



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 15 August 2023
Council Chambers
Beaufort Council Offices,
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

Wadawurrung Country

Members of the public may view the meeting virtually via the livestream

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1. WELCOME

Mayor Cr Ron Eason welcomed all to the meeting.

PRESENT

Mayor: Cr Ron Eason (virtual)

Councillors: Tanya Kehoe, David Clark, Robert Vance, Damian Ferrari

Chief Executive Officer: Jim Nolan

Director Asset and Development Services: Douglas Gowans

Director of Corporate and Community Services: Kathy Bramwell

EA to CEO and Councillors: Chantelle Sandlant (minutes)

Communications Officer: Rebecca Stewart

2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

Mayor Cr Ron Eason read the livestream preamble.

3. OPENING PRAYER

The Mayor read the Opening Prayer.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor acknowledged the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respect to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the elders and people of these tribes on whose land we meet today.

5. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

6. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

Cr Robert Vance declared of conflict of interest (indirect) in relation to item 13.2.1 - Re-naming Landsborough Road to Amarant Road between Ararat-St Arnaud Road and Stawell Avoca Road.

Cr David Clark declared of conflict of interest (direct) in relation to item 13.3.2. - MAV Membership.

7. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Damian Ferrari

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18 July 2023 as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

CARRIED

8. BUSINESS ARISING

Nil.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no questions submitted for public participation question time.

10. ITEMS FOR NOTING

10.1. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

10.1.1. FLOOD RECOVERY UPDATE

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jane Bowker – Flood Recovery Coordinator

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 28/14/50

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on recovery activities arising from the October and November 2022 flood events.

BACKGROUND

The Council approved the Pyrenees Flood Recovery Plan at its meeting on 21 February 2023. The Plan has been developed to coordinate the flood recovery operation and provide an implementation framework and reporting mechanism. It has been designed to evolve over time and has the community at its core.

Oversight of the implementation of the actions and tasks in the plan will be the responsibility of the Flood Recovery Team with support from Council staff and other recovery agencies.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Recovery is continuing with a strong focus on supporting community recovery which is community-led and incorporate the needs and desires of the broad and diverse communities. Whilst there is still support being provided to residents such as material aid, accommodation, clean-up and financial assistance, community-led initiatives are currently being planned with community members, neighbouring councils, and recovery agencies.

The attached Flood Recovery Plan Summary of Review details the status of recovery actions and some of the key outcomes, to date, are:

- Council's Flood Recovery Officer, Windermere Services staff and staff from the Department of Fairness, Families and House continue to provide outreach services to support residents apply for funding, clean-up and make referrals for psychosocial support. The 6 - 8 month mark following the floods saw a rise in residents reaching out for support.
- Landmate teams continue to repair fencing on private properties across the municipality.
- Thorough planning to repair the Council's infrastructure such as roads and culverts is continuing with \$8M work of works required. In conjunction with Council's capital works program, repair works well underway with 12% of works completed and a further 19% coordinated. 20% of emergency works have been completed with a further 37% coordinated. Regular updates on the works appear on the Council's website, in the Noticeboard and in the Flood Recovery Newsletter.
- The Flood Recovery Newsletter continues to be distributed monthly.
- Council staff have been working with community representatives, government departments and insurers to reinstate the community assets. Repair works on the Beaufort Scout/Guide Hall have commenced. The repair work on the Avoca Men's Shed is now complete. Repair works on the Avoca Recreation Reserve complex are nearing completion and as a great resilience measure, the air conditioning and solar power units have been raised so prevent future damage (funded by DEECA).

- Applications have been submitted under the Risk & Resilience Grant for funding to investigate mitigations for the Avoca Recreation Reserve and Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally site.
- First internal recovery/resilience network meeting held to bring together events and initiatives being organised by different departments.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Priority 2 - Place

2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Residents, farmers, sporting/recreation groups and business owners have been contacted either by Council or Windermere Services (on behalf of Council) as part of providing recovery support. There has been ongoing engagement with government agencies and organisations in planning and coordinating the response, relief, and recovery efforts. Consultation and engagement will continue for how long it is required, ensuring the community is fully supported in their recovery.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 15.08.2023 - PSC 2022 Flood Recovery Plan Status Report [**10.1.1.1** - 16 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There has been a significant risk to public safety caused by the October and November flood event. In addition, there has been widespread damage to public and private assets, and substantial personal hardship caused to individuals and businesses. There is a significant financial risk to Council if the recovery effort is not managed carefully.

CONCLUSION

There has been some good progress made on key recovery areas as detailed in the summary. Council is actively continuing with recovery and is also looking at resilience initiatives. Council would like to thank all the community members, businesses and organisations who have helped with the recovery efforts so far. Flood recovery is a big job and takes time, and efforts have been really appreciated.

Cr Robert Vance / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

10.1.2. CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS - JULY 2023

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/08/04

PURPOSE

This report provides updates on contacts made by our community through a range of media, including the Customer Action Request System and emails, for July 2023. This report's purpose is to show efforts to improve responsiveness to customers and the community and to seek the Council's feedback on the change in reporting.

BACKGROUND

Our community contact officers through a range of means, including but not limited to:

- Customer Action Request System (CARS)
- Emails – directly to officers or via the central pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au email address
- Via telephone or face-to-face with Council's switchboard or front counters
- Complaints
- Requests for information via Freedom of Information (FOI) processes
- Social media

The Council has operated an electronic Customer Action Request System (CARS) for many years enabling residents to lodge service requests. Requests can be lodged in person, via telephone, via Council's website or by using a smart phone "Snap Send Solve" application. Requests input via the "Snap Send Solve" application must be input manually by customer service officers into the CAR (Customer Action Requests) system as this currently does not accept automatic uploads.

Service requests are received for operational issues regarding maintenance, road maintenance, pools, local laws, building maintenance and compliance matters. Complaints are received and managed separately to action requests and monthly checks are made of customer action requests to identify requests that should be managed as complaints.

Requests logged through the customer action requests system form a minority of the contacts received by Council officers monthly, however, remain an important method of identifying where problems exist that need to be addressed.

Council has noted a declining trend in customer satisfaction over the past 10 years and this report will be reformatted over the next few months to expand information on officer response to community contact to demonstrate efforts made to reverse this trend.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER CONTACT

For years, reporting on customer contact has been limited to customer action requests (CARs). This limited report does not provide a proper indication of the number and type of customer contacts received and provides a skewed impression of officers' response to such contact. It is intended, therefore, to expand this monthly report to include other types of contact and, over time, demonstrate where improvements have been made to customer service and responsiveness.

Statistics on direct face-to-face contact will be developed and built upon over the next few months.

Customer contact media	June 2023	July 2023
Emails received by organisation	42,906	94,409
External complaints received	0	3
FOI Requests for information	2	1
Requests for review of infringements	1	1
Website page views	25,724	17,970*
Website users	5,190	5,472
Website contact us page	681	645
Website customer enquiry form	n/a	54

*under-reported due to platform changes

Comments:

- Emails remain a growing source of customer contact, taking significant time and resources to manage. The increase in July may be linked to the end of the financial year.
- FOI Requests continue, primarily through one organisation submitting one per month, starting in May 2023. Searches associated with FOI requests can impose significant workload pressures on staff if the request is complex.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS

This report will continue the provision of information relating to customer action requests:

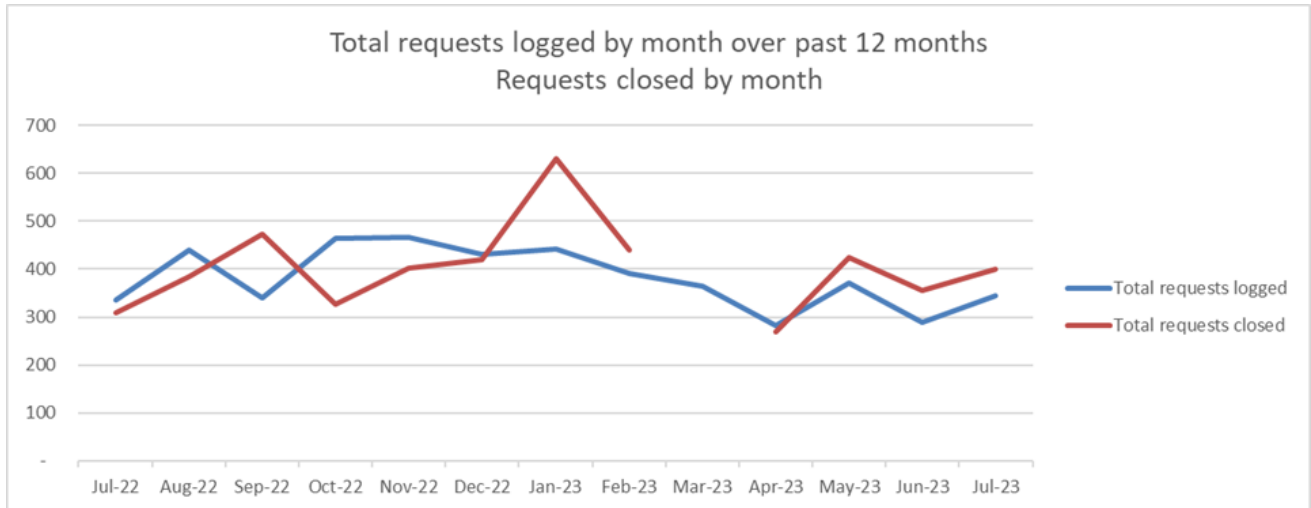
1. Logged and closed requests

344 CARs (Customer Action Requests) were logged in June 2023, 56 more than the previous month. Of these, 117 related to telephone messages.

397 requests were closed during the month, demonstrating the ongoing effort officers are making to maintain focus on addressing and closing requests.

The following charts detail the numbers of requests received over the last 12 months and the number of requests closed each month.

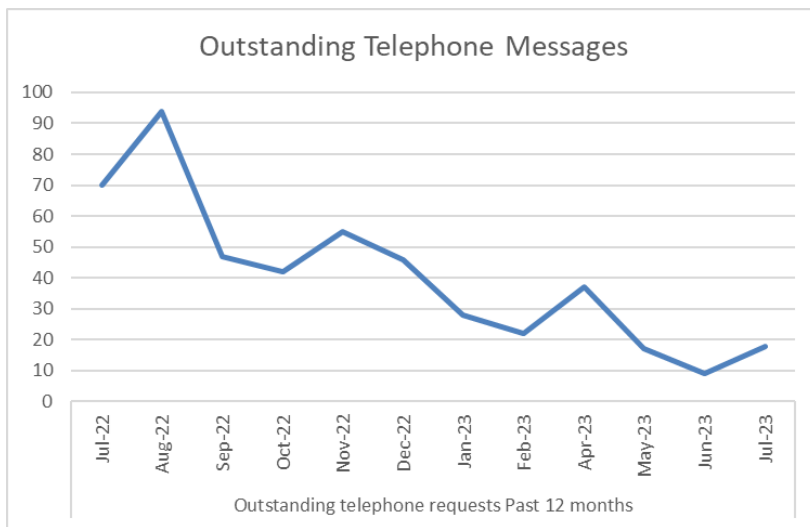
Year	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	% Change
Total requests logged	335	439	339	464	466	431	441	390	364	282	372	288	344	22%
Total requests closed	309	384	473	327	403	421	630	440		269	424	356	401	49%



2. Telephone requests

117 telephone calls were transferred into requests in May 2023, with 18 requests remaining outstanding at the end of the month. The following charts detail the trend in telephone calls remaining outstanding at the end of each month.

