

9.1. Consultation Feedback Summary - Proposed Relocation of Visitor Services and Visual Arts.

C075/03/25

Moved Cr Sue Miller seconded Cr Margaret Gardner

That Council receive and note the outcomes of the community consultation campaign regarding re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre, currently located in the Old Police Station and the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre, currently located in the Old Post Office, to the Signal Point Experience Centre.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C076/03/25

Moved Cr Milli Livingston seconded Cr Margaret Gardner

That Council:

- 1. Pause on the proposed re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre and Goolwa Visitor Information Centre and hold a Council Workshop by the end of June 2025, to re-visit Council's service review objectives and also invite key stakeholders.**
- 2. Note a report will be presented to a future meeting following the Council Workshop, with a recommended approach to further exploring opportunities.**

AMENDMENT

Moved Cr Sue Miller

That Council:

- 1. Pause on the proposed re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre and Goolwa Visitor Information Centre and hold a Council Workshop by the end of June 2025, to re-visit Council's service review objectives.**
- 2. Note a report will be presented to a future meeting but no later than one month following the Council Workshop, with a recommended approach to further exploring opportunities for service level savings and efficiencies.**
- 3. Note the ongoing opportunity cost of approximately \$281,000 per year, should Council decide to retain existing services in their current locations and not pursue the new 'one-business' site at the Signal Point Experience Centre (as per Community Strategic Services Review: Visitor Services, July 2024, undertaken by Alex Brown Project Company):**
- 4. Note the consultant review into Arts and Culture Programs, Strategic Solutions Co. August 2024 states:**
 - a. that across Australia, there are no other councils of a similar size and location to Alexandrina Council who run two (2) galleries; and**

- b. there are a very high number of community and commercial art galleries in the region, 11 in total, and also many professional artists in the area and a vibrant scene of high-level amateur artists.
- c. That Council resources are concentrated in Goolwa.

LAPSED
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The original motion was put and CARRIED

9. Administration Reports

9.1. Consultation Feedback Summary - Proposed Relocation of Visitor Services and Visual Arts

Decision Report

Responsible Officer: Stacey Bateson (General Manager Community)

Report Author: Linda Scholz (Manager Community Connection and Activation)

Previous Decisions: September 2024 (C24476, C24477) October 2024 (C24478, C24779, C24480, C24481, C24482, C24483, C24484)

Report Purpose

To receive the outcomes of the community engagement regarding the proposed re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre, currently located in the Old Police Station and the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre, currently located in the Old Post Office, to the Signal Point Experience Centre.

Recommendation 1:

That Council receive and note the outcomes of the community consultation campaign regarding re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre, currently located in the Old Police Station and the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre, currently located in the Old Post Office, to the Signal Point Experience Centre.

Recommendation 2:

That Council:

- 1. Pause on the proposed re-location of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre and Goolwa Visitor Information Centre and hold a Council Workshop by the end of June 2025, to re-visit Council's service review objectives.**
- 2. Note a report will be presented to a future meeting following the Council Workshop, with a recommended approach to further exploring opportunities.**

Background

Council has resolved that Administration target \$3 million in savings and efficiencies for future reduction to the budgets. In order to inform this and future planning two (2) service reviews were commissioned in 2024 to assess the functions and futures of the;

- **Old Police Station** - located on Goolwa Terrace, and provides a gallery / exhibition space known as the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC)
- **Old Post Office** - located on Cadell Street, which currently houses the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (GVIC)
- **Signal Point Experience Centre (SPEC)** - located on the Goolwa Wharf, features a gallery / exhibition space (1st floor) and the Yuntulun Ku:li-war permanent exhibition (Ground floor)

The outcomes and recommendations from these service reviews were presented to Council at the 16 September 2024 meeting. Both reviews recommended the consolidation and rationalisation of the Council services, which would lead to a one-business model approach and to co-locate into the Signal Point Experience Centre. This move would result in substantial operational savings for the organisation of approximately \$281,000 per annum, as well as generating a significant increase in the local economy by leveraging the opportunities in the growing wharf precinct.

