



**Colac Otway**  
SHIRE

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**Wednesday 12 June 2019**

**at 5:00 pm**

**COPACC**

**95 - 97 Gellibrand Street, Colac Victoria**



# COLAC OTWAY SHIRE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 12 June 2019

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Declaration of Opening.....	3
2 Present.....	3
3 Apologies and Leave of Absence .....	3
4 Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country.....	3
5 Declarations of Interest .....	4
6 Confirmation of Minutes .....	4
7 Verbal Submissions.....	4
8 Officer Reports.....	5
8.1 Consideration of Draft Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 Submission .....	5
8.2 Consideration of 2019/2020 Draft Budget - Public Submissions .....	10

## COLAC OTWAY SHIRE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the next *SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL* will be held at COPACC on Wednesday 12 June 2019 at 5:00 pm.

### AGENDA

#### **1 DECLARATION OF OPENING**

##### **OPENING PRAYER**

*Almighty God, we seek your blessing and guidance in our deliberations on behalf of the people of the Colac Otway Shire. Enable this Council's decisions to be those that contribute to the true welfare and betterment of our community.*

AMEN

#### **2 PRESENT**

#### **3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

#### **4 WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Colac Otway Shire acknowledges the original custodians and law makers of this land, their elders past and present and welcomes any descendants here today.

All Council and Committee meetings are audio recorded, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the Agenda. This includes the public participation sections of the meetings.

Audio recordings of meetings are taken to facilitate the preparation of the minutes of open Council and Committee meetings and to ensure their accuracy.

In some circumstances a recording will be disclosed to a third party. Those circumstances include, but are not limited to, circumstances, such as where Council is compelled to disclose an audio recording because it is required by law, such as the Freedom of Information Act 1982, or by court order, warrant, or subpoena or to assist in an investigation undertaken by the Ombudsman or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission.

Council will not use or disclose the recordings for any other purpose. It is an offence to make an unauthorised recording of the meeting.

The sole purpose of the Special Committee Meeting is for Council's consideration of submissions to the Draft Revised 2017 – 2021 Council Plan and the Draft Budget 2019 – 2020.

## **5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

Councillors are also encouraged to declare circumstances where there may be a perceived conflict of interest.

## **6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

- **Special Committee Meeting held on 3 April 2019.**

### **Recommendation**

***That the Special Committee confirm the above minutes.***

## **7 VERBAL SUBMISSIONS**

The Mayor is to read out the names of the people who have confirmed they wish to make a verbal submission. These verbal submissions will be made in relation to each respective agenda item and must be directly relevant to the respective agenda item. A limit of 5 minutes will apply.

Item: 8.1

## Consideration of Draft Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 Submission

<b>OFFICER</b>	Melanie Duve
<b>GENERAL MANAGER</b>	Errol Lawrence
<b>DIVISION</b>	Corporate Services
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	1. Submission - Draft Revised 2017-2021 Council Plan - Bell C [8.1.1]
<b>PURPOSE</b>	For Council to consider and hear the submission to the draft Revised Council Plan 2017-2021

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the submission received in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* in response to the exhibition of the draft Revised Council Plan 2017-2021.

Council received one submission from Mr. Chris Bell, who has also requested that he talk to his submission.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

***That Council:***

- 1. Receives and notes the written and verbal submission; and***
- 2. Refers all submissions for further consideration to the Council meeting to be held on Wednesday 26 June 2019, as part of Council's deliberations in finalising the Revised Council Plan 2017-2021.***

### 3. KEY INFORMATION

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 24 April 2019 Council resolved:

*That Council:*

- 1. Supports the recommended changes to the 2017-2021 Council Plan for the purposes of section 125 of the Local Government Act 1989.*
- 2. Authorises the Chief Executive to give public notice, in accordance with section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989, that Council has reviewed and changed the Council Plan 2017-2021 and Draft Strategic Resource Plan 2017-2018 to 2020-2021.*
- 3. Appoints a Committee comprising of all Councillors and chaired by the Mayor in accordance with section 223(1)(b)(i) of the Act, to meet on Wednesday 12 June, 2019 and hear any persons who in their written submissions under section 223 of the Act have requested that they be heard in support of their submission.*
- 4. Authorises the Chief Executive to undertake any and all administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under section 223 of the Act.*
- 5. Notes that written submissions will be accepted for a 28-day period closing 5:00pm Friday 31 May 2019.*
- 6. Considers for adoption the reviewed Council Plan 2017-2021 and Strategic Resource Plan 2017-2018 to 2020-2021 at the Ordinary Council meeting on Wednesday 26 June 2019 at 4.00pm at Colac Otway Performing Arts and Cultural Centre after consideration of written submissions, and consideration of any verbal submissions received by Council at its Special Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 12 June 2019.*
- 7. Once it has adopted the Council Plan 2017-2021, authorise the addition of an appropriate notation the Council Plan 2017-2021 that the Plan should be read in conjunction with the adopted Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021.*

