



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 16 April 2024
Supper Room
Avoca Town Hall,
Rutherford Street, Avoca

Dja Dja Wurrung Country

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

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1. WELCOME

Welcome to this meeting of the Pyrenees Shire Council. Councillors will today deliberate and decide on a range of matters relevant to the work of Council in its communities for the welfare of the people of the Pyrenees Shire.

Mayor Cr Robert Vance welcomed all to the meeting.

PRESENT

Mayor: Cr Robert Vance

Councillors: David Clark, Ron Eason, 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)

Senior Communications Officer: Leah Heinrich

Communications Officer: Rebecca Stewart

2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

Mayor Cr Robert Vance read the livestream preamble.

3. 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.

4. APOLOGIES

Cr Tanya Kehoe

5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Ron Eason

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 19 March 2024; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 19 March 2024,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

CARRIED

7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising (items taken on notice) from the previous meeting held 19 March 2024.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Trevor Davey of Waterloo

Question one:

With all the activity in the past few years of installations of wind turbines across the landscape and farms in the Pyrenees Shire, I have a question: Does council receive any funds or payments for the use of this 'Rateable' land over the past years, or does council lose that area of rates and / or does council currently have income from all this infrastructure on the lands.

Response:

Jim Nolan thanked Mr Davey for the question and provided the following response:

The Pyrenees Shire Council receives revenue annually from windfarms within the municipal district, this revenue is calculated via an electricity agreement through the electricity industries act 2000, on the basis of a formula which is a formula in two parts base rate and then there is a rate per megawatt of power that is generated. The estimated income in the 2023/2024 council budget was 1.291 million per 23/24 based on that payment in lieu of rates under the electricity act that has been in place for several years and it continues year on year. The income is indexed each year based on inflation and per the CPI as identified in the act. The agreement however does not take into account all infrastructure of windfarms but covers the towers and the main parts of the infrastructure associated with the wind farm. I hope that provides some clarity.

Question two:

I was wondering is Pyrenees Shire Council an acting agent for VicRoads? Do they collect payments or fees or do they have the authority from VicRoads to act on behalf of VicRoads in other matters?

Response:

Kathy Bramwell thanked Mr Davey for the question and provided the following response:

We used to be agents for VicRoads in regards to learner permits and we do have an arrangement with VicRoads that allows us to access their records for parking infringements, access is very limited and very controlled, and that is all that we do on behalf of VicRoads.

9. ITEMS FOR NOTING

9.1. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

9.1.1. CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS - MARCH 2024

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: 16/24/06

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 March 2024. This report's purpose is to demonstrate ongoing efforts to improve responsiveness to customers and the community over time.

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 continue to be reformatted in the future to expand information on officer response to community contact to demonstrate efforts made to reverse this trend.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER CONTACT

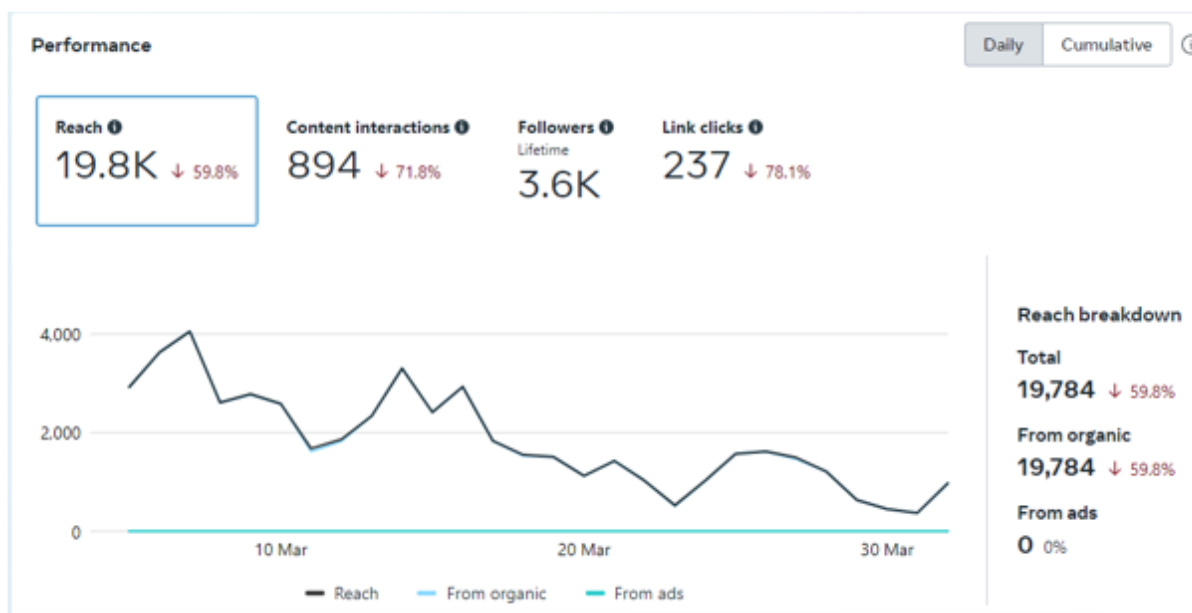
The following provides data on community contacts with employees, other than that recorded through the customer requests system, providing a more comprehensive view of our customer experience.

Customer contact media	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024
Legitimate emails received by the organisation*	40,273	37,273	37,439	21,989	24,478	19,055	18,871	30,221#	24,738
Emails rejected (cyber protection)	10 0.02%	7,743 17%	14,773 40%	12,613 34%	11,483 32%	8,045 30%	9,669 34%	36,630 55%	26,452 52%
Inbound malware detected	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Emails sent by organisation (external)	8,349	9,169	9,529	10,138	8,439	7,295	6,485	11,007#	8,825
External complaints received	3	4	2	2	4	2	3	6	7
FOI Requests	1	4	2	10	0	0	0	1	2
Requests for review of infringements	1	2	0	2	1	6	15	0	6
Website page views	17,970	17,086	17,242	16,133	15,891	12,638	16,047	20,521	17,342
Website users	5,472	5,570	6,017	5,556	5,893	5,000	6,015	8,081	6,314
Website contact us page	645	614	473	542	413	354	410	600	540
Website customer enquiry form	54	65	57	69	60	40	56	50	57
Calls answered by Switchboard / Customer Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1997

* Statistics amended to only include those emails not rejected as spam or viruses.

Email traffic impacted by fire response (increase).

