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**TOWN OF WALKERVILLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER
“PULSE” PERFORMANCE
REVIEW REPORT
APRIL 2021**



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BACKGROUND

The Town of Walkerville conduct annual performance reviews for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as part of the practice of providing effective performance feedback and as required in Clause 10 of the CEO's Employment Agreement. The CEO Performance Review Committee (the Committee) coordinates the review and engages an external consultant to support the process.

The CEO Performance Review Committee has reviewed the performance review process and wants to provide the CEO with regular and more timely feedback. To this end the Committee plans to conduct CEO performance "pulse surveys" during the year. They are short surveys with a focus on a specific topic of importance that has high impact for Council. This will enable Council to provide the CEO with feedback in real time.

The Committee met on 18 March 2021 to establish the first of the pulse survey reviews. It was resolved that feedback would be sought from Elected Members, about a number of key projects undertaken by Council during this performance review period. The following information was circulated to Elected Members on Friday 19 March 2021:

Over recent months Council has been working through a number of major projects (Walkerville Oval, Smith Street/Fuller Street, and Levi Park). Given the nature and impact of those projects the Committee considers it important to seek Elected Member feedback about those projects.

In relation to those major projects:

- How would you rate the processes used for these projects in relation to community consultation and information flow to Council? What worked well and should be continued in future projects, and what if anything needs to improve?*
- Do you consider the reports provided to Council give you the information needed for decision making? What if anything needs to change?*
- How would you rate the CEO's performance in relation to these projects overall?*
- While these projects have had a significant focus for Council, it is important that we deliver smaller projects as well. Are you comfortable that progress on smaller projects is being reported and that they are on track?*

Feedback was received from all Elected Members and their feedback is summarised in this report.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW FEEDBACK

We have reported the feedback for Elected Members each point in this section of the report. Many spoke to the points more generally rather than address each point separately.

How would you rate the processes used for these projects in relation to community consultation and information flow to Council? What worked well and should be continued in future projects, and what if anything needs to improve?

Do you consider the reports provided to Council give you the information needed for decision making? What if anything needs to change?

Most Elected Members made positive comments about the processes used to seek community feedback and the subsequent reporting of that feedback to Council. Many noted that a range of mechanisms were used to seek feedback, with Administration using social media and other more traditional ways to make contact with the Community. Some commented about the effectiveness of the processes used in a time where Covid-19 impacted Council's ability to engage with the Community directly through public gatherings. While a range of processes were used to seek feedback, there was also a view that better use could be made of email, and Administration should explore ways to collect email addresses and use email as a more direct way of engaging with the Community. Most Members were disappointed with the response received from the community but were not necessarily surprised.

Some Members considered that some of the information provided to Council was presented as a conclusion rather than an option, but they were positive about the subsequent information sessions. Messaging following those sessions was more positive and informative. Members generally thought the consultation processes used for Walkerville Oval and Levi Park were better than for Smith Street/Fuller Street, but there was more Community angst about the Smith Street/Fuller Street redevelopment which may have impacted the outcomes. Some commented that the pushback from the Community was always going to make that project difficult, but Council has done the best it could under the circumstances.

Most Members were positive about the information reported to Council during the process, but some thought more time should have been provided to consider the information collected. There seemed to have been a rush to get the projects underway which was reflected in the information provided. Members want earlier access to information in order to review and consider it prior to meetings or workshops, where enough time needs to be available to discuss options. Taking more time would also enable Council to consider Community feedback and potentially go back to the Community seeking further input. There was a view that reports coming to Council could have been better and should have included more analysis of the options.

A number of Members raised a concern about how community feedback is presented to Council. While some are satisfied to have it summarised and presented to Council by Administration, others wanted to review the feedback in more detail and develop their own conclusions. After their own

review of the feedback some Members reached a different conclusion to that presented. Members want access to raw feedback in future projects, to enable better considered decision making. There is a risk with the current process that Administration could summarise the information to lead Council to a conclusion that is not necessarily reflective of Community views.

A common issue raised by Members related to revocation in the Smith Street / Fuller Street project. This was unexpected and of concern to Members. Their view was it should have had a higher focus from the CEO.

Members made comment about the long-term nature of the projects. Planning started prior to the 2018 election, and decisions made by the last Council needed to be understood and considered. That, together with ongoing changes made with the projects, added to their complexity and reinforced the need for more timely and complete information and analysis.

Most Members commented that the outcomes for these projects have been positive, with Levi Park being seen as a model in terms of process and outcome. Smith Street/Fuller Street was always going to be more controversial, and the Community was going to have more strident views. Members commented that some of the negative feedback from the Community directed at Administration was inappropriate, but they have managed a difficult process effectively.

In summary:

- These complex projects have been managed well and the outcomes achieved so far are positive.
- Most of the consultation processes are effective despite the poor return rates from the Community. Administration should also leverage email more to get the message to the community.
- Reports to Council are generally good although some additional detail and analysis is needed. The CEO should consider making information available to Members earlier to allow more time for review and consideration.
- Raw feedback from community consultation needs to be directly available to Members so they can reach their own conclusions and avoid feeling like they are being directed to a conclusion.
- While Council is keen to move these projects ahead, there must be enough time to reflect and review project options and community feedback, to enable the right decision to be made.

How would you rate the CEO's performance in relation to these projects overall?

Members comment that the CEO has provided good advice to Council during these projects. Given the long-term nature of the projects, her understanding of the history and issues has been helpful to Council. All Members value the CEO's availability and responsiveness, and her desire to support Council to deliver their goals. Many noted the ability of the CEO to have a strategic view and

articulate this to Council when needed. She brings to the role, knowledge and experience that has added value in the roll-out of these projects.

Members also had positive views about the current team supporting the CEO and how the CEO has delegated project responsibility to them. Members have seen the organisation operate as a team and they feel supported by the CEO and the Team.

The CEO shows a strong desire to move projects ahead and this is seen positively by Members. As commented in the section above, this desire can lead to information not being fully presented and Administration reaching conclusions that are not necessarily reflective of the community feedback. The CEO needs to balance the need to move ahead with the need of Members to have the time and information to reflect, debate, and seek more input before reaching a decision.

The issue about revocation was raised above but was also mentioned by Members in their feedback about the CEO's overall performance.

While these projects have had a significant focus for Council, it is important that we deliver smaller projects as well. Are you comfortable that progress on smaller projects is being reported and that they are on track?

The majority of Members were positive about the progress and achievements of the organisation to deliver such a wide range of projects across the year. There were some comments that a few projects had slowed, but overall the results are positive. Some commented that the CEO provides updates to Council and will always respond to specific project issues when asked. The CEO is aware of project progress and is able to respond to questions quickly and with enough detail to have the confidence of Members. Some Members commented that the CEO has recently presented an update to Council outlining some of the projects undertaken and completed. Members were impressed that so much had been done with limited resources.

Members also made comment in relation to this point about the quality of the Team reporting to the CEO, as outlined above. They are very confident the CEO has built a stronger Team, which has enabled effective project delivery.

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