As part of the statutory process to adopt the Revised Council Plan, Council is required to consider all submissions received. The closing date for submissions was Friday 31 May 2019.

One submission was received, the submitter has requested an opportunity to be heard in support of their submission at the Special Committee meeting.

A copy of the submission received, has been attached to this report.

### 4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

Pursuant to Section 125 and 127 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council is required as soon as practicable after the completion of a draft Council Plan to put the document out for public viewing and invite public submissions for a period of not less than 28 days. The submission period was open from Monday 29 April to Friday 31 May 2019.

## 5. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLANS, POLICIES OR STRATEGIES

Alignment to Council Plan 2017-2021:

Theme 4 - Our Leadership & Management

5. Communicate regularly with our community and involve them in decision-making.

The Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 reflects Council's commitment to achieving progress against Council's Key Themes in the plan:

- Our Prosperity
- Our Places
- Our Community
- Our Leadership and Management

## 6. CONSIDERATIONS

### ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL, & ECONOMIC

In order to limit the environmental impact of the Council Plan process, hard copies of the plan are kept to a minimum and to this end we make available the draft Revised Council Plan 2017-2021 for viewing on our website as well as limited hard copies at Council offices and libraries.

### LEGAL & RISK

The Council Plan is the strategic document guiding the work of the Council for the years 2017-2021. The Council Plan meets the legislative requirements of sections 125, 126 and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014*. Risks implications have been considered in terms of the capacity of the organisation to meet the objectives of the plan.

### FINANCIAL & BUDGETARY

Not applicable

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

A Special Committee of Council to receive submissions and hear members of the public who have requested to speak to their submission.

### COMMUNICATION

Council's decision as to public submissions will be communicated via mail/email responses to each submitter per the address details we have been provided after the Council Plan has been formally adopted.

### TIMELINE

12 June 2019: Special Committee of Council meeting held to receive and hear submissions

26 June 2019: Adoption of the Revised Council Plan 2017-2021

## 8. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 1989* in the preparation of this report.



Comments re. Council Plan 2017-2021 Revised

I am disappointed to note the following regarding goal 4 in the “Our Community” section of the revised plan.

In the plan it seems that the Council wants to outsource responsibility for physical activity to the sporting clubs and groups in the Shire although they do not cater for a significant proportion of the population. Not everyone wishes to participate in organised sport. In fact, surveys have found that the most popular outdoor recreational activity by far is actually gardening (both your own and visiting gardens and parks), and the most rapidly growing is cycling. Neither gets a mention here, so how can the community be assured that the beautiful public gardens, open spaces, walks and cycle trails will be maintained and improved in this plan?

Even in terms of infrastructure, the best the plan notes is to “maintain” the present parks and gardens. While a good aim, surely it is better to plan to actually improve on what we have now and provide for our growing population, increased visitor numbers and the higher demand for both formal and informal recreational activities such as walking and cycling. The Shire needs more and better shared paths, better connections between the townships for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, more and better parks and gardens for outdoor activities. Whatever happened to our “Botanic City” designation for Colac? We should be a Botanic Shire, given our location astride the Otways! And while it is good to see improvements to the Beechy Rail Trail now funded, this is just one of many cycling routes which could be created or improved within the Shire. Such infrastructure has significantly improved the economic viability of townships such as Forrest and Birregurra.

Can we please stop living in the past and take strides towards a more sustainable future and direct investment to what has shown to be the future people want – to live in harmony with nature and enjoy the many natural benefits our area supplies - our lakes, forests, hills, wetlands, and gardens but to do so requires spending money on the infrastructure to get to them and to maintain them. And while Council actually has put substantial resources into these areas, it would seem appropriate to me to indicate in the Plan that this support will continue. Surely that will help when applying to State and Federal governments for funds, and for local groups to say to funding bodies like the CCMA and Landcare that the Shire shares their enthusiasm to improve on the opportunities for outdoor recreation in our unique natural environment.

