# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016



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CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

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# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

# **COUNCIL'S VISION**

To be a community with choice.

### VALUES

Three behaviours that support our vision are being

Accountable

Responsible for our actions and res

Act with integrity – deal with all people honestly, ethically and transparently.

#### • Progressive

Strive for consistent improvement.

Find new and creative ways; focus on the future.

#### • Respectful

Listen actively and consider other viewpoints

Embrace and respect diversity and inclusion.

This report outlines how the Central Goldfields Shire Council vision for the future has been achieved through the delivery of strategies, projects and services in the period starting July 2015 to June 2016.

# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

# **ABOUT THE SHIRE**

Located at the geographical centre of Victoria, Central Goldfields Shire covers 1,532 square kilometres and has an estimated residential population of just over 12,500 people.

Maryborough is the shire's major business centre with a population of around 7,500. Maryborough has gained recognition in recent years as having some of the finest sporting facilities in regional Victoria, together with significant historical buildings dating back to the goldmining era of the 1850s.

Other towns in the shire include Bealiba, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Majorca, Talbot, Bowenvale-Timor and the rural districts surrounding these centres. All are famous for their heritage architecture and significant agricultural industries.

The shire is currently experiencing significant growth with key infrastructure projects and residential developments reaching fruition.

The State Government's commitment to the shire has seen recent investments in the areas of health, education, and law and order, together with assistance to economic development activities initiated by Council.

The shire is located within one hour's drive from main provincial centres of Ballarat and Bendigo and just two hours from Melbourne.

The first democratically elected council for Central Goldfields Shire was elected on 15 March, 1997. In 2005, the Minister for Local Government determined that the number of councillors to represent the shire be increased from five to seven.

The next election will be held in October 2016 with councillors elected for a four year term.



# COUNCILLORS



#### **Cr Geoff Lovett (Mayor)** Maryborough Ward

Geoff has been a councillor for Central Goldfields Shire since amalgamation in 1997. He was Mayor in 2004, 2005, 2007 and was once again elected to the role in November 2015.



#### **Cr Paula Nixon** Maryborough Ward

Paula was first elected to Council in a by-election in early 2008, and was the Mayor in 2012.



#### **Cr Helen Broad** Tullaroop Ward

Helen became a councillor in March 2015 in a by-election. It is her first time in the role.



#### **Cr Barry Rinaldi** Maryborough Ward

Barry first became a councillor in March 1997. He served as Mayor from November 2012 to November 2014, having previously filled the role from March 1999 to Match 2001.



#### **Cr Bob Henderson** Flynn Ward

Bob was elected in a byelection in August 2013. Bob was a councillor for the Shire of Bet Bet for three years until amalgamation in 1997.



#### **Cr John Van Beveren** Paddy's Ranges Ward

John became a councillor in November 2012. It is his first time in the role.



#### **Cr Wendy Mclvor** Maryborough Ward

Wendy was first elected to the role in November 2012, and was the Mayor from November 2014 to November 2015.

# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

# **MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND CEO**

It is a pleasure to reflect on the past year of meeting challenges, and achievements, of Council.

With an end to the Council term on the horizon it is satisfying to have delivered on all key components of the Council Plan, thereby bringing to life its vision: *to be a community with choice*.

Highlights across the 2015/16 year included:

#### The evolution of the Go Goldfields program

Now in its second phase, the program continues its ground breaking work to address disadvantage and improve the lives of children, youth and families in our shire.

#### Unique Australia Day celebrations

The customary activities were complemented by a Cleveland Cavaliers 'Game Party', where Council partnered with American NBA basketball team Cleveland Cavaliers to provide an Australia theme at the game in USA, and a large screen for the local community to view the action at Station Domain, Maryborough. All of this celebrated the achievements of local star Matthew Dellavedova, who later in the year would be part of the Cavaliers' championship team.

#### The State Government budget

Provision was made for an additional passenger train service for Maryborough, and we look forward to working with the community and State Government on details of this long awaited enhancement.

#### Critical steps forward in economic development

The establishment of Edlyn Foods in Maryborough has been embraced by the community, and Capilano Honey continues to quietly expand in its reestablishment in the town. The growth in the retail sector and continued residential growth all underpin the multiplier effect that keeps the local economy moving.

#### Successful festivals and events

These remain a vital part of the community, both in providing celebratory activities and in bringing visitors to the shire. The RACV Energy Breakthrough headlines these efforts, with the town population trebling for that fantastic four to five days in the third week of November. The Central Goldfields Art Gallery continues to grow its reputation through quality exhibitions, and regular markets, including the region's premier Talbot Farmers Market, are a great attraction.

The relatively new Wings and Wheels event is gaining momentum and quickly establishing itself as a regional highlight.

#### Our capital works program

There has been a number and range of infrastructure projects across the shire, most notably on roads, bridges, and streetscapes. Township improvements are important for locals and visitors alike.

A small yet significant project was the initiative by Council staff to transform a large lemon scented gum tree in Phillips Garden from a potential risk to public safety, to a feature of the gardens, showing real pride in work.

#### Continued community appreciation for our work

This year Council worked with the State Government to achieve a workable outcome regarding new guidelines effecting Supported Playgroups, specifically at Dunolly. Council was pleased to stage a Community Care Services Expo in October 2015, while the much anticipated redevelopment of the Goldfields Children's Centre is well advanced and will provide increased capacity and service.



The Governor of Victoria, the Hon. Linda Dessau (centre), visited many sites in the shire including the Maryborough Town Hall. Pictured here with Mayor Geoff Lovett and Cr Wendy McIvor.

#### Governor's Visit

Council was privileged to host, in August 2015, the Governor of Victoria the Hon. Linda Dessau AM on her first regional visit as Governor and to be able to showcase some of the outstanding features of the shire.

# Continued partnerships with community organisations

Council is an active partner with many organisations and community groups and applauds the opening of the Wellness and Support Centre by Maryborough District Health Service in September, 2015. This is a wonderful asset and will be of invaluable assistance to our community.

#### Introduction of rate capping

The introduction of rate capping by the State Government saw rate increases for 2016/17 capped at 2.5%. This necessitated a lot of preparatory work for Council during 2015/16, with much internal review and community consultation taking place. Council chose not to seek an exemption, and to work within the rules by making hard but necessary decisions. Council believes it has achieved a fair balance in its budget going forward.

#### New local laws

A new set of local laws was adopted following review and consultation. Currently Council is participating in a process reviewing the Local Government Act, which may potentially change many aspects of the way Council operates.

#### New mobile app

The introduction of a free mobile phone app, Neat Streets, allows faults or issues to be reported via a mobile phone and responses to be expedited. This will prove to be a faster and easier way for the community to assist Council in monitoring the shire.

#### Loddon Campaspe Integrated Transport Strategy

This strategy is evidence based work that provides a framework for ensuring transport networks across the region remain fit for current purpose and adaptable for future needs. Council was proud to lead this work.

#### Lighting the Regions - saving energy and dollars

The Lighting the Regions project saw over 900 residential streetlights across the shire converted from old mercury vapour to highly efficient Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs), providing environment benefits and annual usage and maintenance savings of some \$50,000.

#### Town revitalisation

Going forward, Council has produced a prospectus for its Maryborough Civic Precinct and Town Centre Revitalisation project that will require external funding and would certainly transform the civic precinct area in a similar manner to the Station Domain precinct.

These are just some the many highlights for 2015/16. Importantly, as we have stated previously, we respond to challenges and create opportunities. We are proud to present this year's annual report and look forward to an exciting future.





Cr Geoff Lovett Mayor

Mark Johnston Chief Executive Officer

# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

# COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE STAFF



#### Mr. Mark Johnston Chief Executive Officer

As Chief Executive Officer, Mark Johnston leads an organisation focussed on customer service; community participation; financial and strategic management; and value for money services. Strategic leadership is the keynote.

Mark has held the role of CEO since 1995 - initially overseeing the amalgamation process. Prior to that, Mark was the CEO of the former Shire of East Loddon, which followed the completion of the Bachelor of Business (Local Government) qualification.

Heavily involved in local community organisations and activities; a previous Chair of the Bendigo Football League Board of Management, Mark currently serves on the inaugural AFL Central Victoria Commission, and in 2015 completed the maximum nine year term as a director on the board of Bendigo Kangan TAFE. In 2009, Mark was appointed to the Loddon Mallee Committee of Regional Development Australia - an Australian Government initiative that aims to bring together all levels of government to enhance the growth and development of regional Australia. Mark has led and facilitated several major economic and community development initiatives including the ground breaking Go Goldfields – a community driven approach to tackle entrenched disadvantage and improve social, education and health outcomes for children, youth and families.

#### Areas of responsibility:

- Governance
- Civic Services
- Legal Services
- Policy Development
- Economic Development
- Corporate Planning
- Best Value/ Continuous Improvement
- Public Relations
- Organisational Development
- Human Resources
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Customer Services
- Records Management



#### **Mr. David Sutcliffe** General Manager Technical Services

David Sutcliffe commenced the General Manager role at Council in April 2009.

David has a Degree in Engineering from Ballarat University, and has worked as a professional engineer

with the Ministry of Housing, Bayside Council and the City of Casey. David ran his own business for several years before taking on a consulting engineer role with HDS Australia. He then moved to Baw Baw Shire, going on from there to join Central Goldfields Shire.

#### Areas of responsibility:

- Planning
- Subdivision
- Building Control
- Heritage Advice
- Infrastructure Design
- Traffic Management
- Roads
- Construction & Maintenance
- Waste Management
- Emergency Management
- Stores
- Plant & Equipment
- Environment Education
- Parks & Gardens
- Property Maintenance



#### Mr. Wayne Belcher General Manager Corporate and Community Services

Wayne Belcher joined Central Goldfields Shire Council in April 1999 as the Director of Corporate Services, assuming the responsibility for both Corporate and Community Services in 2003.

Prior to commencing a career in local government, Wayne had a career spanning more than 21 years in health administration commencing at the Maryborough and District Hospital, before accepting a position with the Sisters of Mercy administering hospitals in Bendigo and Greensborough.

