

**Questions Submitted in Writing – Ordinary Council Meeting – 25 March 2020 (meeting cancelled)**

**Nasser Kotb, Forrest**

1. The Council allocated \$250,000 for a wastewater treatment system for the Caravan Park in Forrest:
  1. Which Department made the request for fund allocation?
  2. When was the request made?
  3. Did the fund allocation require Council Meeting approval?
  4. When was the approval of fund allocation made?
  5. Why was there no community consultation prior to designing the project?

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

The Forrest Caravan Park Wastewater upgrade has been funded in stages, with \$20,000 allocated for this purpose in the mid-year budget review by Council early in 2018 (i.e. reallocation on unspent funds from the 2017/18 budget), \$100,000 being allocated in the Council budget of 2018/19, followed by an additional \$150,000 in the 2019/20 Council budget. The project was initiated early in 2018 by the Planning Building and Health Department of Council, in liaison with other departments such as Infrastructure and Economic Development. This was following investigation of complaints from a neighbouring property owner about run-off of wastewater onto their property from the caravan park. Council had sourced a Land Capability Risk Assessment of the property late in 2017 which identified the significant non-compliance of the current system, and the need to address this by way of a system upgrade. The two larger budget allocations were publicly advertised as part of the normal budget process in 2018 and 2019 respectively. Officers have engaged with the Forrest Community Group about the project by meeting on-site in October 2019, and attending meetings of the Forrest Community Group in November 2019 and February 2020. Further, drop-in sessions were held in February 2020 to explain the project with broader members of the community, which were publicised in a variety of ways.

2. The response from General Manager, Development & Community Services in November 2019, stated that *“... Council has therefore tentatively prepared a four-year program based on: planning work that has been undertaken previously; the identified need for holistically planning; current and emerging issues and challenges; and support from communities”*. Would the Council provide the graded chart justifying the four year program, in the following format?

Town	Previous planning work	identified need for holistically planning	current and emerging issues and challenges	support from communities	Total Grade
Town 1					
Town 2					
Town 3					
Town 4					

### ***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

The assessment of towns to be included in the rolling four-year planning program was completed internally based on officer knowledge. It wasn't assessed as per the format requested by Mr Kotb and therefore the template provided can't easily be completed. It should be noted that the new Local Government Act recently passed through Parliament requires councils to develop a long-term community vision, supported by a 4 year Council Plan, 10 year financial plan and 10 year asset plan. This will require further deliberative engagement with our communities.

### **Noor Petersen, Forrest**

- 1. Would the Council provide a list of the amounts (in tons) of plastic collected and processed (sent for recycling), Shire-wide starting with the year 2015 through to 2019 calendar years? Please organise the information as follows:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount collected (tons)</b>	<b>Amount processed (tons)</b>	<b>Amount in landfill (tons)</b>
<b>2015</b>			
<b>2016</b>			
<b>2017</b>			
<b>2018</b>			
<b>2019</b>			

### ***Response from General Manager, Infrastructure & Leisure Services***

Colac Otway Shire receives a monthly statement outlining the total tonnes recycled (per month) by our waste service contractors. Our contractors collect and process paper, cardboard, liquid paperboard, glass, aluminium, steel, HDPE plastic, PET plastic and other mixed plastics.

Colac Otway Shire's last recycling audit showed the contamination level was at **6.65%**, where the regional recycling contamination level was at 22.8%. (Colac Otway Shire is well under the regional average for recycling going to landfill.)

The following tonnages of recyclable materials have been collected and processed since 2014:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Volume</b>
2014-2015	2187 tonnes of recycling
2015-2016	2248 tonnes of recycling
2016-2017	2206 tonnes of recycling
2017-2018	2299 tonnes of recycling
2018-2019	2243 tonnes of recycling

<b>Year</b>	<b>Amount collected &amp; processed (tonnes)</b>	<b>Clarification</b>
2014-2015	207	
2015-2016	181	July to April figures only
2016-2017	209	
2017-2018	107	July to December figures only
2018-2019	N/A	No breakdown provided – contractor ceased operation

**Yvonne Francis, Apollo Bay**

- 1. When the Colac Otway Shire lifted its planning obligations by changing the zone that applies to the Apollo Bay Harbour, who becomes liable as the final planning authority regarding such matters as limits to growth and social and economic effects upon the central business district of the town which is clearly under enormous pressure due to the medical pandemic in Australia?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

Council initiated and adopted the planning scheme amendment to rezone the Apollo Bay Harbour to a Special Use Zone, consistent with previous master planning that had been undertaken that sought to redevelop and enhance the precinct for residents and tourists. The Planning Minister approved the amendment. Council is confident that future commercial development at the harbour will not adversely impact upon the commercial centre of Apollo Bay, and will in fact complement and enhance it.