I am writing this as a private ratepayer, but as President of both the Red Rock District Progress Association and the Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens I can assure you that both groups see the need for greater recreational opportunities involving Council assets, particularly around Lake Colac, that most important natural feature of the northern part of the Shire, and which is presently poorly linked to the small townships to its north and west.

I would appreciate the opportunity to present my views to the Council in person.

Chris Bell

Item: 8.2

## Consideration of 2019/2020 Draft Budget - Public Submissions

<b>OFFICER</b>	Nicholas Welsh
<b>GENERAL MANAGER</b>	Errol Lawrence
<b>DIVISION</b>	Corporate Services
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	1. 2019-20 Draft Budget Submission Register Summary v 0.2 [8.2.1]
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To hear from submitters who have requested to speak in support of their submissions and to receive written submissions to the 2019/20 Draft Budget received under s.223 of the Local Government Act 1989.

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A total of 11 submissions were received in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* in response to the exhibition of the Draft 2019/20 Council Budget.

In addition to lodging a written submission, submitters may request to speak to their submission prior to Council considering the Annual Budget. The following five submitters have requested to speak.

1. James Judd
2. Chris Bell (Red Rock Progress Association)
3. Jan Healy (Community Hub Inc.)
4. John Gorman (Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce)
5. Heidi Van Es (Community Hub Inc.)

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

- 1. Acknowledges and notes the verbal comments made in support of written submissions;*
- 2. Receives and notes the written submissions; and*
- 3. Refers all submissions for further consideration to the Council meeting to be held on Wednesday 26 June 2019, as part of Council's deliberations in the adoption of the 2019/20 Budget.*

## 3. KEY INFORMATION

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24 April Council resolved:

*That Council:*

- 1. Endorses the draft budget 2019/20 for the financial year (Attachment 1) for the purposes of Section 127 of the Local Government Act 1989 with the one change to a 0.5% rate rise, but only increase wages by \$320,000 which will make a saving in the budget of \$450,000.*
- 2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to give public notice, in accordance with section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989, that Council has prepared a Draft Budget for the 2019/20 year.*
- 3. Appoints a Committee comprising of all Councilors and chaired by the Mayor in accordance with section 223(1)(b)(i) of the Act, to meet on Wednesday 12 June, 2019 at 5pm, and hear any persons who in their written submissions under section 223 of the Act have requested that they be heard in support of their submission.*
- 4. Authorises the Chief Executive to undertake any and all administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under section 223 of the Act.*
- 5. Notes that written submissions will be accepted for a 28 day period closing 5:00pm Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.*
- 6. Considers for adoption the draft budget 2019/20 at the Council Meeting on Wednesday, 26 June 2018 at 4.00pm at Colac Otway Performing Arts and Cultural Centre after consideration of any submissions received by Council at its Special Committee Meeting on Wednesday, 12 June 2019.*

As part of the statutory process to adopt the 2019/20 Budget, Council is required to consider all submissions received in relation to the Budget. The closing date for submissions was Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

During this process 11 submissions were received, covering 26 issues. These are summarised in the attachment.

## 4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

The draft 2019/20 budget has been subject to extensive community consultation including an upfront consultative process surrounding potential community projects. A period of approximately 5 weeks was set aside to undertake a series of drop in sessions and an online survey via Council's website to capture the community's expectations and priorities. This information was used to inform decision making around Council's capital, operating and priority projects.

This upfront community consultation approach is reflective of Council's desire to put the community at the heart of all decision making.

In addition to the upfront consultation we ran the legislated 28 day public submission process which ended on Friday 31 May where the draft budget was placed on public exhibition with the community invited to make written submissions on the draft budget document.

## 5. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLANS, POLICIES OR STRATEGIES

Alignment to Council Plan 2017-2021:

Theme 4 - Our Leadership & Management

1. Effectively manage financial resources.

## 6. CONSIDERATIONS

### ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL, & ECONOMIC

- No environmental implications were identified.
- All budget decisions take full consideration of any social or cultural implications
- The long-term financial sustainability of Council drives all financial decisions made during this budget process.

### LEGAL & RISK

Any contractual obligations are met by the draft budget.

