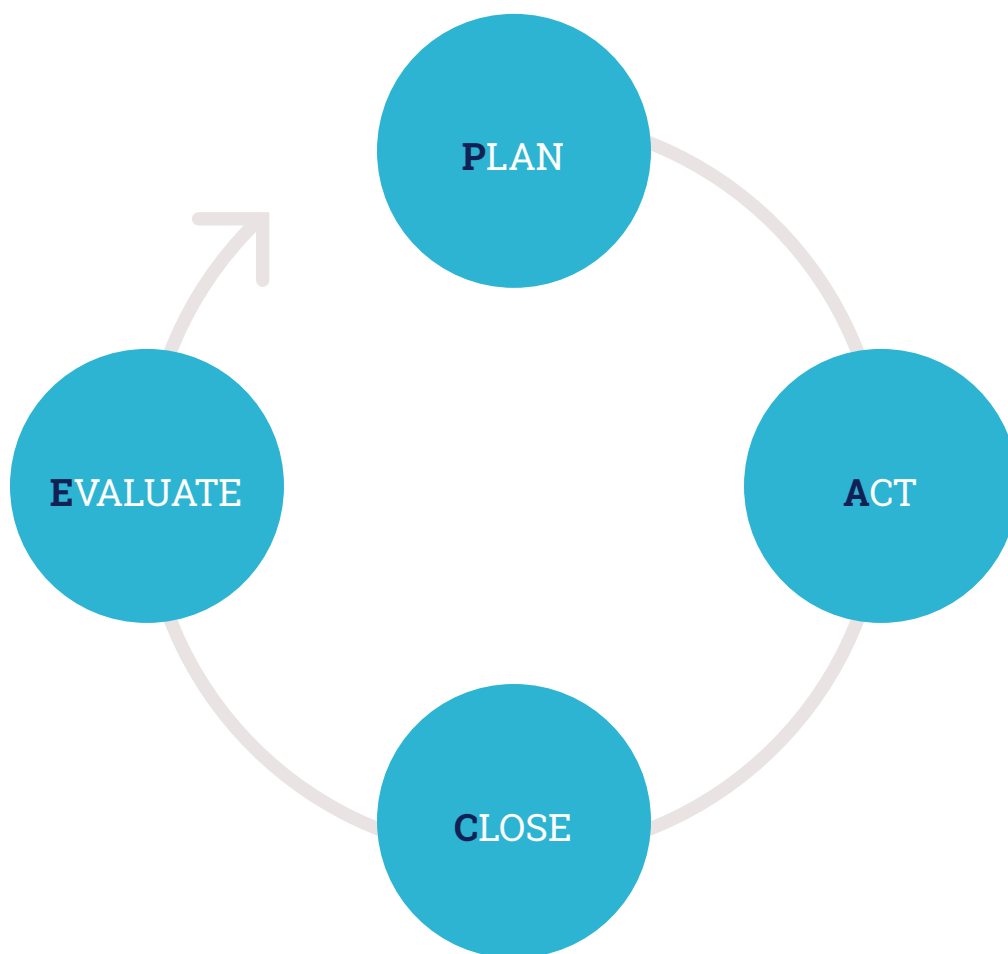


The 'empower' level on the spectrum has limited application within the Local Government context as the elected Council are the decision-making body. However, there may be occasions where non-financial empowerment may occur.

OUR MODEL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An easy to use four step community engagement model has been developed to guide and support all Council departments when planning and implementing community engagement.

The PACE (plan, act, close, evaluate) community engagement model is informed by best practice evidence for effective community engagement and is underpinned by Councils community engagement principles.



Each step of the PACE Community Engagement Model is supported by a range of tools, templates and checklists that can be adjusted and adapted as required.

STEP ONE: PLAN

Good planning is crucial and will assist you to consider the who, what, why, how and when of your engagement activities with the community. A Community Engagement Plan template has been developed to assist you with your planning (see appendices section).

What

What is the issue you are wanting to engage the community about? What is the key information relating to the issue that the community should understand? Crucially, what level of impact does the issue have on the community?

Why

Think about why you are seeking to engage the community. Why is it important? Is community engagement essential?