Wayne has a Degree in Accounting / Economics Hospital Administration and a Graduate Diploma of Education.

#### Areas of responsibility:

- Financial Management
- Environmental Health Services
- Local Laws Enforcement
- Committees of Management
- Aged & Disabled Services
- Pre-schools
- Marketing & Promotions
- Youth Services
- Recreation & Leisure Services
- Sports & Leisure Centres
- Tourism
- Arts and Culture
- Preventive Health
- Risk Management



#### **Ms. Sharon Fraser** General Manager Go Goldfields

Sharon Fraser began her role at Council in November 2011. Sharon was appointed to oversee the State funded Go Goldfields project – a landmark community initiative that targets the needs of children, young people and families

throughout the shire and tackles social disadvantage.

Prior to joining Council, Sharon held executive and management roles in health and community health in state, regional and rural services.

#### Areas of responsibility:

- Go Goldfields
- Neighbourhood Renewal
- Maternal & Child Health
- Children's Services
- Library Services

# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2016

Despite a drop in scores from last year, Council has continued to perform favourably against like councils, and on a state wide basis, according to the latest Community Satisfaction Survey from JWS Research.

Council's performance results on all key measures were above the Small Rural Shires group scores, and, above or in one instance equal to the state wide scores.

Core performance areas where Council scored significantly higher than councils across the State were Community Consultation; Making Community Decisions; and Customer Service.

The annual survey is undertaken to measure how residents rate the performance of their local government authority and is conducted by an independent research group and coordinated by Local Government Victoria. Council will use the survey information in terms of policy development, service delivery and customer service. In short, Council will now look at areas of improvement.

Interestingly the rating for Customer Service has increased, an area providing direct community contact, whereas comparatively reduced ratings for Advocacy, Making Community Decisions, and Overall Council Direction may involve more of a perception or judgement. As the report points out, this suggests that many in the community are unaware of what Council is doing in this area.

A minimum of 400 telephone interviews are conducted in each municipality.

Performance Measure	Central Goldfields	Small Rural Group	Statewide
Overall Performance	61	57	59
Community Consultation	57	55	54
Advocacy	55	54	53
Making Community Decisions	58	53	54
Sealed Local Roads	54	52	54
Customer Service	73	69	69
Overall Council Direction	53	50	51



# CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS ART GALLERY

EST

Purpose: foster community connectedness and social capital, and services which improve people's health and wellbeing.

### Focus area: Community development / connectedness

Foster community resilience, connectedness and social capital.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Go Goldfields
- 2. Australia Day celebrations
- 3. Community grants scheme

### Focus area: Health and wellbeing

Improve people's health and wellbeing throughout all life stages.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Central Goldfields Health and Wellbeing Plan
- 2. Positive aging
- 3. Maternal and Child Health services
- 4. Youth services
- 5. Goldfields Children's Centre

### Focus area: Community safety

Foster a whole of community approach.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Municipal Emergency Management Committee
- 2. Family violence strategy
- 3. White Ribbon campaign
- 4. Animal Management Plan

### Focus area: Arts, culture and heritage

*Increase community awareness/appreciation of and participation in arts, culture and heritage.* 

#### Project/services implemented:

- 1. Art Central
- 2. Central Goldfields Art Gallery
- 3. Maryborough Regional Library services

#### Focus area: Recreation and sport

Increase participation in physical activity.

#### **Project/services implemented:**

1. Recreation services

# Focus area: Community development / connectedness

Foster community resilience, connectedness and social capital.

# **GO GOLDFIELDS**

#### Our community aspiring achieving to live a full life.

Over the past 12 months, Go Goldfields has evolved from an alliance of organisations that came together to address complex social problems to formally adopting the Collective Impact approach to underpin our work. This approach proposes that there are five key characteristics for successful social change in communities, these being: a shared plan; continuous communication; shared measurement; mutually reinforcing activities; and a backbone organisation.

#### Shared plan

In 2015 Go Goldfields continued to focus on improving community engagement so that the community would be more involved in decision making in the work. This has led to the development of a Collaborative Table and Action Groups for each of the key areas of work. Community and business leaders, service leaders and decision makers come together monthly to share a common understanding of the problems faced and implement a joint approach to solving them through a shared plan. This format guided the approach for refreshing the strategies for 2016-2018.

The Go Goldfields Alliance acts in a stewardship role for Go Goldfields. It holds the vision and accountability. Expert Reference Groups confer over the planning and work through their specialist insights and expertise.

As Go Goldfields' backbone organisation, Council holds the vision, and seeks and manages resources, while also facilitating community engagement and behind-thescenes work. It keeps the collaborative process moving along, even as participants and community expectations change.

A significant milestone was the first sitting of the Collaborative Table in November 2015. The Collaborative Table is responsible for overall planning and strategy to meet the community's desired outcomes. The Youth and Work Readiness Action Group, Children and Families Action Group and Family Violence Action Groups have strong representation from community and business leaders, service leaders and decision makers, and meeting regularly. These action groups are responsible for acting on the shared plans.

#### Continuous communication

Achieving community engagement, although essential, requires considerable work. The community engagement brand development has been established and rolled out through the HATCH sessions. Engaging broad representation has led to the development of an induction information package for members of the various groups, the use of graphic recordings and photography to capture community insight and aspiration at work and to tell our story, the Go Goldfields enewsletter, and the Go Goldfields website www.gogoldfields.org



HATCH forums have provided critical community insight for Go Goldfields.

#### Shared measurement

In the past year Go Goldfields undertook work to change how it was using data to inform practice and result in changing behaviours and experiences. Indicators have been developed in collaboration with the community and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute. Data dashboards are being developed to show progress in the agreed areas of work to improve outcomes for children, youth and families in the shire. These dashboards will be available on the Go Goldfields website.

#### Mutually reinforcing activities

Having a shared plan of action maximises the impact of the activities. Some of the highlights of the past year include:

#### Literacy development

Go Goldfields continues to embed the shire wide approach to literacy through the Australian Literacy and

Numeracy Foundation, with further training opportunities for primary school and preschool teachers provided. All children aged 0-4 in the shire now receive age appropriate books and resources, at their ages and stages visits at Maternal Child Health services. The annual early literacy event Dino Day was taken on by a group of service providers and developed into the Early Years Learning Expo.

# Building positive life experience and social connection

In its third and final year Art Central focussed on training and mentorship of local artists, with workshops and individual mentoring. Local artists worked with communities in Bealiba, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Maryborough and Talbot to create Imagination Stations. The Arty Farty Fun Book – Creative activities to share with children under 5 years was launched.

#### Youth connection to education and training

There has been strong engagement with youth to identify the issues for the next phase of the Go Goldfields shared plan. Work has also been undertaken with services in the shire to develop local leadership on youth matters. The results of this will become apparent in the year ahead.

#### Youth and Children's Services Directory

Go Goldfields partnered with School Focused Youth Service to develop yacs.org.au - a new Youth and Children's Services Directory website. The directory was developed to help address a gap identified by the community in the provision of youth and children's services in Central Goldfields Shire - with many services not available locally - and a need make services easier to find and connect to. The site is designed to be used by young people, parents and carers, and education and service providers.

The website was developed with lots of community and service provider consultation regarding the content, function, look and feel of the site. Council's Youth Services Unit will take over the management of the site from the launch.

The first phase of the website, Youth Services, was launched in June, with phase two, Children's Services, to formally launch the site when completed later this year.

#### Building stronger families

A group of local parents was awarded funding by the Child Aware Local Initiative (a community capacity building initiative which aims to enhance community awareness of the range of issues negatively affecting the wellbeing of children.) They are working on a project that will promote positive messages and raise awareness of the range of child-positive activities that are already occurring in the shire.



The Imagination Stations are an exciting legacy from the Art Central project.

# Focus area: Community development / connectedness

Foster community resilience, connectedness and social capital.

# AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

The 2016 Australia Day celebrations were the biggest and the best we have ever seen, with a crowd of around 1,500 people coming together to celebrate our day.

The program for the day included the traditional ceremony and presentation of awards. Garry Higgins was named the Citizen of the Year, community leader Brandon Weatherson was named the Young Citizen of the Year, and the Polka Dots for Peppa received the Outstanding Community Contribution honour.

Following the ceremony the crowd was entertained with a large screen TV, installed on the Station Domain Stage, featuring the first ever NBA 'Australia Day Game' between the Cleveland Cavaliers and Minnesota Timberwolves. The star of the game was Central Goldfields Shire's 2013 Citizen of the Year, Matthew Dellavedova.

The event, supported by the Cleveland Cavaliers and Sanitarium Up & Go, introduced additional activities including the 'Cav Pav Competition', a basketball clinic,

a photo competition, giveaways (t-shirts, stress balls, wristbands, supporter boards, baby bibs), and a free breakfast (Up & Go cereal, BBQ and pancakes).

The excitement and energy on the day was something unforgettable and will be a wonderful memory for all that attended.

# **COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME**

The Community Grants Scheme is a valuable source of funding for community groups that don't have access to funding from other sources. In 2016, all groups applying for the funding were asked to show how their project fitted with the themes of the 2013-2017 Council Plan.

10 applications were received this year. The total funding sought across all applications was \$20,584. The applications were assessed in accordance with the grant scheme guidelines, and nine projects were successful. A total of \$15,584 was allocated.



The 2016 Australia Day event had people sharing our celebrations across two continents.

# Focus area: Health and wellbeing

Improve people's health and wellbeing throughout all life stages.

### CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN

Council adopted a health and wellbeing plan impact statement to ensure Council policies, plans and strategies are considered against an agreed health and wellbeing lens. This has added a valuable dimension to all aspects of Council's operations.

# **POSITIVE AGING**

Council provided Home and Community Care (HACC) services to over 650 clients this year, and this provision of services assisted clients to remain in their own homes.

Council provided package care for 26 SupportFirst clients, which is an increase from last year. This year the packages were managed according to the Client Directed Care (CDC) model, which clients have eagerly accepted. Clients now have control over how they spend their funding, enabling them to reach their individual goals.

