



RUNNING FOR COUNCIL?

The Life of a Councillor

A week-in-the-life of a Councillor is bound to be quite varied. There's always a lot going on in the local community and it is an important part of a Councillor's role to be involved in local events and to be in regular contact with local community members.

Sometimes there are responsibilities outside 'normal' business hours, so Councillors need to be flexible enough to manage working some late nights and weekends too.

A 'typical' week might include:

- Reading the Council meeting Agenda and attachments
- Having a cuppa with a local resident who has been in touch about something that they want Council to champion.
- Attending a community meeting about a new facility or an issue that's a cause for some concern.
- Going on a site visit to see progress on the new capital works project.
- Attending a Committee meeting as a Council representative.

In addition to that sort of variety you'll also need to be able to get together with your colleagues every second Wednesday. These are the days that Councillors get together for briefings – from officers or the community – and Council Meetings.

Thinking of running for Council?

Here are a few things you should know:

Local Government

With three tiers of government in Australia, local government is the tier closest to the people.

The role that councils play in the community has expanded over the years to reflect the changing needs of residents and as the interdependence with other levels of government continues to grow.

Victorian councils provide a wide variety of services to their communities, as well as maintaining important community assets, delivering projects and advocating for the needs of the community to state and federal government.

Role of a Councillor

As a Councillor you have the opportunity to make a significant impact on your community and can create great outcomes for our Shire.

If you embody community spirit and understand the importance of teamwork you would be perfect for the role. If you have those, the only other thing you need is a weekly schedule that's reasonably flexible.

To be a successful and effective Councillor you must communicate well, and be open and responsive to local residents.

Above all else, you need to work well with other people. As a Councillor you are just one person. As part of a Council you'll be relying on the support of your colleagues – and they on you – to get ideas turned into reality.

With that in mind, it is important to note that as a Councillor you represent all the people of Hindmarsh. While you may be elected by and within a particular Ward (and Hindmarsh has three Wards with two Councillors coming from each), once you sit at the Council table you have the responsibility to govern for all of Hindmarsh Shire, from Rainbow to Dimboola, from Jeparit to Nhill.

The ability to work with others not only includes a good working relationship between Councillors and the Mayor (who is elected to be the head of the Council by the six Councillors themselves), it extends to the CEO and other Council staff too. These working relationships are fundamental to being part of an effective and successful Council.

HINDMARSH SHIRE COUNCIL RUNNING FOR COUNCIL?

Hindmarsh
Shire Council

What Council Does

To learn more about the range of services that Council provides, visit the Residents and Community pages of our Website. From road construction to celebrating Harmony Day, from waste collection to animal registration, from major community infrastructure projects to libraries, Council provides a myriad of essential services and activities across the Shire.

Role of a Councillor cont.

Councillors need to understand how to manage external relationships, particularly with the community, the media and other organisations including State agencies and other politicians.

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* each Councillor has a responsibility to:

- Participate in the decision making of the Council.
- Represent the interests of the community in that decision making.
- Contribute to the strategic direction of the Council through the development and review of key strategic documents, including the Council Plan.

Council Documents, Strategies & Reports

A great starting place to learn more about Council is looking through our Council Plan 2021-2025 and Vision to 2040, Council budgets, Annual Reports, strategies and plan and previous Council meeting minutes. Following the QR links below to access some of these documents.

Hindmarsh Shire Council Council Plan 2021-2025 and Community Vision 2040



Hindmarsh Shire Council ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Adopted 25 October 2023



HINDMARSH SHIRE COUNCIL

Budget 2023-24

Adopted 28 June 2023



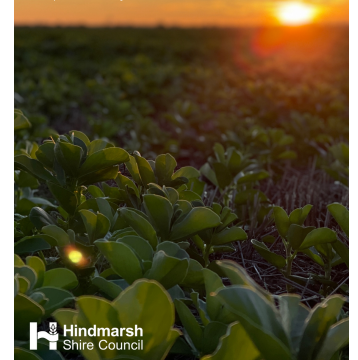
Picture: Jeparit residents enjoying a cuppa and complimentary morning tea at the Jeparit Library



Hindmarsh Shire Council Community Action Plan 2024-2028

Dimboola, Jeparit, Nhill & Rainbow

Adopted 7 February 2024





RUNNING FOR COUNCIL?

Eligibility

To be a candidate for a local council election, you **must**:

- be an Australian citizen
- be aged 18 years of age
- be enrolled on the voters' roll for the council in which you wish to stand
- have completed the mandatory Local Government candidate training
- not be disqualified from being a councillor.



You **cannot** be a candidate for any of the following reasons:

- you are an undischarged bankrupt
- you have property that is subject to control under the law relating to bankruptcy
- you are a member of council staff of the council. You can take leave from this role in order to nominate
- you have been convicted of any of the criminal offences referred to in section 34(2) of the Act
- you are a councillor with another council, including interstate councils
- you are member of an Australian parliament, including the federal Parliament or a member of parliament in any state or territory of the Commonwealth of Australia
- you are employed by a federal or state member of parliament as a ministerial officer, a parliamentary adviser or an electorate officer. You can take leave from these roles in order to nominate

or

- you are otherwise incapable of becoming or continuing to be a councillor.

Local Government Candidate Training

Local government candidates are required to complete mandatory training to be eligible to nominate. The course is about building confidence for both candidates and communities. You must complete the course to nominate for council.

The training covers vital information you need to know about being a councillor, including understanding a conflict of interest, a code of conduct, and what support is available to help you do the role. The mandatory course was introduced in the *Local Government Act 2020* to ensure candidates understand the role of councillor and the standards they are expected to uphold if elected.

Election Campaigns Donation Returns

Local government election candidates must provide a record of whether they did or didn't receive any donations, gifts or in-kind support for their election campaign. Under the Act, all candidates in Victorian council elections must submit a return within 40 days of election day.

Forms must be completed and submitted to the CEO of the council for which you are nominating.



RUNNING FOR COUNCIL?

Other Resources

Victorian Electoral Commission

<https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/>

Hindmarsh Shire Council Electoral Profile

<https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/local-councils/hindmarsh-shire-council>

Hindmarsh Shire Council - Know Your Council

<https://www.vic.gov.au/know-your-council-hindmarsh-shire-council>

Represent: A handbook for culturally diverse Victorians considering running for local government

<https://www.vlga.org.au/resources/represent-handbook-culturally-diverse-victorians-considering-running-local-government>

Barengi Gadjin Land Council

<https://www.bglc.com.au/>

Next Steps

- Determine your eligibility to run: Almost anyone who is entitled to vote at council elections in Victoria is also eligible to stand for election as a Councillor. Before setting off to become a Councillor, ensure you are on the voter roll for Hindmarsh and be clear that you're not disqualified from standing for office. Check out Section 34 of the *Local Government Act 2020* to find out who is disqualified from standing for office.
- Determine what you are passionate about: As a potential Councillor it is important to have a clear understanding of what issues are important to you. Anyone who votes in the election will want to know what you stand for - so make it known!
- Attend a candidate information session: In the lead up to Council elections both Hindmarsh Shire Council and the Victorian Electoral Commission will hold candidate information sessions for those who wish to run in the election. Keep an eye on Council's Facebook page and website for further details as they become available.



SAVE THE DATE

2024 Community and Candidate Information Sessions

MAV Stand for Council Program

14 August 2024 - 6:30pm - Nhill Memorial Community Centre

Being elected as a Councillor is an exciting opportunity to serve your community!

It is highly rewarding to see how hard work and shared commitment can achieve great outcomes when serving your local community.