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# **BUSINESS PAPER**

## **Late Items**

### **Ordinary Council Meeting**

**17 December 2019**

**Warwick Bennett  
General Manager**



We hereby give notice that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on:

Tuesday, 17 December 2019 at 6pm  
in the Council Chambers, Civic Centre  
184 - 194 Bourke Street, Goulburn

**Order Of Business**

**15 Reports to Council for Determination.....4**  
15.31 Financial Assistance Request - Goulburn Harness Racing Club.....4

**Cr Bob Kirk**  
**Mayor**


**Warwick Bennett**  
**General Manager**

**15 REPORTS TO COUNCIL FOR DETERMINATION**

**15.31 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST - GOULBURN HARNESS RACING CLUB**

**Author:** Warwick Bennett, General Manager

**Authoriser:** Warwick Bennett, General Manager

**Attachments:** 1. **Goulburn Harness Racing Club Water Supply Request for Financial Assistance**  

<b>Link to Community Strategic Plan:</b>	CSP Strategy C02 – Encourage and facilitate active and creative participation in community life.
<b>Cost to Council:</b>	Funds are available in the budget for donations made under the Financial Assistance Policy. There is a budget of \$80,000 for grants issued under this policy in the 2019/20 financial year. Approval of the recommendations contained within this meeting’s agenda would leave a remaining amount of \$40,000 for future contributions.
<b>Use of Reserve Funds:</b>	Nil

**RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. The report from the General Manager on the Financial Assistance Request - Goulburn Harness Racing Club be received
2. Council declines the application for Financial Assistance to the Goulburn Harness Racing Club because Council as a general procedure has only funded water not the carting of water and that the financial assistance in this time of drought has been for domestic water users and not business.

**BACKGROUND**

The Goulburn Harness Racing Club has requested as a matter of urgency for Council to give consideration for the cost of carting water for their upcoming race meetings.

**REPORT**

Please find attached a request for financial assistance from the Goulburn Harness Racing Club (GHRC) to allow them to water their track during the race events during December 2019 and January 2020. The current location that the current location that the GHRC obtain their water from the Mulwaree River now has limited source and has (in their opinion) rendered this source virtually unusable. The GHRC have stated in their letter that part of the problem with the lack of water source has been created by Council by accessing water for adjacent road works on Bungonia Road. I wish to make it clear that Council has a legitimate right to take this water.

The GHRC is now seeking that Council makes a grant of \$4,600 to them to transport 450,000 litres of water from Council’s water treatment plant to their race track.

The Council policy states for eligibility:

*Funding Eligibility*

*This stream is to be made available for:*

- *Funding requested by community and/or charitable organisations for events that do not satisfy the criteria under the Event Development Funding Policy.*

- *Funding requested by community and/or charitable organisations for projects that add value to the community*
- *Financial support requested by members of the community to represent or participate in events (both sporting and cultural) at a national or international level.*

Whilst it is acknowledged that the GHRC is a contributor to the overall Goulburn Mulwaree regional economy it is a business which must fund its own costs. Council will recall that it used to make annual reoccurring financial contributions to the GHRC of \$5,000 per annum. These ceased in 2017/18 financial year.

Council leases the property to the GHRC at a minimum rental of \$6,685 plus some 'in kind' contributions totalling approximately \$4,000. As part of this application Council would be supplying the water for no cost as it is water that would otherwise be disposed of elsewhere as it is not fit for human or animal consumption. The water proposed to be used is waste from the Councils Water Treatment Plant.

The recommendation in this report is to decline this application. The reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

- GHRC is a business and to allocate money to this business could set a precedence for other businesses outside of a water reticulated part of the region that could also be suffering from the availability of water due to the drought.
- Council as a principle has been supplying the cost of water and not the cartage of water to and from a property. For Councillors information the cost of a 25,000 litre truck load of water is \$125.00 and Council has made a number of payments for this water from the Mayoral Emergency Relief Fund.
- Council needs to be supporting people and domestic water needs in these difficult drought times rather than business operations.

I will be recommending to Council that this matter be dealt with as urgent business as there is not a Council meeting between now and the time these race meetings are planned.