Who

Consider who the key stakeholders are relating to the issue? Who does this issue impact the most? Are they people from a specific community, or a certain age group or culture or are they a special interest group (for example, farmers, business owners, parents of young children)? Sometimes engagement can focus on a narrow section of the community and other times it may include diverse sections of the community. Thinking through who it is important to hear from and any barriers to involvement that they might have is crucial for your engagement planning.

How

How are you going to engage the community? There are a number of methods that can be used to engage community. It is worthwhile to think about the methods that would work best with the level of community engagement you are planning for. Remember to consider the level of impact for the community.

Consider who might help you, will you require any assistance? Would it be beneficial to partner with a community organisation or another Council department?

Budget is also an important consideration when planning for what methods you might use. Some methods are more time intensive and costly and might not compliment the available budget and timeframes.

When

Thinking through when your engagement might happen is important. The 'when' might be influenced by your project timelines, so planning when and allowing enough time is an important consideration. Rushed engagement can sometimes result in community members feeling like engagement is 'tokenistic' so being mindful of timeframes is vital.

It is also important to consider things like:

- **The best time of day/week/month/year to engage:** this can be important if you are targeting certain groups e.g. small business owners may prefer a breakfast or evening meeting and engaging with farmers at busy times e.g. during harvest may result in lowered involvement as would surveying students during exam times or conducting consultations in December/January.
- **How often:** if you have a steering/working group how often they will meet should be planned for early on.
- **When you might give feedback back to the community:** a common community complaint is that they don't know what has happened as a result of their involvement. Consider when the best time to report back progress such as survey or poll results or any decisions made might be and plan for this.

Assess the level of community impact

The IAP2 spectrum of public participation takes account of the level of public impact of a service, project or activity. Added to this is the level of risk or significance that a service, project or activity may have for the organisation or community.

Generally speaking, the higher the risk, and/or the more significant the impact, the greater the extent of community engagement. The table on the following page has been designed to assist Council staff to identify the potential level of engagement required:

Council assesses the impact across four levels:

Level 1 – High Impact, whole or large part of LGA

Level 2 – High Impact, local (specific neighborhood, group or rural township)

Level 3 – Lower Impact, whole or large part of LGA

Level 4 – Lower Impact, local (specific neighborhood, group or rural township)

LEVEL OF IMPACT	CRITERIA (ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS)	EXAMPLE
Level 1	- High level of real or perceived impact, interest or risk across whole or large part of LGA. - Significant impact on attributes that are considered to be of high value to the whole or large part of LGA, such as the natural environment or heritage. - Significant impact on the health and safety of the whole or large part of LGA community. - Potential high degree of controversy or conflict. - Potential high impact on State or regional strategies or directions. - Strategy or project has legislated engagement requirements.	- Council Plan - Community Vision - Long Term Financial Plan - Other key strategic policy or plans, e.g. Asset Plans, Road Management Plan - Provision of new regional facility - Removal or change to existing key facility
Level 2	- High level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group/s of a specific facility or service. - The loss of or significant change to any facility or service to a local community. - Potential high degree of controversy or conflict at the local level.	- Removal or relocation of playground - Asset or Facility upgrades, e.g. Devenish drainage improvements - Local street closure - Car parking changes
Level 3	- Lower, although still some real or perceived impact or risk across whole or large part of LGA. - Potential for some controversy or conflict. - Potential for some although not significant impact on State or regional strategies or directions	- Minor regional facility changes e.g. Aquatic centre - Changes to customer service e.g. COVID closures - Community studies, e.g. youth survey - Community events, e.g. Benalla Festival
Level 4	- Lower level of real or perceived impact or risk on a local area, small community or user group/s of a specific facility or service. - Only a small change or improvement to a facility or service at the local level. - Low or no risk of controversy or conflict at the local level.	- Street closure due to road works - Street scaping e.g. dining pods - Playground upgrades

Once the level of impact has been established the table below can be used as a guide on the potential engagement techniques that may be most appropriate. The table below provides examples aligned with the IAP2 spectrum of public participation. It is important to note that engagement methods should be tailored for each service, project or activity. Examples below may not be appropriate in all instances, further examples of engagement methods can be found in the appendices.