Facebook snapshot – March 2024



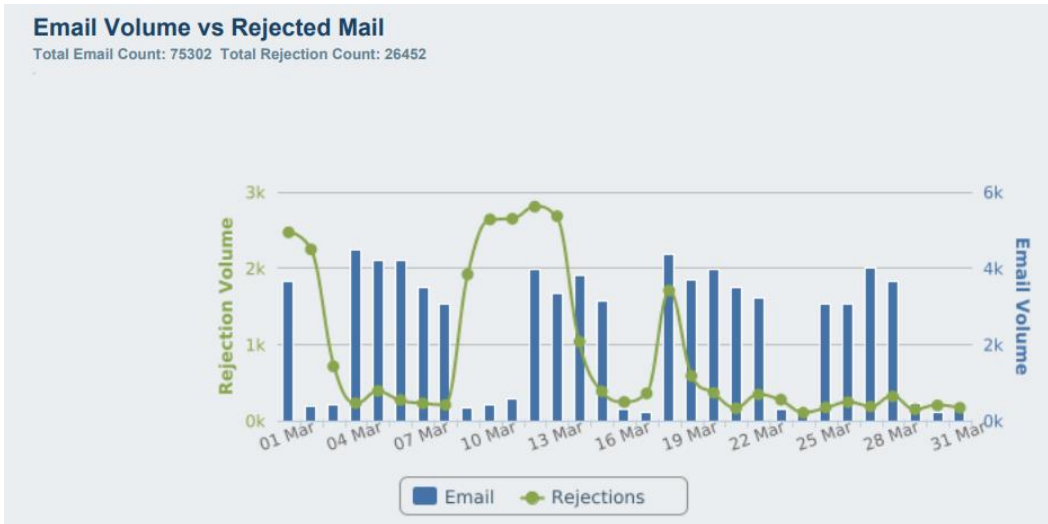
Comments:

- A reduction was seen in website traffic from the high rates in February due to the fires.
- Top website pages viewed: recruitment, fire information, waste management (transfer stations and collection dates).
- Customer enquiries received via the website focused on roads, rates, waste management, and planning.
- Complaints related to flooding, traffic management, infringement notice management, and responsiveness.
- Infringement appeals related to 2 dog matters and 4 failures to comply with fire prevention notices.
- FOI requests related to numbers of paperless parking fines issues and request for Council’s Asset Management Plan.

Cyber security assurance:

To provide assurance for ongoing cyber protections, the following graph shows total emails received against those rejected by automatic protection services.

- 91% of inbound emails rejected were for IP addresses found to be in remote block lists known to be sources of spam or malware infection. 1% of rejections (202) were for spam rejection.
- 4 cases of inbound Malware were detected – all phishing attempts.



ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS

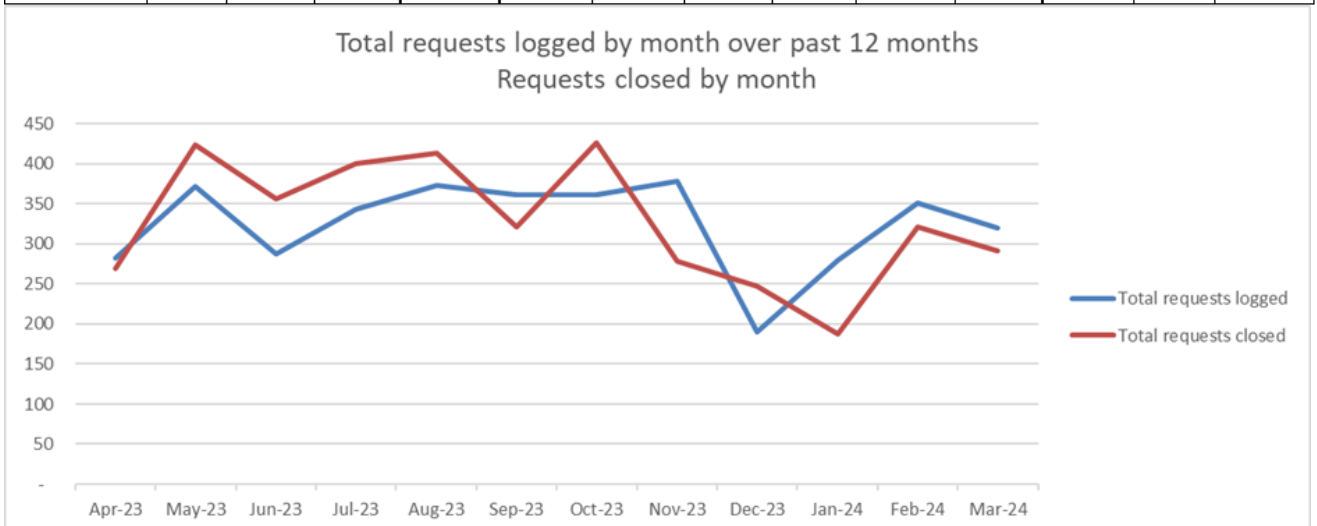
1. Logged and closed requests

320 CARs (Customer Action Requests) were logged during the month, 31 less than the previous month. Of these, 87 related to telephone messages.

292 requests were closed during the month.

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

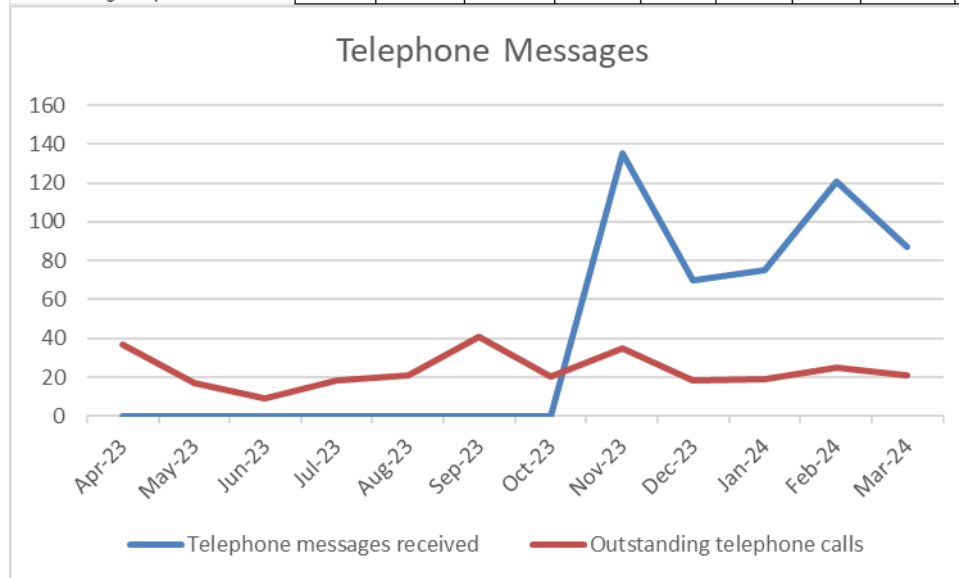
Year	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	% Change
Total requests logged	282	372	288	344	373	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	-9%
Total requests closed	269	424	356	401	413	321	427	278	247	188	321	292	-9%



2. Telephone requests

87 telephone calls were transferred into requests during the month, with 21 requests remaining outstanding at the end of the month. The following charts detail the trend in telephone calls received and remaining outstanding at the end of each month.

