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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Hindmarsh Shire Council Announces COVID-19 Measures**

In response to the recent Victorian Government declaration of a state of emergency for four weeks in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and direction to reduce its spread, Hindmarsh Shire Council has made the difficult decision to cancel or postpone a range of services and events.

Hindmarsh Shire Council CEO Greg Wood said “In order to protect the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, committee members and broader community it has been decided that we need to alter service delivery and cancel non-essential Council hosted events until further notice due to the current and changing environment regarding Covid-19 pandemic”.

Mr Wood said “As of Tuesday 17 March 2020 the following events and activities have been cancelled until further notice”.

- Cinema movie screenings at Nhill Memorial Community Centre
- Harmony Day lunch scheduled for Thursday 19 March at The Patch, Nhill
- School holiday activities – including the Hindmarsh Shire skate park tour scheduled for Friday 3 April 2020
- All Library school holiday activities
- Easter events that were scheduled to be hosted by respective Town Committees e.g. Dimboola Easter Eggstravaganza and Nhill Easter Egg Hunt
- Hindmarsh Visitor Information Centre, Nhill
- Supported Playgroup activities, and
- Group tour bookings for Yurunga Homestead, Rainbow

Mr Wood added “It has also been decided to close the Dimboola Customer Service Centre / Library effective from 5.00pm Wednesday 18 March. Customers are asked to telephone the Nhill Customer Service Centre with their queries. If face to face contact is essential they will be asked to make an appointment in Nhill and in circumstances where a resident is unable to travel to Nhill

alternative arrangements will be made”.

Council will be monitoring counter enquiries at the Nhill, Jeparit and Rainbow Customer Service Centre’s and it is expected that they will be closed to face to face contact in the near future as well with people needing to make appointments for service.

“As the COVID-19 pandemic escalates it is not clear at this stage when the Customer Service Centre’s will again be open for face to face services, but we will be monitoring the directions and guidelines of the Australian and Victorian Government’s very closely” said Mr Wood.

In relation to rate payments, the fourth instalment payments are not due until 31 May 2020 with Council providing an option to pay online.

Because of the ongoing issues surrounding the closure of the Dimboola Customer Service Centre and the expected closure of Nhill, Jeparit and Rainbow Customer Service Centre’s, Council has extended the date for animal registration renewal payments from 10 April 2020, to 31 May 2020. Council is also working with its financial software provider to set up BPay arrangements for animal registration renewals to be paid online.

Mr Wood added, “It is an unprecedented situation that we all find ourselves in at the moment through the COVID-19 pandemic and directions are changing on a daily basis. On behalf of Hindmarsh Shire Council I apologise for the inconveniences the cancellations and postponements will cause.”

“Taking everything else into consideration, the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, committee members and broader Hindmarsh community is of the utmost importance. We therefore ask for your cooperation and consideration during these challenging times” said Mr Wood.

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Greg Wood  
**Chief Executive Officer**