

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

25 MAY 2021

Commencing at 4.00pm

Our aspiration for our Shire and its community

We live, work and play in an inclusive, dynamic and prosperous place where community spirit is strong and people are empowered to engage in issues that affect their lives.

Councillors:

- Cr Mark Holcombe (Mayor)
- Cr James Tehan (Deputy Mayor)
- Cr Steve Rabie
- Cr Paul Sladdin
- Cr Rohan Webb

Officers:Kaylene ConrickChief Executive Officer:Kaylene ConrickGeneral Manager Infrastructure and PlanningKirsten AlexanderInterim General Manager Community and Corporate ServicesMandy Kynnersley

th Country, Lakes and River.



SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL 26 MAY 2021

AGENDA

MANSFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL Livestreamed 4.00PM

CONTENTS

1.	OPENING OF THE MEETING	2
2.	STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT	2
3.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	2
4.	APOLOGIES	2
5.	DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	2
6.	DEPUTATIONS	2
7.	PRESENTATION OF REPORTS	3
	7.1 COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE	3
	7.1.1 Consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25	3
	7.1.2 Consideration of submissions for the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances	.17
8.	MEETING CLOSURE	.18



SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL 26 MAY 2021



1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Chair will open the meeting.

2. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Councillors stand to read:

"As Councillors of Mansfield Shire we are committed to ensuring our behaviour meets the standards set by the Mansfield Shire Councillor Code of Conduct and Councillor Charter. We will, at all times, faithfully represent and uphold the trust placed in us by the community."

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

To be recited by Deputy Mayor Tehan:

"Our meeting is being held on the lands of the Taungurung people and we wish to acknowledge them as Traditional Owners. We would also like to pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and Aboriginal Elders of other communities who may be here today."

4. APOLOGIES

The Chair will call on the CEO for any apologies.

5. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair will call on each Councillor in turn and ask them to declare whether they have any conflicts of interest in relation to any agenda items.

6. DEPUTATIONS

Deputations to be heard from members of the general public who have made a submission on a matter.

MANSFIELD SHIRE COUNCIL Livestreamed 4.00PM



7. PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

7.1 COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

7.1.1 Consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25

File Number:	E7253
Responsible Officer:	Manager Business & Performance, Mandy Kynnersley

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a conflict of interest to declare in this matter, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

Introduction

This report presents the public submissions received to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and the Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25, for the Committee's consideration.

Background

At its Council Meeting, 20 April 2021, Council released its proposed Budget 2021-22 (proposed Budget) and the Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 (the Plan) for public feedback.

Council resolved to establish a Special Committee of Council, consisting of all Councillors, to hear submissions.

Over the subsequent 28 day period, commencing 21 April 2021 and closing 5:00pm 18 May 2021, Council accepted submissions to the proposed Budget and Plan. The submissions received during this period are presented to this Special Committee of Council for consideration with this report.

Policy and Legislative Implications

The proposed Budget is prepared in accordance with section 94 of the Act and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.* The proposed Plan is prepared in accordance with section 93 of the Act.

Both documents were released for public feedback in accordance with section 96 of the Act and submissions will be considered under section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Council Plan

The Council Plan 2021-25 has not yet been finalised and is expected to be adopted closer to the legislative date of 31 October 2021. This report therefore has no direct links to the new Council Plan at this point in time.



7.1.1 Consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 – Cont...

Financial

The consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget and Plan will have varying financial impacts. Where quantifiable, these are documented in the summary table in the Key Issues section of this report.

Any amendments to the proposed Budget and/or the Plan will be decided by Council at the Council Meeting in June 2021.

Social

Council has received submissions supporting the continued provision of existing services, and specifically Aged Care services provided by Council.

Environmental

Council has received submissions to fund a green waste kerbside collection service.

Economic

Submissions relating to economic impacts include both support and opposition to a 0% increase to the base average rate.

Risk Management

There are various risks associated with the submissions received. Key themes are identified in the summary table in the Key Issues section in this report.

Community Engagement

This report presents the results of the community engagement process - public submissions sought under section 223 of the *Local Government Act* 1989.

Submissions were accepted over a period of 28 days commencing 21 April 2021 and closing 18 May 2021. During that time, Council made the proposed Budget (which includes a schedule of proposed fees and charges) and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 available on Council's website and in hard copy on request.

The exhibition period was advertised in the Mansfield Courier, and on Council's website and Facebook page.