- 2. Would the Council consider discussing a ten-year trial cat strategy for Apollo Bay to protect threatened species in our gardens?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

Council is not currently considering developing a 10-year trial cat strategy, but has been actively involved in trapping programs with local residents to remove feral and wild cats from the Apollo Bay area. These programs have been effective in reducing the population of non-owned cats. Council Rangers can be contacted to further discuss any specific issues.

**Tim Cobb, Apollo Bay**

**Many tennis and netball club members feel very strongly about needing Council support to complete the court resurfacing.**

**While we respect Council's sensible request for people not to attend the meeting on Wednesday, please do not make the mistake of thinking that we do not care about the complete lack of Shire support for our sporting facilities.**

- 1. In the 2019/20 budget \$100k was allocated for projects in small towns. What projects has this money been allocated to and has it been spent yet?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

The following projects have been allocated through the 20219/20 Small Towns Capital Works program:

- Cressy Footpath Extension
- Beeac Avenue of Honour Extension
- Small Town Entrance Signage improvements.

It is anticipated that these projects will be completed by the end of the financial year.

- 2. In the last months Council Agenda (in the Q2 Council report section 2.3.1.3) there is a list of 23 Council activities to develop and improve sporting and recreational facilities. Not a single solitary one is on the coast! Has the Shire spent any money at all on outdoor sporting facilities on the coast in 2019/20 so far?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

The activities listed under Action 2.3.1.3 highlighted some of the work undertaken by Council in the period 1 October to 31 December 2019. Council has not spent any funds on outdoor sporting facilities along the coast in 2019/20. Council has provided its annual contribution to the Otway Coast Committee for maintenance of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve. In addition, Council is working with the users of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve to develop a master plan for the reserve. Council officers have had a number of discussions with representatives of the key users groups to help guide the development of the plan, and in turn future investment for the reserve. A detailed master plan is typically a pre-requisite for securing funding from the different levels of government.

- 3. Apollo Bay Netball Club recently resurfaced one of the courts at the Apollo Bay Rec Reserve in order to get the court up to standard for netball this season. The Shire refused point blank to support (or allow) a netball & tennis club application for a Sport and Rec. Victoria grant for these works. Will the Shire contribute \$30k from unspent funds this year (or in the budget for 2020/21) to complete these works which are vital, particularly for kids and women's sport, in Apollo Bay?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

It is important to clarify that Council officers sought clarification from Sport and Recreation Victoria officers in December 2019 about this project, and the clear advice was that without detailed designs, an application to reconstruct and resurface the netball/tennis courts would not be eligible under the State Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund program. Through Council officer encouragement, detailed designs for the netball/tennis courts reconstruction will be completed in conjunction with the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve Master Plan which will better support a future application to Sport and Recreation Victoria.

Council officers are fully supportive of improving the netball/tennis courts in Apollo Bay however the detailed work must be undertaken to determine what work is required and the likely cost.

Council could consider providing \$30,000 in its 2020/21 budget however the work would be a temporary fix only and would need to be ripped up once a full reconstruction was undertaken. Council would need to consider providing funds for a short-term solution, with an understanding that there would likely be a request from the community to provide additional funds for the full reconstruction of the courts in the short-term.

## Questions Submitted in Writing – Ordinary Council Meeting – 22 April 2020

### James Judd, Colac

1. **What impact on the cost of operating the Bluewater Complex in Colac as a result of the COVID-19 closure is to be expected in the 2019-2020 final year balance by the Colac Otway Shire Council?**

#### *Response from General Manager, Infrastructure & Leisure Services*

The closure of Bluewater Leisure Centre is projected to result in an estimated increased cost of approximately \$40,000 for the balance of this financial year, compared to the original budget. This increase is anticipated as the centre is not receiving any income at this time and some operational costs will also be incurred during the closure, for example: maintenance and ongoing operation of the pool to protect it from damage and the need for expensive repair works.

