

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



Wednesday, 29 July 2020

## **BACKING BALLARAT BUSINESSES AND SLASHING RED TAPE**

Thousands of businesses in Ballarat will benefit from more streamlined services and less red tape thanks to a new partnership between the Victorian Small Business Commission and the City of Ballarat.

Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford congratulated the Ballarat council for its commitment to local business operators and their workers after mayor Cr Ben Taylor signed the Small Business Friendly Council charter. Some 41 local councils across the state are now on board with the program.

Launched in May 2019, the charter was backed by the Victorian Government as a way to increase support for small businesses with councils committing to pay bills within 30 days, support local business networks and streamline business approvals.

The City of Ballarat has also completed the Government's Better Approvals Project to drive changes to the permit approvals process – saving small businesses time, money and stress when starting or expanding. This initiative has delivered a 73 per cent reduction in average approval times on multiple permit applications across the state.

There are more than 8,500 small businesses in the City of Ballarat and the Victorian Government has delivered more than \$12.5 million in Business Support Fund grants and around \$3.85 million in payroll tax refunds to businesses in the region to help them ride out the coronavirus pandemic.

More information about the Small Business Friendly Council initiative can be found at [vsbc.vic.gov.au](https://vsbc.vic.gov.au).

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford**

*"We're making sure our small business operators have the support they need to make it through the pandemic – this is an important step that will save many businesses time and money."*

*"We're thrilled to have the City of Ballarat on board and we're calling on all councils to help make Victoria an even more small business friendly state."*

### **Quote attributable to City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Ben Taylor**

*"Ballarat has a lot to offer businesses and signing on to the Small Business Friendly Council is one of many steps we're taking to turn our city into a world-class business and industry hub."*

### **Quote attributable to Victorian Small Business Commissioner Judy O'Connell**

*"I'm really pleased that Ballarat City Council is making the Small Business Friendly pledge and committing to work with us to respond to local needs and help local businesses to prosper."*

### **Quote attributable to the Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison**

*"Ballarat businesses deserve every chance to grow and cutting red tape is a simple but significant step."*

### **Quote attributable to the Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle**

*"Small businesses are the backbone of our workforce – this is a win for workers across Ballarat."*

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