



Mansfield Shire

Additional Meeting of Council

Tuesday 26 April 2022

Notice and Agenda of meeting livestreamed via the
[Mansfield Shire Council website](#)
Commencing at 5pm

Our aspiration for our Shire and its community

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

Councillors

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

Officers

Kaylene Conrick, Chief Executive Officer
Kirsten Alexander, General Manager Infrastructure and Planning
Dena Vlekkert, General Manager Community and Corporate Services

Order of Business

1. Opening of the meeting

The Mayor, who chairs the meeting, will formally open the meeting and welcome all present.

2. Present

Where a meeting is held virtually, Councillors will confirm that they can see and hear each other.

3. Apologies

Where a Councillor is not present, his/her absence is noted in the Minutes of the meeting.

4. Statement of commitment

The Council affirms its commitment to ensuring its behaviour meets the standards set by the Mansfield Shire Councillor Code of Conduct and Councillor Charter.

5. Acknowledgement of Country

The Council affirms its recognition of the Taungurung people being traditional owners of this area, and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

6. Disclosure of conflicts of interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflicts of Interest pursuant to sections 126 and 127 Act in any items on this Agenda.

Council officers or contractors who have provided advice in relation to any items listed on this Agenda must declare a Conflict of Interest regarding the specific item.

7. Officer reports

7.1-7.2 Officer reports are presented to the Council, where required.

Detailed reports prepared by officers from the Infrastructure and Planning Directorate are considered by the Council. This includes reports from the following Departments:

- ▶ Planning and Environment
- ▶ Operations and Capital Works
- ▶ Community Safety
- ▶ Field Services

A Council position is adopted on the matters considered.

Detailed reports prepared by officers from the Community and Corporate Services Directorate will also be considered by the Council:

- ▶ Business and Performance
- ▶ Community Health and Wellbeing
- ▶ Community and Economic Development
- ▶ Governance and Risk

A Council position is adopted on the matters considered.

8. Close of meeting

The Mayor will formally close the meeting and thank all present for attending.

Agenda Contents

- 1. Opening of the meeting.....5
- 2. Present.....5
- 3. Apologies5
- 4. Statement of commitment5
- 5. Acknowledgement of Country5
- 6. Disclosure of conflicts of interest.....6
- 7. Officer reports6
 - 7.1. Infrastructure and Planning Directorate.....7
 - 7.1.1. Animal Welfare Grant Program.....7
 - 7.2. Community and Corporate Services Directorate10
 - 7.2.1. Proposed Budget 2022-2310
 - 7.2.2. Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 Review.....14
- 8. Close of meeting16

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting

2. Present

The Chair will call on each Councillor and ask them to confirm verbally that they can see all Councillors and hear the proceedings:

- Councillor Holcombe
- Councillor Rabie
- Councillor Sladdin
- Councillor Tehan
- Councillor Webb

Councillors will respond to their name with: *“I can hear the proceedings and see all Councillors and Council officers”*.

The Chair will ask each Councillor to confirm by raising their hand that they could all hear each statement of the councillors.

Councillors will raise their hand to acknowledge they can hear each other.

3. Apologies

The Chair will call on the CEO for any apologies.

4. Statement of commitment

The Chair will read the statement and call on each Councillor to confirm their commitment:

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

5. Acknowledgement of Country

Deputy Mayor Mark Holcombe will recite Council’s Acknowledgement of Country:

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

6. Disclosure of conflicts of interest

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

- Councillor Holcombe
- Councillor Rabie
- Councillor Sladdin
- Councillor Webb

7. Officer reports

7.1. Infrastructure and Planning Directorate

7.1.1 Animal Welfare Grant Program

File Number	E9921	Responsible Officer	Grants Officer, Emma McPherson
--------------------	-------	----------------------------	--------------------------------

Purpose

To seek Council approval for waiving the initial pet registration fee for eligible low income and vulnerable residents as an in-kind Council contribution, should Council's application to the State Government Animal Welfare Grants Program be accepted.

Executive Summary

Council is applying to the State Government Animal Welfare Grants Program for a grant of up to \$35,000 to provide free or low-cost de-sexing of cats and dogs for eligible vulnerable and disadvantaged community members.

The objective of the application is twofold; to capture and increase registration numbers, and to support de-sexing of animals for those unable to meet the costs involved.

Key Issues

An in-kind contribution to the grant is proposed to eligible pet owners referred from Emergency Relief Providers and relevant Council staff, by the waiving of initial registration fees through an amnesty if they have no, or lapsed, pet registration(s).

