



2022-23
CORPORATE
PLAN

“To lead in the recognition and conservation of Victoria’s cultural heritage.”

— Heritage Council of Victoria

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Chair's foreword

As a peak Heritage body, we acknowledge Traditional Owners of the Country that we call Victoria as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, and acknowledge the importance and significance of Aboriginal cultural heritage across the state. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of Aboriginal culture and traditional practices.

The Heritage Council of Victoria, as an independent statutory authority, brings together experts across the state to achieve its key function of identifying and protecting places and objects of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria. Our principal role is to ensure that Victoria's diverse cultural heritage is enjoyed, managed and protected for current and future generations.

The *Heritage Act 2017* governs the work of the Council and Clause 9 of Schedule 1 provides that the Council must prepare a corporate plan each financial year. The Heritage Council Corporate Plan 2022–23 is an important document that sets out our priorities and objectives for the coming year. The Council's overarching mission, to lead in the recognition and conservation of Victoria's cultural heritage, guides our scope of work.

The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is continuing to be felt and the Council is continuing to develop hybrid work practices and take forward the best aspects of the new ways of meeting, working and engaging with the broader community. Despite the upheaval, the Council has made great progress in working towards its strategic aims. The Council received positive feedback on its State of Heritage Review and is continuing to implement the recommendations of this report. In addition, leading research in the area of managing climate change and heritage is nearing completion, and the Council is working with Heritage Victoria to identify and address gaps in the Victorian Heritage Register.

The Council's work continues to be guided by our Strategic Plan 2021–25. The Strategic Plan highlights the Council's priorities for the next five years and consolidates our focus on a robust and efficient regulatory process, works to strengthen and communicate the Victorian Heritage Register, and the examination of new and emerging issues in heritage. We present our new Corporate Plan outlining the anticipated scope of work for 2022–23 and the steps we will take towards achieving our strategic goals. The Council's strong financial position, thanks to its prudent management, allows resources to be prioritised for the recognition and promotion of Victoria's cultural heritage.



Prof Philip Goad
Chair, Heritage Council of Victoria

1.0 Heritage Council of Victoria

The Council is an independent statutory authority established under the *Heritage Act 2017* (the Heritage Act) as the Victorian Government's primary decision-making body on the identification of places and objects of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria.

The Council lists places and objects of state-wide cultural heritage significance in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) and hears reviews and appeals, principally in relation to registration recommendations and permit decisions made by the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria.

Note: the statutory scope of the Heritage Act covers places and objects of cultural heritage significance to the State of Victoria, but does not apply to a place or object that is of cultural heritage significance solely on the ground of its association with Aboriginal tradition. In this Corporate Plan, the terms 'cultural heritage' and 'heritage' are used generically and interchangeably to refer to the 'heritage' to which the Heritage Act applies, recognising that heritage places and objects may have multiple attributes and values.

1.1 COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Council consists of 10 members and 10 alternate members who represent a broad cross-section of heritage specialists and the community. Members are appointed by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Minister for Planning. The following chart outlines all of the Council's membership categories for 2022–23 and members in those positions at 30 June 2022.