The annual Seniors' Festival was held in October, highlighted by an expo and a week of free movies. All events were well supported, with over 200 people attending the expo.

Our regular Social Support activities continue to be popular. Our big events for the year included visiting Bendigo Gallery's Marilyn Munroe exhibition; seeing the Archibald Prize finalists at the Ballarat Art Gallery; and a fishing day specifically held for the Men's Out and About group.

Council is continually thankful to all the volunteers who assist in delivering Meals on Wheels and assist in our Social Support programs. The Aged Care team looks forward to working together to achieve positive outcomes for clients. The next 12 months will see changes in the aged care sector. Funding for HACC services will move from State Government to the Federal Government, taking affect from 1 July 2016, and become known as the Commonwealth Home Support Services. (CHSP). It will only be available to people over 65 years of age.

Part of the change for Council includes a national referral system run through a new website - The My Aged Care website.

The State Government will continue to provide limited funds for people aged under 65, which they have named VICHACC. As the NDIS National Disability Scheme rolls out later this year, funding may be reduced, as younger clients are accepted into the NDIS.



A fishing trip was one of this year's events for the men's out and about group.

# Focus area: Health and wellbeing

Improve people's health and wellbeing throughout all life stages.

### MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES

Council's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service provides a universal platform for all children aged 0 to 6 years. The service aims to see all children in the age cohorts for 0 to 4 years to provide assessment of growth and development, anticipatory guidance, immunisations, early intervention and referral to services especially for our families who are experiencing some difficulties. Maternal and Child Health also has an enhanced service to support families who need extra assistance with their parenting and family life and more flexibility with engaging the Maternal and Child Health Service.

#### Some highlights this year include:

- Total Key Age and Stage Consultations: 1146 in the Universal service
- Referrals to other agencies: 174 for children and 33 for mothers
- Total number of birth notices: 115 (down 22 from 2014/2015)
- Number of enrolments in total at MCH : 923
- Number of active infant / child records: 592
- Number of Opportunistic Immunisations: 516

There have been 374 additional consultations and 189 documented phone consultations.

#### Group work

As per the statistics from the annual Maternal and Child Health Program there have been 17 types of groups conducted including:

- Three New Parents' Group
- 42 Community strengthening activities undertaken.

A significant service development this year has been the running of the Maryborough District Health Service's final antenatal education sessions at MCH. This has grown out of a partnership between the two organisations. Already the benefits can be seen, with new mothers being more comfortable with the service.

MCH is a well utilised service by the families in our community. In addition to the above, Enhanced MCH services offer extra hours of care and support to the more vulnerable families. EMCH conducts extra home visits, assistance with ordering nursery equipment for those in need and working with extra parenting assistance, breast feeding assistance and care for those who may be experiencing problems with various forms of substance abuse.

# **YOUTH SERVICES**

#### Central Goldfields Youth Advisory Council

In October 2013, Council endorsed the Youth Advisory Council Rationale, paving the way for the development of the Central Goldfields Youth Advisory Council.

The Youth Advisory Council has a current membership of eight people aged 12 to 25 years. Members of the Youth Advisory Council come from a cross-section of the community, representing Maryborough Education Centre, Highview College, Federation University, and employed young people.

The Youth Advisory Council was formed to encourage and build the leadership skills of local young people. It also provides an opportunity for young people to advocate on behalf of all young people in our community.

Members of the Youth Advisory Council have commenced and participated in a number of initiatives including:

- Delivery of the inaugural 2015 Central Goldfields Youth Awards, now listed as a biennial event
- Writing and developing stories for the Youth Focus Page in the Maryborough Advertiser
- Community consultation regarding the outcomes of the 2014-2015 Youth Survey. Development of strategies to incorporate into programs directed at local young people
- Providing input into the Central Goldfields
  Community Plan
- Engaging in a number of leadership development programs representing the shire
- Participation in social change projects with the Foundation for Young Australians.

#### Central Goldfields Shire Youth Awards

In August 2015, the Central Goldfields Youth Awards were held for the first time in seven years to celebrate the achievements and success of local young people.

Awards were given in the categories of Academics, Sport, Community Involvement, Arts, Employment and Support Services.



Recipients from the 2015 Youth Awards.

#### Central Goldfields Shire Youth Survey

In October, 2014 a survey was conducted with young people in the shire to assess their participation and thoughts about local activities. It also provided an in depth analysis of the movement of young people between sporting clubs, and away and towards participation. 431 responses were received, and these statistics were released in November, 2015. These results have been passed on to education providers, young people, local government departments, state and federal government representatives, community and recreational organisations.

Ongoing strategy implementation is underway to develop solutions to identified issues.

#### Central Goldfields Shire Youth Focus Page

In December, 2014 the Youth Advisory Council commenced a joint partnership with the Maryborough Advertiser to prepare a monthly one page submission

of articles about the achievements, activities and profiles of local young people. This is continuing with a strong article base prepared by local students and members of the Youth Advisory Council.

#### Youth Portal – "All For Youth"

"All For Youth" commenced in 2012 and contains information provided by local young people and support organisations regarding services available in the local area. The site also contains stories about local young people, course availability and information related to health and well-being.

Redevelopment of the site is underway to meet the changing needs of local young people.

#### Engage! Youth Program and FreeZa Events

The Youth Engage Program and FreeZa Events are facilitated by Council in close collaboration with local youth committees. Major achievements for these programs included the staging of the Open Air Cinema and the Peta Evans Taylor Concert at the Maryborough RACV Energy Breakthrough; and the Indigenous Hip Hop Projects performance at the 2015 Central Goldfields Shire NAIDOC Week Celebrations.

The continued development and utilisation of the Youth Engage Space has also provided great participatory and learning opportunities for the local youth.

#### Central Goldfields Shire L2P Program

The Central Goldfields L2P Program is an initiative by VicRoads and the TAC to assist young learner drivers to access a suitable mentor and vehicle in order to achieve the regulatory 120 hours of supervised driving before getting their probationary licence. L2P assist young drivers who have no vehicle access, financial constraints and / or no access to a suitably qualified driver to achieve their 120 hours. Currently the Central Goldfields is exceeding the numbers allocated to the program (20) and operating with 35 participants.

In May, 2016 the Maryborough Bendigo Bank Branch gifted the use of a vehicle to the L2P program, providing a significant boost to this important service.

# Focus area: Health and wellbeing

Improve people's health and wellbeing throughout all life stages.

### **GOLDFIELDS CHILDREN'S CENTRE**



The new watering cans were well received by all at the Children's Centre.

#### Gems Room (Age: 6 weeks to 2 years)

Educators work closely with families to gain an understanding of all of the children's needs and routines to ensure a smooth daily transition between home and the centre.

Songs, storybooks and conversations during play are used to develop language skills; while gross motor skill development includes activities such as throwing and catching balls, climbing on foam blocks, and climbing up the ladder to slide down the slide. Children's early literacy development continues to be a focus, with books always readily available for children to sit with and have a read.

Gems Room educators continue to focus on the development of children's language skills to enable a smooth transition to the Opals Room.

#### Opals Room (Age: 2 to 3 years)

2016 saw the introduction of a new team of educators. The staff is a team of seven educators, and communication is vital to know the various stages that each child is achieving. Getting to know the children and their interests has taken some time but has been a very worthwhile process, with educators making jotting notes that assist with the continuous planning for children's ongoing education and care. Within the program, the room is set up with small spaces for children to have quiet time and also enjoy smaller areas of play with others. This was implemented following training workshops with a speech pathologist that focused on small group activities, with the intention of promoting the individual development of language for all children. Both children and educators are having more conversations in these small groups, which is building the confidence of the children.

Progressive morning tea and afternoon tea enables children the opportunity to engage in their play without interruption. The program plan is never set for the entire week, to embrace children's choice and spontaneous activities.

#### Dynamites Room (Age: 3 to 4 years)

Children participate in bi monthly visits to the Maryborough Nursing home, which provides the opportunity to learn a variety of life skills. Children are getting to know the residents, making a point of learning some of their names.

Another highlight is the pet Yabby. Children are beginning to research yabbies and learn how they live, where they live and what they eat.

Children are thriving through outside time, using many of the natural materials in their imaginative play. The partnership with Council's Parks and Gardens team has been exciting for the children, in particular when the team delivered watering cans for the children to use in the centre's garden.

### Kinder Room (Age: 4 to 5 years)

Exploring the wonders of the human body, the children have consistently engaged with the 'puzzle' completion of a first aid doll, recognising how vital their wellbeing is. Lungs, heart, brain, 'tube like' intestines, stomach and brain have been returned to their rightful position alongside rich conversation as to what job each vital organ does. This learning was extended through the construction of a cardboard ambulance, which provoked many opportunities for children to care for each other - broken limbs were bandaged and injections of vital medicine administered. With Australia Day recognised, children explored the symbols of the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island and 'star and stripe' flags. Images of children's thoughts were created, alongside the learning discussion of what each colour represents on the flags.

Healthy Harold, the funny puppet giraffe, visited the Pioneers room to share his ideas about safe travel and protection away from home. Children shared in book reading at the library, alongside the VCAL Maryborough students, where hats were made with creative delight and brought back to the centre for family viewing (and wearing!). An invitation was extended to us to visit MEC to view the Lion King dress rehearsal. Much pleasure was taken recalling the information children knew about the story and the association with life on an African savannah.

Relationships with families and out of centre professionals/community members continue to grow with rich collaborative connectivity, ultimately for the benefit of the Pioneer children.

#### Family Day Care

Family Day Care (FDC) has had a wonderful start to the year with Assessment and Rating in February, where the service was successful in achieving Meeting National Standard. This achievement shows the hard work and dedication to early childhood education and care from the FDC educators and coordinators.

FDC currently provides care for 38 families, Monday to Friday, with some educators having children as early as 6:30am and as late as 11pm to provide care that suits the needs of the families.