Outstanding telephone requests Past 12 months											
Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
70	94	47	42	55	46	28	22	37	17	9	18



3. Open Customer Action Requests

The number of open requests is now reported differently. Some requests that have had initial contact with the customer but are unable to be resolved quickly for some reason, are now being moved to being 'on-hold' and some may be referred to budget (e.g., long term drainage issues).

At the end of June 2023, there was a total of 291 (last month 344) active or open requests. These include:

- 139 which are open and assigned for action
- 142 which are on hold awaiting resolution or action scheduling
- 2 which have been referred to budget
- 3 which are in progress – meaning that they are longer term case managed issues
- 2 others which are being managed.

Referred to budget – two requests were referred to budget relating to:

1. A request for future maintenance by Council of the Wayside Reserve at Avoca Lead – a wayside stop that was established and formerly maintained by Avoca & District Landcare (Avoca Ward).
2. Culvert installation required in Spring Flat Road, Glenlofty, where the unsealed road was washed out (De Cameron Ward).

In progress – three requests remain in progress, with initial contact made but resolution taking some time:

1. A discussion on changing the speed signs around the Amphitheatre Primary School. This matter is being managed by Engineering Services and a site visit to inspect the existing signs is planned.
2. Crowding of the pool car carpark at the Beaufort Council Offices is causing some issues. The number of pool cars will be reviewed in July.
3. A request to consider installation of culverts in MacMillans Lane, Beaufort.

On hold – 142 requests were on hold as at the end of July. In general, these relate to matters that have had initial contact and require additional work or case management, or have been put on a schedule for action - e.g.,

- Complex local law matters, mostly relating to shipping containers or dog complaints.
- Road improvement requests.
- Flood impacts / Natural disaster.
- Long term drainage works.

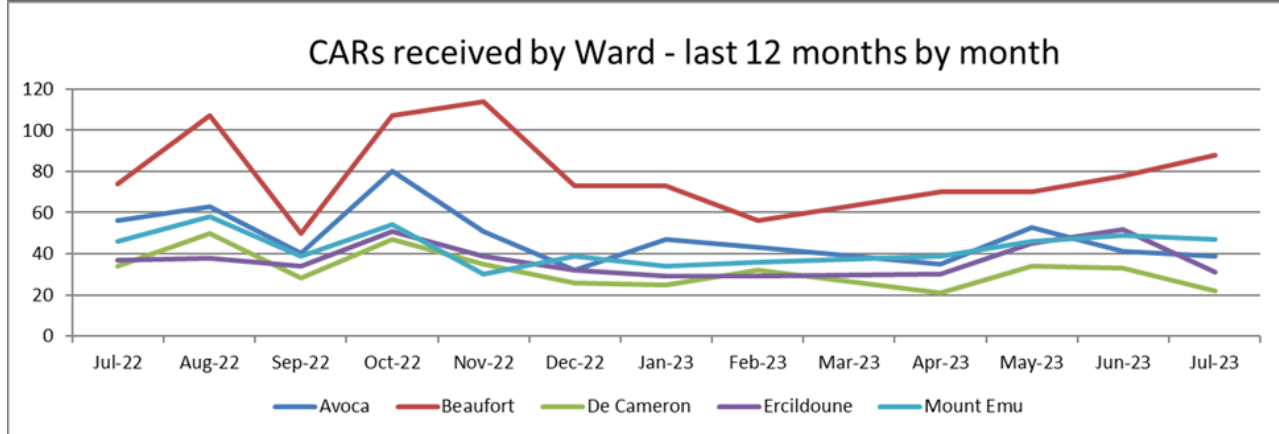
Open requests – the balance of this report will focus on the open requests as previously, but statistics relating to requests marked as on-hold or referred-to-budget have been included in the table.

Of the non-telephone call requests received in July, the following represents those received and still open at the of the last month by Ward:

	Avoca Ward	Beaufort Ward	DeCameron Ward	Ercildoune Ward	Mt Emu Ward
Number of requests received in July 2023 (previous month)	39 (41)	88 (78)	22 (33)	31(52)	47 (49)
Requests received in July and closed in the same month (%)	18 (46%)	69 (78%)	16 (73%)	18 (58%)	34 (72%)
Requests received in July remaining open and assigned for action	18	15	6	9	10
Requests received in July on-hold awaiting final works or resolution	2	3	0	2	3
Requests received in July referred to budget	0	0	0	0	0
Total open (assigned) requests as at the end of June 2023	25	24	15	20	19

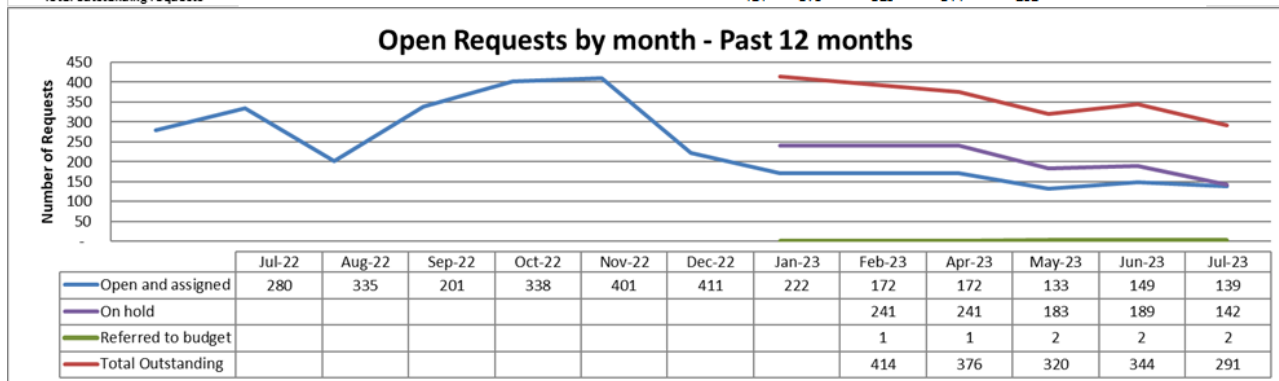
The following charts show the numbers of requests received by Ward per month for the past 12 months.

CARS by Ward received by month Rolling - Past 12 months												
Ward	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Avoca	56	63	40	80	51	32	47	43	35	53	41	39
Beaufort	74	107	50	107	114	73	73	56	70	70	78	88
De Cameron	34	50	28	47	35	26	25	32	21	34	33	22
Ercildoune	37	38	34	51	39	32	29	29	30	45	52	31
Mount Emu	46	58	39	54	30	39	34	36	39	46	49	47
Total by month	247	316	191	339	269	202	208	196	195	248	253	227

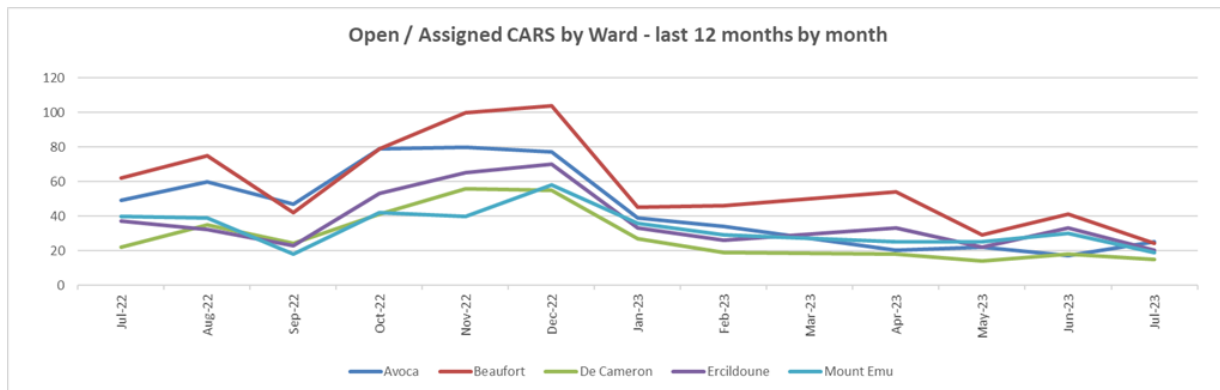


The following charts show the statistics for requests that remained open each month for the past 12 months. Over future months, these charts will start reflecting numbers of requests that are transferred to on-hold or referred-to-budget status.

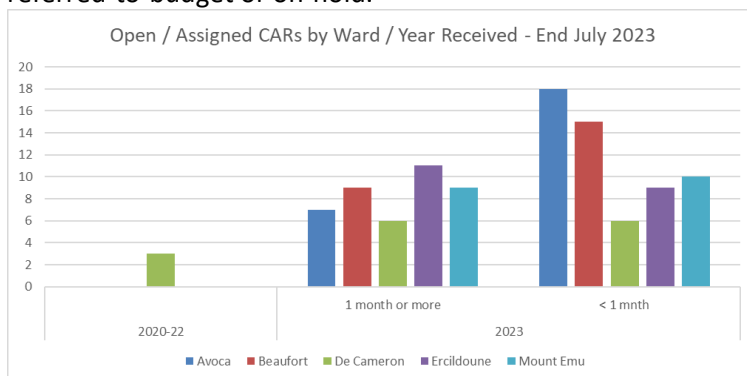
Open requests by age																
Year	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	% Change	On hold	Referred to Budget	
2013																
2020	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1				
2021	21	20	16	15	12	12	-	-	2	4	3	-	-100%	2	1	
2022	258	314	184	322	389	399	131	45	19	115	114	19	-83%	62	1	
2023	-	-	-	-	-	-	91	127	164	201	227	119	-48%	78	-	
Open and assigned	280	335	201	338	401	411	222	172	185	133	149	139	-7%	142	2	
Outstanding but on hold								241	190	183	189	142	-25%			
In progress - longer term										2	4	4	0%			
Other outstanding												4	#DIV/0!			
Referred to budget								1	1	2	2	2	0%			
Total Closed	309	384	473	327	403	421	630	440	269	424	324	397	23%			
Total requests logged	335	439	339	464	466	431	441	390	282	372	288	344	19%			
Total outstanding requests								414	376	320	344	291				



Open Assigned Requests by Ward - Past 12 months												
Ward	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23
Avoca	49	60	47	79	80	77	39	34	20	22	17	25
Beaufort	62	75	42	79	100	104	45	46	54	29	41	24
De Cameron	22	35	24	41	56	55	27	19	18	14	18	15
Ercildoune	37	32	23	53	65	70	33	26	33	22	33	20
Mount Emu	40	39	18	42	40	58	36	29	25	25	30	19
Total by month	210	241	154	294	341	364	180	154	150	112	139	103



The following chart shows the open assigned requests by Ward as at the end of July 2023, excluding those referred-to-budget or on-hold.



The following table provides greater detail of the areas / type where outstanding requests remain, showing the functional areas and numbers of requests still outstanding as at the end of the last month. This data includes those referred-to-budget or on-hold.

Open request - Type			
	Jun-23	Jul-23	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	104	79	-25
Streetlights	2	4	2
Drainage	16	17	1
Footpaths / Kerb&Channel	2	2	0
Park & Reserves	5	7	2
Roadside Veg	14	12	-2
Environmental Health	5	3	-2
Planning	6	7	1
Bld maint	10	8	-2
Local Laws	31	23	-8
Cats	2	4	2
Dogs	9	8	-1
Livestock	4	2	-2
Parking	0	2	2
Fire Hazard	1	2	1
Bld Compliance	0	1	1
Waste Management	0	0	0
Local Government Act	0	0	0
Rates	2	1	-1
Natural Disasters	119	86	-33
Pools	0	0	0
Council cleaning	2	1	-1
Litter	1	2	1
Design & Assets	0	1	1
GIS	0	0	0
Community	0	0	0
Rural Addressing	0	0	0
Road Naming	0	1	1
Telephone messages	9	18	9
Total	344	291	-53

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement
- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report did not require any community engagement or consultation, other than that provided via this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All risks are discussed in the body of the report.