2. **If the Colac Otway Shire Council is to hold Council Meetings that it encourages people to submit questions in writing to but encourages the public not to attend will the Council give a firm undertaking that all letters received and answers given are included in Council Minutes for that meeting so all Councillors and the general public are made aware of questions submitted and answers given, not just questions answered if submitter in attendance?**

#### *Response from Chief Executive Officer*

In the agenda published for the April Ordinary Council Meeting, a recommendation to this effect is to be voted upon by Councillors.

3. **Due to the reduction in Council provided services during the COVID-19 close down of services has this period resulted in more of the electricity required at locations solar panels have been installed at being produced by the solar panels?**

#### *Response from General Manager, Infrastructure & Leisure Services*

Although some of the facilities with solar panels have been closed to the public, they are still utilising power for various reasons. Although the electricity demand is less than normal at some of the facilities, the power being generated by the solar panels is being fully utilised. The reduced services at some of the facilities will mean less power needs to be drawn from the grid, but the solar panels will continue to produce the power needed and help Council save money and reduce carbon emissions.

4. **Due to the COVID-19 ban on most activities conducted outside will the Colac Otway Shire Council delay rates and charges until:**
  - a) **New revaluations to take effect on 1 July 2020 are confirmed as correct;**
  - b) **The State set fire services levy is confirmed in the State budget;**
  - c) **Discounts available to pensioner ratepayers are confirmed in state budget;**

**i) on prime property; and**

**ii) on fire services levy?**

**Now that the introduction of both the national and Victorian State budgets delayed until October 2020 when according to the normal payment of rates the first instalment would need to be paid prior to production of the state budget so no knowledge of the State charges to be added to rate notices authorised. So if ratepayers to be given any chance to comment on proposed budget charges prior to being passed these would have to be delayed until actual state charges and valuations authorised. That cannot be done until the state budget passed.**

***Response from General Manager, Corporate Services***

There is still a level of uncertainty at this time in regards to how the deferral of both State and Local Government budgets will be coordinated and how this will impact the issuing of rate notices. Council will be preparing and adopting its budget, including Fees and Charges, as directed by the State and prescribed by legislation. At this time, it is expected that rate notices will still be issued in August 2020. Council will ensure the community is well informed should this alter.

It is not envisaged there will be any change to the requirement to place the draft budget on public exhibition, to invite submissions and to consider those submissions prior to adopting a budget. It should be noted that Council does not have any direct input into Statutory Fees or Levies set by the Victorian Government.

- 5. When will the Colac Otway Shire qualify firm undertakings it gives to people and the business community about providing services so that it does not deny an undertaking given due to some later regulations introduced, when prior to the closure of the Gellibrand Street Library Annexe it was claimed daily newspapers would continue to be available at COPACC when this ceased due to the closure of COPACC because of COVID-19 orders issued?**

***Response from General Manager, Infrastructure & Leisure Services***

The current COVID-19 situation is unprecedented. Eventualities such as venue closures under instructions from the Federal and State Governments could not have reasonably been predicted at the time that undertakings such as access to and provision of daily newspapers for the local community were made.

In accordance with the extended Stage 3 COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, the COPACC precinct is to remain closed to the general public for the purpose of social gatherings until at least Monday 11 May at this stage. We await any further extension or amendment to these restrictions.

The Stage 3 restrictions also cover general movement of people, with instructions that leaving your home should be for only one of four reasons. There is currently no latitude for persons to sit for periods in open spaces; people are only to be moving to and from eligible places and for legitimate purposes, that is, shops for essential supplies, medical facilities, to gain exercise, or to attend work or an educational establishment.

The decision to cancel general newspaper deliveries at COPACC was made in light of the access restrictions. We unfortunately do not have a safe means of providing access to newspapers

outside of COPACC, when due consideration is given to safe hygiene practices and weatherproofing.

As soon as restrictions are lifted and general access to COPACC is permitted, regular provision of newspapers will resume.