	METHOD	LEVEL 1 HIGH IMPACT LGA	LEVEL 2 HIGH IMPACT LOCAL	LEVEL 3 LOWER IMPACT LGA	LEVEL 4 LOWER IMPACT LOCAL
INFORM	Social media	●	●	●	●
	Benalla Ensign	●	●	●	●
	Displays (Customer Service, Library etc.)	●	●	●	●
	Website	●	●	●	●
	Council News mailout	●	●	●	●
	Email (community lists or providing updates)	●	●	●	●
	In person	●	●	●	●
	Telephone	●	●	●	●
	Banners and posters	●	●	●	●
CONSULT	Online and written submissions	●	●	●	●
	Pop-up booths	●	●	●	●
	Information sessions	●	●	●	●
	Surveys	●	●	●	●
INVOLVE	Workshops	●	●	●	●
	Focus group session	●	●	●	●
	Have Your Say (website)	●	N/A	●	N/A
	Meetings with key stakeholders / users	●	●	●	●
	Meeting with target community groups e.g. youth, rural, CALD	●	●	●	●
COLLABORATE	Strategic Reference Groups	●	●	●	●
	Deliberative Polling	●	●	●	●
	Community Summit	●	●	N/A	N/A
	Community advisory committees	●	●	●	●

● Recommended ● Desirable ● Optional

Summary of key points

- Think through the issue/topic you are wanting to engage the community about
- Consider the level of impact the issue has on the community
- Confirm what resources (budget) you have available
- Create a Community Engagement Plan (see template section)
- Identify and plan for possible engagement barriers
- List of key stakeholders- who does this issue concern the most? (You can use the Stakeholder Analysis Template to assist you with this.)
- Consider the range of engagement methods and decide on approach
- Think about who might help you and potential partnerships
- Think about your available timeframes and the best times to engage community.

STEP TWO: ACT

Once your Community Engagement Plan is completed you are ready to begin community engagement. This is the action or consultation phase where you will implement your community engagement plan.

1. Prepare resources and share information

Write up relevant key information that you would like to share with the community- this can be through a range of mediums such as:

- media releases
- one-page flyers
- postcards
- online information
- newsletters
- emails
- phone calls.

Sticking to a few key simple statements often works well. Consider the audience for the information and write using easy English without jargon wherever possible.

If your engagement is over a period of time, consider when the best time to share information might be and what your key messages might be at each point.

2. Invite participation

Invite community participation, this can be done in various ways depending on the methods and level of engagement that you are looking for:

Invitations to participate can be:

- a phone call or email inviting involvement through an advisory group or steering committee
- a group email forwarded through key stakeholder networks
- a targeted email or written invitation for a focus group or workshop
- a community wide invitation in the local newspaper
- a community wide invitation via community newsletters; and
- invitations via social media.

3. Conduct consultation activities

Use your community engagement plan to assist in guiding your consultation activities. A range of consultation methods are listed in the appendices; ensure that you 'mix it up' and use a variety of print, electronic and face to face methods.

It is helpful to have an idea of what success would look like in terms of your engagement. Is there a certain number of community members or groups that you would like to engage?

Don't forget to consider if internal or external partners should be activated to work together with you. Effective consultations are:

- timely
- community friendly
- flexible; and
- responsive to community needs.

Don't forget that collecting feedback on draft documents is consultation also.

Summary of key points

- Identify key stakeholders- who does this issue concern the most? (see template section)
- Choose the engagement methods that will best fit the level of engagement
- Ensure venues chosen are accessible
- Test your engagement tools e.g. surveys, focus group questions, written materials
- Be flexible in your approach, and adjust your consultation if needed
- Hear from the range of voices that are impacted by this issue/topic.

STEP THREE: CLOSE

Closing the loop is an important step in the community engagement process. When community members can see that their involvement made a difference, they are more likely to get involved in future engagement.

It is common after a consultation for community members to wonder:

- What happened to my idea?
- Did you listen to what I said?
- Did my involvement make a difference?
- What even happened with that issue/decision?

Closing the feedback loop is one of the most important elements of the engagement process and without it you cannot show real respect for your participants' contribution.

