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MEDIA RELEASE

Hindmarsh Shire Council - COVID-19 Council Update

As a result of the rapidly changing situation with the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic Hindmarsh Shire Council has cancelled its scheduled Council meeting due to be held on Wednesday 1 April 2020.

Hindmarsh Shire Council Mayor, Cr Rob Gersch said: "As previously advised, Council's priority has been the safety and wellbeing of the community, volunteers and staff and this has now been extended to include Councillors. The Victorian Local Government Act 1989 does not permit remote attendance at Council meetings which means Councillors need to be physically in attendance at Council Meetings. There are no provisions in the current Act for Councillors to attend via video link, skype or any other digital or electronic means".

"Because of the rapidly increasing impact COVID-19 is having globally, which now includes regional Victoria, Council is doing its best to protect all levels of the community and felt it was a necessary step to cancel the first Council meeting scheduled for April," Cr Gersch said.

Cr Gersch added: "We will review the situation regularly before making decisions about the second April meeting and the May and June 2020 Council meetings. Council has put the appropriate processes in place to enable essential services for the Hindmarsh community to be maintained."

Hindmarsh Shire Council Chief Executive Officer, Mr Greg Wood said: "Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on Tuesday 24 March 2020, Council has now closed Council operated RV and caravan parks throughout the shire for **holiday makers** until further notice. This includes the Riverside Holiday Park Dimboola, Jeparit Caravan Park and Rainbow Caravan Park. The parks remain open for people who live there permanently or as an interim abode where the primary residence is not available and for the purposes of respite, for victims of family violence and other vulnerable groups for care purposes."

Mr Wood concluded "Council's Customer Service Centres remain closed for face to face contact.

Staff continue to be available by telephone on 03 5391 4444 or email info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au. The Mayor, Councillors, staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all residents for their understanding and acceptance of the conditions we are all now forced to work and live under because of COVID-19. Further updates to these arrangements will be publicised as conditions alter.”

Greg Wood

Chief Executive Officer