*Local Government Act 1989: (Act)*

- Section 127 - "Council must prepare a budget"
- Section 129 - "Public notice"
- Section 130 - "Adoption of budget or revised budget"
- Section 223 - "Right to make submission"

### FINANCIAL & BUDGETARY

Refer to the draft budget document

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### COMMUNICATION

The release of the draft budget and processes for providing feedback was publicised in the local media and on Council's website.

### TIMELINE

The exhibition period ran from 3 May 2019 to 31 May 2019.

31 May 2019 – Exhibition ends

12 June 2019 – Council consider submissions

26 June 2019 – Council considers endorsement of the Budget 2019/20 at its Ordinary Meeting

## 8. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 1989* in the preparation of this report.

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

Submission #	Submitter	Details	Comment
1	1	Request for additional funding for the Warrion Hall to upgrade the kitchen. The additional funding amount is \$39,000.	<p>The Business Case referred to in the submission relates to the Building Renewal Programme, which cannot be used to fund the upgrade of the kitchen. Council will do what we can to provide alterations in line with the masterplan. For example, altering the floor level when the floor and substructure are due to be replaced.</p> <p>Renewal works at Warrion Hall are being considered within the draft 10-year Building Renewal plan that prioritises works across all 200 + buildings owned and managed by Council. At the moment there are no renewal works confirmed for 2019/20, however officers will keep the committee updated on the review and finalisation of the 10-year plan.</p>
2	2	How does Council justify the marked difference in the commercial/ industrial rate surcharge between Colac/Elliminyt surcharge on base rate 65%. So are other rates inflated to allow the Council to grant this extra 10% discount to some.	<p>Council has had a differential rating structure since its inception in 1994. Differential rating structures are permissible under section 161 of the Local Government Act 1989 and provide for a different rate in the dollar to be applied to different categories of properties.</p> <p>It therefore allows Council to shift the rates burden between rating categories to ameliorate rate increases caused by events such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sudden significant valuation changes within a particular rating category,</li> <li>- specific catastrophic events such a bushfire, drought, flood, and</li> <li>- capacity of the rating category to pay, etc.</li> </ul> <p>The differential rating levels therefore seek to equitably distribute the rates burden across the shire.</p> <p>Commercial/industrial properties generally pay rates at a higher rate because they tend to have a capacity to pay and can claim rates as a business expense against their income. This is something residential ratepayers cannot generally do.</p> <p>As public consultation undertaken in recent years has indicated public support for the retention of differential rating , the 2019-2021</p>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

			<p>Rating Strategy recommended the current differential structure be retained. Council then determined the differentials.</p> <p>Council does not claim that “all rate classifications must be equal” as stated and this is not practically possible in most aspects of rating.</p>
3	2	Will Council object to the State Government forcing the Council to collect the Fire Service Levy at a uncapped rate?	<p>It is understood that this issue has not been considered by Council previously as it is a legislated requirement. Council could, if it chose to, resolve to send a letter of objection to collecting the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) to the State Government.</p> <p>As indicated in the submission, unlike the State Government cap on rates, there is no cap applied to the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL).</p>
4	2	What is the percentage of total expenses required to maintain and operate all sporting grounds and sporting complexes? How much does Council contributes to G21 area development of sporting grounds or systems?	<p>In the 2019-20 Financial year council intends on spending approximately 6.68% of council’s budget which equates to \$3.3m on sporting grounds and complexes. Please note that this does include \$2.15m which is for the running of Bluewater.</p> <p>Council does not contribute directly to G21 area development of sporting grounds or systems.</p>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

5	3	<p>Reduce the farm differential rate. The current rating strategy is broken and urgently needs to be fixed. Reinvestment of rates back into the North of the Shire, improving roads such as Poorneet Station Road.</p>	<p>The submission requests Council lower the Farm rates differential to reduce the rates for broad acre farms in the north of the shire.</p> <p>As such, the submission is more pertinent to the Rating Strategy that Council resolved upon on 24 April 2019. Councillors will recall the 2019-2021 Rating Strategy resolved to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintain the current rating categories;</li> <li>- maintain the current differentials between rating categories, with the exception that the Farm rate differential be reduced in 2020-21 from 75% of the base rate to 73%.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the rating strategy does meet the submitters request (though undoubtedly not the extent they would like).</p> <p>In order to reduce the Farm rate differential specifically for broad acre farmers in the north of the shire, Council would have to create a new (specific) rating category. Doing this would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contravene the newly adopted 2019-21 Rating Strategy,</li> <li>- change the apportionment of rates used in the 2019-20 budget, and</li> <li>- would constitute a material change to the budget.</li> </ul> <p>The effect of creating a new rating category would be to remove assessments from the existing Farm rate category and place them in a new "Farm-Northern Shire" rating category - at a lower rate in the dollar than the proposed Farm rate. The revenue therefore forgone by placing the northern farm assessments in a lower rated category would therefore have to be apportioned to other categories if the same amount of overall revenue from rates is to be raised</p> <p>As the issues raised are fundamental to how the rates burden is apportioned across the shire, they are more appropriately considered as part of the next Rating Strategy rather than as part of this budget as they relate to the rating structure rather than direct budgetary issues.</p>
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# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

