

# Proposed Name Change for the Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre

SF/265

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## PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report discusses a proposed name change for the *Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre*.

## BACKGROUND

At the Assembly of Councillors briefing held on 30 August 2023, U3A Benalla representatives provided Councillors with a presentation on U3A activities.

During the presentation U3A representatives proposed a name change for the *Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre*.

A letter was received from U3A Benalla President Margaret Jenkins and Senior Citizens Benalla President Val Burke on 14 September 2023 to indicate support for the proposed name change from user groups of the centre (Refer **Appendix 1**).

Further correspondence was received from U3A Benalla President Margaret Jenkins on 30 October 2023 (**Appendix 2**).

Any proposed name change would need to meet *Naming Rules for places in Victoria* statutory requirements. The *Naming Rules for places in Victoria* are based on the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

Appropriate naming is essential for identifying locations when managing emergencies and delivering goods and services in Victoria. The naming rules are based on national standards and policies. They provide a strong basis for standardised and unambiguous naming procedures across the state.

When proposing a new name for a facility or feature the proposed name must conform to the following principles:

- Principle A - Ensuring public safety
- Principle B - Recognising the public interest
- Principle C - Linking the name to place
- Principle D - Ensuring names are not duplicated
- Principle E - Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages
- Principle F - Names must not discriminate or be offensive
- Principle G - Gender equality
- Principle H - Dual names

- Principle I - Using commemorative names
- Principle J - Using commercial and business names
- Principle K - Language
- Principle L - Directional names to be avoided
- Principle M - Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality

Councils can generate a naming proposal in-house, including choosing an appropriate name. If a request is made of council in the interests of public safety, the council must respond to the request within 30 days, outlining intended action.

When preparing a proposal, the council must ensure compliance to the naming rules. Naming should only be considered if the council can demonstrate that the proposal is being made in the community's best interest. Names should be enduring and changed only when necessary, for example, when causing a public safety issue and or the name is causing offense.

*Geographic Names Victoria* can provide in-principal endorsement of a name change prior to public consultation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The decision to proceed with a name change rests with the Council. To guide this decision, a community consultation program is required for a proposed name change of the Centre.

User groups of the Centre have suggested that the Centre be renamed to *Benalla Seniors and Community Centre*. This is Council's preferred option for a name change.

Council will undertake community consultation to ensure that the broader community have the opportunity to have input alongside the Centre's user groups. If a name change was supported by the consultation results and approved by Council, the name needs to be lodged with the Register for consideration and inclusion in *Geographic Names Victoria (VICNAMES)*.

If the Registrar deems that the proposal conforms to the naming rules, *Geographic Names Victoria* will proceed to gazette the proposal.

## ***COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025* IMPLICATIONS**

### **Community**

- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

### **Livability**

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*

### **Leadership**

- *Engaged and informed community.*
- *Effective and responsive advocacy.*

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council's *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed that community engagement be undertaken at the 'Consult' level under the International Association for Public Participation's IAP2 public participation spectrum as detailed in the table below:

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Consult	To inform, listen, acknowledge concerns or aspirations and provide feedback on how community input influenced the decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Surveying user groups of the Community Centre.</li><li>▪ Notice in the Community Centres user group newsletters.</li><li>▪ Provide information on site at the Community Centre.</li><li>▪ Publish public notice and seek feedback through the <i>Benalla Ensign</i>, Council's website and social media accounts.</li></ul>

The community engagement for the renaming process will focus on current user groups of the Centre but will also be open for comment from the broader community.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the name of the facility is changed there will be a minor financial impact related to signage updates.

## LEGISLATIVE AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that the report is consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

## OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

## CONCLUSION

That the proposed name change for the *Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre* be placed on public exhibition.

A report detailing feedback received on the proposed name change for the *Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre* will be presented to a future meeting of the Finance and Planning Committee.

<b>Recommendation:</b>
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That the proposal for the *Benalla Senior Citizens Community Centre* to be renamed *Benalla Seniors and Community Centre* be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.