	Telephone messages logged over past 12 months											
	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Telephone messages received								135	70	75	121	87
Outstanding telephone calls	37	17	9	18	21	41	20	35	18	19	25	21



Of the 21 calls remaining open at the end of February, 3 related to roads / bridges, 5 relates to animals or enforcement, and 3 related to trees. The others were a range of enquiries with no topic ranking higher than others.

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 the reporting month, there was a total of 264 active or open requests. These include:

- 150 which are open and assigned for action
- 32 which are on hold awaiting resolution or action scheduling.
- 4 remain referred to budget
- 78 remain in progress or being managed – meaning that they are longer term case managed issues

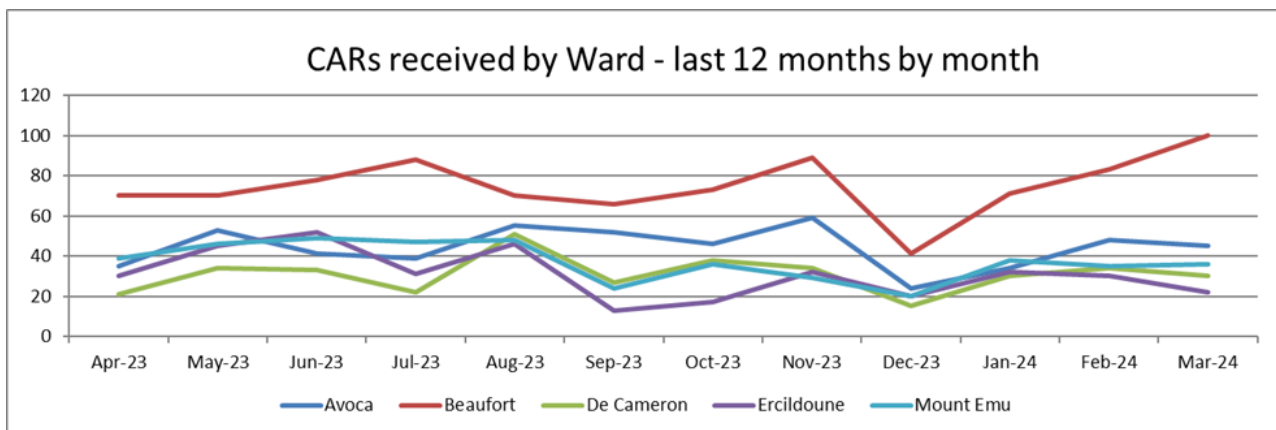
Open requests – the balance of this report will focus on the open requests as previously, but statistics relating to requests marked as on-hold or referred-to-budget have been included in the table.

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

Request status	Avoca Ward	Beaufort Ward	DeCameron Ward	Ercildoune Ward	Mt Emu Ward
Number of requests received (previous month)	45(48)	100(83)	30(34)	22(30)	36(35)
Requests received and closed in the same month (%)	23(51%)	64(64%)	21(70%)	17(77%)	24(67%)
Requests received remaining open and assigned for action	10	30	9	3	12
Requests received that are on hold or in progress	12	6	0	2	0
Requests received referred to budget	0	0	0	0	0
Total open (assigned) requests as at the end of the month	25(20)	58(36)	11(8)	7(9)	23(14)

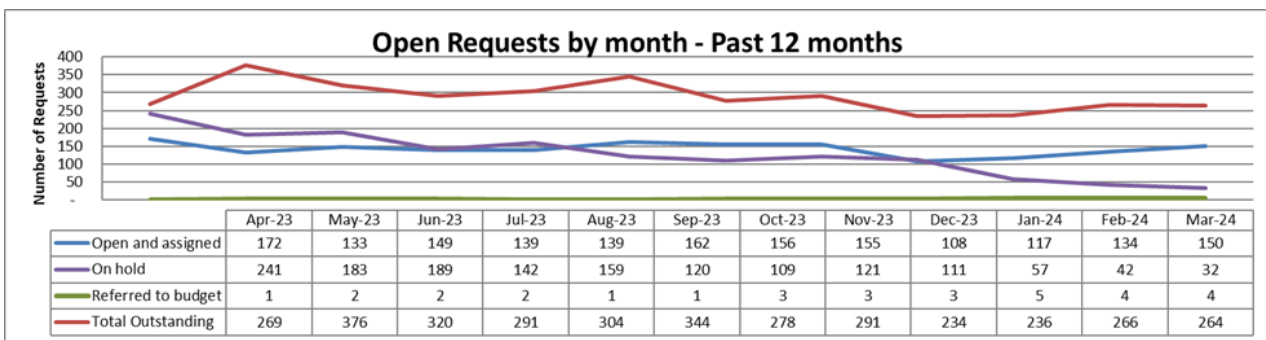
The following charts show the numbers of requests received by Ward per month for the past 12 months.

CARS by Ward received by month Rolling - Past 12 months												
Ward	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24
Avoca	35	53	41	39	55	52	46	59	24	34	48	45
Beaufort	70	70	78	88	70	66	73	89	41	71	83	100
De Cameron	21	34	33	22	51	27	38	34	15	30	34	30
Ercildoune	30	45	52	31	46	13	17	32	20	32	30	22
Mount Emu	39	46	49	47	48	24	36	29	20	38	35	36
Total by month	195	248	253	227	270	182	210	243	120	205	230	233

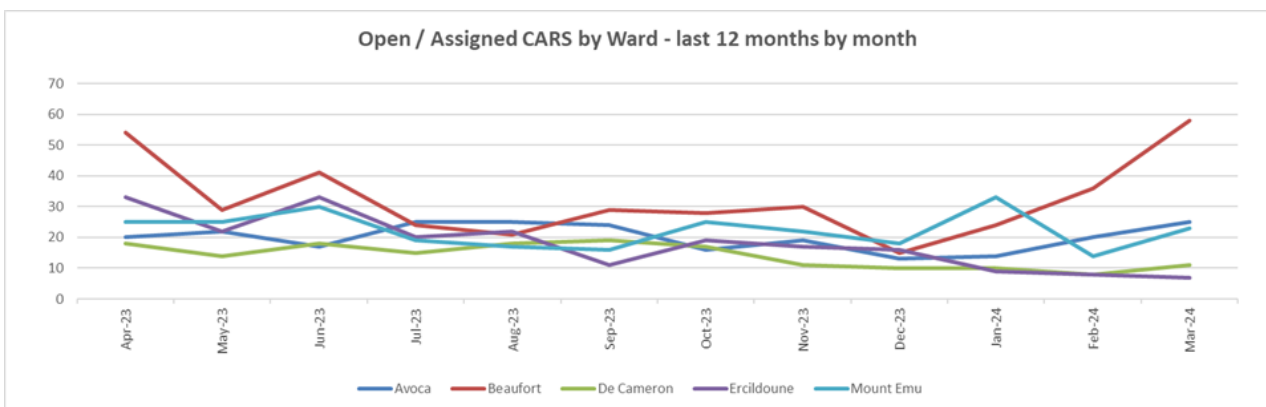


The following charts show the statistics for requests that remained open each month for the past 12 months. These charts now include requests put on hold or referred to budget.