			<p>The submitter has also raised other rates related issues, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the quantum of increase in their rates last year;</li> <li>- capacity to pay, and</li> <li>- lack of services for rates paid.</li> </ul>
6	4	Support for the closure of the AB Shire Office to deliver efficiency and reduce waste of ratepayer money.	Noted
6	4	The subsidy (loss) for operations of Bluewater needs to be a separate line item so that it is visible. As does the proposed subsidy for the AB pool, This is important for transparency so that we can see the assistance that the Shire is providing to each and so that financial performance is transparent.	The content and disclosures contained within Council's draft budget is in accordance with the Local Government Model Budget and the financial structure is based on Council's reporting and accountability structure and does not disclose detailed operational information. However, page 16 of the Draft budget shows the Bluewater Leisure Centre net result of \$818k expenditure.
6	4	I'm pleased to see the Shire retain funds for matching government grants. That is good planning and needs to be retained.	Council considers these reserve funds to be an important aspect of future financial sustainability and plans to continue the practice.
6	4	The Shire grant program should be maintained (as I think it is in this budget). It delivers important support for those volunteer groups that work hard to make our communities the thriving places to live in that they are. This is money well spent. And, no, I have not put in a grant application!	Council agrees with the benefits of this grant program.

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

6	4	<p>There is no proposal in the budget or plan to implement the Shire's new traffic strategy and divert through traffic from Collingwood St in Apollo Bay (or pedestrianise it). No proposal to fund a proper bus park.</p> <p>No proposal to fund proper toilets. These things are desperately needed and should be funded by the users not the ratepayers. Where is the forward thinking?</p>	<p>The Coastal Tourism Traffic and Parking Strategy was prepared for all towns along the coast including Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo. These three towns are each the subject of more detailed investigation and community engagement as part of the Apollo Bay Community Infrastructure Plan being undertaken in partnership with the Otway Coast Committee. This project will look in more detail at potential traffic management measures in Apollo Bay, bus parking, car parking, streetscape improvements, and overall place making. The broader Strategy recently completed provides a good starting point, but the current project will take the issues much further, including the potential to change the traffic movements along the Great Ocean Road through the CBD area. It is premature to allocate funds for these projects before the concept planning has been completed.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, Council has lobbied hard with State and Federal Governments to secure the City Deal funding which will deliver money required to deliver the Kennett River public toilets and traffic management/parking changes, as well delivery of public realm improvements and infrastructure at the Apollo Bay Harbour, and the Skenes Creek to Wild Dog Shared Path.</p> <p>\$250,000 is included in the draft budget which will fund a temporary public toilet in Pascoe Street (including infrastructure for the permanent solution) and detailed designs for some of the capital projects in the strategy.</p>
6	4	<p>Where is a proposal to target the widespread evasion of holiday rental rates by the many properties that operate as airbnb's etc. without paying the appropriate rate?</p>	<p>In late 2018 Council requested assistance from the Australian Taxation Office to locate properties used for holiday accommodation but this request was rejected.</p> <p>Since then, officers have continued conducting internet searches to locate properties used for this purpose with the intention of moving them to the Holiday Rental differential.</p>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