**Bruce Atkinson, Apollo Bay**

- 1. Is it an explicit Shire policy or have Councillors directed the Shire not to provide financial support to outdoor sporting activities in Apollo Bay? Alternatively is the absence of any material support for outdoor sporting activities in Apollo Bay over the last ten years an unfortunate oversight - in which case what steps will the Shire take to fix this oversight?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

It is definitely not a policy for Council not to provide financial support to outdoor sporting activities in Apollo Bay. Typically, outdoor sporting activities in Apollo Bay are located on Crown land managed by the Otway Coast Committee, a State Government appointed committee. Council allocates a small amount of funds annually to the Otway Coast Committee to assist in the maintenance of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve. In addition, community groups are able to apply to Council's annual Community Grants Program for improvement projects.

Council is working with the users of the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve to prepare a master plan for the reserve, which will guide the future development of the reserve and in turn future investment. A detailed master plan is typically a pre-requisite for securing funding from the different levels of government.

**Nasser Kotb, Forrest**

- 1. The Council has allocated \$250,000 to spend on a wastewater treatment and landscaping of the Forrest Caravan Park. Would the Council clarify the following:**
  - a) What is the proof that pollution is different from the rest of the town (data figures from labs used or EPA communications, if any)?**
  - b) Considering that Barwon Water released their final report about the whole town wastewater project in July 2019 claiming that there is NO pollution. The report was endorsed by the Council. Can the Council provide reasons for endorsing one conclusion but acting in the opposite direction?**
  - c) Why was community NOT consulted prior to spending funds for designing the project?**

***Response from General Manager Development & Community Services***

Council commissioned a Wastewater Risk Assessment and Land Capability Assessment of the Forrest Caravan site in 2017 which found that offsite discharge of wastewater from the Caravan Park was likely to be large, particularly during peak periods. The report stated there were potentially significant risks to public health of those that stay or work in the Caravan Park, risks

to the river health of the Upper Barwon West Branch and risks to the neighbouring farm. The 2017 report identified there is very little empirical data available on the actual water usage and wastewater generation in the caravan park, however calculations were made in accordance with the Environment Protection Authority Code of Practice, and a number of assumptions and extrapolations were used to provide a complete idea of the extent of the problem.

Whilst there is a wider legacy issue of wastewater run-off from other properties in the town as identified in the Barwon Water investigation, Council has a legal responsibility to improve the on-site wastewater management of the Caravan Park if it can reasonably do so. Owners of dwellings and businesses in the town are constrained in their physical or financial capacity to address current off-site discharge from their wastewater systems. The small size of many properties would inhibit their ability to meet current EPA standards in any case. Council has identified a wastewater upgrade option for the caravan park which would retain treated wastewater within the site to meet EPA standards.

The Barwon Water investigation by Decentralised Water Consulting (DWC) highlighted the outcomes of the Council's 2017 audit on on-site wastewater systems in Forrest, which showed a high number of wastewater systems within the town resulting in off-site discharge (i.e. into drains and other properties). It stated that a continuation of the Business as Usual wastewater management approach within Forrest cannot meet regulatory or community expectations, and that the town wide investigation of options for wastewater treatment is critical to identify alternative, safe and sustainable long-term wastewater management strategies. There is nothing inconsistent between that project and the Council's current upgrade at the Caravan Park. Without Government/Barwon Water commitment to funding a town wide system as identified in the DWC report, Council has chosen to progress an upgrade of the Caravan Park's system due to the degree of non-compliance and public health risk. Nonetheless, Council will continue to work with Barwon Water and Governments to seek a funding commitment for a town wide approach as this remains a significant priority.

Having reviewed various options for upgrading the on-site wastewater system at the Caravan Park, it was determined there was only one viable option that would meet EPA standards, that being the wastewater design proposed. Officers have engaged with the local Forrest community through the Community Group on several occasions to discuss the proposed approach, and convened drop-in sessions for community access to the plans in February 2020. Council also sought formal public comment on its budgets in 2018/19 and 2019/20, in which expenditure on this project was identified. No opposing submissions were received from the public.