There are a number of ways that you can close the feedback loop:

- Share consultation results in community friendly ways e.g. via social media, local newsletters, newspapers or face to face via presentations to key groups.
- Ensure that any decisions made are publicised broadly and participants who shared their contact details or were involved in collaborative ways i.e. through steering groups are contacted directly.
- When communicating about final decisions provide a summary of the feedback and a clear rationale for the decision.
- For issues of high community interest with high public impact consider developing a summary of feedback received through the consultation.
- Share any key documents broadly.
- Consider if a community celebration or launch might be appropriate.

Summary of key points

- Publicise any decisions made
- Develop community friendly ways to share community consultation results
- Summarise feedback in a community friendly way
- Share key documents/reports with community
- Meet together with key stakeholders e.g. project partners, advisory groups, steering committees to review findings

STEP FOUR: EVALUATE

An important step for effective community engagement is evaluating and learning from each community engagement activity. Communities are not static; they are ever changing and what worked well with one group in a community may not work well at all with another.

Evaluating your engagement of community can be critical for informing future work with community. Ask yourself:

1. What worked well? What made this engagement a success, what learnings should I remember for next time?
2. What didn't work so well? What cautions should I remember for next time?
3. What can I do next time to improve my engagement with community?

When a community engagement activity is significant/involved it may be useful to develop a quick anonymous survey to invite feedback from key stakeholders on what worked well, what didn't work so well and suggestions to improve engagement activities in the future (see appendices section for example survey questions).

Summary of key points

- Think through the process and reflect on successes and challenges (See sample evaluation questions in appendices section)
- Ask others who were involved for their feedback
- Consider if a survey of key stakeholders/ community members would be appropriate
- Capture your key learnings to share with colleagues.

APPENDIX: **ENGAGEMENT TOOLS**

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

#	CONSULTATION METHOD	TARGET GROUP	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES REQUIRED	PARTNERS	COMMENTS/DETAILS	STRENGTHS/LIMITATIONS
	e.g. survey, open house, focus group etc.	e.g. parents, all residents, businesses, young people, farmers etc.				e.g. A series of workshops will be planned to capture key stakeholder and community input and to share project information.	Surveys are inexpensive and can reach many but can typically have a low response rate.

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	LEVEL OF IMPACT (1,2,3,4)	WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO THE STAKEHOLDER?	POTENTIAL VALUE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ISSUE	POTENTIAL THREAT TO THE ISSUE	STRATEGY FOR ENGAGING THE STAKEHOLDER	CONTACT PERSON

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

POSSIBLE CONSULTATION METHODS

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Surveys	A structured consultation process where people respond to a set of written or verbal questions.	• Can reach broad numbers of people • Can be posted online • Anonymous	• No social interaction • Not good for people with literacy issues • Surveys can have low response rates
Interviews	A face to face or phone discussion based on pre-determined questions.	• Easier to discuss sensitive issues • Creates a rapport • Can be comfortable	• Can be intimidating for some • No opportunity for group discussion • Time intensive (especially in rural areas)
Focus groups	A small to medium group of people responding to an issue or group of questions. The aim is to get feedback; not make decisions.	• Interactive discussion • Can involve a diverse range of people • Community facilitators can be trained to assist	• Not a good way to discuss sensitive or personal issues
Forums	People coming together to discuss and decide on issues. Forums can be for people from a mix of backgrounds or can be for a specific interest group.	• Can reach a broad range of people • Provides social interaction • Can develop skills of community members in public speaking and facilitation • Empowering	• Time intensive with detailed planning required • Not a good way to discuss sensitive or personal issues
Reference or advisory groups	A group of people providing feedback, support and advice back to a project or organisation.	• Enables regular and direct feedback • Incorporates community perspectives • Develops community skills in meetings, group work and communication	• Requires time, planning and support • Formal committee approaches can be a deterrent for some community members
Internet discussions	Using the internet to post a survey, hold a discussion or request feedback.	• Can reach large numbers of people • Allows for anonymity • Caters for geographic isolation	• Depends on people having internet access • Requires some IT knowledge/skill