The service has developed a structure that includes the natural environment as an integral part of the learning experiences provided by the educators. FDC embraces the Goldfields community and its bushland areas for the children to explore and develop their knowledge of the natural world.

Families are included in the planning of the educational opportunities, which ensures a cohesive environment and creates the best outcomes for children.

#### **Outside School Hours Care**

The Outside School Hours Care – After School Care program has undergone its first assessment and rating visit, assessed against the National Quality Standard (NQS). During the assessment visit, an authorised officer observed, discussed, and sighted techniques to assess the service against each element of the NQS, National Law and National Regulations. The service received an overall rating of 'Working Towards National Quality Standards'.

The service continues to look at areas for improvement and is working through the Quality Improvement Plan. There is a focus the sustainability aspects of the program, working in conjunction with the Maryborough Education Centre.

#### Education and training

The centre continues to support educators who are studying to upskill their current qualifications. Two educators are currently working towards their Diploma of Children's Services qualification and three more educators will enrol to complete their Diploma qualification as traineeships in January 2017. The Manager Early Years Services will complete a Bachelor of Early Childhood qualification in July 2017.

The children's centre redevelopment is progressing well with centre staff and families eagerly awaiting its completion.

#### Supported Playgroup

The Victorian Department of Education and Training introduced new policy and funding guidelines this financial year, requiring Council to review service delivery. In line with the new requirements, facilitators completed training to deliver *Smalltalk*; a set of evidence-based strategies that parents can use to enhance the home learning environment for their children.

Council currently offers Supported Playgroup in Maryborough and Dunolly, however extensive research is in progress to determine the best location for more groups.

### Focus area: Community safety

Foster a whole of community approach.

# MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The committee comprises members of Council and all emergency response and support agencies. The aim of the committee is to support the community's ability to manage and be prepared for emergencies. It meets four times a year and regularly reviews emergency management plans and strategies aimed at building community and agency resilience.

To support the emergency management planning process across the community, a number of subcommittees have been formed. These subcommittees meet when required to review and develop emergency management plans, processes and procedures for specific hazards such as fire, flood, heat wave, pandemic, animal welfare and recovery.

In the past 12 months, the committee achieved the following:

- Reviewed and updated the Neighbourhood Safer Places plans for Maryborough, Carisbrook, Dunolly and Talbot
- Further Developed the Central Goldfields Flood Emergency Plan
- Reviewed the Municipal Emergency Management Plan in accordance with the new Emergency Management Manual Victoria and legislation
- · Reviewed Relief and Recovery Centres
- Maintained and updated Crisisworks software program and conducted training for EM Staff ready for endorsement by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning committee
- Supported cross border emergency management arrangements in response and planning for emergencies
- Trained officers for utilisation as liaison officers in the Incident Control Centre
- Continued participation in the Northern Regional Water Monitoring Partnership in relation to the management of river and creek rainfall/flood monitoring and early warning systems.
- Continued participation in the Victorian Northern Cluster Project with Bendigo, Campaspe, Mount Alexander and Loddon Councils.

# FAMILY VIOLENCE STRATEGY

The HATCH community engagement sessions have provided the impetus for strengthening the community conversations about Family Violence. Go Goldfields joined with representatives from community and business to address the Royal Commission into Family Violence. An expert reference group has been formed to inform the ongoing work in this area.

# WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

The White Ribbon Ambassador campaign has continued to be supported by Council as part of its approach to community safety. Council maintains at least two organisation representatives (including the CEO) as White Ribbon Ambassadors and facilitates functions to recognise the role.

# ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

The shire's first off leash dog park was opened January, 2016 for a six month trial period. To date there has been no complaints from the general public or from nearby neighbours. The park will therefore continue as is with no further adjustments.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan was due for revision in November 2016. As Council elections are scheduled for the same time, the current plan has been extended for 12 months.

Council continues its efforts to rehouse stray and lost animals, and is proud of its high rate of success. The ability to offer desexing vouchers for pound cats significantly improves the chance of a cat finding a new home. Unfortunately feral cats are still a problem.



The off leash dog park was a welcome addition to Maryborough.

# Focus area: Arts, culture and heritage

Increase community awareness/appreciation of and participation in arts, culture and heritage.

### **ART CENTRAL**

In its third and final year, the aim for Art Central was to ensure an artistic legacy within the community.

One strategy to achieve this was supporting local artists and communities to develop skills and knowledge of community and cultural development practice. This occurred through the projects Imagination Station and The Arty Farty Fun Book.

Imagination Station is an outdoor gallery to exhibit artworks created by communities with artists. The first Imagination Station was installed at the Maryborough Resource Centre. Artworks created in each community will be exhibited on this permanent structure.

Imagination Station has delivered a pool of local artists who are more skilled in working with communities; members of communities excited by artmaking; and a physical structure for the exhibition of artworks; and a process that ensures new artwork is regularly supplied.

The Arty Farty Fun Book contains a series of creative activities for children under the age of 5. The book was designed and laid out by participants using the traditional 'cut and paste' methods reflecting the DIY activities of the book.



Children and parents had great fun creating and launching the Arty Farty Fun Book

# **CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS ART GALLERY**

Located in the historic 1861 fire station, the Central Goldfields Art Gallery offers an exciting program of changing exhibitions. The gallery has a commitment to supporting and promoting artists of the Goldfields region.

To increase community appreciation of the arts, the Central Goldfields Art Gallery continues to present a diverse calendar of exhibitions.

Participation in the arts is strengthened by the annual *Community Arts and Crafts exhibition*, which continues to enjoy the support of local business sponsorship, plus the annual *VCE Art and Design* exhibition. Both of these exhibitions were held at the end of 2015.

#### **Casey Room exhibition**

A selection from the gallery's permanent collection is exhibited in the Casey Room. This growing collection includes works by artist of regional and national significance, such as Arthur Boyd, Pro Hart and Ray Crooke.

#### Bloomin' Art

Bloomin' Art is a unique collaborative exhibition where visual arts meets floral design. The exhibition saw the main gallery divided into 'salons', where seven floral designers interpreted their chosen artwork. In another section of the gallery, floral designers created visual stunning pieces of wearable floral art on mannequins.

As in previous years, the artwork was selected by exhibition curator and award-winning floral designer, Alan Randell-Smith and was from the Gallery's own art collection.

This year the Maryborough branch of Australian Red Cross hosted a floral design demonstration, with all proceeds going to Red Cross.

#### School holiday art workshops

Tutored by artists and teachers from the shire, these workshops continue to engage children in the practice of art making, with a focus on the exhibition in the gallery at the time of the workshops.

# Focus area: Arts, culture and heritage

Increase community awareness/appreciation of and participation in arts, culture and heritage.

#### Friends of the Gallery

The gallery continues to build on its Friends of the Gallery membership. The gallery nurtures this group of art lovers within the community by facilitating group events, excursions and artist talks.

### MARYBOROUGH REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES

The Maryborough Regional Library aspires to increase community connection with its services by providing access to library resources throughout the shire by way of the Maryborough Library, Outreach services, the library van and the mobile library (through the Goldfields Regional Library Corporation, Bendigo).

The library service will undergo some changes in the next 12 months with Goldfields Regional Library Corporation ceasing the mobile service from January 2017. Work will be conducted with the Dunolly community to establish library new services.

#### Outreach

We have continued to make good use of our library van. The van visits the following on a fortnightly basis:

- Havilah Hostel
- Raglan House
- Dunolly Hospital and Nursing Home
- Weekly:
- Talbot
- Once a term:
- AG Leech Kinder
- TL Stone Kinder
- California Gully Kinder
- Goldfields Children's Centre
- Talbot Kinder
- Dunolly Kinder

Staff also visit and conduct sessions with supported playgroups.

#### Adults

Our programs for adults are as varied as they are.

- The library again participated in the Words in Winter Festival. Patrons enjoyed the annual Crossword Challenge, Creswick coming out as the winner.
- The library has hosted two author visits Trish Stringer, and Nicholas Hudson (launch of the new edition of Modern Australian Usage).

The library has gone through some changes with another lounge area created, new Young Adult shelving, a bar table and stools and two small tables and chairs for patrons to use. New audio visual shelving has provided easier access for patrons.



During her two day visit, the Governor of Victoria, the Hon. Linda Dessau AM spent time with children at the library.

#### **Children and Youth**

The Maryborough Regional Library brings learning, literacy and leisure to the forefront by providing Story Time for 2 to 4 years of age (twice weekly), Rhyme Time for newborns to 2 years weekly, as well as visiting kindergarten, playgroups and supported playgroups. The library is also providing a venue for various groups around Maryborough, such as the New Mothers group, Maternal and Child Health Lap Time and Baby Wearers. The Library once again worked with students from Federation University to provide National Simultaneous Story Time.

Children's Book Week was fabulous fun with the staff dressing as their favourite book character. The second annual Toy Animal Sleepover was a great success, fully booked a week in advance. All the animals had a lovely time and their owners received a photo of their activities.

The library conducted school holiday activities:

- Elmo paid the library a visit and entertained children present at our Monster Craft session.
- The Flying Bookworms performed to a packed audience.
- Terry Cole with Circus in a Suitcase performed under the shade sails then conducted a circus skills workshop – both of these events were fully booked.

- African Drumming took place under the shade sails in front of the resource centre and was extremely well attended.
- Roo Keepers brought their mobile zoo to the library for two fully booked sessions.

The library ran a successful pen pal program with two libraries in the US. This program ran for three months and is being repeated with a library from Canada.

A record number of children participate in the Summer Reading Program, with 57 children completing it.



Roo Keeper - Michael Church and snake.

# Focus area: Recreation and sport

Increase participation in physical activity.

# **RECREATION SERVICES**

2015/2016 was a significant year for Recreation Services in terms of strategic planning and capital works developments.

#### 2016 – 2026 Central Goldfields Walking & Cycling Strategy

Council recognised the need to develop a Walking and Cycling Strategy to enable it to meet its community's growing interest in these forms of sport and active recreation. The increased interest in walking and cycling put increased demand on Council to supply information, infrastructure, and services.