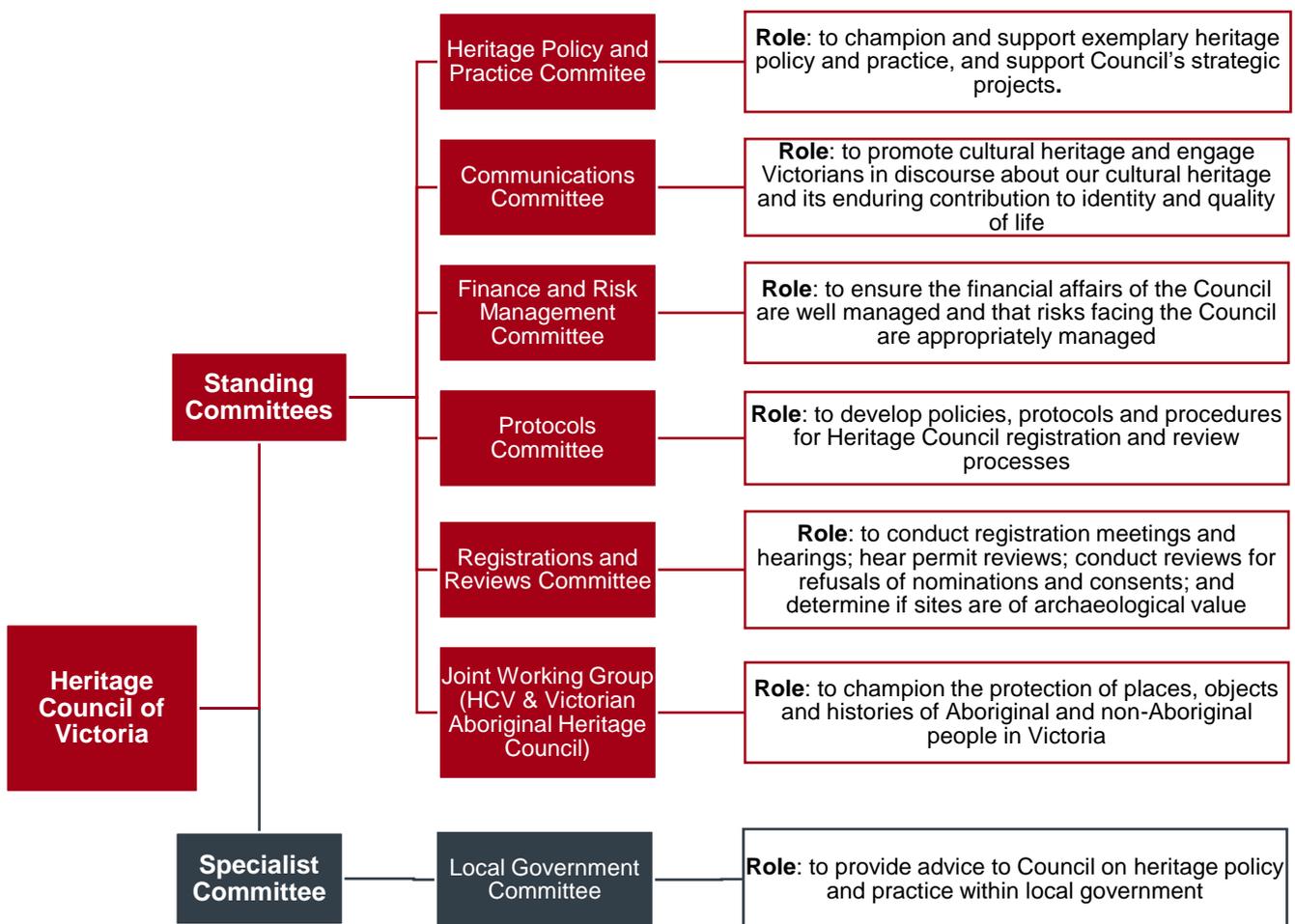
1.2 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Under Part 2, Division 1, s.13 of the Heritage Act, the Council may establish committees to assist and advise it in fulfilling its statutory functions. There are two types of committees currently in operation:

Standing Committees – consisting of Council members only. Six standing committees have been constituted to ensure the effective operation of the Council, especially in relation to its legislative functions. The Standing Committees meet at least six times per year and, on Council’s behalf, undertake some of its most critical and demanding work. This work includes: the conduct of hearings and reviews and the statutory administration of the Act; the management of the Council’s finances; the oversight of strategic, educational and promotional activities; the development of heritage policy and practice; and the partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council.