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
Kitchen table conversations	A kitchen table discussion is a small, informal meeting that takes place in someone's home or a local cafe. Kitchen table discussions are hosted by volunteers who want to take part.	• Interactive discussion • Can involve a diverse range of people • Community facilitators can be trained to assist	• Requires time, planning and support • Must be comfortable with group conversations
Sms text consultations	Sending out text messages on mobile phones asking for opinions on an issue or question.	• Large numbers of people can be targeted • Takes the consultation to people • Quick and easy to do	• Does not include people without access to a mobile phone • Access to mobile phone numbers is required • Difficult to define target groups • No personal contact
Public meetings	Public meetings bring diverse groups of stakeholders together for a specific purpose. Public meetings are held to engage a wide audience in information sharing and discussion.	• Introduces a project or issue to a community • Large numbers of people can be targeted	• Difficult to get broad community representation • Can be difficult to hear from all members • Strong voices can often dominate • Tricky to facilitate
Open houses	An open house involves using a venue as a drop-in centre allowing people to gather information and share their views.	• Can be interactive • Can reach a broad range of people • Creates a rapport	• Requires time, planning and support
Pop-up's	Pop-up consultations are mobile and can be moved around targeting various communities or locations.	• Creates a visible presence • Can capture a diverse range of voices	• Not a good way to discuss sensitive or personal issues
Facebook polling	Two question polls can be added to Facebook pages to invite feedback.	• Can reach a broad range of people • Is anonymous • Quick and easy to create	• Requires Facebook membership and internet • Doesn't gather rich information
Postcards	Postcards can invite written feedback on a range of questions and also provide information.	• Can reach a broad range of people • Is anonymous • Large numbers of people can be targeted	• No social interaction • Not good for people with literacy issues • Can have low response rates if not promoted effectively

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

CONSULTATION TIPS

Be Flexible

Be open to trying new things or tweaking your methods as you go - your plan does not need to be written in stone and should be adjusted to suit.

Use Easy English

If your audience is the whole community easy English will support understanding across a range of backgrounds. Avoid jargon wherever possible, keep it simple and not too lengthy.

Mix it up

Rarely does one consultation tool work for everyone, using a mix of methods- e.g. survey, focus group, interviews, street pop-up's will support you to access a range of people in the community.

Be mindful of your available resourcing

Work within your budget to design your community engagement.

Consider community expectations

Be careful not to create unreasonable community expectations through your consultation. Be clear at the start with community members about resources, decision making and what you can and can't do.

Always 'test' your tools

It is best practice to test your surveys, interview questions, focus group questions etc. Testing can help to ensure that your language is right and people understand what you are asking or sharing. Choose people who haven't been involved and ask them for feedback - they could be community members, young people or work colleagues.

Timing is important

Avoiding holiday times and consider what times might work best for different cohorts for example, young people, working families, single parents, farmers

Accessibility

All venues and information/content provided at consultation sessions needs to be accessible to those with a disability.

Contact details

Provide an opportunity for participants to share their contact details so they can be updated on the project and notified of the outcome. Ensure that participants understand how the information they share will be used and stored.

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

SAMPLE EVALUATION QUESTIONS

These questions may be useful to consider when evaluating your community engagement. You may ask these questions of yourself, other colleagues or key stakeholders/steering group.

.....
Were the right community members at the table/involved?
.....

Was there enough time for the community to participate and respond?
.....

Did the engagement process allow for all voices to be heard and equally valued?
.....

Were consultations accessible? e.g. time, venue, method
.....

Did community members involved inform the development of the consultation plan?
.....

Did you hear from the range of voices that would have been affected by the issue?
.....

Were 'hard to reach' and under-represented stakeholders engaged?
.....

Was the response rate you were aiming for reached?
.....

Was the budget adequate?
.....

What engagement techniques were most effective?
.....

What engagement techniques were least effective?
.....

Did community members build their own capacity through their involvement?
.....

What would you do again and why?
.....

What would you be cautious about doing again and why?
.....

Are there skills that you would like to further build to improve future community engagement?
.....