Council engaged the services of Recreation Planning Consultancy firm Communityvibe to develop the 2016 – 2026 Central Goldfields Walking & Cycling Strategy.

Council acknowledges that national trends in sport and recreation participation are changing, and that participation in non-organised / individual sport and fitness activities are also on the rise. In acknowledging these trends, Council must be prepared and informed to accommodate and positively facilitate the local and regional trends and needs in terms of walking and cycling.

Cycling and walking paths / trails provide linkages in the community between important community infrastructure such as residences, businesses, open space, hospitals, and schools. With growth, development, and in some cases decline, these linkages must be examined and planned to ensure they assist the effective function of our active transport network.

Communityvibe has completed extensive consultation with the community, and the strategic plan will be developed for consideration and implementation in the 2016/2017 year.

### Cycling capital

Continued planning, infrastructure development, and hosting of major cycling events, coupled with our impressive network of gentle undulating and flat rural roads, enables Central Goldfields Shire to build on its already strong position as a cycle friendly community.

The Central Goldfields Shire Bicycle Advisory Group continues to provide the community with a representative and advisory function for Council, and was instrumental in several major cycling developments in the current year.



*Cycling remains a key activity for both tourists and community members.* 

#### Ballarat - Maryborough Heritage Cycling Trail

The development of the Ballarat – Maryborough Heritage Cycling Trail, a joint initiative of the Central Goldfields Shire, Hepburn Shire, and the City of Ballarat, was almost complete in the 2015/2016 year, with the official opening of this iconic cycling trail planned for next year.

This trail incorporates quiet sealed and gravel roads between Ballarat and Maryborough, travelling through the smaller townships of Creswick, Clunes, and Talbot along the way, and passing by the railway stations in each community as well.

It is anticipated that the development of this iconic cycling trail will provide outstanding opportunities for cycle tourism in the region.

#### Central Goldfields Shire Physical Activity Group

The Central Goldfields Shire Physical Activity Group continued to provide opportunities for sport and recreation organisations, schools, and the community to become involved in active recreation.

The 2015 Get Up & Go Family Fun Day at Princes Park and Lake Victoria was a culmination of several initiatives to get the community active. The project involved local schools in the VicHealth Walk To School Program and Hunt For The Golden Shoe, the Spring Into Summer Stroll, and the Physical Activity Expo. All initiatives were highly successful and built on the objective of increased participation in sport and active recreation.

#### Carlton FC Community Club Camp - March 2016

The community hosted the Carlton Football Club's Community Camp on Wednesday, 2 March 2016.

The camp included the following features:

- · Civic Reception at the Community Hub Building
- Player visits to local schools, hospitals, and aged facilities
- Junior Clinics and signing session at Princes Park
- Player attendance and participation at a Sportsperson's Night and Dinner at the Maryborough Highland Society.



The Carlton Football Club visit was a highlight for all shire footy fans.

#### Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure Developments

Council continues in partnership with local sport and active recreation organisations to improve the community's built environment. The following capital works projects were completed in 2015/2016:

- Talbot Outdoor Pool change room upgrade
- Dunolly Outdoor Pool shade structure project
- Maryborough Netball Complex courts and lighting upgrade
- Maryborough Gun Club clubrooms and shooting grounds upgrade.

The road ahead in this sector will be both exciting and challenging as Council ensures it plays a vital part in facilitation of a healthy community as well as healthy community clubs and organisations.



*Purpose: encourage and support economic activity, particularly that which facilitates employment in the community.* 

### Focus area: Economic activity

Support and facilitate activities which contribute to the municipality's economic prosperity.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

1. Economic development strategy

### Focus area: Tourism and events

Maintain and grow local events stock.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Central Goldfields Event Strategy
- 2. Tourism initiatives
- 3. Major events
- 4. First National Heritage Region
- 5. Involvement in the Bendigo Regional Tourism Board

# Focus area: Economic activity

Support and facilitate activities which contribute to the municipality's economic prosperity.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Having adopted a new Economic Development Strategy earlier in its term, Council has achieved key elements thereof, most notably with employment growth and continued record residential development.

Edlyn Foods Pty Ltd converted a facility in Johnson Street, Maryborough to enable relocation of part of its Melbourne based operation, and, future growth. This was a terrific outcome for the community and builds on the establishment of a food processing cluster, as does the re-establishment of Capilano Honey in the town.

A 'Central Goldfields Celebrates' event was held in August, 2015. The function replaced the traditional Business Awards and was designed to recognise and celebrate the business sector in the community. Also a wonderful networking event, Council was delighted to secure Gerry Ryan OAM as guest speaker.

Council has continued its close association with the Central Goldfields Business Group and was pleased to see the Group establish its own identity with upcoming events planned.

The re-opening of a business (café/restaurant/gallery) in the Maryborough Railway Station was a highlight with this iconic building the centrepiece of the town and the magnificent Station Domain precinct. Council was very pleased to facilitate this activity through a lease from VicTrack and subsequent sub-lease arrangement.

Council works closely with Regional Development Victoria and was pleased to host an in-bound trade mission in October, 2015 which gave the opportunity for a number of local businesses to meet directly with potential export customers.



Jayco Founder Gerry Ryan OAM (centre) was an inspiring guest speaker at the Central Goldfields Celebrates event. Pictured here with CEO Mark Johnston and 2015 Mayor, Cr Wendy McIvor.

# Focus area: Tourism and events

Maintain and grow local events stock.

# **CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS EVENT STRATEGY**

In 2014 Council adopted a new events strategy to achieve a number of outcomes including the optimisation of local events, the development of new events, and the use of existing regional events as a platform for local visitation.

The strategy was implemented in a number of ways this financial year. Council used the National Trust Heritage Festival as an opportunity to participate in Goldfields Heritage Month. This was in partnership with the Victorian Goldfields.

The shire's biggest annual event, the RACV Energy Breakthrough, was optimised by focussing on a new promotional angle – day visitation. As it stands, the event has all accommodation in the region booked solidly. So from 2014, the benefits of day visits to the event were promoted to increase visitation to the shire without further impacting the demand for local accommodation.



The long standing RACV Energy Breakthrough has benefitted from Council's event strategy.

# **TOURISM INITIATIVES**

#### 2015 Great Victorian Bike Ride - Dunolly

Dunolly successfully hosted day/night three of the 2015 Great Victorian Bike Ride. This was the result of successful lobbying by Council in conjunction with Bendigo Regional Tourism.

Between 3000 and 3500 riders were in Dunolly for the night. Talbot had a lunch stop the day prior, followed by the Maryborough Harness Racing Club on the 30

November. Bealiba also had a rest stop set up at the Pony Club the day after the ride visited Dunolly.

Council worked closely with Bicycle Network Victoria, Bendigo Regional Tourism and Dunolly and District Inc. to put an exciting and eventful program together for the riders when they arrived, which was very well received by the riders with some terrific positive feedback received. Dunolly Traders and Community Groups benefitted highly from the event visit, with some businesses making a large percentage of their annual revenue in one day.



*The Great Victorian Bike ride spent some time in the township of Dunolly.* 

### Ballarat-Maryborough Heritage Cycling Trail

Continued development of the Ballarat-Maryborough Heritage Cycling Trail took place throughout 2015/16. The trail includes the towns of Ballarat, Creswick, Clunes, Talbot and Maryborough. The steering committee has had signage of the trail installed between Maryborough and Creswick, with the route between Creswick and Ballarat recently approved. An official launch of the trail and release of maps is due in August 2016.

#### 2016 Goldfields Heritage Month

Central Goldfields Shire took part in the Goldfields Heritage Month in April/May 2016. The festival was part of the National Trust Heritage Festival and was celebrated throughout the entire Goldfields region. Heritage experiences and stories were celebrated and the festival showcased heritage sites, exhibitions, tours, performances and culinary delights, with the Central Goldfields hosting 20 activities in the program which received positive outcomes.

### Focus area: Tourism and events

Maintain and grow local events stock.

#### Dunolly Dump Point for Caravans and RV's

Work is underway to install a CMCA Dump Point at Deledio Reserve in Dunolly to help cater for the increasing demand of Caravan and RV visitors to the town. Plan drawings are being completed with the installation likely to take place in the second half of 2016.

#### Victorian and Australian Tourism Awards

In November, 2015 the RACV Energy Breakthrough won silver at the RACV Victorian Tourism Awards in the category of Festival and Events. A fantastic achievement for the event itself and the community of Maryborough. The silver prize however was preceded by two golds in the previous two years, and excluded the event from being inducted into the Hall of Fame.

#### **RACV Energy Breakthrough Ambassadors**

A team of 11 ambassadors worked at the event and collected a total of 212 names and contact details to take part in the online RACV Spectator Survey to assess the value of the RACV Energy Breakthrough to the region.

### MAJOR EVENTS RACV Energy Breakthrough

Central Goldfields Shire's major sport and recreation tourism event, the RACV Energy Breakthrough, was once again an enormous success attracting record crowds to enjoy the energy and excitement of "Maryborough's Signature Event".



The annual Relay for Life continues to be an important event for the community.

School teams registered interest and participated in the event from right across Australia.

The event provides considerable financial benefits to the local community and generated an impressive \$4.63 million for the local economy in 2015, whilst also collecting a Silver Prize at the 2015 Victorian Tourism Award for Festivals & Events.

#### **Spring Fling**

The fourth annual Spring Fling continued to promote entertainment and activities around the shire for the month of October. Maryborough, Dunolly, Talbot, Bealiba and Carisbrook provided locals and visitors with theatre, history, children's activities, art, exhibitions, tours, markets and music.

The 58 events showcased in the Spring Fling program gave visitors and locals plenty to do, and catered for people of all ages and interests.

#### Summer in the Domain

The number of events is steadily increasing as part of the Summer in the Domain program. The 2015/16 program hosted seven events during the summer period. These were Station Domain Twilight Markets, The Domain Carols, New Year's Eve, Australia Day and the Kids' Holiday program.