Council launched supporting and explanatory information on the *Engage Mansfield* webpage over the same period. This included background information, the engagement process, and seven different fact sheets covering topics including:

- Budget context
- Income
- Capital expenditure
- Operational expenditure
- Delivering the Council Plan
- Community engagement
- Rates and charges

Council made four Facebook posts during the exhibition period promoting the opportunity to make a submission.



7.1.1 Consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 – Cont...

The *Engage Mansfield* webpage also provided the opportunity for individuals to ask questions of Council during the exhibition period. Council received eight questions from two individuals/groups. Responses were provided on the *Engage Mansfield* webpage. A copy of the published questions and answers are provided with this report at **Attachment 2**.

Council received a total of 28 written submissions. A summary table of the topics raised in the submissions is shown in the Key Issues section below.

All submissions are presented to the Committee at **Attachment 1** to this report.

Key Issues

The table below outlines the key issues raised in community submissions

Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
	Sı	upport for items included in th	e proposed budget
Maintenance of Jamieson Island Reserve	1	Fund the Jamieson Community Group \$6,500 (indexed over three years) to perform mowing and blackberry eradication.	The Jamieson Public Recreation Reserve (also known as the Jamieson Island Reserve) is Crown land over which Council is the Committee of Management. Therefore maintenance of the reserve is ultimately Council's responsibility. In previous years Council entered into a 12 month Memorandum of Understanding with the Jamieson Community Group for the provision of mowing and blackberry eradication at the reserve. The proposed budget already includes provision for \$6,500 assuming this arrangement will continue, and the term of the MOU will be reviewed as part of the Township Reserves Policy review currently in progress. If Council were to perform the maintenance using internal resources it is unlikely to cost significantly less than the proposed \$6,500.
0% rate increase	7	Supported	



Cubacion Thomas	o ol	Ourse of outputies is a la	Officer commente	
Submission Theme an number of related submissions	na	Summary of submission/s	Officer comments	
Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route	6	Project overdue and should be hastened. Investment in roads commendable. Important for safety.	The design works required for the completion of the route are currently in progress, to enable completion of the construction works in 2021/22.	
Strategic Planning	3	Support funding to expedite planning scheme amendments which are long overdue and have cost ratepayers a lot of money in trying to Council decisions	The proposed funding will enable planning scheme amendments to be progressed, and play an important role in the future development of the Shire.	
Aged Care Services	1	Aged care in the home services should continue to be managed by Council	The Aged Care Services Review that is currently underway will inform the options available to Council and the Community for the provision of these services in future. However, the 2021-22 budget for Aged & Disability Services assumes these programs will continue to be run under the existing model and by Council.	
Service provision	1	Support the commitment to maintaining all services the Shire currently provides.		
Heritage Visitor Facility	2	Support the Station Precinct masterplan implementation. Support the facility but the investment by Council is not enough	Council has sought grant funding for construction of this facility, and has contributed project management resources for completion of the detailed design and planning works necessary to seek Local Economic Recovery funding from the state government. This project has been identified as a priority project to help activate the Station Precinct.	



Submission Theme and number of related submissions	Summary of submission/s	Officer comments				
Suggested amendments to the proposed Budget						
Operating budget & ser	vice delivery					
0% rate increase	 7 Compounding income deficiency leading to a possible inability of future Councils to "balance the books". Future financial position will be compromised to the detriment of services and people. Is the negative cashflow position in the projected ten year cashflows a financially responsible action? Council should apply a 1.5% rate increase to ensure appropriate funding and resourcing is available to service the community. Inability to retain staff and associated intellectual property Inability to deliver key strategies. Increases reliance on volunteers. Lack of discretionary/contingency funding for events and circumstances that normally arise in unexpected forms 	 \$189k in 2021-22, and \$2.1m over the ten years to 2031. Savings will need to be identified or increases in income from sources other than rates to cover the cashflow shortfall that may eventuate in the medium term, to enable Council to continue to deliver the current mix of services and infrastructure under current service models. Council currently utilises over 80 volunteers to assist with the delivery of Council services including home and community care, visitor information services, youth services, family & children's service, library, emergency recovery assistance and community events. Council has included \$200k per annum for "new initiatives" in the years of 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 in the budget. These amounts will be allocated to specific projects as part the annual budget process preceding each of those years. In previous budgets this allowance was approximately \$400k. 				