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BARRIERS

Communities or individuals can face barriers that make engagement with Local Government challenging or unappealing such as:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • lack of confidence | • time constraints |
| • limited money | • insecure housing/homelessness |
| • limited literacy and numeracy skills | • consultation fatigue |
| • mental or physical health issues | • previous negative experience of engagement |
| • limited mobility | • caring responsibilities |
| • issues related to gender, sexuality or race | • work commitments |
| • values and beliefs | • limited interest in the subject |
| • language barriers | • community divisions |
| • age barriers | • lack of understanding about what the information is being used for lack of feedback from previous involvement in engagement activities. |
| • lack of transport | • incorrect assumptions about how people best participate in engagement can also create significant barriers to engagement. |
| • lack of internet access | |
| • apathy towards Local Government or a particular issue | |
| • lack of social support | |

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

A frequent challenge of community engagement work is how to ensure that those community members whose voices are heard are representative of the community or those most impacted by the topic of engagement. For a variety of reasons, certain community members may be harder to engage when seeking input or involvement.

The **Capire Inclusive Community Engagement Toolkit** identifies some of the groups that are often considered as ‘hard to reach’ due to their respective barriers to engagement:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • homeless people | • people with health issues |
| • indigenous | • fathers or mothers |
| • people experiencing family violence | • newly arrived people |
| • older migrants | • wheelchair users |
| • children | • hearing impaired |
| • the bereaved | • speech impaired |
| • people experiencing trauma | • older people |
| • drug and alcohol affected | • people living in rural or regional areas |
| • young people, teenagers | • transient people |
| • people in prison | • international students |
| • professionals | • temporary residents |
| • youth offenders | • business owner |
| • residents in public housing | • same sex attracted |
| • people who have caring responsibilities | • people with a disability |
| • single parents | • vision impaired |
| • parents at schools | • people with an intellectual disability |

It is important to note that not everyone in the named groups would always be hard to reach, the circumstances for each individual may be different depending on their past experiences of engagement and the topic of focus.

ENGAGEMENT TOOL:

CURRENT ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The Benalla Rural City Council actively engages the community to share information and consult on matters of importance in a wide variety of ways, such as:

- Benalla Rural City Council interactive website using polls, surveys and have your say

- social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook etc.)

- Council publications

- stories through the local newspaper

- media releases

- local radio/television

- adverts

- community meetings/forums

- community surveys

- telephone questionnaires

- public Council meetings

- direct mails/emails

- feedback forums

- postcards

- open house sessions

- stakeholder workshops

- advisory and reference groups

- specialist groups

- ‘friends of’ groups

- kitchen table conversations

- guest speakers

- youth researchers

benalla.vic.gov.au

find us on facebook



9.6 Mayor and Councillors' Attendance at Committees and Civic Functions

SF/808-07

Tracey Beaton - Executive Assistant to the CEO, Mayor and Councillors

The following report lists the Mayor and Councillors attendance at meetings and events during the period from 6 December 2021 to 11 February 2022.

Councillor Danny Claridge	
7 December	Benalla Family Research Group Meeting
	Aged and Disability Volunteers end of year function 2021
	Cooinda Aged Care - Annual General Meeting
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
9 December	Tomorrow Today 10 year anniversary
12 December	101st Anniversary reading of the Akhand Path (Sikh Holy Book)
13 December	Councillors Media Training
14 December	Dr Helen Haines MP visit to Benalla Family Research Group
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Council Meeting
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
9 February	Councillor Only Forum

Councillor Peter Davis	
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Council Meeting
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
7 February	Swanpool Bowling Club Committee of Management Meeting

Councillor Peter Davis	
9 February	Councillor Only Forum
11 February	Benalla Art Gallery - Adrienne Doig Exhibition Launch - It's all about me!

Councillor Don Firth	
7 December	Accessibility Reference Group Christmas Break Up Lunch
	Aged and Disability Volunteers end of year function 2021
	Cooinda Aged Care - Annual General Meeting
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
9 December	MAV - Mayoral Welcome and Introduction
10 December	MAV - Mayoral Welcome and Introduction
12 December	101st Anniversary reading of the Akhand Path (Sikh Holy Book)
13 December	Councillors Media Training
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Council Meeting
17 December	Staff Service Awards Presentation
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
8 February	Guest speaker at Benalla Lakeside Probus Club
9 February	Councillor Only Forum
10 February	2022 Benalla Festival Meeting