CONCLUSION

The customer action request system remains an integral part of Council’s reactive identification of issues that need attention. This report provides an update on customer action requests as at the end of July 2023. Reporting is being expanded over future months to include other media of customer contact officers receive.

Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS**11.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - JULY 2023**

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
11 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11 July	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Raglan
18 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
18 July	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward		
5 July	Meeting with Minister Horne	
7 July	MAV Board Meeting	Virtual
11 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11 July	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Raglan
14 July	Rural Councils Victoria Forum	Echuca
18 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
18 July	Council Meeting	Beaufort
25 July	Foreign Interference Roundtable	Melbourne
27 July	Hepburn Shire Positive Ageing Expo	Trentham
27 July	Minister Horne Forum on Public Disruption at Council Meetings	
31 July	ALGA CEO Recruitment	Sydney
Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward		
11 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11 July	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Raglan
14 July	Rural Councils Victoria Forum	Echuca
18 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
18 July	Council Meeting	Beaufort
20 July	Timber Towns Victoria Position Paper Meeting	Virtual
28 July	Rural Councils Victoria Committee Meeting	Virtual
Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward		
7 July	CHCV Mayors / CEO Meeting	Ballarat
11 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11 July	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Raglan
14 July	Rural Councils Victoria Forum	Echuca
18 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
18 July	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
6 July	MEMPC Meeting	Virtual
11 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
11 July	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Raglan
18 July	Council Briefing	Beaufort
18 July	Council Meeting	Beaufort

Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

12. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS**12.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - JULY 2023**

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	11 July 2023 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 4.30pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upcoming Funding Programs 2. Beaufort Pool 3. Ausnet 4. Memberships 5. Road Register Review 6. Agenda Review 7. Works Tour – Beaufort Lake and Footpath 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Ron Eason Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe		Cr David Clark Cr Robert Vance
Apologies	Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Tim Day (Manager Assets) - item 5 Mitchell Biggin (Technical Officer, Assets) - item 5		
Visitors	Carlee Grant, Ausnet – item 3 Jeff Rigby, Ausnet – item 3		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
3	Cr David Clark	Affected landowner	No
4	Cr David Clark	President of MAV	No

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	18 July 2023 commenced at 3.00pm and closed at 5.30pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	1. Swimming Pool Season 2022/23 2. Interim Financial & Performance Audit 3. Potential Renaming of Blackfellows Lane 4. Burke Street Land 5. Agenda Review		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Ron Eason Cr Damian Ferrari (<i>arrived at 3.20pm</i>) Cr Tanya Kehoe		Cr David Clark Cr Robert Vance
Apologies	Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Jerry van Delft (Team Leader – Community Development & Project Management) - item 1 Martin Walmsley (Manager Community Wellbeing & Development) – item 1 Lachlan Steed (Work Experience Student) – item 1 Glenn Kallio (Manager Finance) – item 2		
Visitors	Nil.		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
5	Cr David Clark	Item 13.4.1 on Council Meeting Agenda – MAV President	No
5	Cr Robert Vance	Item 13.4.1 on Council Meeting Agenda – Council representative on committee listed.	No

Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

13. ITEMS FOR DECISION

13.1. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

13.1.1. CO2 EMISSIONS MONITORING

Presenter: Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 30/18/06

PURPOSE

This report seeks to provide Council with Co2 emissions data relating to the consumption of utilities in the previous 12-month period to provide a benchmark in Council's pathway to reduce emissions.

BACKGROUND

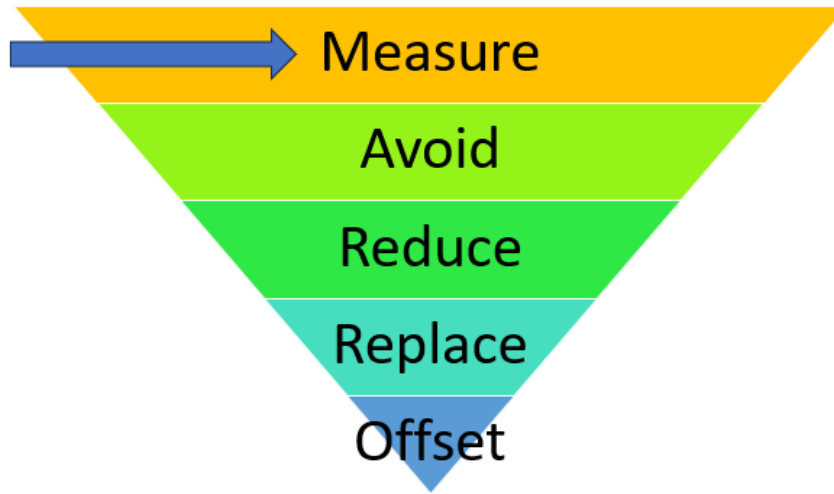
A 2018 report commissioned by Council showed that most of Council's Co2 emissions are associated with fleet, plant and stationary energy consumption from Council's buildings. In 2021 Council adopted the Climate Change Response and Mitigation Action Plan and together with Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) a significant number of sustainability projects were undertaken to reduce Council's Co2 emissions, including solar panel installations, LED street light implementation, signing up to 100% GreenPower (electricity sourced from renewable energy) and auditing and retrofitting of 8 Council buildings.

The conversion to 100% GreenPower automatically reduced Council's Co2 emissions by approximately 25%.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

In 2022 Council implemented Co2 monitoring software Trellis. Generated through Council's financial systems, the web-based platform is used to collect, interpret and act on data produced by transactions, providing an accurate corporate carbon footprint and a measured baseline to commence Council's journey to reducing carbon emissions.

The first step in Council's journey to net zero is to have an accurate measure of the existing carbon footprint to be able to identify where improvements can be made. With each step along the journey this will require Council to follow the industry adopted methodology as demonstrated in the diagram below. The implementation of the Trellis software data has allowed Council to move into the "Measure" stage of this journey, outlined in the below diagram.

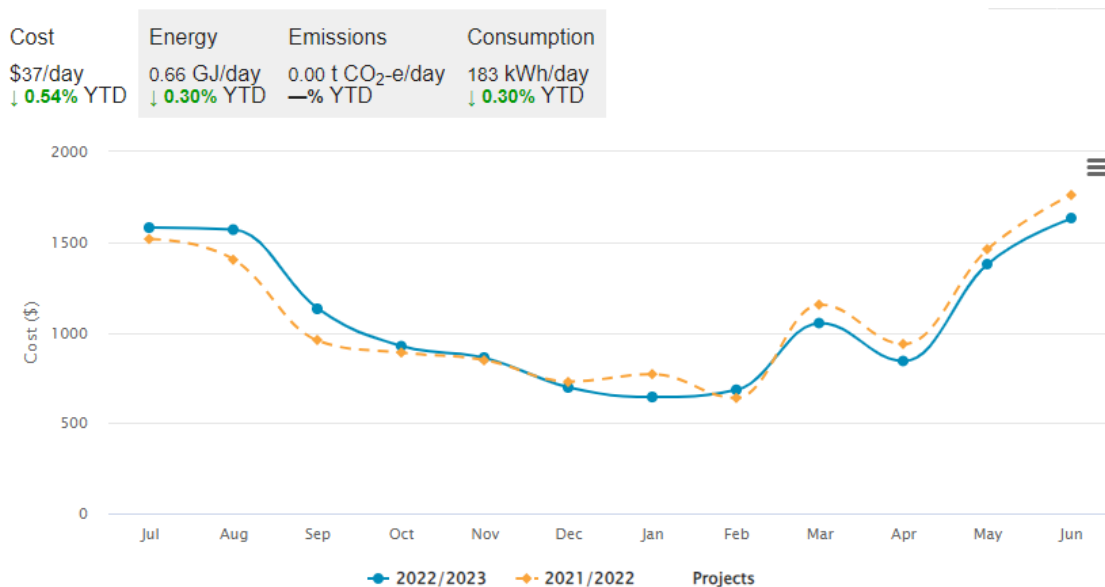


Monitoring each site and asset class within Council’s control helps to identify how various energy sources are used, including the time of year, which can assist in identifying improvements. The software provides graphs for all sites. A few examples are provided in this report to demonstrate what information is being collected. The data captured will also highlight any anomalies to be identified. Spikes in certain areas will assist Council Officers to conduct investigations and identify areas requiring repair or upgrade.

Lawrence Street Office

The current electricity use comparison for the Beaufort Shire office from July 2022 to June 2023 shows a small reduction in costs from the previous year. The graph also shows at what times of year Council is using more electricity, which may relate to the higher generation of energy from solar during the sunnier parts of the year and may also relate to the fact that heating of the office requires more energy.

Based on the floorspace and the number of people that work in the Lawrence Street office the cost is reasonably low (\$37 per day) due to recent initiatives such as the lights upgrade, improvements to insulation and heating and cooling systems upgrades. The 100% Greenpower initiative and therefore use of electricity sourced from renewable energy allows Council’s Co2 emissions to remain at 0.00.



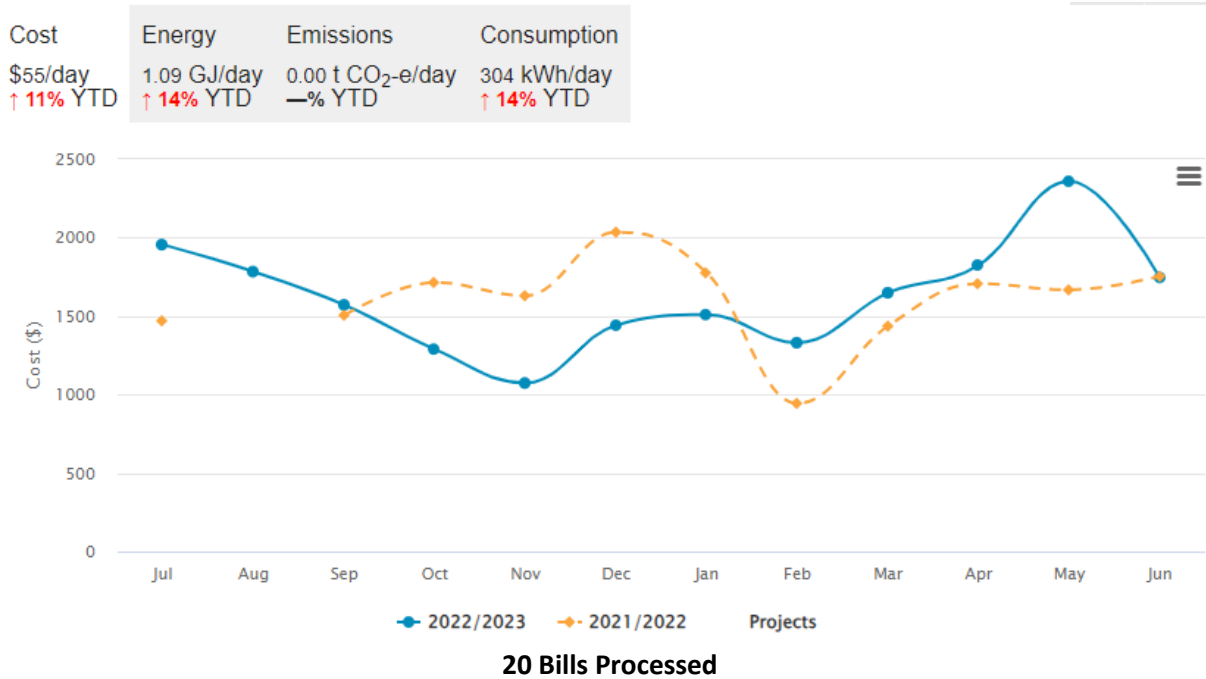
12 Bills Processed

Summary data

Total cost	\$ 12,992
Total consumption	64,661 kWh
Emissions	
Scope 1	0 t CO ₂ -e
Scope 2	0 t CO ₂ -e
Scope 3	0 t CO ₂ -e
Total emissions	0 t CO ₂ -e

Beaufort Lake Caravan Park

The data presented for the energy consumption and Co2 emissions for the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park highlights some areas for improvement to reduce costs and Co2 emissions such as better insulated cabins creating less reliance on heating and cooling mechanisms and improved lighting.