Open requests by age													
Year	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	% Change
2013													
2020	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2021	2	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2022	19	115	114	19	19	27	29	20	13	7	7	7	0%
2023	164	201	227	119	119	135	127	135	95	43	24	22	-8%
2024										67	103	121	17%
Open and assigned	185	133	149	139	139	162	156	155	108	117	134	150	12%
Outstanding but on hold	190	183	189	142	0	120	109	121	111	57	42	32	-24%
In progress - longer term		2	4	4	4	4	9	10	10	33	63	43	-32%
Other outstanding				4	1	3	1	2	2	24	23	35	52%
Referred to budget	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	3	5	4	4	0%
Total Closed	-	424	356	401	413	321	427	278	247	278	321	292	-9%
Total requests logged	282	372	288	344	373	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	-9%
Total outstanding requests	269	376	320	291	304	344	278	291	234	236	266	264	-1%



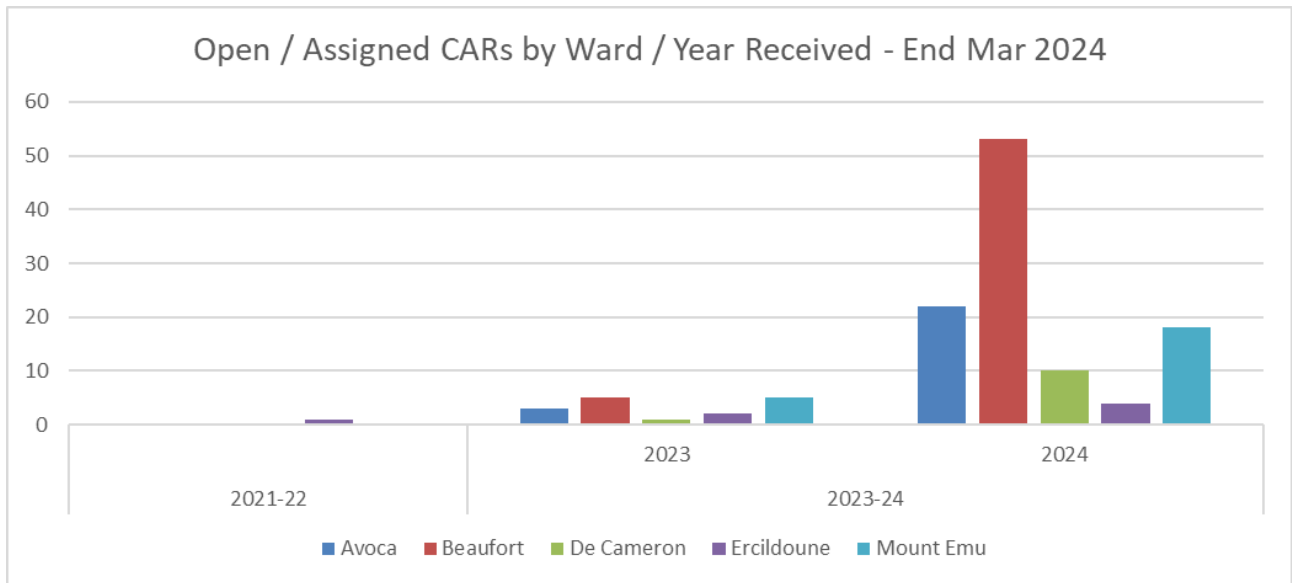
Open Assigned Requests by Ward - Past 12 months													
Ward	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	
Avoca	20	22	17	25	25	24	16	19	13	14	20	25	
Beaufort	54	29	41	24	21	29	28	30	15	24	36	58	
De Cameron	18	14	18	15	18	19	17	11	10	10	8	11	
Ercildoune	33	22	33	20	22	11	19	17	16	9	8	7	
Mount Emu	25	25	30	19	17	16	25	22	18	33	14	23	
Total by month	150	112	139	103	103	99	105	99	72	90	86	124	



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

There is one open and assigned requested on the list that remains from November 2022 for Ercildoune Ward. This relates to a request for repair to Government Road (near Thomsons Road) in Amphitheatre that was inspected and deemed not to be resulting from flood damage. This request is awaiting repairs to be programmed.

Ageing CARS by Ward - Open/Assigned				
Ward	2021-22	2023-24		Total
		2023	2024	
Avoca	0	3	22	25
Beaufort	0	5	53	58
De Cameron	0	1	10	11
Ercildoune	1	2	4	7
Mount Emu	0	5	18	23
Total by month	1	16	107	124



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.

	Feb-24	Mar-24	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	46	70	24
Streetlights	0	0	0
Drainage	20	14	-6
Footpaths / Kerb&Channel	11	14	3
Park & Reserves	11	16	5
Roadside Veg	40	47	7
Environmental Health	2	1	-1
Planning	7	1	-6
Bld maint	4	12	8
Local Laws	11	9	-2
Cats	5	5	0
Dogs	17	10	-7
Livestock	1	2	1
Parking	2	2	0
Fire Hazard	8	2	-6
Bld Compliance	0	0	0
Waste Management	0	0	0
Local Government Act	0	0	0
Rates	7	4	-3
Natural Disasters	33	29	-4
Pools	0	0	0
Council cleaning	2	0	-2
Litter	2	1	-1
Design & Assets	2	3	1
GIS	0	0	0
Community	0	0	0
Rural Addressing	0	1	1
Road Naming	0	0	0
Telephone messages	25	21	-4
Total	256	264	8

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 March 2024. Reporting continues to be expanded to include other media of customer contact received by officers.

Cr David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

9.1.2. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

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: 32/04/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting M011 held on 26 March 2024.

BACKGROUND

S.54 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires the Council to establish an Audit & Risk Committee. The Council re-established its Audit & Risk Committee and approved the revised Audit & Risk Committee Charter under these provisions at its meeting in June 2020.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A copy of the Draft Minutes from the Meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 26 March 2024 is attached for Council information.

A new Committee Chair is elected at the first meeting of the year and Mr Rod Poxon was elected unopposed to this position for 2024.

A brief overview of the issues considered by the Committee is provided below:

- The CEO provided an overview of topical issues faced by the council, primarily focused on the February 2024 fire event.
- Governance, risk and compliance matters including staffing statistics, policies and procedures, complaints and public requests for access to information.
- Committee membership.
- The External Audit Strategy for 2024 was presented by VAGO's external audit representative.
- A financial report was provided.
- The Committee Chair tabled her biannual report on the performance of the Committee.

The following were tabled at the meeting and are attached for Council information.

- External Audit Strategy for 2024
- Internal Audit Program Update
- Industry update on reports and publications of interest to councils.