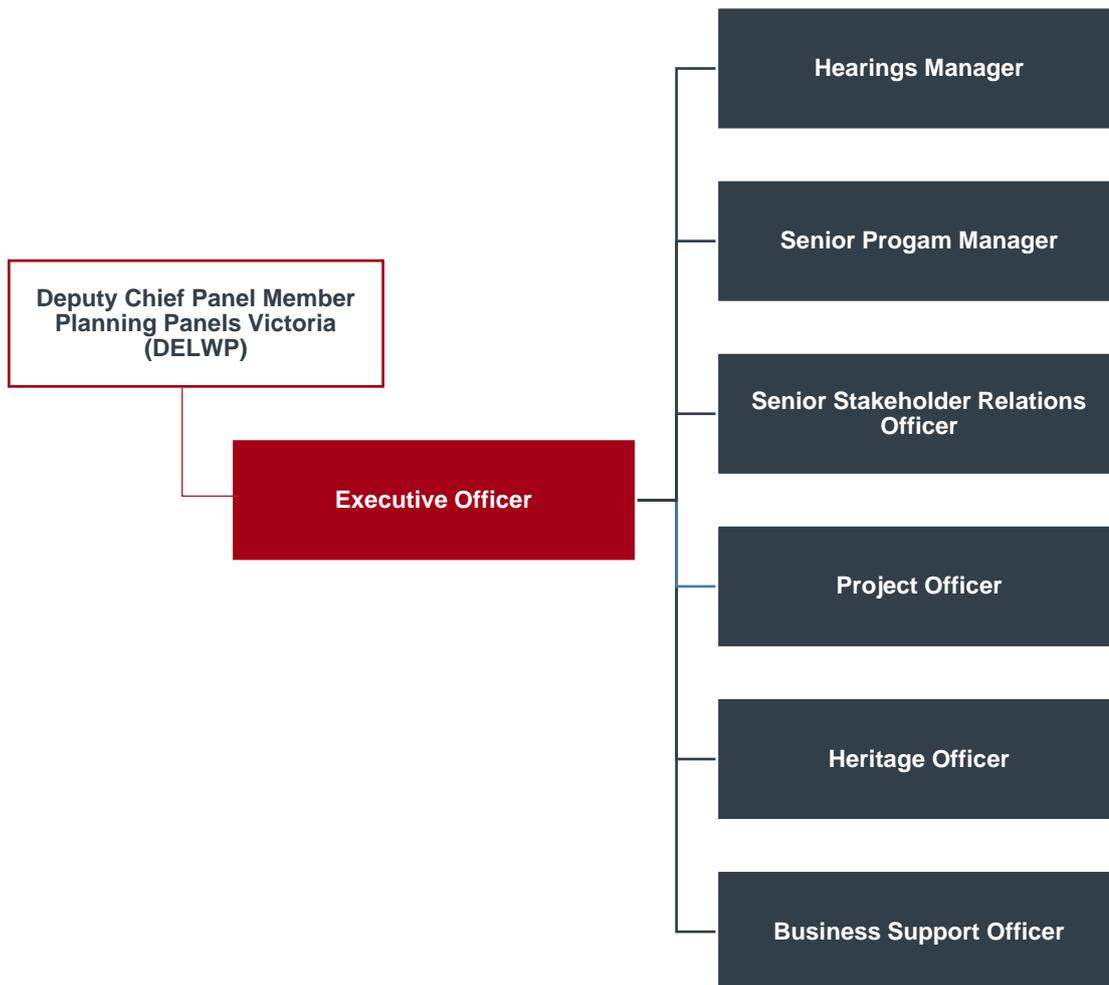
Specialist Committees – consisting of Council members and external subject-matter experts. Specialist committees advise the Council on cultural heritage matters pertaining to specific subject areas. They meet a maximum of four times per year and provide advice to the Council as needed.

The following chart outlines the committees that will be operating in 2022–23 and their different roles:



1.3 SECRETARIAT

The Council does not employ any staff but is supported by a small Secretariat consisting of Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) employees. It is led by an Executive Officer who is the Council's Accountable Officer and is responsible for day-to-day matters. The Executive Officer reports to the Deputy Chief Panel Member, Planning Panels Victoria, DELWP.



2.0 Mission, vision and values

The Council uses the following strategic statements, taken from its Strategic Plan 2021–25, to guide its work. The Council's Strategic Plan 2021–25 and its stated mission, vision and values guide and inform the Council's objectives, priorities, main undertakings and activities as set out in the following sections of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022–23.

2.1 MISSION

To lead in the recognition and conservation of Victoria's cultural heritage.

2.2 VISION

Victorians connect with and value our diverse cultural heritage. We aspire to have:

- Victorian communities, landowners and custodians understanding and valuing our heritage and its contribution to enriching culture
- a heritage system that protects, sustains, and enhances our heritage
- coherent and integrated heritage processes across all levels of government
- transmission of heritage values to current and future generations through effective stewardship and inspirational story telling.

2.3 VALUES

Respect for heritage

We value Victoria's heritage places and objects as an assets to be enjoyed as expressions of the traditions, identities and achievements of our diverse communities and cultures.

Collaboration

We value the knowledge others bring to heritage conservation, and encourage the sharing of experience and information.

Innovation

We value exploring new approaches to ensure a more sustainable future for Victoria's cultural heritage.

Skilled practice

We value the skills and resources that enable high-quality heritage management across the state.

