



## MEDIA ALERT

### Regional Cities Victoria elects Chair and Deputy Chair to lead advocacy efforts

**Wednesday 20 November 2019**

Regional Cities Victoria, a leadership group charged with representing regional interests to the State and Federal Government, this week voted to retain Councillor Margaret O'Rourke as Chair and also elected Councillor Anna Speedie as Deputy Chair.

Regional Cities Victoria (RCV) comprises the Mayors and CEOs of the 10 largest cities outside Melbourne – Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga. Following Council elections across the state, the group recently welcomed four new Mayors as voting members of the group.

The RCV annual election saw Cr Margaret O'Rourke, Mayor of Bendigo, run uncontested for RCV Chair. It will be her third consecutive term as head of RCV.

Cr O'Rourke is an accomplished business woman and company director with extensive leadership experience. Her focus is industry growth and job development, and she is committed to ensuring both rural and urban residents are better connected through new technology. Improving regional transport networks is also a high priority.

The ballot for deputy leadership went to Cr Anna Speedie, Mayor of Wodonga. An elected official since 2005, Cr Speedie also has extensive board experience and has previously served as Chair of RCV.

The appointments come as RCV prepares to prosecute the case for additional funding for regional priorities in the upcoming State and Federal budgets.

"I want to thank my RCV colleagues for their ongoing support. I commit to doing everything in my power to be an effective voice for our regions, and our communities, in Spring St and in Canberra," Cr O'Rourke said.

"RCV will continue to fight for investment in infrastructure, services and programs in regional cities and towns to ensure we continue to maintain a high standard of living for our communities and our state."

RCV is dedicated to the sustainable growth of Victoria's regions and advocates for policies and programs that help attract business investment and a diverse workforce to regional Victoria.

**Media contact: Kristina Burke on 0425 762 429.**

*RCV is a regional leadership group dedicated to building a sustainable Victoria by providing strategic advice, coordination and advocacy to State and Federal Governments to support policies which enable Victoria's regional centres to grow and develop. Comprising Mayors and CEOs of the 10 largest cities in regional Victoria – Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga – RCV is focused on achieving real change in regional Victoria through policy development and active implementation of those policies.*