A copy of the Committee Chair's biannual report was provided to the Council at an earlier meeting.

The March 2024 meeting was the last for Independent Member and Committee Chair, Ms Wendy Honeyman. This marks the end of nine years on the Pyrenees Shire Council's Audit & Risk Committee for Ms Honeyman and under the requirements of the Charter cannot be extended further.

Recruitment for a replacement Independent Member was successfully concluded in March 2024 and the Committee welcomed Mr Kelvin Tori at the meeting.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2024 03 26 Draft Minutes Audit Risk Committee Meeting 26 March 2024 [9.1.2.1 - 26 pages]
2. 2191555 2- Status Update 26.03.24 [9.1.2.2 - 5 pages]
3. 2191622 2- Industry Update 26.03.24 [9.1.2.3 - 10 pages]
4. Audit Strategy Memorandum 30 June 2024 - Pyrenees Shire Council [9.1.2.4 - 23 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All financial and risk matters are addressed in the body of the report.

CONCLUSION

A meeting of the Council's Audit & Risk Committee was held on 26 March 2024. This report provides an overview of discussions at that meeting.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council notes the information contained in this report.

CARRIED

10. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS**10.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - MARCH 2024**

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
12 March 2024	Council Briefing	Avoca
12 March 2024	Cuppa and Chat	Redbank
19 March 2024	Council Briefing	Beaufort
19 March 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort

Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward		
6 March 2024	Governor General Community Lunch	Beaufort
7 March 2024	Raglan Check-In	Raglan
12 March 2024	Council Briefing	Avoca
12 March 2024	Cuppa and Chat	Redbank
13 March 2024	Small Halls Event	Lexton
19 March 2024	Council Briefing	Beaufort
19 March 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
20 March 2024	Raglan BBQ & Fencing Demonstration	Raglan
21 March 2024	Evansford Community Centre CoM Meeting	Evansford

Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward		
3 March 2024	Meeting with Minister Tierney	Beaufort
5 March 2024	RCV Event at Parliament House	Melbourne
6 March 2024	Governor General Meeting & Community Lunch	Beaufort
7 March 2024	Raglan Check-In	Raglan
12 March 2024	Council Briefing	Avoca
12 March 2024	Cuppa and Chat	Redbank
14 March 2024	Wimmera Southern Mallee Central Highlands MAV Regional Meeting	Virtual
15 March 2024	GBAC Mayors and CEO's Meeting	Ballarat
19 March 2024	Council Briefing	Beaufort
19 March 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
21 March 2024	Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel Meeting	Melbourne

Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward		
6 March 2024	Governor General Community Lunch	Beaufort
12 March 2024	Council Briefing	Avoca
12 March 2024	Cuppa and Chat	Redbank
19 March 2024	Maryborough Breastsreen Opening Celebration	Maryborough
19 March 2024	Council Briefing	Beaufort
19 March 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
22 March 2024	Avoca Arts & Gardens Meeting	Avoca
26 March 2024	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Beaufort

Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
6 March 2024	Governor General Community Lunch	Beaufort
12 March 2024	Council Briefing	Avoca
12 March 2024	Cuppa and Chat	Redbank
19 March 2024	Council Briefing	Beaufort
19 March 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort

Cr David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

11. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

11.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - MARCH 2024

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	12 March 2024 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 4.30pm		
Meeting Location	Avoca RTC		
Items Discussed	1. Fire Event Update 2. Budget Timetable 3. CEO Performance Appraisal 4. Major Projects discussion 5. CEO Update		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Tanya Kehoe	Cr David Clark Cr Ron Eason	
Apologies	Cr Damian Ferrari		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Visitors	Philip Shanahan (item 3)		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

MEETING INFORMATION

Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	19 March 2024 commenced at 3.00pm and closed at 5.30pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sustainability 2. Bushfire Recovery 3. CEO Update 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Damian Ferrari	Cr David Clark Cr Ron Eason	
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services)		
Visitors	Nil.		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

Cr Ron Eason / Cr David Clark

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

12. ITEMS FOR DECISION

12.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

12.1.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

Report Author: Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

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

File No: 22/02/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform councillors on recent activities of the Economic Development and Tourism team and review progress of actions and activities against the March 2020 Economic Development Strategy and action plan.

BACKGROUND

Economic Development Strategy

Council endorsed the current Economic Development Towards 10,000 Strategy in March 2020 which includes three overarching objectives to:

1. Attract new residents, visitors and investment
2. Foster the capability of key economic sectors
3. Develop local business and employee capacity

An action plan was developed in 2020 from the strategy and Attachment A to this report summarises progress of the thirty two actions identified in the action plan.

Council Plan

A dedicated community panel of 25 residents developed the current council plan which was endorsed by Council in 2021. The plan takes a wholistic view of the Pyrenees community and includes four central pillars of People, Place, Environment and Economy.

The Economy pillar states that Council will:

- Support our local businesses and help strengthen key industries
- Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community
- Advocate for and invest in assets and infrastructure to support industry sustainability

Central Highlands Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)

The key priorities of the CH REDS are:

- Enhance the regional value add and collaboration across the agri-food supply chain
- Continue to grow and develop the visitor and creative economies
- Strengthen the renewable energy and waste management industries
- Enhance the innovation ecosystem

Summary of Population Growth and Economy

Population

Council set a base line target in its 2020 Towards 10,000 Economic Development Strategy for population of 8,000 people by 2025.

Since 2013 the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate the Shires population has grown by 848 people to 30 June 2023 at an average annual rate of 1.222% to arrive at an Estimated Residential Population of 7,786.

If the current population growth rates continue then the population target of 8,000 people by 2025 will be achieved.

Council continues to play an active role in population growth through residential development and the purchase of land at Avoca and Beaufort for this purpose. Furthermore, an application for funding of \$3.4M has been submitted to the Victorian Governments “Regional Worker Accommodation Fund”. Should the submission be successful then it will enable Council to proceed with the construction of ten dwellings for worker accommodation.