3.0 Objectives, main undertakings and scope of activities

3.1 CURRENT OPERATING CONTEXT – OVERVIEW

As an independent statutory authority, the Council is very mindful in all its activities of its obligations to the state, the community and Victoria's cultural heritage. The Council strives to meet community expectations in compliance, transparency and good governance. As part of its responsibilities, the Council must prepare and present an annual report, in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the *Financial Management Act 1994*. Performance reporting in relation to the objectives and priorities set out in the Heritage Council's corporate plan is now required to be included in its annual report. The Heritage Council's financial statements are audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994*.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to be felt and will be a challenge to the operating environment in 2022–23. The Council is operating a hybrid model with staff returning to the office two or three days a week and most meetings and hearings remaining online for now. The Council has dealt quickly with changes to work programs and will continue to use its flexibility and responsiveness to deal with future changes. Despite these challenges the Council is focused on continuing to improve performance and lead in the development and implementation of strategic heritage projects.

While COVID-19 has impacted much of the Council's work, to date there has been no major impact on the Council's financial position. Strong financial management by the Council allows it to focus on large strategic projects with the ability to make a long-term positive impact on the recognition and management of cultural heritage in Victoria.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives for 2022–23 are outlined in detail in Section 5 of this corporate plan and are related to the Council's priority activities and performance targets. They correspond to the following five key strategies for achieving the Council's vision over the next five years:

- Wider understanding of cultural heritage.
- Effective and representative Victorian Heritage .
- Innovative and sustainable heritage practice.
- Shared responsibility for heritage conservation.
- Improved Heritage Council operations.

3.3 MAIN UNDERTAKINGS

The Council's identified objectives have been informed by the following main undertakings:

Provision of advice

One of the Council's key roles is to advise the Minister for Planning on the State of Victoria's cultural (non-Indigenous) heritage resources and any steps necessary to protect and conserve them.

The Council also has a role in advising and liaising with other bodies and individuals that have responsibilities in heritage protection and conservation in Victoria, including local government, community organisations and heritage owners/managers.

Determination of state-level significance and archaeological value

The Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) provides the state's highest level of legal protection for our cultural (non-Indigenous) heritage. The Council determines which places and objects are of state-level heritage significance and are included in the VHR.

The Council also determines if sites under 75 years of age have archaeological value and should therefore be included in the Heritage Inventory of Victorian archaeological sites.

Hearings and reviews

As prescribed by the Act, the Council conducts hearings or reviews in relation to requests for a review of: the Executive Director's recommendations for inclusion or non-inclusion in the VHR; determinations of permit applications; refusals of nominations for the VHR; and consents for certain activities at archaeological sites.

Promotion of cultural heritage

The Council works to promote public understanding of Victoria's cultural heritage.

Undertaking research

The Council initiates and undertakes research to identify Victoria's heritage and assist in its conservation and interpretation. The Council may do this itself or in partnership with other government or community bodies.

Governance and compliance

As an independent statutory authority with its own financial management responsibilities, the Council has multiple governance and compliance obligations and reporting requirements. Please refer to the Heritage Council's Annual Report 2020–21 for further detailed information.

3.4 NATURE AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

The Council's Strategic Plan 2021–25 sets out the strategic goals and activities that inform its objectives and main undertakings. The Council's core functions (as outlined in the Act, Part 2, Division 1, s.11) can be found at Appendix A. The Council's core functions and objectives will determine its activities and their scope, as set out in further detail in Section 5. The nature and scope of activities include:

- attending to core statutory functions (making determinations, conducting hearings and reviews) in relation to the VHR, the Heritage Inventory, nominations, permits and consents
- managing the Heritage Fund and publication of the corporate plan and annual report
- reporting annually on the state of Victoria's cultural heritage
- developing guidelines and research in relation to the protection and conservation of cultural heritage
- promoting public understanding of the state's cultural heritage – including by conducting public forums, industry workshops and developing strategic partnerships such as those with Open House, Design Week and the Australian Heritage Festival
- conducting internal reviews, training and analysis in relation to the Council's core functions.

4.0 Financial Projections

For 2022–25

4.1 ESTIMATES OF 2022–25 REVENUE, EXPENDITURE AND OVERALL FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE HERITAGE FUND, MANAGED BY THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO s11(1)(o) AND PART 11 OF THE ACT

	Budget 2021–22 \$'000	2022–23 \$'000	2023–24 \$'000	2024–25 \$'000
Revenue				
DELWP Contribution	–	–	–	–
Fees Revenue	1,625	2,113	2,121	2,129
CBS Interest	10	6	6	6
Total	1,635	2,119	2,127	2,135
Expenditure				
Admin and Remuneration	1,582	1,464	1,501	1,539
Communications	100	88	88	88
Strategic Projects	218	100	200	200
Partnership Projects	15	15	15	15
Grant to Heritage Victoria	300	395	150	150
Legacy Grants and Studies	167	216	–	–
Total	2,382	2,278	1,954	1,992
Overall Position	(747)	(159)	173	143

HCV	Budget 2021–22 \$'000	2022–23 \$'000	Forecast 2023–24 \$'000	2024–25 \$'000
Revenue	1,635	2,119	2,121	2,129
Expenditure	2,382	2,278	1,954	1,992
Overall Position	(747)	(159)	173	143

Heritage Council of Victoria has access to funds of \$2.56 million in investments.