Council subsequently resolved to approve for the purposes of consultation that the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (Old Post Office) and the gallery operations at South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station) re-locate to the Signal Point experience Centre (C24479). Council also noted that the proposal to co-locate the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre and the South Coast Regional Arts Centre to the Signal Point Experience Centre, would provide future years annual budget savings of approximately \$281,000 (C24477).

Council resolved that a further report be presented on the community consultation outcomes, implementation plan and proposed budget (C24482).

A community engagement campaign was subsequently developed and consultation occurred between Thursday 09 January 2025 and Friday 31 January 2025.

Discussion

It should be acknowledged that for the proposed re-locations, these were the first round of service reviews that were carried out, and they were done at pace due to concerns around financial sustainability and reducing operating costs. On reflection after commencing these reviews this time last year, Administration believe they could have taken a different approach, and engaged the community more effectively.

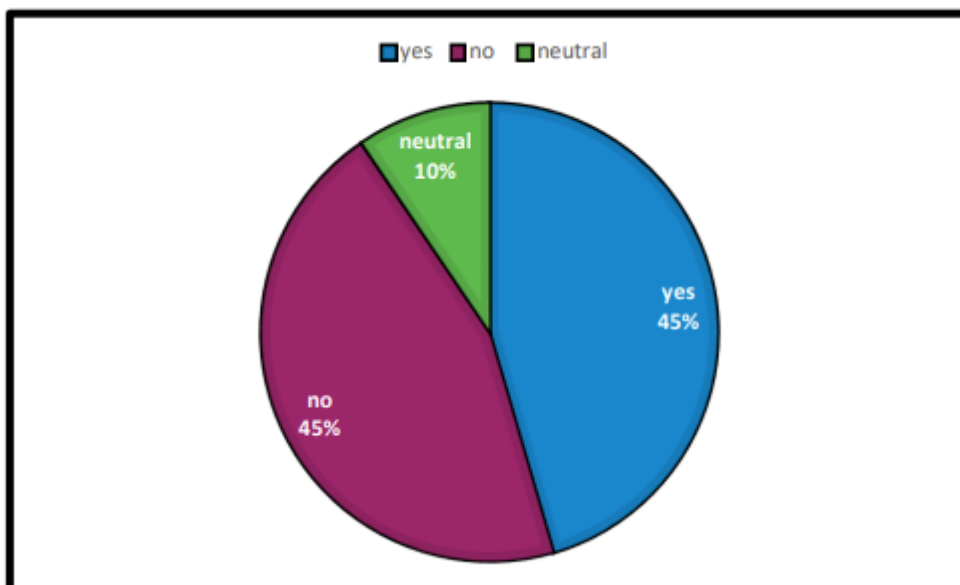
The community engagement campaign was conducted primarily through the MySay platform and Council's social media channels, with a presence and hard copy information also displayed in Council's offices at Goolwa and Strathalbyn.

A detailed Consultation Feedback Report is available [here](#)

During the consultation period, 200 responses were received. 184 through the MySay platform, six (6) hard copy/email responses and 10 additional submissions were also received throughout the consultation period.

Consultation outcomes for South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station)

In response to the question “Do you support the proposed relocation of the gallery operations at the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station) to the Signal Point Experience Centre?”