Submission Theme and number of related submissions	Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
	How does 0% rate increase align with guaranteed inflation and increases in expenditure?	The State Government declared rate cap is typically aligned with the States forecast for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is a commonly relied upon indicator of inflation. The rate cap declared by the Minister for Local Government for 2021-22 is 1.5%. Council's most significant operational expense is its labour costs, which are not linked to CPI. Council has currently commenced negotiating its next Enterprise Agreement (EA) between Council, its employees and the relevant unions. Council has assumed a 1% EA annual increase in the Budget.
	Devaluing of local government and its services when compared to taxes levied by the State and Commonwealth	The Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) continues to advocate strongly for increases in the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) provided to local government from federal government. ALGA reports that in 1996 when the most recent iteration of the program came into effect, the FAGs were equal to 1% of total Commonwealth tax revenue. However this contribution has over time reduced to approximately 0.5% of Commonwealth tax revenue.
	Cannot see a decline in the wealth and prosperity within the region as a result of the challenges of 2020.	



Submission Theme and number of related		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments				
submissions							
Rate differentials	3	3 Reducing the farming differentials and increasing the commercial different to minimise impacts of changes	The following table shows the movement in the differential percentages applied over the last four years.				
		in property values is at odds with the purpose of	Differential percentages				
		differential rates, which is to		21-22	20-21	19-20	18-19
		achieve greater equity or	Vacant	130%	130%	130%	139%
		efficiency in implementing	Commercial	143%	137%	137%	141%
		what is effectively a tax on property in Victoria.	Residential	100%	100%	100%	100%
		property in victoria.	Rural Residential	86%	89%	89%	93%
		Why are Commercial properties receiving a 6%	Farmland	58%	66%	66%	72%
	i c	increase and others a decrease? Recommend an upper and lower limit for each	The following municipal pro 2020 to 1 Jar	perty valu			
		differential to be declared in	CIV increase	21-22			
		the Revenue & Rating Plan	Vacant	13.6%			
			Commercial	3.1%			
			Residential	6.9%			
			Rural Residential	13.5%			
			Farmland	23.2%			
Rating of Beolite	1	Application for change in rateable status for Beolite	Currently ead is rated on a residential lan Beolite are re exemption ur available to la charitable pu land non-rate The exemption separately of which is not e interpretation Act and their therefore the Council's value	separate nd. equesting nder the L and used rposes, w able. on is not a ccupied ar exclusively s of the re applicatic request h	the appl ocal Gov exclusive hich wou available nd used y charita equireme on are te- nas been	to land for a puble. Th ents unc chnical,	of an ht Act are the that is rpose e ler the and



Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
Revenue	2	Generate income from sources other than rates such as developer contributions schemes, and tourism.	The creation of a Developer Contribution Plan Overlay is proposed for inclusion in the Council Plan 2021-25, which is currently under development. Such an overlay would enable Council to derive income from developers to invest in improved or expanded infrastructure.
Service delivery	2	Housing, education, improvement of community services and health are overlooked.	Council is currently preparing a future land use planning and strategy document – Mansfield 2040. This strategy will include considerations of housing requirements and how town planning considerations can support the future needs of the Shire. Education is primarily the responsibility of Federal and State governments. However, in conjunction with the Department of Education, Council are currently undertaking a review of the Shire's capacity to continue to provide Early Years (0-5yrs) Education programs and the community needs in the future as a result of growth in population. The results and recommendations from this review will be considered by Council in due course. Council has also invested \$173k in the current year (2020-21) to assist the Mansfield Kindergarten to improve and expand their facilities with further support of \$600k from the Federal Government. Council are currently undertaking an independent review of its Aged Care services which is expected to identify any improvements that should be made to the service. The Mansfield Autism Statewide Services redevelopment project "Operation Game Changer" and the continued funding and development of the Mansfield District Hospital are key advocacy projects for Council and continue to be presented to State and Federal Ministers and MP's at every opportunity.



