

City of Ballarat's Update on COVID-19

The COVID-19 emergency is an unprecedented event in recent history. To protect the health of residents and staff, the City of Ballarat has instigated its Response and Recovery Pandemic 2020 Plan for its staff, ratepayers, residents and the broader community.

Evidence from around the world has shown that pre-emptive measures are extremely effective in containing the spread of the disease.

NOTE: This is an extremely fluid situation and events are changing daily.

All information listed below is correct as at 2.30pm, Thursday 26 March but is subject to change. Please keep up-to-date by visiting ballarat.vic.gov.au

The City of Ballarat has a key role to play in all emergency management situations affecting the municipality.

The City of Ballarat's primary focus for the next six months is to ensure that we have the best chance of avoiding the major impacts of COVID-19.

City of Ballarat Urges Residents to Stay Home

The City of Ballarat, Commerce Ballarat, Committee for Ballarat and Ballarat Regional Tourism are calling on Daniel Andrews and Scott Morrison to continue to be bold and brave in their decision-making on flattening the COVID-19 curve.

All four organisations are urging the Ballarat community to stay home and do their bit to flatten the curve across the region. Cases in Australia have now risen to more than 2,000, with five positive cases of COVID-19 in Ballarat.

Australia is currently on the same trajectory as Italy, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States. Ballarat has some of the worst social determinants of health and chronic disease. The City of Ballarat wants to ensure no one is left behind.

Ballarat city leaders are urging the Premier and Prime Minister to consider making moves to close cities and limit the movement of people. Within weeks, based on current figures, we could have 77,000 people infected in the Grampians region alone.

Melbourne is where the majority of the COVID-19 cases are currently being recorded. They have recorded more than 400 cases to date – Ballarat has recorded five.

Hear from Ballarat Mayor Cr Ben Taylor [here](#).

Reporters are invited to download and use this recording in their coverage.

City of Ballarat wants to be like Vo

The City of Ballarat wants to be like Vo – the Italian town that beat coronavirus by isolating itself from the rest of its nation. In the epicentre of the Italian COVID-19 epidemic, Vo has recorded just one death. Officials say there hasn't been a new case of COVID-19 in Vo since 13 March.

The City of Ballarat is calling on the state and federal governments to be bold, brave and move swiftly. They are urging Ballarat residents to stay home, and stay within the municipal boundaries.

Ballarat City Council calls for an Amendment to the Local Government Act

The City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Ben Taylor has written to Minister for Local Government The Hon. Adem Somyurek asking for immediate exemption or changes via an amendment to the Local Government Act.

Cr Taylor, with support of Ballarat City Council, wants the Act amended to allow all Council meetings to lawfully proceed without a quorum of Councillors needing to be physically present in the chamber. Council is requesting changes that will allow at-risk Councillors to continue to carry out their elected duties via video link. This will protect the health and wellbeing of all Councillors.

In these unprecedented times Ballarat community needs government at all levels to continue to operate at maximum efficiency. For this to be achieved locally it is essential changes be made to allow Council decision-making to proceed in a way that is fully compliant with social distancing recommendations.

Ballarat City Council is also urging changes to be made that will close Council meetings to the public. Council will continue to livestream the meetings and is currently working on solutions to will allow residents to make presentations and ask questions.