Summary data

Total cost **\$ 19,535**

Emissions

Scope 1 **0 t CO₂-e**

Scope 2 **0 t CO₂-e**

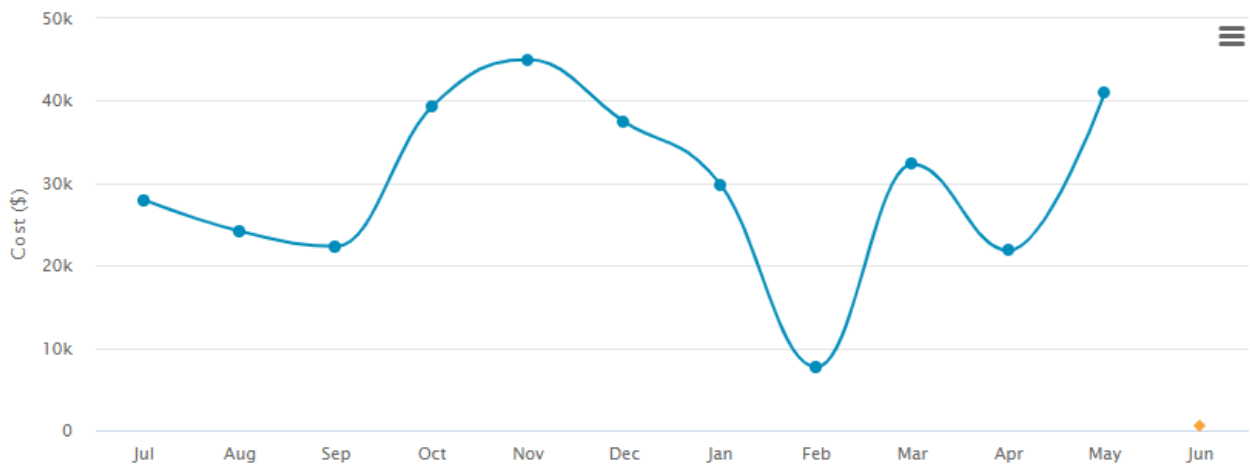
Scope 3 **0 t CO₂-e**

Total emissions **0 t CO₂-e**

Fleet

The Pyrenees Shire Council fleet transport fuel costs are currently being measured at the total cost of \$328,833.00 and 577 tons of Co2 emissions.

Cost	Energy	Emissions	Consumption
\$932/day	19 GJ/day	1.64 t CO ₂ -e/day	494 L/day
—% YTD	—% YTD	—% YTD	↑ 71848% YTD



797 Bills Processed

Summary data

Total cost	\$ 328,833
Total consumption	174,451 L
Emissions	
Scope 1	463 t CO₂-e
Scope 2	0 t CO₂-e
Scope 3	114 t CO₂-e
Total emissions	577 t CO₂-e

A comparison of the transport fuel data will be available in the next financial year.

Council officers will continue to measure and track emissions data across the areas of electricity consumption and fuel costs and provide updated comparisons to Council on a regular basis.

The next step in the data capturing of Co2 emissions is to transfer actual costs in other areas from the previous 22/23 FY into equivalent carbon emissions. This will enable tracking and a possible reduction in costs in these areas of emissions categories as well as providing a total emissions figure for the organization.

The emissions categories are as follows:

- Accommodation
- Cleaning and chemicals
- Construction materials and services
- Food and catering
- Horticulture and agriculture
- ICT services and equipment
- Machinery and vehicles
- Office equipment and supplies
- Postage, courier and freight
- Products such as clothing and first aid supplies
- Professional services
- Roads and landscape
- Waste

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 3 - Environment

3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The community engagement that contributed to developing the council plan put a strong emphasis on environmental protection and action on climate change resilience.

Council has shown through the various CO2 reduction programs that it is committed to climate action. Council continues to support the community regarding the impacts of climate change by promoting actions that are replicable.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Climate change presents a significant economic threat to the community with increases in energy costs and the impact from extreme weather events on communities and Council assets. By measuring the emissions and cost of operation, Council can better identify ways of reducing emissions and therefore costs.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Trellis software is a big step on the pathway to Co2 emissions reduction. The accurate measuring of data allows Council to assess the current costs and emissions of the organisation's operations.

Cr David Clark / Cr Robert Vance

That Council:

1. Notes this report.
2. Commits to further reports being presented once more data has been collected.

CARRIED

13.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Prior to the following report being presented and discussed, Cr Vance, having declared an interest, left the room at 6.16pm

13.2.1. RENAMING LANDSBOROUGH ROAD TO AMARANT ROAD BETWEEN ARARAT-ST ARNAUD ROAD AND STAWELL AVOCA ROAD

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 58/08/08

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to adopt a unique name for a road which currently has the duplicate name of Landsborough Road.

Road - Proposed name – Amarant Road – Landsborough.

This road services around 20 properties, most of which are not residential. This section of road is in an area that is not included in any of the current aboriginal corporation's areas of interest.

BACKGROUND

The above duplicated road name has been identified through a road name auditing process; Council resolved at a meeting on 21st February 2023 to rectify this by seeking an alternative name for this section.

Public consultation seeking alternative names for this section consisted of the following: -

1. Letters to all affected landholders seeking alternative names
2. Landsborough Noticeboard
3. Posting of consultation process on Council Website
4. Email and letter to Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (closest to this road)
5. Advertisements in local press.

No response was received from the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation in the consultation period.

One response was received from an affected landholder. When contacted the respondent was able to supply Council with a document, that had been researched by the local historical group, supporting the proposed name of Amarant Road. Below is a summary from that document.

Amarant family of Wattle Creek from research compiled by BRETT LESLIE from LANDSBOROUGH & DISTRICT HISTORICAL GROUP

Manoel D'Azevedo de Sousa Amarante (1328-1906) emigrated from The Azores, a group of small islands situated in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, to Australia in 1853. He arrived aboard the schooner 'Water Lily, as part of a 'Gold Expedition'. Manoel could read and write but his command of English was questionable. It is unknown as to where Manoel went immediately upon his arrival in the colony however by 1862 he was mining at Barkly..... The first mention of him being in Landsborough was in 'Landsborough

Times', October 1868 advertising that he partnered with William Jeffery to construct a quartz crushing machine. It might just be mentioned here that the original spelling of Amarant as used today by the family, was 'Amarante'. Over the years it has been spelt various ways including 'Amaranth' and 'Amaranthe' On 28 November 1871, some 18 years after arriving in Australia, Manoel sought naturalisation and became a British subject. Perhaps this was necessary to be eligible to be a land selector. On 13th July 1873 Manoel Amarant and Mary O'Connor were married in the home of Andrew McNamara by John Hogan, a Roman Catholic clergyman.....Manoel and Mary selected approximately 700 acres and settled in Wattle Creek where Manoel continued to operate a quartz crusher and farm, Manoel and Mary's eleven children were all born in Landsborough over a twenty-year period from 1874-1894. There are many descendants of Manoel and Mary living in the surrounding districts, especially Stawell and Ararat. The Amarant family are related to other families in Landsborough District including Falvey, Lennon, Mulcahy, Hogan, French, Hanley, Devery, Start, and Vance. This includes fourth generation descendants still occupying the family home in Wattle Creek.

A second letter containing the above summary was given to all landholders offering them the opportunity to object to the proposed name of Amarant Road. Following the statutory consultation period, no objections were received.

This name reflects one of the earlier multicultural examples of the people moving into and contributing to the development of the Pyrenees area.

This name has been checked against the Principles of the Naming Rules for Places – 2022 and complies. The name has been submitted by a local descendant of this family.

Once adopted, the Council then submits the name to Geographic Names for formal consideration and approval. Only after that approval can Council formally place signage, change addresses, and use the new name.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Creating unique road names and addresses is important for public safety and the delivery of goods and services to all properties. With the difficulty of replacing a duplicated name with a unique one, the name 'Amarant' that has some local historical relevance seems appropriate for this road.

Additionally, unique road names are required for the Municipal Public Road Register as each road needs a unique name to clearly identify which road requires maintenance or improvement, to reduce the risk of Council or contractors working on the wrong road and to provide high standard of customer service by being able to clearly identify which road customers have concerns with.

This section of road is a sealed road connecting Landsborough to other towns so will retain the type of 'Road'.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 4 - Economy

4b. Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Public consultation seeking alternative names for this section consisted of the following: -

1. Letters to all affected landholders seeking alternative names
2. Landsborough Noticeboard

3. Posting of consultation process on Council Website
4. Email and letter to Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (closest to this road)
5. Advertisements in local press.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risks identified in not naming the roads according to the principles.

1. Increased possibility of emergency service vehicles not locating a property in a timely manner
2. Increased difficulty clearly identifying road assets and properties.

Costs to Council after adoption by Geographic Names

1. Administration to change property addresses, requiring letters to landholders, editing council systems, editing Vicmap Address
2. Purchase and installation of two street blades on poles at each end of this section of road and removal of any signs indication old road name that might be there now.

CONCLUSION

1. Road 1 - Proposed name – Amaranth Road – Landsborough
2. Nineteen properties (42 Landholders) consulted by letter – resulting in no objections.

As there were no objections, Council proceeds with supporting this road name so it can be lodged with Geographic Names for approval and adoption.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr David Clark

That Council:

1. Adopts Amarant Road as the road name for the road currently known as Landsborough Road between Ararat-St Arnaud Road and Stawell Avoca Road.

CARRIED

Cr Vance returned to the room at 6:18pm.

13.2.2. HEALTH SAFETY & WELLBEING POLICY

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/24/17

PURPOSE

The report seeks Council adoption of the updated Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy 2023.

BACKGROUND

The Council has an obligation under Occupational Health & Safety legislation to maintain a safe workplace.

As part of the activities to meet this obligation, Council must maintain a policy that articulates the intention of the Council in this regard.

Council's existing Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy was due for review in 2023.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council's Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy was scheduled for review in 2023 and after this review was completed in July 2023, it was submitted to the Health Safety & Wellbeing and Risk Management Committees for consideration and approval.

The review resulted in minor changes being made to the Policy to maintain its currency with legislative obligations.

Adoption of the updated policy is now requested.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Consultation was conducted with relevant members of the internal community, including the Health Safety & Wellbeing and Risk Management Committees. As the policy was reviewed as part of Council's scheduled processes and no major changes were made, it is considered that no additional consultation was required.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2023 [**13.2.2.1** - 4 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Legal obligations exist if a current policy is not maintained.

CONCLUSION

The scheduled review of the Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy was completed and the updated policy is now provided to Council for consideration and adoption.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Adopts the updated Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy.