The proposed Council in-kind contribution to the grant will also provide 12 months free registration for any animals belonging to eligible concession card holders, which are de-sexed under the program. As we are applying for a limit of 100 animals under the scheme, this co-contribution amounts to a maximum of \$2,500.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL support the Animal Welfare Fund Program application for de-sexing cats and dogs for eligible participants, by waiving the initial registration fee for each pet owned by a concession card holder referred to the program by local emergency relief providers, or Council's Family Integration unit, for a maximum number of 100 animals.

Support Attachments

Nil

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

This project addresses the environmental issue of unwanted kitten and puppy numbers as a direct result of parent animals not being de-sexed, and the associated impact on our community and native wildlife. Unwanted and stray animals require attention from the Council Ranger and impact on resources at the Council shelter and in administration.

The social implications are beneficial as the project supports eligible pet owners to be able to keep their companion animals and enjoy the positive aspects of health and well-being that pet ownership brings.

Community Engagement

The grant was identified by Council officers in consultation with, and acknowledgement of the need for this program by, local Emergency Relief Providers and Mansfield Shire vets.

The significance of pets to support mental health and wellbeing is well established. This funding proposal recognises the importance of improving companion animal welfare to continue their significant role.

Representatives of these organisations have agreed to supply letters of support with enthusiasm as this State Government funded program will not only provide care and support to their clients but will enable care providers to support clients in other ways.

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

There is no mandatory co-contribution for this grant program, however the Council co-contribution proposed will assist with increasing participation in the program and is considered likely to provide long term benefits through increased compliance with pet registration, and less unwanted/stray animals.

The financial implication through waiving the fees is limited to a maximum of \$2,500, due loss of registration fees applicable to the 100 domestic cats and dogs proposed to be de-sexed under this grant program, if Council's application is successful.

There is potential for increased future Council income with ongoing renewal registrations of pets recorded under this scheme.

Legal and Risk Implications

Not Applicable.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

This project supports responsible pet ownership and contributes to the Domestic Animal Management Plan currently under development.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This is the first time that Council has considered free/low-cost de-sexing program support for eligible community members.

It provides benefit to the community in two ways; the acknowledged role of companion animals and benefit of them being de-sexed, but equally important, also it builds relationships and supports local community emergency relief providers in caring for the more vulnerable members of our community.

The project will support eligible pet owners across the shire at very little cost, with positive, measurable outcomes.

Alignment to Council Plan

Health and Wellbeing Strategic Objective 1 The health and wellbeing of families and communities is maximised, and the community is a key factor to achieving its aspirations for the Mansfield Shire.

Strategic Objective 6: Council possesses in-house and outsourced capability to meet community expectations

Strategy 6.1 Use and gain knowledge of our community to make good decisions. Initiative Strive to continuously improve Council's customer service experience.

Strategic Objective 8 A consultative Council that represents and empowers its community

Strategy 8.2 Develop capacity and capability to advocate powerfully for the most important interests of the Mansfield community.

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

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

7.2. Community and Corporate Services Directorate

7.2.1. Proposed Budget 2022-23

File Number	E9456	Responsible Officer	Manager of Business & Performance, Anthony Smith
Purpose			

This report relates to the commencement of the community exhibition process for Council to seek community feedback prior to adoption of the 2022/23 Budget in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Executive Summary

Development of the annual budget is an essential planning process to provide for the operational and financial sustainability of Mansfield Shire Council and the services it provides to the community. Sound financial management and well-planned infrastructure investment is necessary to support the long-term growth of the Shire, deliver on Council Plan initiatives, and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities.

The proposed budget document covers the financial year commencing 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 and includes financial projections for the following three years. It is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* (the Regulations), Better Practice Guides and the Australian Accounting Standards.

Key Issues

This report relates to the commencement of the community exhibition process for Council to seek community feedback on the proposed 2022/23 Annual Budget, in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The proposed budget recognises the importance of setting a clear direction for the future, achieving measurable objectives and being financially sustainable.

The proposed rate increase is 1.75 per cent, in line with the rate cap set by the Minister for Local Government under the Fair Go Rates System.

The rate increase will fund:

- ▶ Council Operations,
- ▶ Service Growth,
- ▶ New Initiatives, and
- ▶ Capital Works Program.

Proposal

The proposed budget provides for a total operating expenditure of \$23.7 million and a capital works program of \$10.92 million including carried forward works of \$3.42 million from 2021/22 for priority projects.