Economy

Gross Regional Product

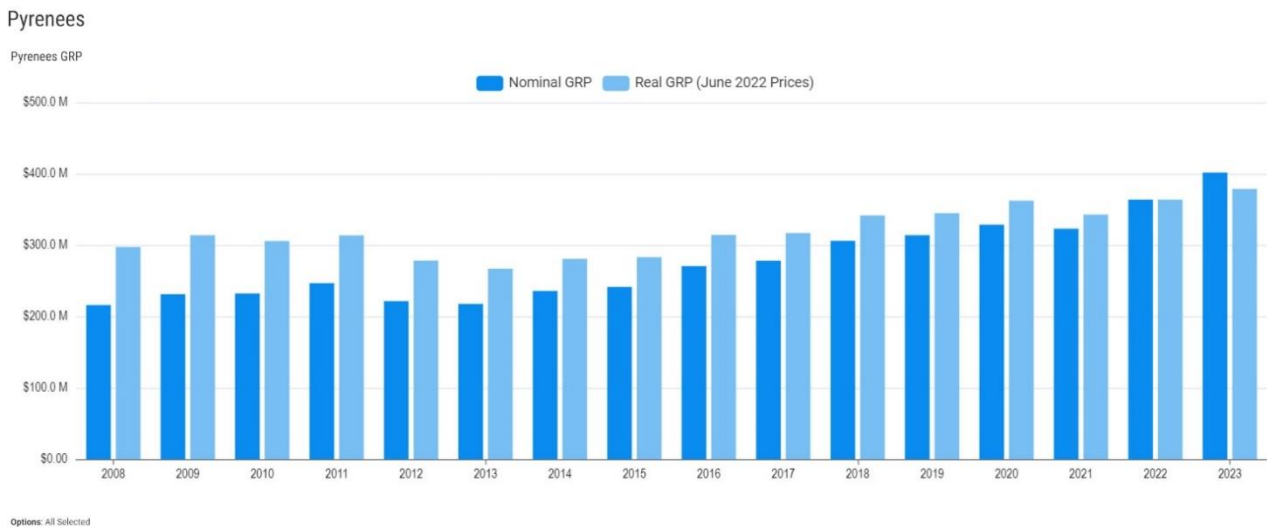
Gross Regional Product increased in both real and nominal terms in the year ending 30 June 2023.

Nominal GRP increased by \$37.848M to \$401.505M and in real terms by \$15.025M to \$378.682M.

Nominal GRP is a measurement that shows growth but is also affected by the change in prices (inflation or deflation).

Real GRP only shows growth and prices will be based off a single point in time.

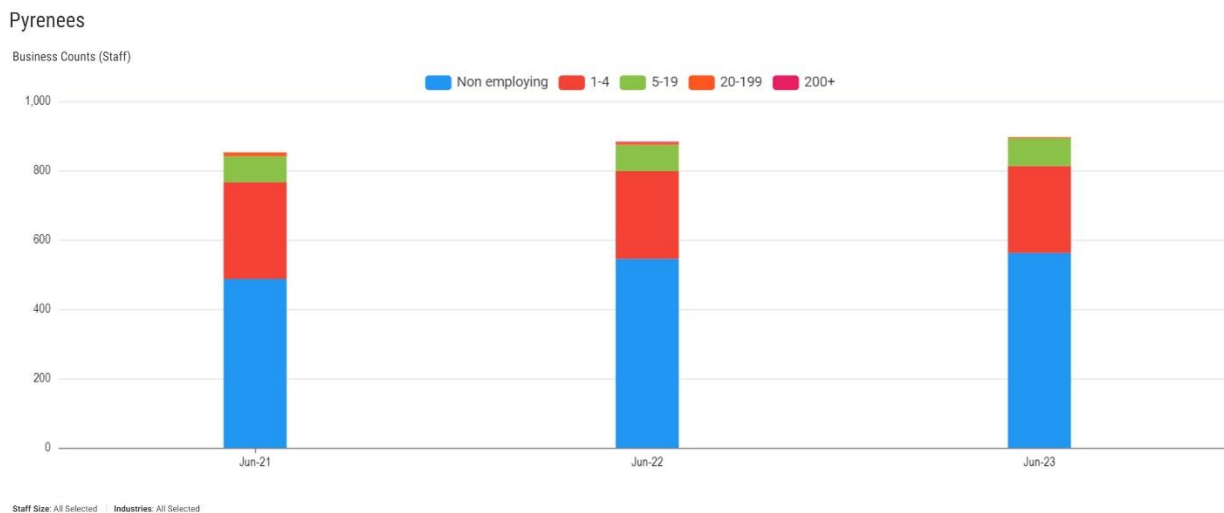
Figure 1: GRP



Business Counts

Business numbers continued to rise during the 2023 financial year and there were 896 businesses as at 30 June 2023.

Figure 2: Business Counts



Staff Size	Pyrenees			
	Staff Size	Jun-21	Jun-22	Jun-23
Non employing	Non employing	487	545	562
	1-4	279	253	251
	5-19	75	76	80
	20-199	11	6	3
	200+	0	3	0
	Total	852	883	896

Key Propulsive Sectors

Councils’ “Towards 10,000 Economic Development Strategy” identified Agriculture, Manufacturing, Construction and Tourism as the key private industry sectors contributing to the Shires economy.

Agriculture

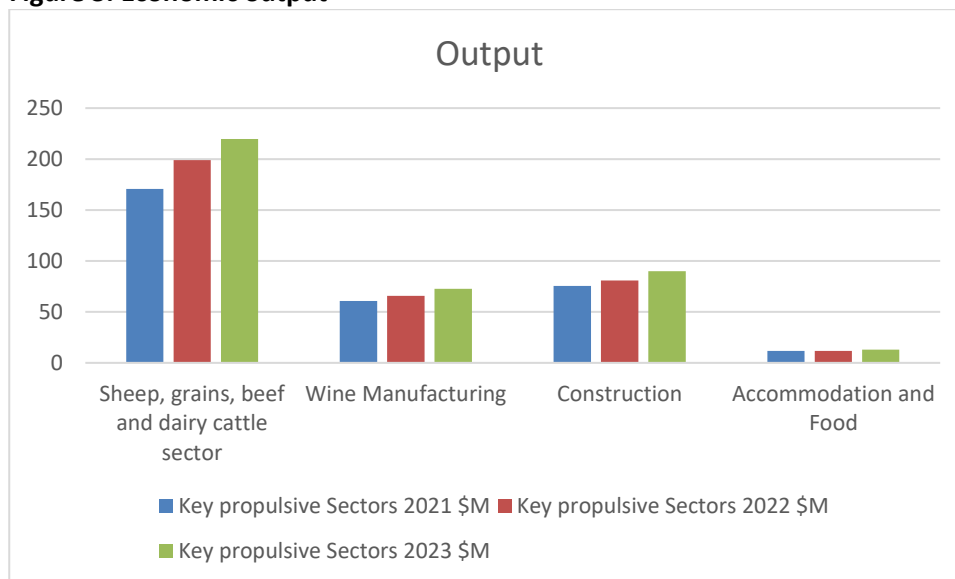
Key points released by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARES) in their March outlook for 2024/25 were:

- Value of agricultural production forecast to rise by 6% to \$85 billion in 2024–25.
- Improving seasonal conditions relative to 2023–24 to support crop production values.
- Saleyard prices for livestock to recover in 2024–25 from sudden increase in domestic supply in 2023-24.
- High global demand for livestock production to support rising international prices.
- Average farm cash income to recover from large drop in 2023–24, rising by 47% in 2024–25.

The agriculture sector in Pyrenees Shire is predominantly driven by the sheep, grains, beef and dairy cattle sector.