CARRIED

13.2.3. COUNCIL PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

Presenter: Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/20/06

PURPOSE

This report provides the Council with an end of year progress report on actions planned to deliver the strategic goals and priorities identified in the Council Plan 2021-2025 for the financial year 2022/23.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with section 90 of the Local Government Act 2020, the Council adopted the Council Plan 2021-2025 at its Ordinary Meeting on 19 October 2021. The Council Plan outlines how the Council will work toward implementing the 10-year Community Vision.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 is framed around four strategic priorities, plus enabling principles:

1. People
2. Place
3. Environment
4. Economy

In February 2022, the Council approved the operational projects and priorities for the next two years, designed to support the implementation of the Council Plan.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Work continues to progress implementing the multi-year operational initiatives designed to support the delivery of the Council Plan 2021-2025, ensuring that delivery of the Council Plan remains foremost in the minds of all officers and business units.

At the end of June 2023, the Council Plan is at its mid-term point of delivery.

The attached report provides a progress update against the Pyrenees Shire Operational Council Plan 2021-2025 as at the end of June 2023. Of the 66 priority actions detailed in the Council Plan, 60 (91%) have commenced. The six priority actions not commenced are:

- *Enabling Principles, (a) Motivate and inspire community involvement, item 5: Annual report to a community consultative group to review the implementation of the Community Vision:* This will be done in late 2023.
- *Priority 1 People, (c) Improve accessibility and inclusivity, item 8: Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:* Implementation of this was subject to appropriate funding being available, which has not arisen.
- *Priority 1 People, (c) Improve accessibility and inclusivity, item 9: Develop an Accessibility Strategy:* Implementation of this was subject to appropriate funding being available, which has not arisen. Council officers will convene a working party during 2023/24 to determine what can be achieved within existing budget parameters regarding accessibility and inclusion.
- *Priority 2 Place, (a) Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities, item 2: Identify priorities and seek support to identify, preserve, and protect heritage assets:* Implementation of this was subject to appropriate funding being available, which has not arisen.






- *Priority 2 Place, (c) Promote responsible development, item 10: Adopt and apply principles around sustainable growth and development within townships: Requires project funding to develop and deliver policy and scheme incorporation.*
- *Priority 3 Environment, (c) Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values, item 9: Ensure that the implementation of Roadside Management Strategy considers and enhances biodiversity regeneration: A review of the Roadside Management Strategy is planned for 2023/24 which will incorporate enhanced biodiversity regeneration.*






Progress against priorities is summarised below:




Priority Section	Completed and/or ongoing	In progress	Outstanding / not commenced
Enabling Principles	8	3	1
Priority 1: People	11	5	2
Priority 2: Place	6	2	2
Priority 3: Environment	11	1	1
Priority 4: Economy	11	2	0


Performance against measures is included within this report and is provided below.






Enabling Principles: Measure		Target	Status
1	Percentage of Council decisions made at meetings open to the public	Maintain to at least 90%	86% The number of decisions made in closed Council meetings is limited to essential confidential items only, relating to personal or business in confidence matters
2	Attendance by Councillors at Council meetings	95% or higher	98.57%
3	Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	Maintain at 55% or above	50% This score level was expected for 2023 and strategies are being implemented to increase over the next few years
4	Online Engagement Hub	At least 12 new engagement activities per annum	8 published on the Engagement Hub
5	Social media activity – Number of followers on Facebook	Increase to 2,500	2,816
6	Face-to-face engagements with communities by Councillors / senior officers – community cuppa events	Held in at least 20 localities over a 2-year period	18 sessions held, 16 different localities over 2 years. 2-year period impacted by COVID-19 with 4 months unable to meet in 2021/22.






7	Responses to Customer Action Requests (CARs)	Maintain open CARs below 300	2022/23 Average = 234.50 2 months during the year were over target.	
8	Average rate per property assessment	Maintain below average for small rural councils	Pyrenees - \$1,511 Local Government Performance Reporting to enable comparisons to be made unavailable until October 2023	
9	Rates as a percentage of underlying revenue	Under 50%	PSC 60.71% Local Government Performance Reporting to enable comparisons to be made unavailable until October 2023	
10	Annual percentage of staff turnover	Maintain below 15%	15.9%	
11	Report to Council on health of organisation through Workforce Plan	Annually	Briefing provided to Council by officers on 8 November 2022.	

Priority 1: People Measure		Target	Status	
1	Municipal Emergency Management Plan passes external audit	June 2023	Due to be submitted in August 2023 On track	
2	Visits to resource centres	Maintain or increase by 5% per year	21/22 - 27,239 22/23 - 35,173 29% increase over the financial year	
3	Participation in active ageing social support programs	Maintain at least 85 active clients	64 active clients This program will change over the coming financial year following the exit from funded aged care programs.	
4	Participation in Maternal & Child Health Service	90% or higher	92.95%	
5	Community satisfaction with arts centres and libraries	Increase from 69%	70%	





Priority 2: Place Measure		Target	Status	
1	Planning applications decided within required timeframes	At least 90%	97.48%	
2	Community satisfaction with appearance of public areas	Maintain to at least 70%	65%	
3	Number of townships with Framework Plans	At least 1 new annually	No new plans developed – work focused on implementing current plans	
4	Community satisfaction with recreational facilities	Maintain to at least 69%	65%	

5	Community satisfaction with enforcement of Local Laws performance	Maintain to at least 62%	61%	
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Priority 3: Environment Measure		Target	Status	
1	Number of climate change or environmental projects involved in or supported	At least 3 significant actions	2 x Integrated Water Projects EV Charging stations in Avoca and Beaufort Council involvement with CVGA projects	
2	Community satisfaction with waste management and recycling	Maintain to at least 66%	69%	
3	Percentage kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	Increase to at least 50%	43.59% This is a target to be achieved over multiple years. Good performance in 2022/23 increasing from 24.3% in the previous year.	
4	Cost of kerbside garbage collection service per bin	Maintain below average for small rural councils	\$171.89 Local Government Performance Reporting to enable comparisons to be made unavailable until October 2023	
5	Number of trees planted	500 per year	530 – half were amenity plantings around townships, the other half were biodiversity plantings along roadsides.	

Priority 4: Economy Measure		Target	Status	
1	Km of roads gazetted for high-productivity vehicle accessibility	Increase by at least 50km per year	2022/23 bridge construction: total 43.65km <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carngham Streatham Road – 17.98km Raglan Elmhurst Road – 25.67km 	
2	Number of new dwellings in the municipality per year	50	47 dwelling building permits issued	
3	Rate of unemployment	5% or lower	3.7% Victoria; 3.5% Australia	
4	Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards	Maintain to at least 95%	99.93%	
5	Asset renewal and upgrade as a percentage of depreciation	At least 80%	149.51%	

Measures Status Legend:

			
Achieved target	Not achieved	Almost there	Not yet due or available

The report has been structured for clarity, utilising brief commentary to provide a snapshot of progress. The status of the initiatives scheduled for the financial year is identified against each individual item and it should be noted that some items cross multiple years.

Recommendations for change:

It is recommended that consideration be given to changing the following measures:

- **Priority 1-People, measure 3: Participation in active ageing social support programs, target to maintain a minimum of 86 participants.** With Council’s exit from funded aged care programs as of 1 July 2023, it is recommended that this measure be discontinued and that a new measure be implemented around active ageing when the new program is developed and adopted.
- **Priority 2-Place, measure 3: Number of townships with Framework Plans, target to increase by 1 each year.** It has generally been stated by our communities that more work should be done on the implementation of plans rather than just more planning. The current focus in this area is to implement the Framework Plans already completed, which meets this community expectation. It is, therefore, recommended that this measure be changed to reflect the number of implementation actions commenced or completed.

There are six priority actions that have not yet commenced in the 2022/23 reporting year. These include four priorities identified as needing funding to progress, which at this midway point in the Council Plan have not materialised. It is considered that funding for this type of work is unlikely to be available during the balance of the current Council term and the following changes are recommended:

- **Priority 1 People, (c) Improve accessibility and inclusivity, item 8: Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.** It is unlikely that funding will be available for this type of activity over the balance of the Council term and, as this is an additional task for Council officers without such funding, it is recommended that this Priority be discontinued and remove from the Council Plan.
- **Priority 1 People, (c) Improve accessibility and inclusivity, item 9: Develop an Accessibility Strategy:** It is unlikely that funding will be available for this type of activity over the balance of the Council term. However, it is considered that this is of sufficient importance to the community that it is recommended to continue with this priority and convene an internal working party during 2023/24 to determine what can be achieved within existing budget parameters regarding accessibility and inclusion.
- **Priority 2 Place, (a) Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities, item 2: Identify priorities and seek support to identify, preserve, and protect heritage assets.** It is unlikely that funding will be available for this type of activity over the balance of the Council term, and it is recommended that this Priority be discontinued, other than the support provided already through community grants, and removed from the Council Plan.
- **Priority 2 Place, (c) Promote responsible development, item 10: Adopt and apply principles around sustainable growth and development within townships.** This requires project funding to develop and deliver policy and scheme incorporation. It is unlikely that funding will be available for this type of activity over the balance of the Council term and there is so much strategic planning work underway that there remains insufficient capacity for Council officers to deliver this priority. It is recommended, therefore, that this Priority be discontinued and considered for re-inclusion within the Council Plan development for the next Council term.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report serves as part of the Council's regular communications to communities on the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-2025, which is closely aligned with the Community Vision 2021-2031.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Council Plan Progress Update EOFY Report 30 June 2023 [13.2.3.1 - 22 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Any risk implications are discussed in the attached report.

CONCLUSION

The Council adopted the Council Plan 2021-2025 in October 2022 and approved the operational activities that support its delivery in February 2022. This report provides a progress update on those activities as at the end of the 2022/23 financial year – 30 June 2023 and makes recommendation for changes to the Council Plan for 2023/24.

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr David Clark

That Council:

1. Considers and accepts the end of year Council Plan Progress Report as of 30 June 2023.
2. Seeks to report back to the community members that participated in the deliberative engagement to inform the Community Vision, and seek to hold an appropriate event with the community members to discuss the implementation progress
3. Considers and approves the following recommendations for change to the Council Plan priorities:
 - a. To discontinue the measure: *Participation in active ageing social support programs*.
 - b. During 2023/24, to consider inclusion of a new measure around participation of the community in active ageing programs to be developed.
 - c. To change the measure: *Number of townships with Framework Plans (target 1 new annually)*, to *Number of framework plan implementation activities commenced* with the target number to be determined.
 - d. To discontinue and remove from the Council Plan for 2022/23 the Priority: 1 People, (c) *Improve accessibility and inclusivity, item 8: Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*, due to funding and capacity unavailability.
 - e. To discontinue and remove from the Council Plan for 2022/23 the Priority: 2 Place, (a) *Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities, item 2: Identify priorities and seek support to identify, preserve, and protect heritage assets*, due to funding and capacity unavailability.
 - f. To discontinue and remove from the Council Plan for 2022/23 the Priority: 2 Place, (c) *Promote responsible development, item 10: Adopt and apply principles around sustainable growth and development within townships*, due to funding and capacity unavailability.

CARRIED

13.3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

13.3.1. MEMBERSHIP - RAIL FREIGHT ALLIANCE (RFA)

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 64/10/12

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider whether to continue membership with the Rail Freight Alliance (RFA).

BACKGROUND

The Rail Freight Alliance (RFA) is made up of rural, regional and metropolitan municipalities in Victoria. The Alliance was first formed in 1997 due to growing frustration with the lack of rail connectivity both within Victoria and with the neighbouring states and the lack of investment in Victoria's antiquated 19th century rail freight system.

