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MEDIA RELEASE

COMMUNITY SHARES VISION FOR MANNUM INSTITUTE

The Mid Murray Council is confident of a bright future of the 137-year-old Mannum Institute, with the town's community sharing a wealth of possibilities over recent months, for its long-term use.

Hundreds of residents and members of local interest groups took the chance to have their say recently on how the Council should use the building, which was purchased from private owners in August 2018.

Mid Murray Council Mayor Dave Burgess said the community's strong response to the call for ideas for the historic institute was overwhelmingly positive.

"We had over 330 people pass through the doors of this significant heritage building over three open days in October and almost 200 more put their ideas in writing," Mayor Burgess says.

"It clearly demonstrates the community's passion for this historic Mannum landmark and their desire to play an active part in planning for its future.

"The Council is very encouraged by the range of possible community uses put forward for the building – the challenge now will be to narrow the list of options down and decide on best uses for the whole community."

Public consultation on the institute's future closed on 30 November, 2018, with 197 comment forms submitted to the Council. A report detailing feedback was presented to Elected Members at a meeting last week.

Suggestions range from a meeting and memorabilia display space for the Mannum RSL and Mannum History Group - to an art gallery, community hub, venue for theatre and music productions, general hire, a youth space, a library and a disability services centre. With nine separate rooms in the building - there are options for a variety of uses to share the space.

Mid Murray Council Chief Executive Officer Russell Peate said the council would now work to narrow down the possibilities.

"Focus group meetings have just been held with representatives from the Mannum History Group, the Mannum Progress Association and Mannum RSL and their suggestions were valuable in considering possible uses," Mr Peate says. The council will also need to consider sufficient space for toilets and a lift to meet disability access requirements to the first floor.

"The Council will consider all the suggestions made by those groups and the wider community's responses before finalising the initial building uses."

The Council is also prioritising repair works to improve the institute's ground floor, with a view to opening this level of the building to the public first. A portion of the Federal Government's Drought Communities Funding (\$182,000) will ensure this work can happen in 2019.

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