#### Relay for Life

The seventh annual Relay For Life was held in April 2016, attracting 26 teams and 465 participants. The event raised \$33,194, and brought the community together to celebrate life, remember those who have passed, and to share life changing experiences.

The shire's overall total raised for the Cancer Council over the past seven years equals \$458,879.

The Committee worked with the Maryborough District Health Service to provide health checks for participants. 67 people took up the opportunity to have a free health check.

The commitment of the 14 committee members is a testament of the continued success of the Maryborough Relay For Life.

#### Major cycling events

Central Goldfields Shire hosted the South Pacific Veterans Cycling Championships in March 2016, and the Vision Super Central Goldfields Reverse Triathlon in February 2016.

### FIRST NATIONAL HERITAGE REGION

2015/16 updates for the project:

- Considerable progress has been made on identifying the requirements for development of a nomination for the World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields:
- A partnership between the Collaborative Centre for Research in Australian History (CRCAH) in Federation University and the Victorian Goldfields Tourism Executive (VGTE) was developed to advance World Heritage Listing for the Goldfields and other strategic priorities and an MOU signed.
- A Symposium on World Heritage Listing of the Victorian Goldfields was jointly organised by the VGTE, and the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (NTAV) providing strong endorsement for a Goldfields regional nomination and recognising the range of resulting benefits including economic development and job creation. Following the Symposium the Victorian Minister for Planning provided public comments in support of a nomination.
- A proposal is with RDV for a two year research and consultation process at CRCAH to develop a World Heritage Listing nomination for the Goldfields.
- Utilising the partnership between the VGTE and NTAV, the NTAV forwarded to the Premier a proposal to establish a \$25 million Goldfields Heritage Restoration Scheme which would be administered by the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund and would support the restoration of key Goldfields heritage assets leading to increased visitation and job creation. This proposal has been forwarded to all 13 Councils who have participated in The Goldfields – Australia's Premier Heritage Region project to enable their direct advocacy with the State Government.
- The VGTE proposed to the Review of the Management of Historic Places undertaken by the Victorian Environment Assessment Council (VEAC) that the Goldfields would be well placed to pilot initiatives arising from the Review and the proposed Goldfields

### Focus area: Tourism and events

Maintain and grow local events stock.

Heritage Restoration Scheme would form a "shovel-ready" initiative to implement its "revolving fund" recommendations.

 Building on its partnership with the VGTE the Board of the NTAV has identified the Goldfields region as an area of focus in its work and has established a representative body-the Goldfields Strategic Advisory Committee to guide its work and focus its efforts on high-value activities.

### INVOLVEMENT IN THE BENDIGO REGIONAL TOURISM BOARD

Council continues to be active on the Bendigo Regional Tourism (BRT) Board. BRT has completed some highly valued projects and has made a big difference for the Central Goldfields Shire by creating opportunities that have only been formed through involvement on the BRT. Some of these opportunities include:

#### Bendigo and Region Destination Management Plan

BRT officially launched the completed Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan (DMP) in May 2016. The aim of the plan is to develop a more strategic approach to tourism, recognising the strong connections between the regional centre of Bendigo with the surrounding villages and councils (such as the Central Goldfields Shire), and their more boutique offerings. This proposed hub and spokes model will grow the whole region's tourism industries and subsequently grow tourism jobs right across the region.

In total, 16 priority projects have been selected to further develop tourism across the shires involved in BRT. The projects that directly impact Central Goldfields Shire are:

- Maryborough Cultural Arts Precinct
- Maryborough serviced apartments and function centre.

Further to these priority projects, the DMP lists as series of destination development projects for the Central Goldfields sub-region, which focus on:

• Strengthening the primary role of Maryborough through development of its cultural tourism, retail and accommodation offering

- Improving transport connections including train and bus services to Maryborough
- Improve RV facilities in small townships to increase the stay of touring grey nomads
- Building the product and branding of historic villages in the Central Goldfields
- Improving infrastructure and Nature Based Tourism offering in State and Regional Parks.

#### Maryborough brand and personality development

BRT appointed iSPY Brand Research & Strategy to complete a Brand/Personality Development project for the Bendigo Region. This assisted each region to identify key brand strengths, regional personalities and overall strategic positions as BRT work together as a broader region for tourism purposes.

#### Sharon Wells – PR Initiatives

BRT contracted Sharon Wells as PR consultant in 2016 to help market the Central Goldfields and extended region into the Melbourne metro market. She has already generated leads and stories in The Saturday Herald Sun, The Saturday Age and Jetstar for the region.

#### **Regional Itineraries**

BRT received State Government funding to boost visitation throughout the Bendigo Region through the development of regional itineraries. The region is aligning with a hub and tourism spokes model, where visitors travel to the hub (Bendigo) and are then further motivated to venture out into the surrounding regions on day and overnight trips, based on regional itineraries. This will therefore increase intrastate tourism and boost the local economies.



# MARYBOROUGH RAILWAY STATION

27 6

"Don't you overlook that Maryborough Station... why, you can put the whole population of Maryborough into it, and give them a sofa apiece, and have room for more", Mark Twain, 1895

MARYBOROUGH

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Purpose: value, conserve and enhance the rich built and natural environment.

## Focus area: Infrastructure assets and facilities

Protect and enhance our existing amenities.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Asset maintenance
- 2. Flood management planning
- 3. Township enhancements

#### Focus area: Natural environment and sustainability

Value, add and value-add to our natural environment and sustainability.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

1. Waste management plan review

#### Focus area: Strategic land use

Achieve outcomes in planning and policy activities to create environments that support public wellbeing and economic success.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

1. Central Goldfields Planning Scheme

2. Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan

## Focus area: Infrastructure assets and facilities

Protect and enhance our existing amenities.

### ASSET MAINTENANCE

Council maintains hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of infrastructure throughout the shire. Infrastructure takes the form of a huge multitude of assets, from park benches to buildings, roads, trees, bridges, parks, reserves and sporting facilities, drainage, pathways and many more.

All assets and infrastructure have a service life, and without carefully planned maintenance at the optimum time there is a risk of losing the asset. Council has limited budgets for the maintenance of infrastructure and must juggle cost against requirement. This means that the management of our assets is critical to reducing the need for asset renewal.

Asset Management is the driving component to ensuring efficiency in managing infrastructure. Knowing the assets, as well as the current condition they are in, and when to intervene, is what effective Asset Management and maintenance of infrastructure is all about.

#### Phillips Gardens enhancement

In late 2015 it was identified that an iconic and heritage listed lemon scented gum in the Phillips Gardens posed some risk to the public. The tree was planted in the late 1800's and is estimate to be approximately 120 years old. The tree was planted from seed on the site with the seeds bought back from Western Australia by a local traveller.

Two arborist reports were sought, and given the significance of the tree, canopy reduction and an exclusion zone under the tree was considered the best course of action.

The tree now has a feature garden circling it that acts as an exclusion or tree protection zone. The exclusion zone has been planted to reflect the origins of the tree, with all planting consisting of West Australian species. Whilst is serves a practical purpose, the exclusion zone garden has become a feature, with the iconic gum shining as its centrepiece.

## FLOOD MANAGEMENT PLANNING

In accordance with the Central Goldfields Flood Emergency Plan and the Carisbrook Flood Study (developed in 2013) Council engaged consultants to investigate and provide final designs for the flood mitigation works at Carisbrook. The completed flood mitigation design includes a western levee around Carisbrook with a support levee at Williams Road south of Carisbrook.

Planning applications and provisions for land easements and acquisitions are currently in progress. Sections of the levee construction works will be undertaken in in early 2016/17 with other sections planned as planning and land easements are approved.

The clearing of vegetation in Tullaroop Creek through the Carisbrook precinct, as part of the flood mitigation works, were completed during the year.

In accordance with the Dunolly Flood Study, flood mitigation works for Dunolly were designed and will involve reinstatement and rehabilitation of the north eastern levee and retention structure. Development approvals have been provided for the works to be completed as funds become available, potentially in the 2016/17 year.

### **TOWNSHIP ENHANCEMENTS**

A key project for the year was the upgrade of Dunolly's shopping precinct, Broadway. This project involved the complete renewal and upgrade of the footpath and street furniture to reflect the heritage landscape.

This year Council has upgraded 1.9 km of high use unsealed roads. Possum Gully Road in Adelaide Lead had the seal extended by 700 metres, with a bridge replacement; while Moonlight Road at Alma had the seal extended 1,200 metres. Road and street improvements are an ongoing task for Council. Other major projects for the year included:

- Jeffs Street Road, Maryborough and Drainage Construction scheme
- Burns Street, Maryborough surface upgrade asphalting
- Smeaton Road, Moolort pavement stabilisation
- Havelock Street, Maryborough pavement, drainage kerb and channel and street scape renewal
- Higham Street, Maryborough pavement, drainage kerb and channel and street scape renewal.



Possum Gully Road bridge replacement.

#### Street tree planting

The 2016 street tree planting program continues to enhance streets throughout the shire. Included in this year's plantings were Maryborough's Park Road, Inkerman Street (replanting following vandalism of 24 trees), Elgin Road, Primrose Street and Whirrakee Drive.

## Focus area: Natural environment and sustainability

Value, add and value-add to our natural environment and sustainability.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

Council's Waste Management Plan 2011-2016 was adopted by Council in July 2011. The Plan sets out a number of strategic directions and key actions required to achieve Council's goal of ensuring the Waste Management Plan meets the needs of residents.

The plan was appraised for the preparation of the new waste services contract in January 2015 and has been formally reviewed in June 2016. In the past 12 months a new Waste Services contract was tendered and implemented in October 2015. Local contractor Waste Recyclers of Victoria secured the kerbside waste, recyclables, green waste/organics and street bins collection service. Ellwaste, a regional contractor, secured the transfer station management and kerbside hard waste collection services.