The Alliance's Mission is to advocate for:

- *Rail standardisation of key rail lines in Victoria*
- *Upgrading and connecting to a National Rail Freight Network*
- *A competitive, independent and open access rail freight system*
- *Seamless freight logistics that will facilitate efficient rail freight movement*
- *A competitive, independent and non-discriminatory Open Access rail freight system in Victoria;*
- *A seamless freight logistics that will facilitate the movement of bulk freight by rail, rather than by road.*

The benefits for Local Government from the achievement of the above objectives will be:

The facilitation of regional economic development through having an efficient, competitive and connective rail freight system. Significant social, environmental and economic community benefits derived from having fewer bulk haulage trucks on our roads.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The primary role of RFA has been to advocate for investment in rail to get more freight off roads and onto rail. This benefits Pyrenees by reducing truck impact on roads and reducing truck traffic through small towns. It also provides freight efficiencies benefiting the agriculture sector and Victoria's global competitiveness.

Since RFA was formed there has been significant investment in regional rail freight infrastructure by government including more recently:

- \$800M investment in the Murray Basin Rail project
- \$30 million Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS)
- \$181M capital upgrade program
- The Port of Melbourne Rail Transformation Project
- \$130M Freight passenger rail separation project

There are also significant current projects underway, all of which are detailed on the Department of Transport and Planning website:

<https://dtp.vic.gov.au/ports-and-freight/rail-freight-network>

The RFA has advocated strongly on many of these projects over many years and ensured that local government and rural communities are well represented at the various stages of development including the planning, funding and delivery.

This advocacy is evident in the range of submissions made on related matters over the years which are publicly accessible.

RFA has required member funds to undertake this work to administer the work, to undertake research, and for the development of advocacy pitch documents such as their Policy Statement document which can be accessed on their website:

https://railfreightalliance.com/downloads/RFA_Policy_Statement_17.pdf

Included in their policy statement is the policy to advocate for the Standardisation of the Victorian Rail Freight Network which is represented in the map below.

CURRENT VICTORIAN RAIL NETWORK MAP



While the work of RFA advocating on the matter of rail freight is ongoing, the matter of passenger rail is also a significant issue for Pyrenees and one that requires Council attention to advocate for infrastructure and services that benefit our residents. This advocacy, while linked, is generally outside the charter of the RFA. Council has current relationships with Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC) and Committee for Ballarat (CfB) which both have a passenger rail advocacy agenda.

There is an ongoing benefit to Pyrenees in maintaining membership with RFA for reasons outlined above, and there is still much more investment needed. The issue for Pyrenees to consider is whether this need warrants the financial membership ongoing given that the matter of Rail Freight is a responsibility of other government. Council's membership is current for the 2023/24 period; however, it is suggested that Council consider giving notice to RFA of intention to not continue with membership beyond 30 June 2024 in the context of Council's current financial constraints.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The Chief Executive Officer for RFA, Reid Mather maintains contact with Council and earlier this year attended a briefing of Councillors on RFA activities.

Mayor, Cr Eason has been Council's representative on the committee and participated in meetings and activities with the Alliance.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The membership fee for RFA for 2023/24 is \$3,756.50 was paid in May 2023.

CONCLUSION

The RFA has been a strong and successful advocacy alliance for many years advocating to government for improved rail freight. Government has increased its investment in rail infrastructure, and while there is an ongoing role for advocacy for ongoing investment, it is suggested that Council consider giving notice to RFA of intention to not continue with membership beyond 30 June 2024 in the context of Council's current financial constraints.

Cr David Clark / Cr Robert Vance

That Council:

1. gives notice to RFA of intention to not continue with membership beyond 30 June 2024 in the context of Council's current financial constraints

CARRIED

Prior to the following report being presented and discussed, Cr Clark, having declared an interest, left the room at 6.39pm

13.3.2. MEMBERSHIP - MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV)

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 44/04/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider continuation of membership with Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

BACKGROUND

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is a membership association and the legislated peak body for Victoria's local councils.

The MAV was formed in 1879, with the [Municipal Association Act 1907](#) officially recognising MAV as the voice of local government in Victoria.

The MAV purpose is to advocate for local government interests; build the capacity of councils; protect and support the viability of councils; promote the role of local government and deliver insurance services to local government.

MAV's role is to:

- Represent and advocate local government interests
- Promote the role of local government
- Build the capacity of councils
- Facilitate effective networks
- Provide policy and strategic advice
- Support councillors
- Provide insurance and procurement services.

MAV has a set of Rules which were reviewed and revised in 2022, and a Strategic Plan 2021-25 which was developed is reviewed in consultation with its members.

MAV has a Chief Executive that leads a skilled organisation to provide services to members, and a Board elected by the members. Pyrenees Councillor, Cr David Clark is the current President.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The work of MAV is well documented and summarised in the document attached to this report. Given the breadth and complexity of activity local government, the 79 Councils in Victoria consider membership as an essential means of undertaking the work needed to get the best outcomes for communities.

A summary of Member Benefits is contained in the Member Benefits Report attached and copied in part below.

Pyrenees Shire Council



2022 MEMBER BENEFITS REPORT

YOUR MAV SUBSCRIPTION PROVIDES:

- A national voice:** your membership entitles you to access to ALGA, as the MAV pays the fees for Victorian local governments. Only members of the state association can participate in ALGA including the national general assembly.
- Stakeholder engagement:** our extensive work representing local government provides unparalleled insight and influence for member councils. In the last year, we had more than 200 key stakeholder meetings with ministers, members of parliament, ministers' officers and senior departmental staff to discuss and provide input on issues of importance for the sector. This access was invaluable during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide information to and from councils responding to public health restrictions.
- Policy and advocacy:** expert analysis and data on the critical issues facing the sector is available via our Members' Only Briefs. We also partner with experts to examine the challenges faced by the sector and share recommendations. Additionally, we lodged 23 submissions to parliamentary enquiries, royal commissions and on government policy making a vital contribution to the State and Federal governments' strategy development, discussion papers and proposed changes to legislation.
- Sector representation:** the MAV represents – or nominates representatives – on 77 external committees and other bodies. Representation on these committees provides an important opportunity to present local government views and input as well as advocate and influence policy outcomes. Similarly, MAV representative regional forums allow for consideration of issues at a regional level for members.
- Governance support:** we host State Council and regional meetings as well as provide for Board elections, meeting administration and support to the sector. Our members can access confidential support and advice on their roles, responsibilities and compliance with the LG Act. We also have an online MAV Governance Network Forum to build connections and share knowledge, information and resources. We connect with IGV, VEC, IGI, IBAC and Ombudsman, and make submissions on matters affecting the sector. This year's State Council meetings will be held on 19 May and 13 October.
- Councillor development:** we offer an annual Mayoral Induction program for new and returning mayors and our Councillor Development Program offers a range of learning and development opportunities to assist councillors build the skills and knowledge required to effectively perform their role as prescribed in the Local Government Act 2020. Training is offered online and in person, and includes Discrimination, Bullying & Harassment; Sexual Harassment Prevention; Strategic Planning and Decision Making; Land Use Planning & Building; Meeting Procedures; and Presentation and Public Speaking Skills.
- Councillor acknowledgement:** we recognise councillors long service to their communities via the annual Councillor Service Awards and Mayor Emeritus Award.
- Emergency management:** the MAV team supports, represents and advocates on behalf of its member councils in numerous State-led forums regarding emergency management.
- MAV Procurement contracts:** member councils save on subscriptions through the collective purchasing assistance of the MAV. Non-member councils can expect to pay much more for their subscriptions to – for example – SAI Global for electronic standards updates and VM Ware for disaster recovery and backup services. Other contracts spend is in Street Lighting, ICT Professional Services, Telecommunications, Call Handling, Bill Payment Services, Office Supplies, Unaddressed Mail, Media & Marketing, Parks & Playground Equipment, and Corporate Clothing.
- Conferences and events:** we present almost 200 events annually including the Councillor Development Program. The vast majority are exclusive to our members and more than 12,000 registrations from across Victoria creates exceptional networking and information-sharing opportunities for staff and councillors alike. Our conference program includes the MAV Technology Conference, the MAV Annual Conference, the Rural & Regional Planning Conference, and the Smart Urban Futures Conference. The biannual MCH conference now attracts more than 1,500 council staff and offers insights into best practices for early years.
- Sector-wide communications:** MAV member-only newsletters provide information, analysis and advice not available via other means. This includes the weekly *CEO Connect* as well as *CEO Alert* and *President's Alert* on demand for urgent and important matters. On a monthly basis, *MAV Analysis* and *MAV What's On* inform mayors, councillors and CEOs about issues and events while the weekly *Council Communications Update* details current local and state communication campaigns including summer preparedness and severe weather events.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The Pyrenees Councillor Delegate for MAV is Cr Robert Vance who participates in and votes at State Council meetings.

MAV undertakes many engagement events and activities to maintain close connection with its members.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2022 Member Services Report - Pyrenees [13.3.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. MAV Strategy 2021-25 [13.3.2.2 - 20 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The annual membership fee with MAV for Pyrenees is \$22,506.

CONCLUSION

Council is looking to make financial savings in the context of a significant financially constrained environment. This has led Council to systematically review its various memberships.

Given the many benefits outlined in this report, ongoing membership is considered good value for the membership fee, and ongoing membership is recommended.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Notes the benefits of membership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, and
2. Continues its membership with the Municipal Association of Victoria.

CARRIED

Cr Clark returned to the room at 6:44pm.

13.3.3. MEMBERSHIP - WESTERN HIGHWAY ACTION COMMITTEE (WHAC)

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 64/10/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider continuation of membership with the Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC).

BACKGROUND

The Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC) was formed in early 2000, with members from local councils located along the Western Highway corridor from outer Melbourne to the South Australian Border. The Committee has the following Objectives:

- 2.1 To pursue the upgrading of the Western Highway to achieve improvements to safety, transport efficiency and amenity.*
- 2.2 To lobby and obtain allocations of Government Funding for the implementation of approved strategies for the construction, planning and maintenance of the Western Highway.*
- 2.3 To investigate the relationship between all transport systems linking Adelaide with Melbourne through the Western Highway Corridor and collaborate with other groups and agencies in improving these links.*
- 2.4 To liaise with and support Local Government with initiatives and actions relating to bypass issues of the cities and towns along the Western Highway.*
- 2.5 To support and assist in the implementation of Highway enhancement programs and strategies for economic, tourism and employment opportunities available along the Western Highway.*
- 2.6 Encourage the implementation of programs for the appearance, presentation and serviceability of the Highway facilities.*
- 2.7 To support a sound consultative approach in managing the balance between improving highway safety and the environment.*
- 2.8 To promote the design objective for upgrades to the Western Highway to be for freeway standards, including bypasses of towns and cities, to achieve a suitable consistent design speed that is safe and assists transport efficiency, supporting the dual outcomes of a “Towards Zero” approach to road casualties and the economic benefits of improved freight efficiency.*

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC) has been a strong advocacy committee for many years with a great deal of success in advocating to government for investment in improvements to the Western Highway. Since its inception, the committee has comprised officer and councillor representatives from the participating councils as well as officers from the Department of Transport and Planning (VicRoads), and with Horsham Rural City acting as the secretariat for the group.