Key indicators within the 2022/23 Budget include:

- ▶ Operating Surplus \$2.97 million
- ▶ Underlying operating deficit \$0.53 million
- ▶ Cash inflow from operations \$8.35 million
- ▶ Asset renewal \$5.65 million compared to depreciation of \$4.3 million, new assets \$2.37 million and asset upgrades \$2.9 million

In addition to the planned delivery of services, the 2022/23 Budget proposes to fund several new initiatives. The new initiatives are as follows:

- ▶ Continuing with the Outlying Communities Infrastructure Fund Grant \$50k.
- ▶ Community Connection Officer \$41k.
- ▶ Implementation of the Onsite Wastewater Management Plan \$54k.
- ▶ Waste and Resource Recovery Master Plan Implementation \$9k.
- ▶ Environment Program (Tree Planting and Education program) \$10k.
- ▶ Flood Mapping Mansfield Township \$25k (Offset by a grant of \$90k).
- ▶ Road Maintenance and Parks & Gardens \$142k.

In total, Council will invest \$242k in new service initiatives across service areas.

Capital Projects

Council's Capital Works program provides for maintaining (renewal) of existing infrastructure and for the upgrade or provision of new assets to meet community expectations.

Included in the 2022/23 Budget is \$10.92 million (including \$3.42 million in estimated carry overs from 2021/22) for the delivery of the Capital Improvement Program.

Some of the key infrastructure projects proposed as part of the 2022/23 Capital Works Program include:

- ▶ Stormwater Drainage Works Apollo and High Streets Mansfield Stage 1 & 2 (\$0.87 million).
- ▶ Malcolm Street Footpath (\$0.21 million).
- ▶ Construction of a new Public Car Park High Street Mansfield (\$0.60 million).
- ▶ Heavy Vehicle Alternative Route Stage 2 (carry forward from 2021/22) (\$2.08 million).
- ▶ Station Precinct Master Plan Heritage Display Building (carry forward from 2021/22) (\$1.28 million).

Waste Service Charges

The cost to Council of waste disposal is increasing significantly year on year, particularly the EPA levies associated with that waste, which have increased more than 60 per cent in one year. These costs have had a big impact on how Council recovers the costs of waste services and have necessitated a review of the waste charges.

Council's Waste Management Reserve was created during the 2019/20 budget process to report the net surplus/deficit between waste charges collected from ratepayers and actual waste costs incurred by Council during the financial year. Council's Waste Management Reserve has a forecast deficit of \$0.50 million as at 30 June 2022. It is necessary for the reserve deficit be recovered via an increase in the fees and charges associated with waste. Council has benchmarked its waste charges against neighbouring shires in determining an appropriate increase.

Loan Funding

The Proposed Budget includes new borrowings of \$0.60 million which will be used to fund the construction of the new High St carpark, included in the 2022/23 Capital Works Program.

Cash Management

Overall, total cash and investments of \$8.45 million are forecast as at 30 June 2023.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Endorses the release of the Proposed Budget 2022/23 for community consultation from 28 April 2022 until 26 May 2022.
2. Gives public notice, seeking written submissions on the Proposed Budget 2022/23, in a locally distributed newspaper and on Council's website, making it available for public inspection and seeking written submissions on the Proposed Budget 2022/23, noting that any submitter may request to be heard in support of their submission.
3. Establishes a Special Committee of Council, if required, consisting of all Councillors for the purpose of hearing submissions in relation to the Proposed Budget 2022/23 on Tuesday, 7 June 2022.
4. Notes that the adoption of the Proposed Budget 2022/23, with consideration to the community engagement outcomes, will be considered for adoption at the Council Meeting to be held Tuesday, 28 June 2022.

Support Attachments

1. Mansfield Shire Council Proposed Budget 2022-23 [7.2.1.1 - 85 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Sustainability Implications

Economic The economy is continuing to experience a level of uncertainty as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mansfield Shire has experienced extraordinary growth (3.4%) over the last 12 months and is expected to continue at a rate of 2.2% per annum, this puts Mansfield only behind the City of Wodonga as experiencing the fastest population growth in North East Victoria.

Over the next 15 years Mansfield Shire's permanent population is forecast to grow by 5,000 residents. This together with our non-resident population, which currently equates to 48% of our rate base, presents some emerging opportunities and challenges.

Community Engagement

The Proposed Budget 2022/23 will be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting community feedback and submissions.

Council will also provide the Proposed Budget 2022/23 through its Engage Mansfield portal on Council's website.

During the public exhibition period, Council will attend several information forums including the Mansfield & District Business Association's Budget Breakfast and a Council led non-resident ratepayers' forum in Melbourne.

Public submissions will be received until close of business Thursday, 26 May 2022. Public submissions received will be heard by a Special Committee of Council on Tuesday, 7 June 2022.

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

The Proposed Budget 2022/23 contains the financial resources required to deliver the Council Plan.

