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Council's Initial Response to Coronavirus

Council has been monitoring ongoing developments related to the COVID-19 or Coronavirus outbreak with the Australian Government's Department of Health being the primary source of information for updates regarding COVID-19 and SA Health being the principal lead agency within South Australia.

The Federal Government, via the Department of Health, declared the COVID-19 outbreak a Pandemic on 15 March 2020 and implemented a number of associated actions in order to protect the community and minimise the spread of infection. This has included the requirement for all persons travelling to or returning to Australia to now self-isolate for 14 days, and all outdoor public gatherings of over 500 people to be prohibited. Indoor public gatherings have been restricted to a maximum of 100 people. The Federal Government have closed the nation's borders and the situation is fluid.

The State Government declared a Public Health Emergency on 15 March 2020, providing greater powers the State's Chief Health Officer, and is also considering a raft of legislative amendments to assist both State Government and Local Government in continuing to meet its legislative obligations, while at the same time minimising the potential for spreading the infection.

Mayor Redman said "whilst it's important to continue to fulfil our legislative obligations and associated service delivery functions within the community, Council has and will continue to implement some operational changes to limit potential exposure to Staff, Council members and the wider community as a result of this public health emergency."

Council CEO Henry Inat advises "Council is continuing to keep as many of its key services open and operating as usual. These are trying times and where and however we can keep Council business as usual the better to support local residents, businesses and visitors alike. The following Council operated facilities will remain open, including continuing to provide face to face services, subject to further advice from National and State Governments as the situation changes:

- ☐ Gawler Administration Centre – including Customer Service
- ☐ Gawler Civic Centre – including Library Service
- ☐ Gawler Sport and Community Centre".

The full scope of Council other key service delivery areas such as waste services, depot operations, ranger services, environmental services, planning and development activities etc will continue as normal".

The operational changes at the Town of Gawler being implemented include:

- ☐ Requesting people attending Council facilities to regularly wash hands with soap, practice good personal hygiene including coughing into a tissue or your elbow, use hand sanitiser available at all Council customer interaction points.
- ☐ Promoting cash less transactions where possible.
- ☐ Meetings with customers will be made via appointment, where possible.
- ☐ Practicing social distancing including maintaining the required distance between people and avoiding physical contact (eg. no handshaking).
- ☐ Requesting anyone experiencing flu like symptoms to stay home and not attend Council facilities.



Given the health risks involved in large public gatherings as per government advice and to ensure the safety of our staff and community, the following range of non-essential programs have been cancelled until further notice:

- ☐ Youth programs
- ☐ Gawler Sport and Community Centre Programs
- ☐ Council delivered Gentle Fitness Programs
- ☐ Library programs including Story Time
- ☐ Gawler Civic Centre Programs
- ☐ Gawler Aquatic Centre Programs

As a precaution to slow the spread of COVID-19 in the wider community, the following Council facilities have or will be closed.

- ☐ Gawler Visitor Information Centre was closed 5pm Tuesday 17 March 2020. However, the Centre is still be able to provide assistance with enquiries made over the phone or on line.
- ☐ The Evanston Gardens Community Centre and The Elderly Centre.
- ☐ The Gawler Aquatic Centre will close one week earlier than planned with the last day of operations now being Friday 27 March 2020.

"Council Meetings will proceed as normal however public attendees will notice some changes to the layout of the Council Chamber and public seating gallery to ensure we comply with the required distances to satisfy social distancing requirements.

Council Members and Council Staff will be seated within the Council Chamber with a minimum 4 square metres of space per person as per latest Government advice. The public gallery will be located in the Institute Hall and public seating will also be placed 4 square metres apart. Council's audio/visual systems within each of the spaces are linked so all people in attendance will be able to hear and see what is occurring at Council Meetings. Any members of the public wanting to attend Council Meetings will be requested to wash their hands on arrival and use the hand sanitiser provided", said Mayor Redman.

As stated above the status of the COVID-19 pandemic is continually evolving, as is the Australian Government's Department of Health response. It is likely that additional control measures may be implemented in the near future by the Federal Government and State agencies. Council will continue to monitor advice being provided from the relevant agencies and communicate any further action to be taken accordingly.

Mayor Redman finishes by saying "We are all in this together. It's important we look after each other and that we listen to both the Federal and State government who are doing all that they can to protect us. If you are needing clarification don't hesitate to contact Council officers and or source information from the many avenues available. We are a strong community and we will get through these difficult times".



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ENDS

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