During the analysis of responses received, some clear themes were identified, the five (5) most prominent of which were:

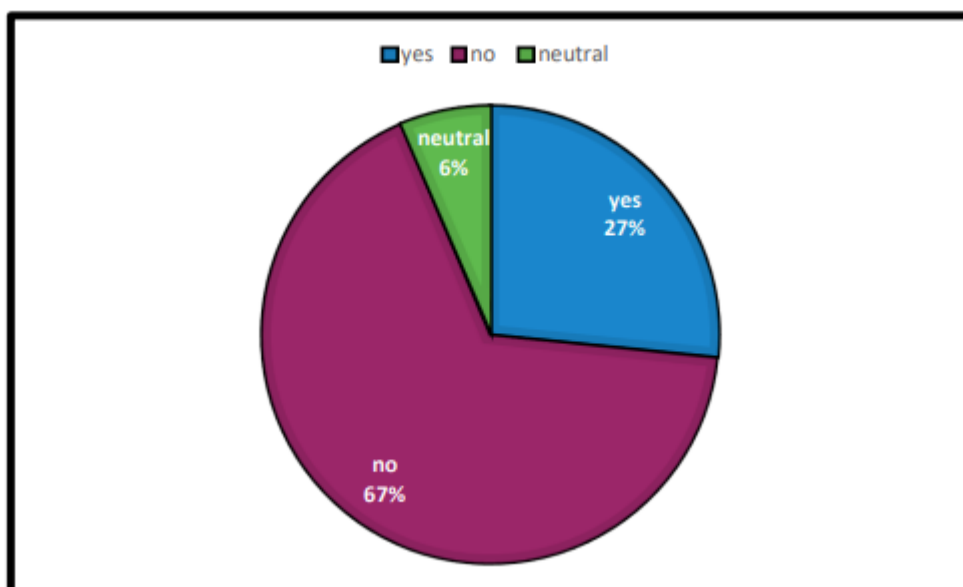
- Concerns regarding the fact the Signal Point Gallery is for major exhibitions & high-end art; whilst the South Coast Regional Arts Centre is for local and emerging artists
- Concerns that the South Coast Regional Arts Centre won't be retained as an art gallery & that the Old Police Station will be sold
- Concerns regarding the future of the Old Police Station building
- Concerns regarding the future of the artists who are located in the 'stables' at the rear of the Old Police Station
- Concerns regarding Council staff needing to be present in open public buildings and the associated cost of this

A Council Information session was held on Tuesday 11th March 2025, to discuss community feedback and potential next steps.

It is recommended that a Council Workshop be held by the end of June 2025, to re-visit Council's service review objectives with these services and buildings. Following the Council Workshop, a report will be brought to Council for consideration, where Administration will recommend an approach to further exploring opportunities.

Consultation outcomes for VIC/Old Post Office

In response to the question of "Do you support the proposed relocation of the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (Old Post Office) to the Signal Point Experience Centre?"



During the analysis of responses received, some clear themes were identified, the three (3) most prominent of which were:

- Concerns regarding the lack of visibility that the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre would have if re-located to the wharf; lack of way-finding signage to the wharf precinct area; parking and access on the wharf
- Concerns regarding the future use of the Old Post Office building
- Concerns that the Visitor Information Centre service won't 'fit' into the Signal Point Experience Centre

Following the council information session on Tuesday 11th March 2025, Administration presented options to address the above concerns and also proposed a way forward with the re-location of the VIC only, to assist with activating the wharf and taking advantage of cost savings of approximately \$219k per year.

As a result of the outcomes from the Community Consultation and feedback from Council Members, Administration is recommending to include the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre in the Council Workshop mentioned earlier in this report, to allow Council Members to re-visit their service review objectives, before a further report on next steps are brought back to Council.

Financial Implications

In accordance with the Alexandrina Council's Adopted Budget / Long Term Financial Plan, the financial implications of adopting this recommendation are considered low, due to no financial decisions being recommended to increase the current existing operational budget.

There may however be an ongoing opportunity cost of approximately \$281,000 per year, should Council decide to retain existing services in their current locations.

Risk Implications

In accordance with Alexandrina Council's Risk Assessment Matrix, the risk of adopting this recommendation is considered low, due to responding to the outcomes of the Community Consultation insights and recommending that further exploration be undertaken.

Attachments

Nil