Councillor Punarji Hewa Gunaratne	
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Aged Care in Council Webinar
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
9 December	Community Plan Implementation Steering Committee end of year celebration
10 December	Australia Day Meeting and Awards Selection Panel
13 December	Councillors Media Training
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Council Meeting

Councillor Punarji Hewa Gunaratne	
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
9 February	Councillor Only Forum

Mayor Bernie Hearn	
7 December	Accessibility Reference Group Christmas break up lunch
	Aged and Disability Volunteers end of year function 2021
	Cooinda Aged Care - Annual General Meeting
8 December	Planning Applications Review
	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Aged Care in Council Webinar
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
9 December	ONE FM Phone Interview
	Ian Potter Foundation
	MAV - Mayoral Welcome and Introduction
10 December	MAV - Mayoral Welcome and Introduction
	Australia Day Meeting and Awards Selection Panel
12 December	101st Anniversary reading of the Akhand Path (Sikh Holy Book)
13 December	Councillors Media Training
15 December	Australia Day award nominees presentation
	Councillor Only Forum
	Benalla Health Annual General Meeting 2021
	Council Meeting
16 December	Art Gallery Exhibition - Contemplating Nature by Pauline Fraser
2022	
18 January	Australia Day Committee Meeting
24 January	Benalla Sports and Equestrian Centre Advisory Committee Meeting
25 January	Leadership Training
	Australia Day Ceremony Rehearsal
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony
30 January	Benalla Art Gallery talk by Nicole Durling, Director CRAFT
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review

Mayor Bernie Hearn	
7 February	Benalla Local Safety and Traffic Liaison Committee Meeting
8 February	Guest speaker at Benalla Lakeside Probus Club
9 February	Councillor Only Forum
11 February	Benalla Art Gallery - Adrienne Doig Exhibition Launch - It's all about me!

Councillor Justin King	
7 December	Aged and Disability Volunteers end of year function 2021
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
13 December	Councillors Media Training
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Council Meeting
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony via livestream
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
7 February	Benalla Local Safety and Traffic Liaison Committee Meeting
9 February	Councillor Only Forum
10 February	Benalla Showgrounds and Recreation Committee Meeting

Councillor Gail O'Brien	
6 December	Benalla Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group Meeting
7 December	Aged and Disability Volunteers end of year function 2021
8 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Tour of the Landfill Cell Construction and Transfer Station
	Aged Care in Council Webinar
	Planning and Development Committee Meeting
9 December	Community Plan Implementation Steering Committee end of year celebration
13 December	Councillors Media Training
15 December	Councillor Only Forum
	Live4Life Benalla Partnership Meeting
	Council Meeting
2022	
26 January	Australia Day Ceremony

Councillor Gail O'Brien	
2 February	Councillor Only Forum
	Assembly of Councillors Business Review
7 February	Benalla Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group - Workshop/Planning Session
9 February	Councillor Only Forum
11 February	Benalla Art Gallery - Adrienne Doig Exhibition Launch - It's all about me!

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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9.7 Council Actions Pending

Council Actions Pending are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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Council Actions Pending From The Cycle Of Meetings Ended 23 February 2022

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
1.	P&D Committee 16-Feb-22	5	Draft Road Management Plan 2021-2025 – Consideration of Submissions That the <i>Benalla Rural City Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025</i> be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.	MAI	Completed
2.	P&D Committee 16-Feb-22	4	Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 – Consideration of Submissions That the <i>Benalla Rural City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025</i> be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.	MD	Completed

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
3.	P&D Committee 16-Feb-22	2	Planning Application No. P0133/21 – To Use And Develop The Land For A Dwelling And The Creation Of An Access To A Road Zone Category 1 – 2187 Benalla Tatong Road, Tatong That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. P0133/21 to be given under Section 52 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> decides to refuse to grant a Permit under the provisions of the Benalla Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as 2187 Benalla Tatong Road, Tatong, for the use and development of a dwelling in accordance with the endorsed plans, with the application dated 7 September 2021 on the following grounds: 1. Adequate justification has not been provided to detail that a dwelling is required on the land for the agricultural use. 2. The proposed dwelling will reduce the availability of land for agricultural production on site. 3. The proposed dwelling will lead to a proliferation of dwellings in the area which will reduce the potential for agricultural production. 4. The proposed dwelling will make it difficult for surrounding properties to expand existing farming operations.	MD	Completed
4.	F&O Committee 16-Feb-22	2	Draft Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit – Consideration of Submissions That the <i>Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit</i> be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting on 23 February 2022.	MC	Completed
5.	Council Meeting 15-Dec-21	9.3	Professional Development For Councillors Policy 1. <i>That the Professional Development for Councillors Policy be adopted.</i> 2. <i>That the Professional Development for Councillors Policy be reviewed in March 2025.</i>	GMC	1. Completed 2. Completed