The following tables accessed using Remplan data reflect the performance of the key propulsive industries of the private sector in the Pyrenees Economy.

Figure 3. Economic output



Recent Economic Development Activities

Progress continues on the projects outlined below which were reported to Council in the February Economic Development Update.

- The business case for the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply Project is due for completion in mid 2024.
- Hydrological investigations are being undertaken to finalise the Beaufort Linear Masterplan project by June 2024.
- The planning application for development of Beaufort Lake Caravan Park has been lodged and expressions of interest are currently being sought on cabin prices from suppliers of transportable accommodation.
- Some applicants under the Shop Façade Program are awaiting trades to undertake their improvements.
- Tourism Midwest Vic Destination Management Plan and Local Area Plans are anticipated by the end of April.

Digital Connectivity Plan

During the past quarter the ED&T unit have been working with representatives of Telstra and NBN to document a Pyrenees Shire Connectivity Plan.

The aim of the plan which is in early stages of being drafted is to improve both digital connectivity and digital literacy.

It is intended to conduct a series of digital roadshow events at various locations across the Shire and a workshop for council staff during the month of May to enhance awareness of digital opportunities available now and those that are planned.

Fire Recovery

Since the economic update in February of this year, the Bayindeen Fires of that month have placed fire response and recovery efforts at the forefront of the economic development units' activity since that time.

This has included:

- Working in partnership with Ararat Rural City Council to establish the Blazeaid camp and a hay depot at Buangor, with hay requests being coordinated by the VFF
- Partnering with Beaufort Rural and Hardware to host a recovery event at Raglan on 20 March
- Attending recovery outreach sessions at Raglan and Amphitheatre over a period of three weeks
- Supporting the activities of the recovery team in responding to the needs of property owners impacted by the fire. These include access to emergency grants and other material support, replenishment of water supplies, waste removal, requests for hay and assistance with fencing
- Liaising with Tourism Midwest to advocate to government for support of the Shires tourism operators
- Liaising with the various agencies involved in the recovery phase
- It is estimated the economic losses due to the fire are:
- \$21M in lost tourism revenue within the Pyrenees Shire is predicted to 30 June 2024 with ongoing losses anticipated due to the damage to nature based tourism assets at Mt Cole and Mt Buangor State Park and trees along roadsides. Tourism Midwest are advocating to government for a region wide recovery package.
- Approximately \$29M in damages and losses to pine plantations, fences, livestock deaths, buildings, vehicles, sheds, pasture and bee hives.

Activities by ED&T will be ongoing for the time being to support the local community and businesses in the recovery phase.

Events

Events scheduled over Autumn include:

- Pyrenees Unearthed Wine and Food Festival 13 April
- Avoca by the River 27 April
- Back to Waterloo 27 April
- Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally 4 & 5 May
- Pyrenees Art Exhibition and Sale over the Kings Birthday in June
- Various Art exhibitions, music and workshops at cellar doors
- Town markets at Avoca, Beaufort and Waubra

Tourism

Tourism activities since December have included:

- Input to the development of the Tourism Midwest Destination Management Plan and Local Area Action Plan for Pyrenees Shire. These plans are due for completion by the end of April.
- Planning and implementing marketing activities to attract and occupy visitors during the Autumn season and in particular over Easter and the school holidays
- Developing content for the winter marketing campaign

- A submission of \$89,600- to the Victorian Governments “Enabling Tourism Fund” has also been developed for activation of the Avoca Art Silo site. This application seeks funding to engage consultants to undertake a planning amendment of the site and undertake design work. This work estimated to cost \$112,000- (based on quotes received) is required to unlock the potential of the site to host events.

There has also been support provided by Council officers for applications to the Enabling Tourism Fund to:

- Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers Association (PGWA) who are planning to undertake a feasibility study into a new high-end accommodation facility
- Cyril Callister Foundation for a Vegemite themed activity space for children

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The 2020 Economic Development Strategy Action Plan identified thirty two strategic actions aimed at meeting the three key objectives of the economic development strategy as follows:

1. Attract new residents, visitors and investment
2. Foster the capability of key economic sectors
3. Develop local business and employee capacity

Further to the above three objectives a fourth objective is to improve the living standards for residents in the Pyrenees. A number of strategies and actions incorporated into various Council strategies and plans including that for Economic Development will have some bearing on improving living standards with indicators such as SEIFA and median household incomes providing some measure of how residents in the Pyrenees compare with the broader Victorian community.

An internal review of the strategy which commenced in early February has been paused for the time being due to response and recovery activities undertaken since the Bayindeen Fire.

It is anticipated that the review will recommence in the second half of the year.

Progress since 2020

Attachment A to this report provides a brief summary of actions completed against the Economic Development Action Plan endorsed by council in March 2020.

Of the thirty two actions listed, nine have been completed, ten are in progress, five involve ongoing work that are in progress/recurring activities and eight that have not yet started.

A commentary on progress to date is provided in Attachment A to this report.

In addition to the comments in Attachment A, Council continues to place a priority on improvements to the road network for heavy vehicles. The Department of Assets and Development have continued to work on the rural bridge and road network to improve freight efficiency and the productivity of the agricultural sector.

Over the past twelve months this has included:

- Bridge 139 on the Raglan Elmhurst Road has been completed at a cost of approximately \$1M to improve access for larger vehicles along this route.
- Bridge 11 on the Beaufort Carngham Rd has also been completed and Bridge 10 is yet to be upgraded to improve heavy vehicle access along this road.
- Bridge 10 on the Beaufort Carngham Road is estimated to cost \$1.7M for which funding was applied for in January 2024 and,

- Bridges 58 and 60 along Eurambeen – Streatham Road are being upgraded this financial year at a cost of \$300,000-.
- The next quarter will see the Economic Development and Tourism Department focus on activities including:
- Finalising the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply business case and Monte Carlo assessment
- Concluding the Beaufort Linear Masterplan project. Hydrological assessments are currently being undertaken to gain an understanding of the positive or negative impacts that the changes proposed in the draft masterplan
- Undertaking a series of events throughout May that are related to the Pyrenees Digital Connectivity project
- Developing and implementing the winter tourism marketing campaign
- Collaborating with TMV partners to finalise the tourism Destination Management Plan and Local Area Action Plan.
- Continuing Council’s support to events organisations, in particular, but not exclusive to the Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally, Pyrenees Unearthed Festival and Beaufort Art Exhibition and Sale in June.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 2 - Place

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

2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 4 - Economy

4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.

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

4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report is an update of ED&T activities for information purposes for the March 2024 quarter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment A EDandT update April 2024 [**12.1.1.1** - 5 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information and includes no additional financial or risk implications.

CONCLUSION

Population growth has remained steady and if current growth rates continue will see the Pyrenees population reach 8,000 people in 2025.

The Pyrenees economy has continued to perform strongly over the year reflected by increases in Gross Regional Product, output and jobs.