## Key achievements of the strategy in the past 12 months include:

- Materials recovered (recyclables and organics) from the waste stream have stabilised at about 41.3%, which meets regional targets.
- Green waste and kitchen organics collection voluntary service participation has increased to 979.
- The compost facility at the Carisbrook Transfer Station has operated successfully over the past 12 months processing 293.63 tonnes of green waste and kitchen food waste. The compost process has been improved by the installation of a screening trommel. The consistency of the processed compost has improved as a result. A new compost bagging machine has allowed bagging of the compost on site utilising services of a local social enterprise.
- Facilities and services at the Carisbrook Transfer Station have improved with the extension and upgrade to the recoverable materials resales shop to provide a larger selling area and lock up areas for the workshop and plant.
- The rehabilitation of the closed Carisbrook landfill was approved by the Environment Protection Authority, with the approval of a hydrogeological assessment and the preparation of an ongoing aftercare management and monitoring plan for the closed landfill.

- The Bealiba Transfer Station yard has been sealed along with the access road to improve the facility for the users.
- Council has renewed a number of street and park waste bins to compliment the 32 new Public Place Recycling bins throughout the Shire. The aim is to improve the public place recovery of materials from the waste stream in shopping centres, parks and at community events.
- Waste Service calendars are distributed each year to inform residents of the urban and rural waste, recycling, green/organic waste and hard waste collection weeks and provide contact information for enquiries. A new waste information booklet will be produced in August 2016 to reflect waste services provided in relation to the new waste services contract.
- The new Victorian Waste and Resource Recovery Policy 'Getting Full Value', implemented by the State Government in 2013, introduced a number of new reforms and challenges in waste and resource recovery for the future. Council has been actively involved in the Grampians Central West Waste and Resource Recovery Group along with 11 other councils to the west of Victoria currently developing the Regional Waste and resource Recovery Implementation Plan.

The Waste Management Plan 2011-2016 can be viewed on Council's website.

## Focus area: Strategic land use

Achieve outcomes in planning and policy activities to create environments that support public wellbeing and economic success.

### CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS PLANNING SCHEME

Council is working towards the introduction of an updated Municipal Strategic Statement and local policies in order to ensure that Council's planning scheme is up to date and reflects the vision of Council.

The updated planning scheme will overcome the following local issues identified in the Planning Scheme review process:

- Assist in managing bushfire risk, which could prevent some existing zoned residential land from being developed for urban use.
- Assist in attracting a share of urban growth occurring in the larger regional centres of Bendigo and Ballarat.
- Provide a strategy to accommodate population growth.
- Help reconcile urban growth with environmental risks such as bushfire and flooding, and the need to protect native vegetation.
- Assist the capture of economic development opportunities through tourism given the significant heritage assets.

#### Maryborough North Development Plan

A development plan for Maryborough North has been prepared in consultation with various stakeholders including the existing landowners and authorities. This plan will guide future use and ensure that residential development has appropriate access to open space, infrastructure and creates an attractive and vibrant living atmosphere for residents.

#### Talbot Urban Design Guidelines

Council has prepared the Talbot Urban Design Guidelines which will be finalised and used to guide development within Talbot into the future. The Talbot Urban Design Guidelines are a practical resource that will assist Council, landowners and community groups to achieve significant improvements in both the physical presentation and function of the township.

The guidelines aim to:

- Manage infill development and consolidate growth of the township
- Maintain significant view corridors and visual permeability within the township
- Improve Talbot's presentation, view lines, amenity, suitability and protection of character.

In order to achieve these aims, the guidelines set principles and prescriptions to ensure that new development within the township protects and enhances its character.

#### **Development activity**

Council's planning office received 169 planning permit applications in the 2015/2016 year with some notable applications including:

- Hay processing development in Flagstaff
- 12 applications for native vegetation removal
- Residential development including the development of 72 new dwellings
- 21 applications for subdivision. In keeping with the recent trend of infill developments in existing urban areas, over 60% of these applications were two lot subdivisions. Subdivision activity occurred in Maryborough (17 applications) and Carisbrook (4 applications), which is similar to previous years.

#### Building

The Building Department is responsible for administering the Building Act 1993, providing permits and inspection services for building works on dwellings, sheds, factories, extensions and renovations.

A program of finalising old, incomplete permits is ongoing. Permit fees have increased to assist recovery of costs and bring them in line with private building surveyors.

A total of 252 permits were issued within the municipality in the past 12 months; 74 by private building surveyors and 178 by Council's building surveyor. The total value of the work was \$22,651,861.

The number of permits is down by approximately 9% compared to the 2014/15 financial year, but the value of the work is up by approximately 1%.

### LODDON MALLEE REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN

The Loddon Mallee Regional Growth Plan was adopted by Council as part of a regional response to the Loddon Mallee Regional Strategic Plan. The Regional Growth Plan was supported by all Loddon Mallee South municipalities and was the result of municipal collaboration. The plan sets a blueprint for future growth activity.



*Purpose: implement strong, clear and transparent corporate governance, strategies and actions.* 

## Focus area: Organisational processes and systems

Demonstrate good governance and provide quality customer service.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Communications strategy
- 2. Customer service charter
- 3. Information technology and management
- 4. Occupational Health and Safety
- 5. Human resources
- 6. Governance processes

## Focus area: Leadership and governance

Provide strong leadership in representing the community.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Advocacy
- 2. Council awards and work showcased
- 3. Council communications channels

### Focus area: Financial sustainability

Deliver responsible financial management and business planning to ensure long term sustainability.

#### **Projects/services implemented:**

- 1. Finance and risk management
- 2. Budget compliance

## Focus area: Organisational processes and systems

Demonstrate good governance and provide quality customer service.

### COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Council adopted a new communications strategy in October 2013, which was developed to align with Council's plan and vision.

Implementation of the strategy has continued in the 2015/16 financial year. It forms the foundation of communications for Council, ensuring the same key messages are used across all channels, with the aim of giving the target audience a clear understanding of Council's goals.

Looking ahead, Council elections will be held in October 2016. This will see the development of a new Council Plan and subsequently, a correlating communications strategy.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER**

The Customer Service Charter has been developed to articulate Council's response to its customers in line with the vision and values in the Council Plan.

Every effort is made by staff to uphold the standards outlined in the Customer Service Charter, and if circumstances outside of Council's control prevent this from happening on occasion, staff will contact the customer to keep them updated on the progress of their request.

Additionally, Council has an obligation under the Public Records Act 1973 to have a system in place to create and manage records that meets recordkeeping needs and protects the rights and interests of Council, its employees, contractors, clients and other stakeholders affected by its actions and decisions.

In line with current standards Council is currently in the process of upgrading its electronic records management system.

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

The last 12 months has seen a major step forward in records management. In July 2015 an upgrade of Council's Records Management System began. All of this work has been done in house by an internal steering group and Project Manager. The system, *Magiq*, was introduced in June 2016 and the movement and processing of documents throughout Council is starting to become more efficient. It has reduced the amount of paper circulating the office, minimised duplication, and increased accountability and transparency in our operations.

Council also adopted four related Records Management Policies that set the framework for continuing improvement in this area, and as departments become more familiar with the system, more efficiencies will be made as everyday workflows become automated.

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Council aims to maintain a safety culture that supports an incident and injury free workplace for all employees, councillors, contractors, visitors and the public. Over the past 12 months Council has maintained its safety management system. This has involved undertaking six monthly safety audits of the worksites. A review of all hazardous substances was undertaken and alternative non-hazardous chemicals sought.

Council remains involved in the Collaborative WorkCover Project with four other rural councils to improve the return to work processes by implementing early intervention initiatives. The project has seen improvements in return to work timeframes, training opportunities and insurance premium rates.

As part of the return to work process Council, conducts Occupational Rehabilitation Assessments as part of its return to work process. This ensures appropriate plans are agreed on to facilitate a safe return to work for injured staff.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO has responsibility for the day to day management of operations in accordance with the strategic directions of the Council Plan. The CEO and three General Managers form the Executive Management Team and lead the organisation.

#### **Organisational structure**

A chart setting out the organisational structure is shown to the right.



#### Central Goldfields Shire Council Organisational Structure

## Focus area: Organisational processes and systems

Demonstrate good governance and provide quality customer service.

#### Council staff

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) council staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender is set out below.



CEO: Chief Executive Officer GMCCS: General Manager Corporate and Community Services GMTS: General Manager Technical Services GMGG: General Manager Go Goldfields

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender is set out below.



#### **Equal Employment Opportunity Program**

Council is an equal opportunity employer and strives to ensure that all staff members work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment. Council supports access and equity and recognises diversity as a valuable strength that will create benefits for employees and the community.

Council's Equal Opportunity Policy has been reviewed against the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 this financial year to ensure compliance has been maintained.

Staff are provided with a copy of the policy on appointment as part of their induction kit. Further information has been made available via the staff newsletter and posted on staff noticeboards.

#### **Enterprise Bargaining Agreement**

Council continues to adhere to its 2014-2017 Enterprise Agreement. All staff matters and employment agreements are implemented as per the conditions set out in this agreement.

#### Professional development

Council offers assistance to staff undertaking relevant undergraduate and post graduate studies. In the past year, three staff were successful in obtaining or continued to receive this form of support.

Council also provides a comprehensive corporate learning program that supports a broad range of staff development needs. In the past 12 months there have been 28 sessions undertaken on various topics and were either attended offsite or completed in-house. This staff developed is in alignment with strategic priorities as well as in response to needs identified through performance development process.

A variety of learning methodologies are used including facilitated workshops, eLearning and coaching.

#### Long service awards

In December 2015, Council presented awards to staff for length of service to the organisation. 17 awards were given in the following categories:

Years of service	No of staff awarded
10 years	3
15 years	5
20 years	2
25 years	4
30 years	2
40 years	1

## **GOVERNANCE PROCESSES**

#### **Council meetings**

Council meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of every month in the Community Hub, 48 Burns Street Maryborough at 5.30 pm.

Special meetings are called as required and are advertised in the local newspapers and on Council's website.

#### **Councillor remuneration**

The Mayoral Allowance of \$57,812 and Councillor Allowance of \$19,350 are within the maximum allowable amounts set by the State Government for shires the size of Central Goldfields. Council set remuneration levels for the term of the Council during the adoption of the 2014/15 budget.