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
6.	Council Meeting 15-Dec-21	9.2	<i>Councillor Resources And Reimbursement Policy</i> 1. That the <i>Councillor Resources and Reimbursement Policy</i> be adopted. 2. That the <i>Councillor Resources and Reimbursement Policy</i> be reviewed in March 2025.	GMC	1. Completed 2. Completed
7.	Council Meeting 10-Feb-21	11.2	Notice of Motion: Hosting of a community and sporting group summit to understand the impact of COVID-19 1. That the Council invite representatives from sporting and community clubs to participate in "round table" discussions to identify the challenges faced during the COVID-19 Pandemic with the intent to better understand the impact of the pandemic with a specific focus on: ▪ Financial impact ▪ Participation rate impact (members/volunteers) ▪ Social impact 2. That "round table" (or alternative 'one on one') discussions be facilitated in accordance with COVID-19 requirements by the Waste and Recreation Coordinator, Community Development Coordinator and Volunteer Development Coordinator in the normal cycle of interactions (i.e. Committee of Management meetings) across 3 months. Options of MS Teams and Zoom can be offered as a second means of facilitating discussions if required. 3. That the Council use the Summit as an exercise to collect information. 4. That the Council draft the information collected in a document that captures the impact of COVID-19 on sporting clubs and community groups within our community. 5. That the report be developed and presented to the Council for adoption and be provided to Federal and State members for consideration.	CEO	In progress.

Action No.	Meeting Name	Item	Action	Officer	Status/notes
8.	Council Meeting 10-Feb-21	11.1	Notice of Motion: Seeking development of COVID-19 Support Initiatives That the Council develop COVID-19 Support Initiatives (BCSI) that provide advice and support to the Benalla community through 2021/22. 1. That the Council develop a community 2021/22 BCSI document (directory) that provides current advice and information relating to COVID-19 supports, including local providers and agencies, Government Departments and sectors from across the state. 2. That the Council undertake a review to consider local supports for the Benalla community as part of the BCSI. 3. That the Council consider the adoption of the final BCSI document upon its completion and the review be considered during the council budget process 2021/22.	CEO	In progress.
9.	P&D Committee 17-Jun-20	2	Planning application for a 118 Lot Subdivision and the removal of native vegetation at Kilfeera Road, Benalla That the item be deferred until the Planning and Development Committee Meeting scheduled for 22 July 2020.	MD	To be rescheduled. Awaiting developer response.

10. Reports by Councillors

Recommendation:

That the report(s) be noted.

11. Notices of Motion

12. Notices of Rescission Motion

13. Urgent Business

Business can only be admitted as urgent business by resolution of the council, and only then if it:

- relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- cannot be deferred until the next Council Meeting without having a negative impact on the Council, the municipality or the local community; and
- cannot be addressed through the Customer Request Management System.

A Councillor proposing that a matter be admitted as urgent business must lodge it in writing with the Chief Executive Officer by 4pm on the day of the meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer will advise the Mayor of any matter that the Chief Executive Officer determines appropriate for the Council to consider admitting as urgent business.

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14. Confidential Business

It is proposed that the following items be considered in confidential business pursuant to the *Local Government Act 2020* as they contain personal information that would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about a person or their personal affairs if released:

14.1 Confidential Reports by Councillors

14.2 Confidential Report by Councillors

Recommendation:

That the meeting be closed to the public for the consideration of the confidential business item noted above pursuant to Sections 3(1) and Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

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15. Reopening of the Meeting to the Public

Recommendation:

That the meeting be reopened to the public.

16. Closure of the Meeting