

# Hepburn to move with Ballarat

## No losses at branch level

By RACHEL AFFLICK

CENTRAL Highlands Regional Library Corporation chair Tim Hayes has moved to assure residents that branch jobs will not be lost after Hepburn Shire council voted last week to follow Ballarat when it withdraws from the corporation in June.

City of Ballarat last year notified the CHRLC board of its intention to withdraw from the corporation in order to establish a new "shared services" library model.

Under the model, Ballarat would take over the administrative function of library services with an option for other councils to buy into the service.

Cr Hayes said Hepburn Shire Council believed the CHRLC would not be sustainable without Ballarat's involvement.

But he said under the motion carried by councillors last Tuesday, Hepburn's support for and participation in the development of Ballarat's shared services model would be subject to several conditions, including the assurance there would be no reduction in the level of library services to Hepburn Shire residents during the development stages of the model.

All municipalities have been asked to indicate their preferences for library services by Monday.

Cr Hayes said it was now a waiting game to see the details of



**CONDITIONS IMPOSED:** Cr Tim Hayes said Hepburn is seeking assurances about services and staff.

Ballarat's model, although it was expected that substantial savings could be made by allowing Ballarat to take over all administrative functions of the service.

"We really don't know what the costs are until this shared service model is fully developed," he said.

"I would like to think that for anyone employed there should be no redundancy whatsoever.

"All they'll have to do is change their employer from the corporation to the council."

Cr Hayes did admit while staff employed at branch level would keep their jobs, the fate of staff

employed by the corporation's central administration in Ballarat would depend on how the shared services model was developed.

Council's decision to follow Ballarat out of the corporation has coincided with the release of Hepburn Shire's Review of Library Services.

The review focused on identifying whether the existing library service levels meet both the current and future needs of the community and what future service levels should be.

Cr Hayes said it highlighted the fact the library service was valued by residents.



**WIND POWER:** Hepburn Wind chairman Simon Holmes a Court marks the raising of Hepburn Wind's first turbine.

## First turbine goes up

HUNDREDS of onlookers gathered at Leonards Hill at the weekend to celebrate the raising of Hepburn Wind's first turbine.

About 300 of the 1600 owners of the Leonards Hill wind farm gathered on Saturday to watch and celebrate as the tower sections were lifted into place.

The most dedicated returned on Sunday morning hoping to watch the rotor lifted into position, however consistent high winds over the site postponed the lifting.

The second turbine is to be raised this week.

To build the \$13 million project, wind farm cooperative members collectively invested more than \$8.7 million.

The project was born out of frustration with the pace of action on climate change – the community project is expected to generate more energy than is used by Daylesford in an average

year and will displace an estimated 12,200 tonnes of CO2 annually.

"I love the idea of the community owning our own energy resource," said Hepburn Wind member Kate Allsopp. "I also love that the project is environmentally, socially and financially sustainable."

Hepburn Wind was conceived in 2005 and launched its membership and share offer in July 2008.

Members will share in the proceeds of the sale of electricity and a portion of profits will be returned via a community sustainability fund.

Through the fund, Hepburn Wind plans to fund more than \$1 million of sustainability initiatives in the local community over the next 25 years.

Hepburn Wind has inspired more than 40 communities around Australia to begin development of their own solar, wind and mini-hydro initiatives.



# Turns One Year Old

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