Notes on 2022–23 projected budget deficit

- The projected \$159,000 budget deficit in 2022–23 is due to an increase in grants and an anticipated pay out of legacy grants and projects.
- The Heritage Fund holds investments of \$2.56 million and approximately \$1.38 million cash on hand which can be drawn down as required.

Notes on the Council's Financial Projections 2022–25

- The economic conditions are difficult to predict with the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council previously budgeted for a projected decline in revenue, but this decrease did not eventuate, and revenue has remained consistent with previous years. The Council has therefore projected revenue to remain steady over the next three years.
- The Council is returning to a 'balanced budget' approach over the next three years.
- The Council has not forecast the need to request additional funding from DELWP over the next three years. However, forecasting is imprecise, and this line has been retained in case the council's financial position changes.

5.0 Objectives, priority activities and performance targets

For 2022–23

The Council's objectives listed below correspond to strategic goals listed in the Council's Strategic Plan 2021–25.

Strategy 1		WIDER UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE		
Goals		<p>a. More Victorians understand the role that cultural heritage plays in the life of our communities, heritage processes, and the roles and responsibilities of organisations involved in heritage management.</p> <p>b. The stories and narratives of our important cultural heritage places and objects are well told and widely shared.</p> <p>c. The Council is recognised as leading public discourse about the conservation, management and celebration of Victoria's cultural heritage.</p>		
Strategic Actions	Goal	SOHR	Target Outcomes (ie: 'Measures of Success')	
Update the Heritage Council communications plan	1(b)	PP2	Communications Plan updated to reflect revised focus and adopted by HCV Community 'roadshow' prepared and delivered	
Work with the Minister, Heritage Victoria, National Trust, local government, community heritage organisations and other stakeholders to clarify and communicate roles, responsibilities and processes for heritage	1(a)		Chair to meet with Minister bi-annually At least one annual formal engagement session (meeting / workshop) with Heritage Victoria, National Trust, and local government	
Engage with Development Victoria, the Property Council (Victoria), UDIA, and other property organisations to create opportunities for improved communication, and better recognition of the contribution of cultural heritage to the Victorian economy and development projects	1(c)		Timing and delivery of engagement with Development Victoria, the Property Council (Victoria), UDIA, and other property organisations agreed	
Demonstrate the economic and social value of heritage to the community by reference to authoritative data and case studies	1(a)		Project commenced to assemble and synthesise information on the economic and social value of heritage to the community	

Strategy 2		EFFECTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE VICTORIAN HERITAGE REGISTER		
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Victoria's Heritage Register recognises and protects our state-significant cultural heritage. b. The Victorian Heritage Register reflects the diverse range of state-significant cultural heritage valued by communities throughout Victoria. c. The Victorian Heritage Register is accessible and easy to use as a source of useful information about Victoria's state-significant heritage. 			
Strategic Actions	Goal	SOHR	Target Outcomes (ie: 'Measures of Success')	
Update the 'Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines' to reflect current legislation and contemporary best practice	2(a)		Work commenced on the review of the 'Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines'	
Work with Heritage Victoria to improve the functionality of the Victorian Heritage Database so that users understand its purpose and have easy access to current information about places on the Victorian Heritage Register	2(c)	PI 6	Liaison with Heritage Victoria about the functionality of the Victorian Heritage Database through Hermes/VHD working group	

Strategy 3		INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE PRACTICE		
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cultural heritage conservation contributes to sustainable practices and addresses challenges arising from climate change. b. Victoria has a more highly skilled heritage workforce – professional and trade – to support custodians and policy makers. c. The Council identifies, instigates, undertakes or supports projects which develop or demonstrate exemplary heritage practice and/or showcase Victoria's cultural heritage. 			
Strategic Actions	Goal	SOHR	Target Outcomes (ie: 'Measures of Success')	
Instigate a project to highlight and promote the intergenerational value of heritage in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals	3(a)		HCV working group established to consider UN SDGs and intergenerational value of heritage	
Implement a 'Cultural Heritage and Climate Change Project' focused on the effects of climate change on impact Victoria's cultural heritage places and objects and the development of principles, tools and resources to enable their protection and conservation	3(c)		Public communication of the outcomes of the Cultural Heritage and Climate Change Project including case studies and other tools	
Pro-actively support a national strategic approach to the growing shortage of specialist heritage trade skills, in the context of post-pandemic economic recovery, through the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ)	3(b)		Propose a review of the findings from heritage trades and training projects report by HCOANZ	