2. **The Council officers have requested the endorsement of "Environmental Significance Overlay Planning Scheme Amendment (C101cola)". Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 – Warrion Groundwater Area (ES01) – Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 – Lakes, Wetlands and Watercourses (ES02). It is noted that there was no direct mail out to landowners and occupiers and no community consultation forum. Consequently, no submissions were received. It is no surprise! Inappropriate handling of such critical issue aside, the question is:**
  - a) **Would the Council provide "environment impact statement" as evidence of the consequences of Amendment C101cola on the groundwater-dependent eco-system?**
  - b) **Did the Council Consider the logical alternative of addressing inaccuracies in the mentioned ES01 and ES02 overlays?**



### ***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

The reasons for the amendment being pursued by Council are outlined in the officer report to Council that is included in the April 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting agenda. Council is in fact seeking to address inaccuracies in the ESO1 and ESO2 mapping. Council does not believe there would be any adverse environmental impact arising from the removal of both overlays in the manner proposed. The removal of the ESO2 as it applies to Colac's waterways implements State Government biodiversity mapping which found there not to be justification for the overlays over Barongarook Creek and Deans Creek (except a small sliver of the creek where it is being retained) within the town. The two water authorities which benefit from the protection of groundwater resources north-west of Colac (Southern Rural Water and Barwon Water) support removal of the ESO1 on the grounds that groundwater resources are protected from key threats via other processes. Given the lack of environmental benefit arising from these overlays, and the onerous planning burden on land owners, Council is seeking to remove them. ESOs applying to other areas of identified environmental significance are not proposed to change.

Given the very broad areas impacted by the removal of the overlays, the lack of environmental benefit achieved by the overlays, and the reduction of planning control (versus applying new controls), both Council and the State Government agreed that notification of individual property owners would not be required. Council did however place notices in newspapers and on its website, and issued media releases and social media stories highlighting the amendment being undertaken.

- 3. The Council community consultation and engagement policies constitute an important component of the Council's decision-making process, and considering that digital technology exist to allow virtual participation would the Council allow for community members to participate in the virtual space in Council meetings?**

### ***Response from the Chief Executive***

Council is proposing to live stream Council meetings onto the web. The Colac Otway Shire does not have the capacity to manage virtual participation at Council meetings.

- 4. A state of emergency can mean the slippage of open democratic processes. How does Colac Otway Shire intend to ensure full accountability at this time?**

### ***Response from the Chief Executive***

Council is proposing to live stream Council meetings onto the web. Council has also modified the process for responding to questions from the public, to ensure that questions can still be asked, responded to and included in the minutes of the Council meeting.

### **Anna Dixon, President, Apollo Bay Tennis Club**

- 1. CoronaVirus19 has forced the closure of sporting clubs in Apollo Bay with a significant impact on clubs and players of all ages. It is likely that non-contact sports such as tennis will be the first to restart. Will the Shire look to help support clubs in restarting activities - particularly to get seniors, kids, and females back into activity?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

Council is extremely mindful of the importance sporting clubs play in enabling physical activity. Officers would be available to work with clubs and local and state sporting associations to encourage participation in sporting activities.

- 2. Will the Shire take the opportunity to help fund completion of the resurfacing of the tennis/netball courts in Apollo Bay to help encourage the restart of sport in Apollo Bay?**

***Response from General Manager, Development & Community Services***

Council officers are fully supportive of improving the netball/tennis courts in Apollo Bay however as per previous advice, detailed work must be undertaken to determine what work is required and the likely cost. Council could consider providing \$30,000 in its 2020/21 budget however the work would be a temporary fix only and would need to be ripped up once a full reconstruction was undertaken. Council would need to consider providing funds for a short-term solution, with an understanding that there would likely be a request from the community to provide additional funds for the full reconstruction of the courts in the short-term.

**Philippa Bailey, Kawarren**

- 1. Climate and Biodiversity Petition: Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Councillors were to receive a briefing from members of the Climate Action group. Would Councillors be open to receiving briefing documents to be provided by the Climate Action group, in order to inform discussion of the petition at the May Council meeting?**

***Response from the Chief Executive***

It is unlikely that Council will be able to consider the petition at the May Council meeting. The petitioners are welcome to forward briefing documents and we will pass them on to Councillors.

