

# Mayor's Message



With the knowledge of the Bald Hills Wind Farm report from James C. Smith and Associates having been received by Council we have had many questions about what are our next steps. The report was immediately shared with all parties involved to be open and transparent; however it has meant that Council has also been reviewing the document over the past week. The investigation of noise complaints from wind farms is one of the most technical and complex matters a Council can be called upon to investigate.

As this report is just part of the process in Council determining if a nuisance exists, we are seeking more information – and giving all parties a chance to comment.

Council will be working with all parties involved on the matter and will continue to keep them informed of our actions as we proceed. We know this process has been long and we empathise with the residents surrounding the wind farm. I assure them that we want this matter resolved as soon as practicable. That said, we must be thorough, provide for procedural fairness and ensure that we have all of the relevant information before determining our next steps.

I must take this opportunity to also highlight the position that the disconnect between the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* have placed Council – and by extension our residents and ratepayers – in this situation. The requirements that local governments in Victoria investigate nuisance complaints regardless of whether wind farms are acting in accordance with planning permits or not creates a significant reputational, financial and resource burden on Council, our ratepayers and our region.

It is due to this disconnect that while Council will continue to take every necessary measure to deal with the situation at the Bald Hills Wind Farm effectively, we will continue to advocate to the Victorian Government to change its legislation to resolve the uncertainty it creates.

**Cr Lorraine Brunt - Mayor**