WHAC has used member fees to fund research and prepare advocacy documents to assist in its work. One of the more significant pieces of work commissioned by WHAC was the technical work completed by SKM consultants which lead to commitments from state and federal governments for the duplication of the Western Highway from Ballarat to Stawell. While stages 2 and 3 of the duplication are still to be completed, the construction of stage 1 Ballarat to Beaufort has significantly improved access and safety for Pyrenees residents.

Further evidence of success was the role of WHAC in the commitment and completion of the Deer Park Bypass. WHAC has also supported Pyrenees in its advocacy over the Beaufort Bypass.

More recently, WHAC has successfully driven the need for improved safety at Beaufort through the installation of speed / red light camera installation which has been completed in recent weeks.

As population grows and transport on the route continues to increase, there is an ongoing role for advocacy to continue to ensure the Western Highway attracts the appropriate commitment and funding from government, and to ensure road freight and passenger transport needs are met.

Improvements to the Highway still requiring attention include:

- Completion to the Beaufort Bypass
- Planning and upgrade to remove congestion from Melton to Caroline Springs
- Planning and upgrade to remove speed restriction east of Ballarat
- Improved standard of Maintenance for safety and ride.

Given the extent of work still required, and the importance of road connectivity for our community, it is suggested that there is an ongoing role for WHAC and ongoing membership is recommended.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Pyrenees representation on the committee comprises Director Assets and Development Services and Councillor Damian Ferrari.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Currently there is no annual fee associated with WHAC membership.

CONCLUSION

Given the extent of work still required on the Western Highway, and the importance of road connectivity for our community, it is suggested that there is an ongoing role for WHAC and ongoing Pyrenees membership is recommended.

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Robert Vance

That Council:

1. Having considered the importance of the Western Highway to our communities and the extent of improvement work still needed, continues its membership with the Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)

CARRIED

13.3.4. ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT DATA

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 52/04/20

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide details on the Essential Services Commission (ESC) Council fact sheets on the outcomes of rate capping.

BACKGROUND

The ESC's 2023 report on the outcomes of rate capping in Victoria identifies any impacts or trends that might be emerging across the local government sector since the introduction of rate capping.

The outcomes report provides information about councils' service, infrastructure and financial outcomes, and a comparison with other similar sized Victorian councils. The reports are compiled from the various financial and performance reported data up to the end of the 2021/2022 financial year.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The full details of the findings can be accessed online at: [Local Council outcomes report 2023 | Essential Services Commission](#)

Attached to this report are the findings for Pyrenees Shire and a separate report on the combined findings for small rural councils.

The 19 small shire councils in this grouping comprise the following LGAs:

Alpine, Ararat, Benalla, Buloke, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Hepburn, Hindmarsh, Indigo, Loddon, Mansfield, Murrindindi, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Queenscliffe, Strathbogie, Towong, West Wimmera, Yarriambiak.

Key findings from the 2023 outcomes report include:

- Ratepayers have paid lower rates than they would have done in the absence of rate capping. However, it is noted that the experience of individual ratepayers varies, as factors outside the rate capping system (such as relative property values and differential rates) continue to determine the annual change in rates for each individual ratepayer.
- Ratepayers have paid more in service charges each year, due to changes in the waste market and the introduction of new waste services by some councils.
- While there was a deterioration in the sector's financial health, in general, it remained sound. Performance of individual councils varied, and some councils may face some difficult decisions to maintain their long-term sustainability as inflation persists.

When comparing to 2021/2022 outcomes of Pyrenees with the small rural council group, the following observations are made:

Revenue from all sources comprised:

	Pyrenees \$m	Small Rural Council (ave) \$m
Rates and Charges	12.4 (45%)	15.4 (44%)
Fees and Fines	1.1 (4%)	2.1 (6%)
Grants	13.8 (50%)	16.1 (45%)
Contributions and other	0.3 (1%)	1.7 (5%)
Total Revenue	27.7	35.4

Average Rates and Charges	1,787	2,026
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Expenditure

Operating Expenditure:	17.8 (66%)	23.5 (69%)
Employee cost	9.1 (34%)	12.0 (35%)
Materials and Services	8.4 (31%)	10.1 (30%)
Other	0.3(1%)	1.4 (4%)
Capital expenditure:	9.3 (34%)	10.7 (31%)
Total	27.1	34.2

Areas Where council spent its money on:

Aged and disabled services	1.1 (5%)	1.3 (4%)
Business and economic services	2.3 (10%)	3.1 (10%)
Environment	1.4 (6%)	0.9 (3%)
Family and Community Services	0.6 (3%)	1.7 (6%)
Governance	7.0 (30%)	7.5 (25%)
Local Roads and Bridges	5.9 (25%)	7.9 (27%)
Recreation and Culture	2.3 (10%)	4.0 (13%)
Traffic and street management	0.7 (3%)	0.8 (3%)
Waste Management	2.2 (9%)	2.6 (9%)
Other	0.0 (0%)	0.1 (0%)
Total	23.5	29.9

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 2 - Place

2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The data used in this report is compiled by the Essential Services Commission compiled from the various financial and performance reported data up to the end of the 2021/2022 financial year.

ATTACHMENTS

1. ESC - LG Outcomes 2023 Factsheet - Pyrenees [13.3.4.1 - 7 pages]
2. ESC - LG Outcomes 2023 Factsheet - Group Small Shire [13.3.4.2 - 8 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The data contained in the reports provides a view of Councils financial sustainability.

CONCLUSION

These reports provide useful data for Council's long term financial and service planning.

Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Note the data contained in these reports, and
2. Look to use the data in future community engagement and for financial and service planning where appropriate.

CARRIED

13.3.5. LEGISLATIVE REFORM IMPACTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 44/02/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on some recent legislative reform impacting the Local Government Sector.

BACKGROUND

With more than 200 pieces of legislation, regulation, or associated standards, guidelines, codes of practice and Ministerial Directions that govern the activity of local government, it is critical that the sector and individual councils have sufficient visibility of change and reform as it occurs.

This report touches on some current matters relevant to council core activity and is outlined here for Council's awareness.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Circular Economy

The Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021 (CE Act) is now in place and provides for stronger regulation of the state's waste and recycling sector for more and better recycling, less waste and landfill. The Act provides for Victoria's transition to a sustainable circular economy, including enabling laws for the new container deposit scheme and state-wide four-stream household waste and recycling system with mandatory provisions for local government.

The Act also established the new Recycling Victoria entity, a dedicated government business unit to oversee and provide strategic leadership for the waste and recycling sector. Recycling Victoria (RV) will deliver state-wide stewardship, planning, regulatory and market oversight functions. RV's plan includes the development of regulations and service standards that will determine how services are to be delivered by councils.

Importantly for Pyrenees, while the four-bin system (and three bin system for rural areas) was introduced in 2021, the provisions that are in development are likely to influence future service standards including for the food and organic waste stream which has the potential to impact on the cost of service for residents. Given the wide-ranging implications it is proposed that a further more detailed report on the reforms be brought to a future Council Meeting.

Building Control

The City of Port Phillip received judgement recently by the Supreme Court involving a case that limits the powers of municipal building supervisors (MBS) to issue building orders for minor works (whether building work or protection work) that do not fall under the Building Regulations 2018.

This decision impacts the enforcement powers of councils, the responsibilities of building owners, the safety and health of the occupants, and the broader community.

The limitation relates to the enforceability of works to be undertaken relating to building safety. The City of Port Phillip is advocating for greater safety through raising public awareness among councils to influence policy and decision makers.

Other legislative reforms have been introduced in 2023 that introduce a new statutory position of State Building Surveyor.

Planning Reform

The Victorian Planning System is legislated under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 that provides framework involving planning schemes which form the rules for land use planning development administered through Councils as the responsible authorities.

The Victorian government has foreshadowed significant reforms to modernise the system to meet current development pressures particularly relating to population growth and demand for housing and energy. Further reforms have also been recommended by IBAC in its Operation Sandon report.

Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Amendment Bill

This Bill was introduced into Victorian Parliament in June 2023 and its purpose is to “*amend the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 to modernise the regulatory approval processes for exploration, mining and quarrying industries in Victoria.*”

The Bill will improve the management of risks associated with minerals and quarry operations by a primary duty to eliminate or, if not possible, to minimise the risks of harm so far as is reasonably practicable. This will replace the existing obligations on operators to submit and comply with a ‘work plan’ specific to each operation. It will deliver a simpler and more flexible regulatory framework by streamlining processes for the submission, assessment and determination of regulatory approvals for operating mines and quarries.”

While extractive industry quarry activity currently requires a work plan to be approved and enforced by Earth Resources Department, these quarries also are also subject to planning approval from councils. There is some concern in the local government sector that the proposed provisions may see an unintended shift of responsibility to local government.

The range of issues identified in this report further highlights the importance of peak bodies such as the MAV to have oversight and to advocate on behalf of the sector.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 2 - Place

2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Legislative reforms have varying levels of input from the sector and broader community.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Legislative reform can have a significant financial impact on council and requires oversight and scrutiny.

CONCLUSION

This report raises some current legislative changes relevant to local government requiring oversight and input by the sector to ensure a consistent voice and improved outcomes for communities.

Cr Robert Vance / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Continues to work with peak bodies including the Municipal Association of Victoria to ensure appropriate scrutiny and advocacy on key legislative reform proposals including those outlined in this report.
2. Receives a further report on the Circular Economy reforms at a future Council Meeting.

CARRIED

13.3.6. ROAD MANAGEMENT

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 58/08/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide information on road responsibilities and undertake community engagement on aspects of road management and maintenance.

BACKGROUND

Council's biggest expenditure function is in the maintenance and construction of its local road network. Depending on the level of capital expenditure in any year, Council spends between 25% and 40% of its annual budget directly on the road asset. The network comprises over 2000km of sealed and unsealed roads.

The Road Management Act 2010 and associated regulations and codes provide the legal framework and Council's Asset Management Plan and Road Management Plan sets out the road hierarchy, inspection and maintenance regime and service standards.

The Roads Register is a publicly accessible register of all roads managed by Council.

The Council local road network is part of the total road network that provides transport links for public access to property and places and for the transportation of goods.

Council engages an independent assessor to assess the condition of the assets every four years and this assessment is used to inform decisions about Council's annual renewal and capital improvement program.

Funding for the various maintenance and renewal programs is primarily through the rates and commonwealth funding including Federal Assistance Grants, Roads to Recovery (R2R) and program specific funding such as the Local Road and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP), Bridges Renewal Program, Black Spot Program or Natural Disaster Recovery Fund (NDFA).

The Victorian government through the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) is responsible for the management and maintenance of the freeway and arterial road network (listed in the VicRoads Register of Public Roads).

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

There exists within our community, considerable confusion about which roads Council is responsible for and which roads are the responsibility of others.

A Map of DTP Roads is accessible online at <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/traffic-and-road-use/road-network-and-performance/maps-of-declared-roads>

Within the Pyrenees Shire, roads managed by DTP include:

- Western Highway
- Sunraysia Highway
- Glenelg Highway
- Pyrenees Highway

- Beaufort –Skipton Road (including Park Road in Beaufort)
- Beaufort Lexton Road (including Lawrence Street in Beaufort)
- Ballarat –Carngham Road (to Carngham)
- Lexton-Talbot Road
- Stawell-Avoca Road
- Ararat-St Arnaud Road
- Maryborough-St Arnaud Road

Within the urban areas, while DTP has coordinating road responsibility, and maintenance responsibility for the through carriageways, Council has responsibility for some associated road infrastructure such as footpaths, medians, street trees urban drainage signage etc. within the total road reserve. The limits of these responsibilities are detailed in the Code of Practice - Operational Responsibility for Public Roads. Which can be accessed online at <http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2017/GG2017S174.pdf>

A Map attached to this report is a colour coded map that shows local and DTP roads, and this map is also accessible on Council's website at <https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/Community/Roads#section-2>

The annual Community Satisfaction Survey of Pyrenees residents confirmed that the maintenance of sealed and unsealed roads is among the most important services that Council provides, and yet rank among the lowest in terms of community satisfaction. While the confusion among residents about responsibilities is a factor in the survey results, there is nevertheless a need for council to be proactive in engaging with the community on roads to look to better meet the community expectations within the limits of Councils financial capacity.

