



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE



COMMUNITY THINKTANK

Handbook

WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for joining the Golden Plains Shire Community Thinktank. This handbook outlines the way in which the Golden Plains Shire Thinktank will operate and the responsibilities of the Community Thinktank.

01

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY THINKTANK?



Providing recommendations inline with Golden Plains Shire Council's Community Vision 2040



Providing recommendations to assist with the development of a new Council Plan (including the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan), and the review of Financial and Asset Plans.

The Community Thinktank's recommendations will be presented to Council for consideration in the development of the 2025-2029 Council Plan. Council will report back to Thinktank Members in January 2025 on the Council Plan Survey Results and the Thinktank sessions.

02

HOW WILL THE COMMUNITY THINKTANK WORK?



The Community Thinktank workshops will be facilitated by Council staff with expertise across our Community, Corporate, Infrastructure and Environment Services. Council staff will ensure all members have an opportunity to present their views.

This is a 'deliberative' community engagement process, which means Community Thinktank members will be required to participate in a series of facilitated workshops which will involve:

- ▶ Learning about the wider communities feedback already received on the Community Vision.
- ▶ Listening to other Thinktank members and the ideas and perspectives of internal experts.
- ▶ Providing thoughts and ideas on the information presented.
- ▶ Discussing the issues, challenges, ideas, and opportunities that are raised with fellow members and considering evidence in-depth.
- ▶ Finding common ground to help inform the development of the Council Plan.

03

MEETING DATES AND TIMES



Three Community Thinktank sessions will occur on the dates below. If you require assistance with Microsoft Teams for the online session, we can help you to set it up on your device and show you how to use. Please reach out to Community Wellbeing Team for assistance via emailing customerhub@gplains.vic.gov.au, or phone (03) 5220 7111.

SESSION 1

SMYTHESDALE THINKTANK

Presentations, Thoughts and Ideas Exchange, Discussion

Friday 22 November 2024

10am - 1.00pm

The Well Community Room
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale

SESSION 2

BANNOCKBURN THINKTANK

Presentations, Thoughts and Ideas Exchange, Discussion

Thursday 28 November 2024

5.30 - 8.30pm

Council Chambers
2 Pope Street, Bannockburn

SESSION 3

ONLINE VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present findings from Council Deliberative Engagement Sessions (online only)

Thursday 30 January 2025

5.30 - 7.00pm

Online via Microsoft Teams



04 | WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO BRING TO EACH WORKSHOP?

For the workshops (in person), please bring along an electronic device (computer, mobile phone or tablet) if you have one as we will show you how to participate in any online platforms we will use for workshops. If you don't have a device, please don't worry we will have Council Officers assist you with collecting your ideas and discussion on the day with their devices or have hard copies available to you.

For the online workshop in January 2025, you will need to join the Microsoft Teams meeting from your computer, tablet or mobile phone.

There will be a link to Microsoft Teams in the calendar meeting invitation we will send you. If you have any concerns, please contact us, or speak to one of our staff members at the in-person workshop in Bannockburn or Smythesdale.

We will also share the information on our Council Website and email a copy of our What We Heard Report to all Thinktank members.



05 | WHAT YOU WILL GET OUT OF IT

The Community Thinktank isn't your average one-off workshop. It's a more inclusive and in-depth process where we bring together the knowledge, thoughts and experiences of Golden Plains Shire community members to help shape our future plans.

As a Thinktank member, you'll get to collaborate with people of all ages, backgrounds and interests. Together, you'll listen to interesting presentations, ask questions, and discuss important issues. You'll share your own insights about Golden Plains Shire and hear about other's experiences.

The series of sessions will give you the time, practical information, forum and resources you'll need to provide recommendations on tricky challenges and strategic plans.

Our friendly facilitators will be there to make sure everyone is heard in a supportive and welcoming environment.

This is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, learn more about your community, and play a part in shaping what the Council does for the next four years.