Strategy 4	SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION		
Goals	<p>a. The Council leads a shared approach to recognising, protecting and conserving Victoria's cultural heritage.</p> <p>b. The shared history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians is recognised and understood.</p> <p>c. Local government is supported in managing local heritage.</p> <p>d. Victorian state government agencies demonstrate high-quality conservation and management of public heritage assets.</p>		
Strategic Actions	Goal(s)	SOHR	Target Outcomes (ie: 'Measures of Success')
Collaborate with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council through a joint working group to facilitate a common approach which appropriately recognises places of shared histories and promotes a broader understanding of Australia's history	4(a)		Joint working Group with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council meeting regularly
Contribute to delivering <i>Dhawura Ngilan</i> Vision and Standards in collaboration with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council and Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ)	4(b)		Promote/support the Dhawura Ngilan implementation initiatives to HCOANZ
Facilitate best practice local heritage management, guidance and knowledge sharing through forums, workshops, the updated Heritage Council Communications Plan, and the work of the Local Government Specialist Committee	4(c)	PI 5	Local Government Heritage Forum structure and content, including focus, structure, timing and costs, is approved by HCV
Support local government through creation of relevant information packs and delivery of information sessions	1(a)	PI 2 PI 3	'Heritage 101' information pack created for councils and the public published and communicated 'Heritage 101' induction pack created for new councillors published and promoted

Strategy 5	IMPROVED COUNCIL OPERATIONS		
Goals	<p>a. The Council will have adequate resources and will manage its workload to address strategic programs while managing statutory functions effectively.</p> <p>b. Capacity for community participation and transparency of Council processes will be increased.</p> <p>c. The Council will continue to provide robust and effective advice to the Minister.</p>		
Strategic Actions	Goal	SOHR	Target Outcomes (ie: 'Measures of Success')
Examine ways to improve efficiency and to increase available resources, including advocacy for additional staff, greater support for Members and specific project funding	5(a)		Annual review of staff allocation, member costs and strategic funding and implementation of recommendations Scope options for improved management of member documents
Implement a systematic annual program for training and capacity-building for Council Members	5(c)		HCV identifies training and capacity needs and opportunities on an annual basis and implements a program to address these
Develop a user-friendly, publicly accessible, online system for management of documentation associated with hearings and other statutory processes.	5(b)		Online system for management of documentation associated with hearings and other statutory processes operational and subject to review and fixes as necessary

Appendix A

The Heritage Council's core functions

The Council has the following statutory functions, as set out in Part 2, Division 1, s.11, of the *Heritage Act 2017*.

- to advise the Minister on the Status of the state's cultural heritage resources and on any steps necessary to protect and conserve them
- to make and publish guidelines in relation to the conservation of cultural heritage
- to promote public understanding of the state's cultural heritage and develop and conduct community information and education programs
- to advise government departments and agencies and municipal councils on matters relating to the protection and conservation of places and objects of cultural heritage significance
- to liaise with other bodies responsible for matters relating to the protection, conservation, management and promotion of Victoria's cultural heritage
- to initiate and undertake programs of research related to the identification, conservation or interpretation of Victoria's cultural heritage
- to include places or objects in the Heritage Register
- to remove places or objects from the Heritage Register, or to amend the registration of a place or object
- to remove sites from the Heritage Inventory
- to conduct reviews of decisions of the Executive Director in relation to nominations, permits and consents
- to develop, revise and publish the assessment criteria to be used in considering the cultural heritage significance of places and objects and determining whether those places or objects should or should not be included in the Heritage Register
- to adopt, and forward to the Minister, World Heritage Strategy Plans and amendments to World Heritage Strategy Plans
- to determine criteria for assessing whether a place has archaeological value
- to advise the Minister administering the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, on proposed amendments to planning schemes which may affect the protection or conservation of cultural heritage
- to manage the Heritage Fund
- to perform any other functions conferred on the Heritage Council under this Act or any other Act.

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