Submission Thomas	ad	Summery of submission/s	Officer comments	
Submission Theme and number of related		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments	
submissions				
		Can Council guarantee no reduction in services if the budget proposes a \$1.2m reduction in economic development services?	The significant reduction in expenditure in Economic Development, as shown on page 10 of the proposed Budget, relates to delivery of one-off programs funded by grant income to aid community recovery after the 2019-20 bushfires. As such, there is also a corresponding decrease in income.	
Pest management	1	Fund and deliver a European wasp control program.	Council's role and jurisdiction regarding pest management is limited to land within Council ownership and control. Under the Local Law Council does issue directives to landowners where a wasp nest has been identified on their property. Residents making enquires to Council regarding wasps on private property are provided the details of local businesses that specialise in the management/removal of wasps. The provision of wasp traps is encouraged	
Waste management	1	Provide a green waste collection	but would generally be promoted for placement on private property. Council adopted a comprehensive Waste Strategy in 2020. The waste team are currently working through the associated recommendations as per Year 1 of the strategy. The introduction of the FOGO (Food Organics and Green Organics) has been recommended for implementation during Year 4 (2024).	
			Council's current waste contract is due to be re-tendered in 2024. This will be an opportunity for Council to further assess the cost of the rollout of the state-wide 4 bin system. This will include separate bins for co- mingled recycling, FOGO, glass and residual waste. According to the State Government guidelines, all Victorian Councils must move to a state-wide 4 bin system by 2030 (https://www.vic.gov.au/Standardising- household-recycling-across-Victoria).	



Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
Targa	2	Event does not benefit the local community and should not be funded. Is Council getting value for money?	Council has signed a major partner agreement with Targa Aust Pty Ltd and Mt Buller Mt Stirling RMB to financially support the staging the event from 2018- 2022. Council's contribution is \$37,500, and the event is estimated to bring over \$750k to the local economy (through visitation of both participants and spectators including spend on accommodation, food and drink, retail) and over \$2m to the region indirectly.
Website	2	Not user friendly and requires an update	The budget includes \$10,000 to refresh and update both the website and intranet (internal web platform).
Capital projects and i	nfrast	ructure	
Public toilet facilities	1	Provide new public toilet facilities in Merrijig	A new public toilet facility is estimated to cost in the vicinity of \$250k, depending on design, location, and existing utilities. Further work is required to investigate potential locations and costs, for future budget consideration.
Roads	1	Widen the shoulders of heavily used roads for safety Increase funding in future budgets to improve and maintain existing infrastructure Strengthen efforts to lobby Rural Roads Vic to prioritise upgrades to the Midland and Maroondah Highways.	There are no road widening projects currently included in the budget, however Council is due to complete a ten year Asset Plan by 30 June 2022. The development of this plan will include a community engagement and feedback process which will identify the community's priority projects, and inform future funding requirements.
Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route	1	Cost estimate is inadequate.	Council will be in a position to form a detailed estimate once the detailed design is complete. It is anticipated that this will be completed in the first quarter of the next financial year to enable construction to commence later this calendar year.





Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
Borrowings 1		 What is the cost of borrowings including interest? Are Council comfortable borrowing funds for a project that has not had detailed design and costing prepared? How does borrowing align with a reduction in income through 0% rate increase? 	The budget assumes the loan of \$2.6m would be subject to a repayment term of ten years and a fixed annual interest rate of 2.06%, based on current market rates for government entities. Based on these assumptions the interest costs are estimated at \$306,000. The annual loan repayments (principal and interest) are estimated to be \$288,000.
Merton Playground	1	Donate playground equipment removed from the Botanic Park Playground to the Merton Recreation Reserve Committee Management (for installation at Merton). Provide annual playground inspection service for the Merton Playground.	The equipment removed from the previous Botanic Park playground is has been stored, and subject to inspection by an appropriately qualified person, may be available for donation to the COM. From a risk management perspective it is not recommended that Council take responsibility for safety inspections of playgrounds that are not owned by Council. However, Council may undertake this service by agreement with the COM. The Township Reserves policy currently facilitates the contribution of \$2,000 per annum to the Merton Recreation Reserve Committee of Management to maintain the reserve playing surface.via a MOU agreement (currently under review). If Council were to pursue this option, the cost to Council would be approximately \$2,000 a year to perform the inspections.



Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments	
Outlying community infrastructure	3	 Macs Cove: no footpaths very little infrastructure investment from Council Woods Point: No upgrades of public spaces, infrastructure or roads. Community Plan from 2015 not progressed. \$50,000 is not enough to service the outlying areas. 	Council is due to complete a ten year Asset Plan by 30 June 2022 which will consider shire wide infrastructure. In developing this plan, Council will engage shire wide and seek feedback to identify communities' priority projects, and inform future funding requirements. Council is also drafting a Footpath & Shared Paths Strategy that will also be made available for community feedback. The outcomes of this strategy, once adopted by Council, will also be incorporated into the ten year Asset Plan, the ten year Financial Plan and future budgets. The Woods Point & Matlock Community Plan 2015 was developed by the community with support from Council. The plan is owned by the community. This is embedded within the plan itself.	
Heritage visitor facility	1	Council should allocate more funding to support Mansfield's heritage.	Council has actively supported and contributed project management resources to the development of detailed designs for the Heritage Visitor Facility, in order to submit an application for Local Economic Recovery funding for construction of the facility.	