6	4	<p>Where is a proposal to charge parking fees for buses and cars and fees for toilets to fund the items in 5. As Richard Riordan has pointed out the Shire's have the ability to introduce these fees to fund the tourist infrastructure that is needed since State government refuses to do so. We all pay for parking if we go to Melbourne city or bay beaches</p> <p>- why does the Shire think that ratepayers should provide these facilities fee?</p>	<p>Council investigated the potential for parking meters in Apollo Bay to increase revenue from tourism, but resolved not to proceed due to the level of public opposition to the proposal.</p>
6	4	<p>Where is the breakdown of expected average rate rises by area? I hear that rises in Skenes Creek will be approaching 10%. Is that correct?</p>	<p>The format of the budget is consistent with the Model budget developed by the State Government which meets all legislative requirements and provides consistency across all local government. The main aim for this is to make it easier for the end user to compare various councils from across the state. The template requires Council to show total rates revenue, broken down by rating category.</p> <p>Showing a breakdown of rates revenue by rating category also compliments information shown in Council's Rating Strategy, which deals with the rating categories.</p> <p>With regard to rates increases experienced in Skenes Creek, it is pointed out most properties in Skenes Creek are in the "Residential – Balance of Shire" or "Holiday rental" rating categories.</p> <p>The rate in the dollar proposed in the 2019-20 budget for these rating categories is 4.7% lower than the rate in the dollar used for 2018-19. The total value of all properties in Skenes Creek has increased by 12.3%.</p> <p>Whether rates for individual properties in Skenes Creek increase or not will depend upon the extent of any change in valuation.</p>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

7	5	Discusses the need to make sure that there is spaces for elderly within our playgrounds to participate in activities. They commend the council on recent improvements on the local footpath infrastructure.	<p>Council appreciates the positive comments about the Queens Ave and Memorial Square footpaths and will aim to continue improving the footpath network further under respective footpath programmes.</p> <p>The comments regarding inclusion of specific equipment to assist mobility for an aging demographic are valid and Council officers will include ideas such as suitable leaning rails within designs which will be open for comment prior to the works commencing.</p>
8	6	Presentation of the Budget Document. Asks for a number of changes to the presentation of the document to try and make it more clear for the public to read.	<p>The content and disclosures contained within Council's draft budget is in accordance with the Local Government Model Budget and the financial structure is based on Council's reporting and accountability structure and does not disclose detailed operational information.</p> <p>The Model Budget is prepared and released by Local Government Victoria each year and ensures all Councils meet their legislative and disclosure requirements.</p>
8	6	Discusses the council's values with regards to council officers applying these. Suggests to amend position descriptions to make officers more accountable to the organisations values.	Promoting Council's values are already a key component included in Position Descriptions.
8	6	<p>Asks for explanations on the following:</p> <p>1- Time taken to decide planning applications is much longer (70 days) compared to the other two Councils (Corangamite 25 days; Surf Coast 48 days).</p> <p>2- Direct cost to Council of statutory planning service per planning application is high (COS: \$3,634.56, Corangamite: \$1,541.29, Surf Coast: \$1,480.98)</p>	<p>The expenditure attributed by the submission to Statutory Planning of \$1,649,000, with net cost of \$1,341,000 includes functions in addition to statutory planning. The budget for statutory planning activities is \$612,667, with income of \$307,840, with a net cost of \$304,827. The service is also supported by an administration unit that provides services to the Statutory Planning, Strategic Planning and Building Unit, including management costs for the department. It has a net cost of \$436,199. These amounts include employee costs, materials to deliver the service, provision for expenditure on expert consultants (e.g. \$11,000 for Heritage advice or Geotechnical peer review), \$35,000 for legal advice/support, and \$30,000 for consultant support for backfill of officers on leave.</p> <p>It is difficult to directly compare costs of a</p>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

			<p>service across different Councils as each Council attributes costs to the service differently (i.e. in some Councils subdivisions are dealt with planning officers, and in others the Infrastructure department. In some Councils admin costs are included, and in others they are not. Some statutory planning services include compliance or management costs, and others do not). Benchmarking undertaken in 2015 with other Councils reflected that the ratio of planning officers to numbers of applications was approximately equivalent. It is not likely that Colac Otway Shire's Planning Department is significantly different in net cost to Surf Coast Shire.</p> <p>Colac Otway Shire's performance in processing planning applications in the past two years has been in accordance with industry standard. The Median days to determine an application 2017/18 was 72 days, compared to 74% for all Rural Councils, and 72% for Peri-urban Councils. The percentage of applications determined within the statutory 60 days was 71%, close to the Rural Average of 74% and Peri-urban Average of 72%. This was achieved despite significant workload challenges during the year and difficulties replacing vacant staff positions with suitably qualified people.</p> <p>It is not fair to compare the statutory planning performance of Colac Otway with Corangamite Shire given Colac Otway Shire has significantly more complex planning controls, with much of the lower half of the Shire in national park, water catchments, and significant landscapes. There is also significantly more commercial and industrial activity around Colac and other towns, and a greater proportion of applications need to be referred to other agencies for comment before decisions are made.</p>
8	6	<p>Explanation for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Would the Council explain the facts behind the policy decision to decrease spending on roads?</li> <li>2. Provide a list of road names that works for the upcoming year in the Budget Document.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The chart included in the submission doesn't reflect the expenditure on roads. It's misleading. Council's expenditure on roads has not diminished.</li> <li>2. Lists of road sections that will be completed under the respective road programmes are available. The submitter has previously been made aware of this. Presentation of Council's road expenditure in the form of a map is not a</li> </ol>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

