

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



Wednesday, 24 March 2021

BACKING SMALL BUSINESSES ACROSS VICTORIA'S WEST

Small businesses across western Victoria will receive greater support thanks to new partnerships signed between the Victorian Small Business Commission and local councils.

Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford today welcomed Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack Shire and Hindmarsh Shire councils to the Small Business Friendly Council initiative. The scheme now totals 50 partnerships across the state.

Launched by the Andrews Labor Government in May 2019, the initiative includes a pledge by councils to pay small business suppliers within 14 days and help them manage disruption to trade and operations caused by infrastructure works.

Getting permits to start and expand a business is also streamlined, with Small Business Friendly Councils committing to the Government's Better Approvals Project which provides a single point of contact for approvals.

This initiative has delivered a 73 per cent reduction in average approval times on multiple permit applications across the state.

Businesses in the Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack and Hindmarsh municipalities support more than 14,000 jobs largely driven by agriculture – dry land broadacre farming and livestock grazing – as well as manufacturing, construction and retail services.

To help businesses ride out the pandemic and support workers, the Labor Government has delivered more than \$3.5 million in Business Support Fund grants to businesses in Horsham Rural City, \$385,000 to businesses in Yarriambiack Shire and \$705,000 to businesses in Hindmarsh Shire.

Additionally, businesses across the three council areas have benefited from more than \$1.5 million in payroll tax relief.

For more information about the Small Business Friendly Council initiative, visit vsbc.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford

"Fifty councils have now signed up to this charter, which is about supporting businesses that are the backbone of local communities and their workers."

"It's saving time and money and it's fantastic that Horsham, Yarriambiack and Hindmarsh are on board."

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane

"Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack Shire and Hindmarsh Shire are to be commended on the commitment shown to local business operators and their wider communities."

Quote attributable to Victorian Small Business Commissioner Judy O'Connell

"I'm thrilled to see the Horsham Rural City, Yarriambiack Shire and Hindmarsh Shire councils pledge to further support their local small business community – we look forward to working together to respond to local needs."

Media contact: Shaun Phillips 0407 553 763 | shaun.phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au