06

EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR

All workshops will be delivered in a safe, friendly and supportive manner. Council staff, guest presenters and facilitators are committed to ensuring your experience is as enjoyable as possible. Different views, healthy debate and disagreements are welcomed as part of this process. All people involved with in Thinktank process are however expected to show respect for each other and not engage in any offensive, harmful or aggressive behaviour which could cause distress to other participants. If any such behaviour occurs participants may be removed from the remainder of the process.

07

WHAT IS A COUNCIL PLAN?

The Council Plan identifies the community needs and local issues to be dealt with every four years following local government elections. The Plan describes the objectives and strategies to be implemented by a council for the coming year and the following four years.

The voice of the community shapes the plan and incorporates:

- ▶ **Community Vision:** the long-term aspirations of the community.
- ▶ **Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan:** what the Council will do to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing.



08

WHAT IS AN ASSET PLAN?

Council has an obligation to manage assets appropriately. This includes financially planning for maintenance, future renewal and potential replacement. An important part of the Asset Plan is a ten-year plan on future costs for these activities.

Council’s assets and facilities include things such as our:

- ▶ Buildings (libraries, recreation centres, halls, community centres, pavilions, etc)
- ▶ Roads, trails, footpaths and drains
- ▶ Open space (parks, playgrounds, sporting grounds, etc)
- ▶ Public Art, monuments and natural assets



09

WHAT IS A FINANCIAL PLAN?



Our Financial Plan outlines the resources required to deliver the Council Plan and ensure:

- ▶ We are investing in assets the community values and needs.
- ▶ Our services remain affordable and accessible for the community.
- ▶ Our organisation remains financially sustainable.

Council needs to effectively manage its finances as well as invest in community assets and facilities (capital works program) over the next 10 years.

This means we have to effectively prioritise where our money is spent, which services we offer and which assets are maintained and updated and which capital works we undertake to meet the future needs of our community.

The core financial obligations of council are:

- ▶ Proper stewardship of existing assets by funding maintenance and renewal activities
- ▶ Ensuring funding for Council’s specific legislative obligations
- ▶ Ensuring funding for Council’s core services



MORE INFO

For further information on key documents in for consideration please go to Council’s Website <https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au> you can view current key documents mentioned in this handbook at the links provided below.

[Current Community Vision](#)

[Current Council Plan](#)

[Current Asset Plan](#)

[Current Financial Plan](#)



10 | PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSENT AND YOUR PRIVACY



Council may be taking photographs during the sessions.

The images may be used in printed or online formats by Golden Plains Shire Council for the purposes of documenting and promoting Shaping our Future Together, Council Plan 2025-2029, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Meetings will not be recorded but facilitators will take notes, to capture panelists contributions. All notes, and quotes will be de-identified to protect panel's privacy. Council will manage your data and information in line with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Act).

Please advise Council via email at customerhub@gplains.vic.gov.au if you do not give permission for your image to be used.



11 | DECLARING A CONFLICT OF INTEREST




Community Thinktank members will be entrusted to make recommendations to Golden Plains Shire Council based on input from the broader community, hearing from experts and working together as a group. We therefore would like to ensure that decisions are not underpinned by personal interests or personal gain.

If you realise at any time during your time as a Community Thinktank member, that you may gain a real or perceived disproportionate personal or professional advantage from the outcome of an engagement activity, please declare the conflict to Council via email at customerhub@gplains.vic.gov.au or to one of the project team members at the activity and abstain from the engagement activity.

Examples of a conflict of interest may include membership to a local club, owning a small business, or any other venture that might benefit through your involvement in the Community Thinktank.

It is your responsibility to declare any conflicts of interest. If you are unsure whether something is a conflict of interest, it is better to declare it, providing full transparency.

CONTACT

-  (03) 5220 7111
-  1300 363 036 (free within the Shire)
-  enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au
-  goldenplains.vic.gov.au

POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 111, Bannockburn, VIC 3331

CUSTOMER HUB HOURS

Golden Plains Civic Centre

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, VIC 3331

The Well, Smythesdale

8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, VIC 3351

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