It is proposed that Council undertakes information and engagement sessions across the shire during 2023 to provide an opportunity for residents and ratepayers to share views and understandings about roads, and for the community to have input into how Council spends the funds it has available on the road network.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 4 - Economy

4b. Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The community provides regular feedback to council on its performance in maintaining the road network through community cupper events, the annual community satisfaction survey, and through reporting customer action requests (CARs).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Road Responsibility Map [**13.3.6.1** - 1 page]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council spends between 25% and 40% of its annual budget directly on the road asset, and given the increasing financial constraints, it is important that Council seeks to spend the limited funds it has in the most cost-effective way.

CONCLUSION

Confusion exists within the community about the limits of Council’s responsibilities for roads within the shire, and given the relative importance to the community, it is proposed that Council undertakes targeted engagement across the shire on the management and maintenance of Council s sealed and unsealed road network.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr David Clark

That Council:

1. Continues to inform the community through various means about its local road management and maintenance activities, and
2. Undertakes targeted engagement across the shire on the management and maintenance of Councils sealed and unsealed road network.

CARRIED

13.3.7. OPERATION SANDON

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

Declaration of Interest: As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.

File No: 16/23/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide details on the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission's (IBAC) Operation Sandon Special Report.

BACKGROUND

Operation Sandon is an investigation into allegations of corrupt conduct involving councillors and property developers in Melbourne's south-east. The report also examines the effectiveness of Victoria's systems and controls for safeguarding the integrity of the state's planning processes.

The full report can be accessed online here [Operation Sandon special report | IBAC](#)

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

IBAC has made 34 recommendations including:

- That an inter-departmental taskforce be established to be responsible for (among other things) the implementation of the recommendations
- Changes to the planning processes, including the development of independent planning panels for significant planning matters
- Changes to the recruitment and employment of council CEOs to give greater consistency and independent oversight
- That the Minister for Local Government develop and maintain a Model Code of Conduct and model governance rules including better practice provisions to apply to all councils.

The report was tabled in Victorian Parliament on 23 July 2023 and the government will now consider the matter before making a formal response.

There has been wide discussion on the matter within the sector and the wider community, and Council may wish to consider any appropriate action in light of the recommendations made, and it is suggested that the report be presented to Council's Audit and Risk Committee for consideration.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 2 - Place

2c. Promote responsible development.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Councillors and officers continue to engage across the sector on Operation Sandon.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 5.5.1 - IBAC Operation Sandon special report - recommendation summary 2023 [**13.3.7.1** - 10 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Significant risks to councils relating to fraud and corruption have been identified through the investigation.

CONCLUSION

Operation Sandon has identified significant corrupt conduct involving councillors and property developers in the City of Casey, and following its investigation, IBAC has made 34 recommendations for the sector to prevent future similar corrupt activity.

Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Refers the Operation Sandon report and its recommendations to councils Audit and Risk Committee for consideration.
2. Continues to engage with the sector and relevant oversight agencies to develop and implement appropriate measures and controls to mitigate future corruption risks in the sector.

CARRIED

14. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Vance

- Attended a Rural Councils Forum in Echuca. I was very proud of the fact that our CEO had the opportunity to present to the forum on the Correa Park project that Council completed. It really created a lot of interest at the forum and a lot of people were asking questions about the project.
- Prior to the actual forum we had the opportunity to go and inspect the wharf at Echuca, the water has got within two inches of the highest ever recorded in history at Echuca. When the Campaspe river met the Murray the water was flowing back up the Murray. It isolated paddle boats in little areas off to the side of the river and they were still sitting there when we were there. It was very interesting just to see the enormity of the amount of water that was coming down those rivers three weeks after the actual rain event. We are fortunate in one aspect in the Pyrenees that when the rain falls it falls heavy and gets away quick.
- Attended a virtual Timber Towns Position Paper meeting, the paper has now been completed. It was interesting to know that the decision of the government to close all of the forest to hardwood timber selection has now created extreme hardship to Gippsland. We have one timber mill here in Beaufort which is still important to the community and as I understand it employs seven people and when they run out of timber shortly, they are going to close their mill. In Gippsland, in towns like Swifts Creek and Orbost there are whole towns of timber working families that are out of jobs and as they are going to become welfare towns and that is a pretty hard pill to swallow for those people, I really do feel sorry for them.
- I attended an RCV meeting, one of the things that was mentioned was regarding Freedom of Information Requests that are coming forward to small rural councils. It is creating quite a deal of hardship and that is something that is going to be pursued by our executive. As one would understand, when you are required to provide this information, it takes people away from other jobs that they are doing in the business, and it is a bit frustrating.
- Attended the cuppa at Raglan and had quite a good attendance.
- I wish to thank the outdoor staff and the contractors for the work that they have done on our flood damage, it took a long time to get around to it but as people don't understand, we have got to get all of the approvals before we get the funding to do the work.
- Finally, I wish to let other councillors know that Wal Henning passed away ten days ago and was buried at Mount Cole last Thursday. I thank Robert John for letting me know that it had happened, I went along to the funeral, there were very few people there, that was his wish. A man that was a pioneer of our viticulture industry in the top end of the shire and a character in his own right, it was disappointing to see 20 people there to say goodbye.

Cr Kehoe

- I would like to remind residents about our community funding program, applications for the program will open on Friday 8 September, and close on Monday 23 October. Those of you interested may like to start preparing for them as soon as possible. With these funds, Council has committed to supporting local community groups, organisations, and businesses to deliver projects and activities that help our whole shire. The grants are offered for events, projects, equipment, minor capital works and one-off programs and activities. Information is available on our website, and I encourage you to make the most of those grants.
- Our latest community cuppa was at the Lake Goldsmith Hall last week. Residents raised a lot of essential concerns and in particular, road maintenance and the rating system. We had a lot of valuable discussion, and we thank those people who attended. We were really looking at issues like prioritising effective grading practices to protect our roads, looking at drainage practices and how we can better

protect our roads. Just to re-iterate, committing to running engagement sessions in relation to roads in order to improve is such an important thing across the shire.

- With the time of the year and the weather conditions, be very careful on the roads and please always drive to the conditions. Be careful with water and ice on the roads and livestock and wild stock, please be very careful.
- I would like to finish on another sadder note but a joyful note on remembering an incredible fellow, we had the passing of Clive Drinkwater who was actually a council worker for many many years and was known in the Snake Valley area as the Mayor of Mortchup. He will be greatly missed by many community members, and he was someone who did so much for the community and in his own small way but also in greater ways being someone that people could go to seek advice on many council matters as well as other matters. Condolences to his beautiful wife Joan and his family and friends. He was certainly a community man as his whole family are and very involved in community matters around Snake Valley, particularly the football club and a few other organisation and committees around that area.

Cr Ferrari

- Attended the councillor cuppas and chats at Raglan and Lake Goldsmith, and I note again that they are better represented by the community because we are having them in the evenings and people have the ability to attend so that was a really good decision to change that.
- Had a number of discussions with some groups around Beaufort including some of the Lake Goldsmith steam rally, they have a lot happening and some big events coming up, those discussions will be ongoing and as we know they are very passionate about their little area out there and of course it is not just a local venue, when they have their events they are nationally and internationally recognised and attended, it is a really important part of our local economy and events calendar.
- Discussions with some of the committee of the Beaufort scramble track, I wasn't aware, but I was told that not too long ago they had up to 130 participants riding on the track out at the Lexton Road so that has obviously really taken off again and it is great to see that it is getting that amount of use. It is really fantastic and congratulations to the people involved in running it and organising it as it would take a lot to make sure those events run properly and are safe.
- Had some discussions with the Beaufort Cricket Club and the Beaufort Football Club over a number of matters. I would like to say that the cricket nets are well underway and not far from completion, that is really good to see after we have had some delays and they will certainly be used for the cricket season.
- The public toilets in the main street are well underway, as with a lot of these projects, when you start doing something you find something else along the way so there has been some little delays, but my understanding is that they should be up and going within the next fortnight or so and we will keep the community informed.
- The lake foreshore infrastructure is up at the lake, it is ongoing, and it is coming along really nice, I am sure with a few little additions that is going to be an absolutely fantastic area for the community.
- The Football Club mentioned issues about the lights on the oval, we did have a look, but it was going to be very expensive to fix them and we took that into consideration. There are new lights due to be installed after the season finishes and when the ground dries a little bit so by next season the new lights should be installed, and it will be a fantastic asset for them.
- Just in closing, I wasn't aware of Ozzie Higgins passing until Cr Vance mentioned. I did know Ozzie as he was a resident of Beaufort for many many years and he was character and a larakin in some aspects, he is very clever and a visionary, especially within that viticulture sector and as Cr Vance eluded to, he is probably one of the pioneers in starting all that up. Vale Ozzie.

Cr Clark

- Attended councillor cuppas at Raglan and Lake Goldsmith which were both well attended and both really good positive discussions.
- Have had a number of constituent meetings in Raglan, Waubra and Lexton over the last month.
- I attended the RCV Forum which was a really good day, and I would like to commend Cr Vance as a member of Rural Councils Victoria for his part in helping organise that event.
- I had the privilege to go over to our neighbouring shire Hepburn to attend their Positive Ageing forum, they had about 120 people there on a very lovely winters day. It was a really good event.
- Locally, it is the last round of Central Highlands Footy League this weekend, I am not sure any of our three teams, Carngham Linton, Beaufort or Waubra are going to go particularly deep in the finals this year, but it has been a good season and we have got through it. Our ovals, particularly given how wet it was in June and July, have held up pretty well.
- Nyaninyuk Wind Farm information sessions are being held in Evansford and Clunes this week and in Waubra early next week for anyone that has interest in that project which comes from Evansford back across to Mt Bolton, please go and have a discussion with the people from Acciona at the information sessions.
- I have received notice today in relation to the Western Renewables Link, Ausnet has referred the project (the Western Renewables Link Transmission Line) in its current proposed form to the minister for planning for a new decision on the assessment requirements under the environmental effects act. In effect, they are asking the minister to determine whether or not a new environmental effects statement is required for the line. In terms of the context of that they give, they basically talk about the fact that the Sydenham terminal station is now not a part of the project, obviously in our patch, what was a 220kv line from Bulgana through to Mt Prospect, to Newlyn has now been upgraded to 500. The Mt Prospect terminal station has now been taken out and there will be a new terminal station at Bulgana. There is not much other detail on the website at this point in time, this will most likely extend the planning time of the project and as Council receives more information, we will share that with the community.

Cr Eason

- Attended a local mayors meeting in Ballarat where we discussed issues of a more regional nature.
- Attended the Rural Councils Victoria Forum in Echuca and congratulate Cr Vance on running a very informative day and publicly I would like to congratulate Mr Nolan on his presentation to the forum, I think it put our abilities as a shire in front of everybody that was there and a lot of people were talking about it after they had heard his presentation.

15. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Ordinary Meeting of Council closed at 7.36pm.

Minutes of the meeting confirmed

2023

Mayor Cr Ron Eason