**Marina Lewis, Gellibrand River**

- 1. Given that Council deferred the March Apollo Bay meeting due to safety concerns about community participation, could Council please clarify what 'full community participation' (draft recommendation 10.2 Agenda 22.4.20) means?**

***Response from the Chief Executive***

The Council will consider the petition when the public is allowed to physically attend Council meetings as observers of the meeting and participants in Question Time. Council is proposing to live stream Council meetings onto the web, but this will not allow public participation. We are hopeful that a resumption of public attendance at Council meetings will occur in the next three months. On the basis that physical attendance by the community at Council meetings is not able to occur within three months, I imagine local government will be seeking an alternative digital means by which the community can engage meaningfully with Council.

**Greg Slater, Colac**

- 1. Given the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly shown the benefit of both listening to the science and preparing for crises, when will the Council respond to the community petitioning for action on the now concurrent crisis of climate change?**

***Response from the Chief Executive***

The Council will consider the petition when the public is allowed to physically attend Council meetings as observers of the meeting and participants in Question Time. Council is proposing to live stream Council meetings onto the web, but this will not allow public participation. We are hopeful that a resumption of public attendance at Council meetings will occur in the next three months. On the basis that physical attendance by the community at Council meetings is not able to occur within three months, I imagine local government will be seeking an alternative digital means by which the community can engage meaningfully with Council.

**Jeffrey Cooke, Colac**

- 1. Given the current restrictions of meetings due to the Covid 19 emergency and the decision to delay the consideration of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Petition by Council what arrangements can be put in place in terms of facilities &/or technology to enable:
  - a. Members of the Climate Action Team to brief Councillors prior to consideration of the petition at a Council meeting; and,**
  - b. The petition to be considered by Council at the May meeting?****

***Response from the Chief Executive***

The Council will consider the petition when the public is allowed to physically attend Council meetings as observers of the meeting and participants in Question Time. Council is proposing to live stream Council meetings onto the web, but this will not allow public participation. We are hopeful that a resumption of public attendance at Council meetings will occur in the next three months. On the basis that physical attendance by the community at Council meetings is not able to occur within three months, I imagine local government will be seeking an alternative digital means by which the community can engage meaningfully with Council.

**Neil Longmore, Gellibrand River**

- 1. As the climate emergency is inextricably linked to a biodiversity emergency, can Council offer any explanation why, in the last year in the Gellibrand water supply catchment, it has abandoned the mechanical slashing of roadsides, instead opting to spray all roadsides and drains with herbicides? The Gellibrand catchment supplies drinking water to over 40,000 residents and is also home to many endemic aquatic species.**

**How does this align with Objective 4 of Colac Otway Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 which is:**

***“Leadership in natural environment through good management practices”?***

***Response from General Manager, Infrastructure & Leisure Services***

Services & Operations does not spray inside the enclosed catchment area.

Within the wider catchment area Services & Operations has always sprayed around street furniture and in many circumstances on the shoulders of the roads.

Colac Otway Shire does use the slasher to control grass on the shoulders of the roads and a wider area near intersections for improved driver visibility for safety reasons; this is done two to three times per year depending on the area.

Grass on the shoulders of the roads are also controlled using glyphosate based products. This is a road maintenance practice additional to and not a substitute for slashing. The purpose is to reduce the build-up of soil that accumulates with grass and weeds that prevents effective drainage of the road surface; slashing is not the best means to achieve this objective.

Colac Otway Shire uses nationally approved products that are designed to not seep into waterways. Use of the product is done to manufacturer standards by certified staff and contractors using purpose built equipment to do the spraying.

This relates to the Council Plan in that legal and responsible practices are adopted to effectively optimise the condition and longevity of road surfaces.

**Matthew Armstrong, Apollo Bay**

- 1. Given governments at all levels are currently relying heavily on medical and scientific advice, in responding to a worldwide health emergency; can the Colac Otway community be reassured that the Council will respect the medical and scientific consensus, when formulating their position?**

***Response from the Chief Executive***

Councillors are elected by the community to represent our community. Councillors draw on a wide range of information in formulating a position, including information provided by officers. How each Councillor uses information to determine their position on an item is a matter for each individual Councillor.