Legal and Risk Implications

There are no known legal and risk implications associated with this report.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not Applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: A Trusted, Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 7 Financial sustainability and value for money

Strategy 7.1 Increase Council's financial resilience by utilising opportunities to derive own-source of funding income and optimising costs of delivering services

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

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

7.2.2. Revenue & Rating Plan 2021-25 Review

File Number	E9456	Responsible Officer	Manager of Business & Performance, Anthony Smith
Purpose			

The Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 is presented for Council endorsement for community consultation.

The Revised Review and Rating Plan 2021-25 will be made available for public exhibition for a period of 28 days during which submissions may be received for Council consideration prior to adoption at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held in June 2022.

Executive Summary

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires each Council to prepare a Revenue and Rating Plan for a period of at least 4 years by 30 June after a general election.

The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes the revenue raising framework within which Council proposes to operate.

The purpose of the Revenue and Rating Plan is to determine the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council to generate income to deliver on the Council Plan, services and the capital works program.

Key Issues

The Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 was adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting held Tuesday, 22 June 2021.

The Revenue and Rating Plan contains the necessary statutory information in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Revenue and Rating Plan outlines Council's primary revenue streams including:

- ▶ Rates and charges
- ▶ General rates
- ▶ Rating differentials
- ▶ Valuation basis
- ▶ Municipal charge
- ▶ Service charges
- ▶ Special charge schemes
- ▶ Financial hardship
- ▶ Other Revenue
- ▶ User fees and charges
- ▶ Statutory fees
- ▶ Grants
- ▶ Contributions
- ▶ Investment income

The Valuer General Victoria is responsible for valuing all properties as at 1 January each year. The Capital Improved Values are used to allocate Council rates.

The preliminary valuations for 2022 have been returned to Council and have been utilised in determining the rating components of the Revenue and Rating Plan. The preliminary valuations for 2022 have returned valuation shifts that are more significant in some property categories than others. Unaddressed, this has the effect of shifting the rate burden toward those property

categories with higher valuation increases. To mitigate this, and to ensure an equitable rate burden distribution, Council is proposing to modify the differentials applied to each property category.

Council provides an incentive to develop vacant land by applying a higher differential rate. Council is also proposing to further increase the vacant land differential.

The Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 proposes the following rating differentials for 2022-23:

<i>Differential Category</i>	<i>Preliminary Property Revaluation Increase Capital Improved Value (as at 1 January 2022)</i>	<i>Differential as a percentage (%) of the Residential Rate</i>		
		<i>2021/22</i>	<i>2022/23 Proposed</i>	<i>Change</i>
Residential	45.0%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Commercial	18.8%	143.00%	175.00%	32.00%
Vacant properties	61.4%	130.00%	170.00%	40.00%
Rural residential	35.7%	86.00%	92.00%	6.00%
Farmland	27.3%	59.00%	67.00%	8.00%

The final certified valuations will be returned to Council at the end of April/early May and any resultant changes to the differentials will be incorporated into the final version of the Revenue and Rating Plan for Council adoption on 28 June 2022. It is not expected that significant changes will be required.

Recommendation

THAT COUNCIL:

1. Endorses for release the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 for community consultation from 28 April 2022 until 26 May 2022.
2. Gives public notice of the preparation of the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25, in a locally distributed newspaper and on Council's website, making it available for public inspection and seeking written submissions on the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25, noting that any submitter may request to be heard in support of their submission.
3. Establishes a Special Committee of Council, if required, consisting of all Councillors for the purpose of hearing submissions in relation to the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 on Tuesday, 7 June 2022.
4. Notes that the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25, with consideration of the community engagement outcomes, will be considered for adoption at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held Tuesday, 28 June 2022.

Support Attachments

1. Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 [7.2.2.1 - 30 pages]

Considerations and Implications of Recommendation

Sustainability Implications

Economic: The disparate impact of the annual property valuations on each differential rating category has been mitigated through the revision of the differential percentages. This has the effect of ensuring the revaluation cycle does not unfairly redistribute the rate burden between ratepayers categorised as Commercial, Farmland, Residential, Rural Residential and Vacant.

Community Engagement

The Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 will be placed on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting community feedback and submissions.

Council will also provide the Revised Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 through its Engage Mansfield portal on Council's website.

Public submissions will be received until close of business Thursday, 26 May 2022. Public submissions received will be heard by a Special Committee of Council on Tuesday, 7 June 2022.

Collaboration

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

The Revenue and Rating Plan does not set revenue targets for Council. The Plan outlines the strategic framework and decisions that inform how Council will determine and collect its revenue.

Legal and Risk Implications

Not Applicable

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Not Applicable

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Not Applicable

Alignment to Council Plan

Theme 3: A Trusted, Effective and Efficient Council

Strategic Objective 8: A consultative Council that represents and empowers its community

Strategy 8.1: Increase community trust in Council to make informed decisions with "no surprises"

Governance - Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

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

8. Close of meeting