

STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE
7 JULY 2008 **GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE**

A15	HINDMARSH PORT PHILLIP FRIENDSHIP AGREEMENT
LOCATION/ADDRESS:	NA
RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:	SALLY CALDER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT
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FILE NO.:	18/01/19
ATTACHMENTS:	N/A

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report outlines the implications of signing a formal Friendship Agreement with the Shire of Hindmarsh and recommends that the Council resolve to sign the Hindmarsh - Port Phillip Friendship Agreement.
- 1.2. A friendship agreement will formalise a mutual commitment to achieve collaboration, connection and understanding between our respective rural and inner urban communities and act as a framework within which the Councils will facilitate a relationship between their respective communities.
- 1.3. There are a number of existing community and council links between the City of Port Phillip and the Shire of Hindmarsh that may be strengthened through a formal Friendship Agreement.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. The Shire of Hindmarsh is in the Wimmera-Mallee region, about 350 kms northwest of Melbourne. It is bordered in the north by the Big Desert / Wyperfeld National Park, and in the south by the Little Desert National Park. The main townships are Nhill, Dimboola, Rainbow and Jeparit. It has a population of approximately 6300 residents.
- 2.2. The economy of Hindmarsh is based largely on farming. Agricultural manufacture and tourism are also important.
- 2.3. Council and community members have been informally establishing links with the Shire of Hindmarsh over the past twelve months through a series of visits including:
 - 2.3.1. visit by senior City of Port Phillip staff to Hindmarsh in November 2007 to determine potential areas for professional interchange and development

- 2.3.2. visit by Councillors Cribbes, Logan, Bolitho, and Gross to Hindmarsh in March 2008 to share ideas and identify potential areas of organizational and community exchange.
- 2.3.3. visit by Hindmarsh Shire councillors to Port Phillip in May 2008 to meet with community members and learn about the City of Port Phillip. Specific project ideas were discussed and have been detailed in the Friendship Agreement.
- 2.4. Hindmarsh has an established large-scale revegetation program linking Little and Big Deserts which is supported by a large number of city-based volunteers.
- 2.5. Hindmarsh has existing economic links with businesses in the City of Port Phillip.
- 2.6. Similar urban rural friendship agreements have been established between Hobsons Bay City Council and Buloke Shire Council, and Boorondara City Council and Moira Shire Council to encourage and formalize connections between rural and inner urban community communities.

3. RECOMMENDED OPTION

- 3.1. A draft agreement has been prepared and is contained in the text of the recommendation at the end of this report. It is recommended that Council resolve to formally sign the Hindmarsh - Port Phillip Friendship Agreement.
- 3.2. This draft agreement is also being considered by the Hindmarsh Shire Council.

4. CRITERION FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1.1. There are existing links between the City of Port Phillip and Shire of Hindmarsh.
- 4.1.2. Formal recognition of a friendship between urban and rural communities will provide a framework to build upon existing linkages and community involvement from both communities.
- 4.1.3. A one year term will allow us to assess the success of the agreement.

5. SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

Social Pillar	The Friendship Agreement encourages shared understanding and interaction between diverse communities.
Economic Pillar	The Friendship Agreement strengthens and develops economic linkages with the community of Hindmarsh. Projects will be self-funded by each Council or community.
Environmental Pillar	The Friendship Agreement provides opportunities for people to learn about and understand environmental issues effecting rural Victoria and to actively participate in solutions like Project Hindmarsh.

Cultural Pillar	The Friendship Agreement encourages the showcasing and valuing of our own physical and cultural heritage by sharing it with another community.
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5.1. Policy and legislative implications

- 5.1.1. The Friendship Agreement is aligned with current policies.

5.2. Risk implications

- 5.2.1. The agreement will be reviewed in 2009 to ensure that it continues to be aligned with Council priorities.

5.3. Resource implications

- 5.3.1. Commencement of the Friendship Agreement will require no additional resources and be supported by the Community Governance team.

6. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

6.1. Internal

- 6.1.1. The people who have been engaged with in relation to this report include the Mayor and Councillors, CEO, Director, Organisation Systems and Support, and staff from the areas of Youth Service, Environment and Sustainability, and Community Governance.

6.2. External

- 6.2.1. The external people and organisations who have been engaged with in relation to this report include Shire of Hindmarsh Mayor and Councillors, Shire of Hindmarsh Chief Executive Officer and various community members and organizations.

7. RECOMMENDATION

That the Strategy & Policy Review Committee recommend that Council resolve to endorse the Hindmarsh - Port Phillip Friendship Agreement as follows:

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Shire of Hindmarsh and the City of Port Phillip in establishing a Friendship Agreement aim to achieve collaboration, connection and understanding, between their respective rural and inner urban communities.

The Friendship Agreement seeks to facilitate exchanges and partnership arrangements to achieve this aim. The Agreement is focused on sharing knowledge and expertise to achieve benefits to both parties – skill development, cultural development, and to connect diverse communities.

The agreement is designed to provide a framework within which the Councils will facilitate the development of a relationship between their respective communities.

AREAS OF COMMON INTEREST

The Shire of Hindmarsh and the City of Port Phillip will explore collaborative projects in some or all of the following areas:

- 1 Environmental sustainability and adapting to climate change*
- 2 Arts, culture, youth and healthy communities*
- 3 Economic development and tourism*
- 4 Governance policies and practices*
- 5 Community connections and participation in civic life*
- 6 Staff development*
- 7 Information technology systems and applications*
- 8 Business processes*

TYPES OF EXCHANGES

The following list of potential activities is a guide to practice:

- Mentoring to assist management and officer skills and technical expertise;*
- Forums to discuss specific technical or planning issues (e.g., Waste Management Forum, Community Consultation Forum)*
- Carbon emission trading programs;*
- Mayor and Executive leadership forums;*
- Shared projects;*
- Site visits;*
- Joint problem solving;*
- Mutual assistance during periods of natural disaster.*

MONITORING OF AGREEMENT

It will be necessary to establish a Steering Committee, with representation by one or two Councillors from each Council, and at least two community members. A Council officer will be identified from each organisation to be the executive support to the Committee.

The role of the Committee will be to:

- Identify specific projects for implementation.*
- Identify community resources to support the successful execution of projects.*
- Suggest solutions to practical matters such as transport, accommodation, materials.*
- Facilitate joint community activities and initiatives.*
- Where necessary, source funds to support the achievement of projects.*

The Steering Committee should also have the role of overseeing the monitoring and effectiveness of the Friendship Agreement, and presenting an annual report to the Councils. The report will identify projects that have been completed, or are currently being developed, and will answer questions such as:

- are the objectives being achieved?*
- can things be improved and if so, how?*
- do the benefits exceed the total costs?*
- should the relationship continue?*

The partnership reports its progress and achievements to both participating Councils and communities.

SOME SPECIFIC PROJECTS TO BE PROGRESSED:

The following projects were identified in a joint planning session of the two Councils as being worthy of further progress:

- Art exchanges*
- A fencing day at Perce White Reserve.*
- Participation in tree planting*
- Country sailing exchanges*
- Museum visit*
- Women in leadership discussion forum*
- Youth exchanges*
- Landcare link*
- Business to business links*

TERM OF AGREEMENT

The current agreement is for a 1 year period to be reviewed in 2009 following the election of new Councils.