## Goulburn Harness Racing Club Inc.

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15 December, 2019

Mr Warwick Bennett  
 General Manager  
 Goulburn Mulwaree Council

Goulburn Harness Racing Club application for financial assistance to address the critical shortage of water necessary for the conduct of race meetings at the Goulburn Paceway

Dear Mr Bennett

The following commentary and request stem from the telephone conversation I had with you on Friday 13 December, and subsequent discussions with Mayor Bob Kirk and Deputy Mayor Peter Walker.

The Goulburn Harness Racing Club (GHRC) is scheduled to host four (4) race meetings over the Christmas and New Year period, including its two most important fixtures, the Hewitt Memorial and the Goulburn Carnival of Cups race days.

Specifically, the race dates are as follows:

Monday	23 December, 2019
Friday	03 January, 2020
Sunday	12 January, 2020 (Hewitt Memorial race day)
Sunday	19 January, 2020 (Goulburn Carnival of Cups race day)

All racing at Goulburn is covered by the NSW TAB and is televised throughout Australia and into New Zealand by Sky Racing. The two feature race day fixtures focus the racing spot light on Goulburn and draw strong crowds from outside of the district to the Goulburn Paceway.

The importance of conducting these race days successfully cannot be overstated; they are the primary way for the GHRC to demonstrate a professional capacity to conduct and host racing fixtures. It is a central element in our deliberations with Harness Racing NSW (HRNSW) for their continued investment in Goulburn as both a venue for training Standardbred horses, a racing centre, and the awarding of additional race meetings.

HRNSW requires all tracks and training centres to maintain minimum standards with a strong focus on safe racing and training surfaces. Clubs are required to comply with the 'NSW harness Racing Track Maintenance Manual'; it

"Goulburn Paceway" Braidwood Road, Goulburn



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is singularly the most important requirement for clubs to address in respect to the training and racing of the Standardbred horse.

As a result of these Work, Health and Safety requirements, and in light of the on-going drought, the GHRC took steps to ensure access to a reliable water source by acquiring a Water Licence to pump from the Mulwaree River near the Bungonia Bridge.

The licence acquisition process commenced in February 2016 with the licence awarded in August 2018. HRNSW and the GHRC invested a total of \$26,835 to purchase the licence, and to construct water truck access to the river and installation of infrastructure (footvalve, concrete block and 100 mm piping and associated fittings) to pump water from the river.

Following construction of the Bungonia Road Bridge across the Mulwaree River, it became apparent to the harness club that council water truck drivers were utilising the facilities put in place by the harness racing club to access and pump water from the Mulwaree River. This became a daily occurrence involving multiple loads, sometimes as much as 6 to 7 per day.

The harness club understands that public entities such as Council and RMS have exceptions to water licencing requirements; however, the installation of access and equipment to pump water from the river presented a convenience for Council water truck operators who otherwise were required to wait in line at standpipe localities in Goulburn. Their use of the Mulwaree River location has rendered the river as virtually unusable, and places the club in serious jeopardy as to the conduct of the upcoming race meetings.

The risk of losing race meetings due to the unavailability of water is an issue of serious concern. Harness racing industry generates a significant economic output in the Goulburn district. With more than 100 Standardbred horses trained on the Goulburn Paceway, this enterprise creates employment, and supports a number of Goulburn based ancillary services and businesses such as horse feed merchants, veterinary practices, farriers, tack and equipment sales, truck and tractor maintenance, fuel supplies etc.

On behalf of the GHRC I submit the immediate problem facing the club has been created in part by Goulburn Mulwaree Council employees accessing water from the source the Goulburn Club has been licenced to pump from. With 4 race meetings in the next 5 weeks, the preparation and maintenance of the track is completely reliant on the availability of water, which by our calculations would amount to approximately 450,000 litres.

Inquiries by Robert Hughes with Divalls Earthmoving & Bulk Haulage reveal the rate for recycled water transport is \$130 per hour, with estimate time of 2 hours per load. Utilising a 25,000 water cart, a rounded figure of \$4,680 is reached to transport the 450,000 litres of water required by the club to guarantee racing in the first instance.

While the 450,000 litres will not suffice for all 4 meetings, it provides the club with the time to explore other means for the provision of water for the meetings listed in January.

On behalf of the GHRC I request Council consider the provision of funding as set out above under the Financial Assistance scheme.

Yours sincerely

Mark Croatto  
Treasurer  
Goulburn Harness Racing Club  
Mob: 0458013399