## Public Submissions

			necessity. Instead the qualifications, skills and attitudes of officers are being used to deliver actual necessities to the community.
8	6	Explanation for the following: Would the Council explain the reasons for the policy decision to reduce number of employees and its impact on Council services to the residents of the Shire?.	<p>The policy decision to reduce the number of employees was made at the Council meeting on 24 April 2019, during deliberation to place the Draft Budget out for public submission. The reasoning for this was to reduce the level of rate revenue to be generated, and in turn to be levied across the Shire.</p> <p>At the meeting Council resolved to reduce its average rate increase to 0.5% for the 2019/20 financial year which is 2.0% less than the Council's adopted Council Plan and Strategic Resource plan which is forecasting an annual average increase of 2.5%. to ensure all services are adequately funded into the future.</p> <p>The impact on services is yet to be determined as this reduction in employee numbers was not planned. The Chief Executive is currently reviewing existing services and vacant positions in an attempt to meet this resolution.</p>
8	6	Explanation for the following: 1- Would the Council provide details of the Budget item "Other Infrastructure" that amounts to \$1,695,000? 2- Would the Council outline the allocation of the budget item "Consultants" by department? 3- What does account "Agency Staff" of \$432,000 comprise by department?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The other infrastructure item includes the following, Open Space Renewal Programme, Western Reserve Lighting Project, Central Reserve Lighting and Netball Court Redevelopment and the Coastal Tourism parking and Toilets Project.</li> <li>2. Consultant Costs by Department are as follows: Arts and Leisure \$32,340, Asset and Project Delivery \$27,500, Chief Executive \$10,000, Community Services \$67,000, Economic Development \$32,600, Environment and Community Safety \$38,000, Financial Services \$20,000, Governance \$73,000, Information Services \$80,000, Infrastructure and Leisure Management \$30,000, People, Performance and Culture \$108,200, Planning Building and Health \$71,000</li> </ol>

# 2019-20 Colac Otway Shire Draft Budget

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			<p>and Services and Operations \$75,000.</p> <p>3. Agency Staff costs are as follows: Community Services \$7,000, Economic Development \$25,000, Planning Building and Health \$356,500 and Services and Operations \$43,300.</p>
9	7	<p>Discusses the lack of spending in the Cororooke area even though there is a current infrastructure plan for the area.</p> <p>Notes that it is harder for small towns to receive funding as the STIP programme has ended.</p> <p>Also wish council to help them proceed with the implantation of these plans.</p>	<p>Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>
10	5	<p>Request for funding of the Community Hub to assist in covering a \$25,000 shortfall in the cost of operating the centre.</p>	<p>Council have previously discussed this at briefing sessions. Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>
11	8	<p>Looking for assistance in the driving of Apollo Bay's Festivals with a funding allocation to help drive these for the next 10 years.</p>	<p>Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>
11	8	<p>Festive Norfolk Lights - Seeking \$20,000 to enable the lighting of the Feature Norfolk Pine on the Apollo Bay Foreshore.</p>	<p>Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>
11	8	<p>Traffic/Parking/Toilets - Requests that council holds a budget provision to purchase land to help with the parking issues in Apollo Bay if these parcels of land become available.</p>	<p>Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>
11	8	<p>Marengo Seal Viewing Platform - Wishes Council to commit to the building of a viewing platform with telescopes to aid the viewing.</p>	<p>Council to consider this submission prior to adopting the 2019/20 budget. Council would also need to consider how any contribution would be funded.</p>