Submission Theme and number of related submissions		Summary of submission/s	Officer comments
Lords Pavilion	1	Is the project still a priority given it has not been included in the budget? Will not having the project in the budget adversely effect the likelihood of attracting funding?	Council included the Lords Pavilion project in the 2020-21 budget in the hope of attracting sufficient funding to deliver the project in that financial year. Council has not been successful in obtaining funding to date, however are waiting for a response to a recent application submitted to the Federal Government that should be announced mid year. The project continues to be a priority project derived from the Mansfield Shire Sport Facilities Strategy endorsed by Council in June 2018. Should the recent funding application be successful, Council will look to incorporate the project into its capital plan in the near future. Should the funding application be unsuccessful Council will look at the possibility of re-scoping the project or pursuing alternative funding solutions.
Library	1	Should not spend money on current facility, and instead should relocate to Station Precinct.	Council have been awarded grant funding of \$543,511 to renovate the Mansfield Library. The project will increase the floor area by 29m ² , create a more welcoming layout and provide flexibility to deliver a better service for the community. Council's financial contribution to the project is \$15,000.
Parking	3	Mansfield requires dedicated long vehicle parking. Parking in the CBD requires attention.	Dedicated long vehicle parking is currently available in Highett Street. The need for, and location of, additional long vehicle parking is under consideration, however no funding has been allocated in the budget for undertaking this work in 2021/22, after consideration of competing priorities.
Footpath trading	1	Council should limit the volume of items permitted on footpaths in the Mansfield CBD.	Council's Community Safety and Local Laws officers will continue to monitor this area, and ensure that the appropriate permits are obtained for placement of items on Council road reserves or footpaths.



7.1.1 Consideration of submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 – Cont...

Attachments

- 1 Submissions
- 2 Questions and Answers published on *Engage Mansfield* during exhibition.

Recommendation:

That the Special Committee of Council, comprising all Councilors, receive and consider the submissions to the proposed Budget 2021-22 and the proposed Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25.



7.1.2 Community and Corporate Services Directorate

7.1.2 Consideration of submissions for the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances

File Number:	E7253
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Governance & Risk, Michelle Kain

Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

The author of this report and officers providing advice in relation to this report do not have a direct or indirect interest in this matter, as provided in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the public submissions received in respect of the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances, for the Committee's consideration.

Background

At its Council Meeting on 16 March 2021, Council released its proposed Councillor and Mayoral Allowances for public inspection. Council also resolved to establish a Special Committee of Council, consisting of all Councillors, to hear submissions.

Over the period 24 March 2021 to 11 May 2021, Council accepted submissions to the proposed allowances. There was only one submission received during this period and it is presented to this Special Committee of Council for consideration with this report.

Policy and Legislative Implications

The *Local Government Act 1989* still applies to the review of Allowances. Section 74(1) of the 1989 Act states that Council is required to review its Councillor and Mayoral allowances within 6 months of a general election, or by 30 June, whichever is later.

Section 74(4) of the 1989 Act provides for public submissions to be made under section 223 of the 1989 Act in respect of this review.

Council Plan

Strategic Direction Five - Responsible Leadership. Strategic Objective 5.1: *We achieve the highest standards of good governance*

Financial N/A

Social N/A

Environmental N/A

Economic N/A





7.1.2 Consideration of submissions for the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances – Cont...

Risk Management N/A

Community Engagement

Council released the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances for public review on 24 March 2021. Public notice was given by advertisement in the Mansfield Courier and a post on Council's Facebook page.

Council also utilised its Engage Mansfield portal on its website to receive community feedback and submissions. The attached report from Engage Mansfield shows that there were 35 visits to the page.

At the closure date of submissions on 11 May 2021, Council had received one submission via the Engage Mansfield portal.

The submission received stated "Admirable of the Councillors to keep their remuneration at last year's rate. In line with keeping to their 0% rate rise. Well done and much appreciated."

Key Issues

The submission received is provided to the Committee for consideration, prior to the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances being recommended for endorsement by Council at the June Council Meeting.

Attachments

1 Engage Mansfield Project Report

Recommendation:

That the Special Committee of Council, comprising all Councillors, receive and consider the submission for the Councillor and Mayoral Allowances.

8. MEETING CLOSURE

The Chair will close the meeting.