#### Code of conduct

Section 76c of the Local Government Act 1989 requires each Council to adopt a Code of Conduct for Councillors. The code commits councillors to work effectively together and provides for effective participation and accountability to the community.

Council adopted an amended Code of Conduct on 24 May 2016. Review of the code is carried out, as is required under the Act within four months of a Council election.

#### **Council Plan**

Section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989 requires Council to prepare and approve a Council Plan within the period of six months after each general election or by the next 30 June, whichever is later. A Council Plan must include:

- 1. The strategic objective of Council
- 2. Strategies for achieving the objectives for at least the next four years

- 3. Strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives
- 4. A Strategic Resource Plan containing the matters specified in Section 126
- 5. Any other matter prescribed by the regulator.

Council developed and adopted the Council Plan for the period 2013 – 2017 at a Special Meeting on 23 April, 2013, with annual reviews thereafter.

#### Citizenship ceremonies

Council conducts citizenship ceremonies on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. The Mayor conducts these ceremonies at a private ceremony or a formal ceremony prior to an Ordinary Council Meeting.

#### Carer's Recognition Act 2012

Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the Carers Recognition Act 2012. Council has promoted the principles on the Act, to people in care relationships who receive council services; to people in care relationships, and to the wider community by:

- Distributing printed materials through relevant Council services
- Displaying posters at Council community venues
- Providing links to State Government resource materials on Council's website
- Providing information to organisations represented in Council/community networks.

Council has taken all practicable measures to ensure staff, Council agents and volunteers working for Council are informed about the principles and obligations of the Act by including information on the care relationship in:

- Council induction and training programs for staff
  working in HACC and disability services
- Council induction and training programs for staff working in front line positions in the general community
- Induction and training programs for volunteers working directly in the community.

## Focus area: Organisational processes and systems

Demonstrate good governance and provide quality customer service.

Council has taken all practicable measures to review and modify policies, procedures and supports to include recognition of the carer relationship and has provided the following additional activities and resources to recognise the care relationship:

- Providing access to carer's leave
- Supporting staff through family friendly initiatives
- Information provided in induction programs
- · Information link on website.

#### Protected Disclosure Act 2012

#### Council's procedure

The Protected Disclosure Act 2012 requires a public body, other than an investigating entity, that is required under another Act to provide an Annual Report for a financial year must include in that report;

- a) Information about how to access the procedures established by the public body under Part 9; and
- b) In the case of a public body that can receive disclosures made in accordance with Part 2 – the number of disclosures notified to the IBAC under section 21(2) during the financial year.

Council has adopted guidelines and appointed an officer to the Protected Disclosure Coordinator role. The guidelines are available for viewing by members of the public by contacting Council's Protected Disclosure Coordinator (Manager Governance).

During the 2015/16 year Council received one protected disclosure.

#### Documents held by Council

Council maintains a variety of documents as part of its day-to-day operations. Both property and subject based files are held to assist in the coordination of documents and correspondence relating to its areas of responsibility. Property files relate to the location, street name and number. Subject files cater for matters of a more general nature and cover a range of areas such as Council administration and community services. Other technical material held includes: road construction; infrastructure plans; planning and building records; and statutory information Council is required to keep such as food premises registrations and dog and cat registrations.

#### Publically available documents

The following information is available for inspection at Council's administration office. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, inspection can be arranged on request. Fees may apply.

- Details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors under Section 74 and 74A of the Local Government Act.
- 2. Details of senior officers' total salary packages for the current financial year and previous financial year including gross salary, the amount of the Council or employer contribution to superannuation, the value of any motor vehicle provided by Council, and the total value of any other benefits and allowances provided by Council.
- 3. Details of overseas or interstate travel (with the exception of interstate travel by land for less than three days) undertaken in an official capacity by Councillors or any member of Council staff in the previous 12 months, including the names of the Councillors or members of Council staff and the date, destination, purpose and total cost of the overseas or interstate travel.
- 4. Names of Council officers who were required to submit a return of interest during the financial year and the dates these returns were submitted.
- 5. Names of Councillors who submitted returns of interest during the financial year and the dates these returns were submitted.
- Agendas and minutes for ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months kept under Section 93 of the Act except where minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act.
- 7. A list of all special committees established by the Council and the purpose for which each committee was established.

- 8. A list of all special committees established by the Council which were abolished or ceased to function during the financial year.
- 9. Minutes of meetings of special committees established under Section 86 of the Act except where minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed to members of the public under Section 89 of the Act.
- 10. Applications for enrolment on the voters' roll under Sections 12 and 13 of the Act for the immediate past roll and next roll being prepared.
- 11. Register of Delegations kept under section 87, 88 and 98 of the Act.
- 12. Submissions received under section 223 of the Act during the previous 12 months.
- 13. Agreements to establish regional libraries under Section 196 of the Act.
- 14. Details of all property, finance and operating leases involving land, buildings, plant, computer equipment and vehicles entered into by the Council as lessor or lessee, including the name of the other party to the lease and the terms and the value of the lease.
- 15. Register of authorised officers appointed under Section 224 of the Act.
- 16. List of donations and grants made by the Council during the financial year, including the names of persons or bodies which have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant.
- 17. List of the names of organisations which the Council was a member during the financial year and details of all membership fees and other amounts and services provided during that year to each organisation by the Council.
- List of contracts valued at \$100,000 or more which the Council entered into during the financial year without first engaging in a competitive process and which are not contracts referred to in Section 186(5) of the Act.

#### Freedom of Information Act 1982

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 1982 requires Council to make available information and documentation where such information is not exempted by legislation.

The FOI Act embodies the following basic principles:

- 1. That members of the public have a legally enforceable right of access to government information;
- 2. That government departments and agencies are required to publish information concerning the documents they hold;
- 3. That people may ask for inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading information to their personal records to be amended; and
- 4. That people may appeal against a decision by a government body not to give access to the information or not to amend a personal record.

The FOI Act provides the opportunity for public access to certain Council documents and Council fully supports these principles and makes a wide range of information available to the public.

The initial point of contact relating to FOI is the Manager Governance, who is Council's FOI Officer. Advice will be provided on the documents that may be accessed without the need to make a formal FOI request. For example, many of Council's documents are open for public inspection.

### Focus area: Leadership and governance

Provide strong leadership in representing the community.

### ADVOCACY

Council enjoys an excellent working relationship with its State and Federal Government representatives which includes ongoing dialogue around key or topical issues.

The announcement from the State Government of additional passenger rail services for Maryborough was excellent news, as was the release of project details for the upgrade of the Maryborough Water Treatment Plant.



## COUNCIL AWARDS AND WORK SHOWCASED

#### Victorian Tourism Awards

The success of 2014 RACV Energy Breakthrough was recognised at a gala ceremony at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in November, 2015 with the event winning silver in the Festivals and Events category at the Victorian Tourism Awards.

This event won gold at the two previous Victorian Tourism Awards. Unfortunately, as the event did not secure a third consecutive gold, it did not qualify for the Hall of Fame.

The ongoing success of this event is only possible thanks to the hard work by scores of volunteers, Council staff, our partners at RACV and the Country Education Project and our supporters Holden, VicRoads and the Victorian Education Department.

### COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

Council has continued to push communications through its relaunched Facebook page. The number of followers

grew from 600 to nearly 1000 in the past 12 months, indicating the community's preference and enthusiasm for the page.

Engagement with page items has also been positive. Among the most successful posts are the employment opportunities. These posts reach up to 2000 people, with community members tagging friends who might be interested in the various roles advertised. These posts also link directly to Council's careers website, thereby increasing the website's traffic.

Followers have shown great interest in photos of works and capital improvements. Posted images gain numerous "likes" and comments of praise.

The support of the page has prompted Council to post daily, which is an increase from the page relaunch when posts were scheduled every three days.

One of the biggest communications efforts for the year went into the Australia Day celebrations that were held in conjunction with the Cleveland Cavaliers, and the live NBA game. Council actively posted, tagged and hash tagged in the lead up to the event and on the day, both on Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook communications are supported by the Council website. Updates are made regularly to ensure user friendliness and ease of access to information.

Last year, Council implemented Yammer - a channel for staff and departments to better communicate with one another. The aim was to reduce the number of internal emails circulating. Take up of Yammer continues to be slow. Training sessions for the program were held, with many staff remarking at how easy and fun the system is. However old habits remain, and email continues to be the preferred method for internal communication.

Council maintains its traditional media communications, however some slight changes have occurred to reflect changing trends. Council has reduced the number of press releases distributed, opting to increase its weekly space in the local newspaper to one full page (instead of half page). The full page includes all Council items such as advertisements, news and items of interest. Readers can therefore find all Council matters in one consistent location in the publication.

## Focus area: Financial sustainability

Deliver responsible financial management and business planning to ensure long term sustainability.

## FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Finance Department continued to provide a high quality, professional service to the public and Council. These services include annual reporting, preparation of annual budgets, statutory reporting, management reporting, cash management, rates management, accounts receivable, accounts payable and payroll.

#### Highlights for the year included:

- Achieved SuperStream compliance in October 2015 (new standard superannuation data file format introduced by the ATO)
- Implementation of Direct Debit as a payment option for Rates and General Debtors
- Completion of the 2016/2017 budget document, and Strategic Resource Plan for 2016/2017 to 2020/2021 (adopted by Council on 28 June 2016)
- Review of internal controls, policy documents in conjunction with Council's Audit Advisory Committee
- Update of Council's debt collection policy to include hardship provisions consistent with MAV guidelines (December 2015)
- Conducting a Risk Management Workshop (December 2015), followed by a comprehensive update/review of Council's Risk Register
- Review of Council's risk management policy, risk management procedure and Risk Management Committee charter.

## **BUDGET COMPLIANCE**

In addition to internal monitoring, a budget process report is presented monthly to Council, checking actual against estimated income and expenditure. Diligent controls have seen a favourable financial result produced again this year, while a five year financial projection shows Council in an increasingly strong, sustainable financial position.



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