Progress on actions identified in the 2020 Economic Development Strategy that are completed and in progress etc. are included in Attachment A to this report.

Cr David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

That Council:

1. Notes this information contained in this report.
2. In conjunction with Tourism Midwest Victoria, advocates for funding from the Victorian Government to support recovery of the tourism sector due to the significant impact following the Bayindeen fires.

CARRIED

12.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

12.2.1. COMMUNITY GROUP & NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS - WASTE SERVICE RATES EXEMPTION

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: Daniel Potter – Manager Engineering

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

File No: 68/08/02

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council's direction on the waste service fees applied on community groups and non-for-profit organisations within Pyrenees Shire Council. Council's direction will assist with 2024/2025 financial year budget preparation for the waste service component on rates notices.

BACKGROUND

The waste service fee included within property rates notices is a zero-profit cost recovery for the service that includes kerbside collections, disposal of materials and transfer station operations.

Waste service fees are applied to properties with the following waste codes. These waste service fees will also be reviewed in the 2024/2025 financial year budget preparation process.

Code	Description	2023/24 Financial Year Fee
49	Waste Service – Levy - Farming exemption	\$0
50	Waste Service - No Collection – Disposal only	\$251
51	Waste Service - Rural – Landfill, Glass & Recycling	\$556
52	Waste Service - Levy	\$100
53	Waste Service – Urban - Landfill, Glass, Recycling & Greenwaste	\$556
54	Waste Service – Extra Landfill Bin	\$150
55	Waste Service – Extra Recycling Bin	\$75
56	Waste Service – Extra Glass Bin	\$50
57	Waste Service – Extra Greenwaste Bin	\$75
58	Waste Service – Landfill, Glass & Recycling – Exemption	\$0

19 properties currently include an exemption from a waste service fee (code 58) and still utilise the waste services including the kerbside collections, transfer stations, and material disposal services. This is equivalent to roughly \$10,500 of costs that are covered by other properties paying the waste service - levy (code 52), waste service – disposal only (code 50) or waste service - 3 or 4 bin service (code 51 or 53).

There are over 230 community groups included on the community group register maintained by the Community Wellbeing & Partnerships Department. Some of these community groups and non-for-profit organisations own or lease property within Pyrenees Shire Council and could be eligible for an exemption to the waste service fee.

Some of the 19 properties currently exempt from waste service fee are also not of a similar type or meet a non-for-profit criteria. These properties will be reviewed against the criteria determined in this report and updated to the appropriate waste service fee.

The main properties that are recommended be considered are:

- Public Halls
- Recreation Reserves
- Sporting clubs/facilities;
 - o Motorcycle clubs,
 - o Golf clubs,
 - o Bowls clubs
 - o Tennis clubs, etc.
- Churches
- Community childcare centers
- Cultural organisations
- Public museums
- Libraries
- Scouts/Guides
- Senior citizens property
- Men's Shed property
- Other non-for-profit organisations (eg. Beaufort's op shop, etc.)

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

This report focuses on the rates waste services fee and not the level of service that each property receives. The waste service is aimed to provide a consistent level of service across all properties and isn't an opt-in/out system.

There are several options with different criteria to consider in determining if an exemption to the waste service fee should be granted. These will have different impacts on the waste service fee of other rate payers.

The following are three main options which outline different criteria:

Option 1: Full exemption to all waste fees - including leased properties.

All community groups and non-for-profit organisations are considered exempt from all waste service rate fees with the 'S58 - Exemption' code applied against their property. This includes properties that are leased by community groups or non-for-profit organisations. Any additional bins will also be exempted. Properties proportionally leased by a community group or non-for-profit organisation will have a proportional fee exemption.

This option would result in an estimated cost change of \$26,000 if a total of 65 properties (46 additional to the current exempted properties) meets these criteria and would result in the rough increase of \$6 per property for to the 'S51 & S53' waste services fee (ie. \$556 to \$562).

Option 2: Exemption for non-for-profit organisations. Additional bin fees applied to non-sporting facilities.

Only non-for-profit organisations owned properties are exempt from all waste service rate fees, but fees for additional bins will apply if not a sporting facility. The number of exempt additional bins is restricted for sporting facilities (eg. max 4 bins exempt for an active facility).

This option would result in an estimated cost change of \$3,000 if 25 properties (6 additional to the current exempted properties) meet these criteria and would result in the rough increase of \$1 per property for to the 'S51 & S53' waste fee (eg. \$556 to \$557).

Option 3: No Exemptions.

All community and non-for-profit organisation owned properties are to be charged for the waste service they receive with no exemptions. ie. 'S52 – Waste Levy' if the property is vacant land, 'S50 - Waste disposal only' if the property can't receive a kerbside collection or the 'S51/S53 - Waste Service Collection' for properties that receive a collection.

This option would result in an estimated cost change of -\$10,500 if the existing 19 properties were not considered exempt and would result in the rough decrease of \$4 per property for to the 'S51 & S53' waste fee (eg. \$556 to \$552).

Summary Table to the above options

Note: Crosses indicate exemptions to waste fees.

Options	Community Group		Non-for-Profit		Extra Bins	Extra Bins for sporting facilities	Potential cost increase for service
	Owned	Leased	Owned	Leased			
1	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$6
2	-	-	X	-	-	X	\$1
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-\$4

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2a. Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities.
- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 4a. Support our local businesses and help to strengthen key industries.
- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement
- b. Provide transparency and accountability.

Councils 2021-25 Plan also includes the measure to maintain waste service rates fee at a value below the average small rural council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Any change to the current service levels will need to be communicated to any community organisations that will be impacted. Typical requests and enquiries from the public have been received via direct communication through customer services for exemptions to the waste service rates fee.

If the Council resolution is to approve a criteria allowing exemptions to the waste service fees, property owners who meet the criteria are encouraged to contact the Council's Waste team with evidence.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Several options are considered in the discussion section of this report that indicate potential financial implications. These financial implications have no impact on the council's overall finances but affect the waste service fees for other property owners.

CONCLUSION

As the waste service is a cost recovery service, considerations to exemptions to the fees applied to community groups and non-for-profit organisations will result in higher fees to the properties that pay waste service fees.

Option 2, exemption to non-for-profit organisations that own property not including additional bins, is similar to the current properties that include an exemption. This option has minimal change from the current level of service including financial implications to other properties.

For properties to be considered exempt, the property owners will need to demonstrate that the property is a non-for-profit organisation.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Adopts option 2 - Exemption to the waste fees for non-for-profit organisations that own property within Pyrenees Shire Council, excluding additional bins if not a sporting facility,
2. Supports Council's waste team to review existing property exemptions,
3. Encourages non-for-profit organisations that meet the option 5 criteria to apply for exemptions to the waste fees included on rates notices.

CARRIED

12.2.2. WASTE DISPOSAL QUANTITIES & COST UPDATE

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: Daniel Potter – Manager Engineering

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

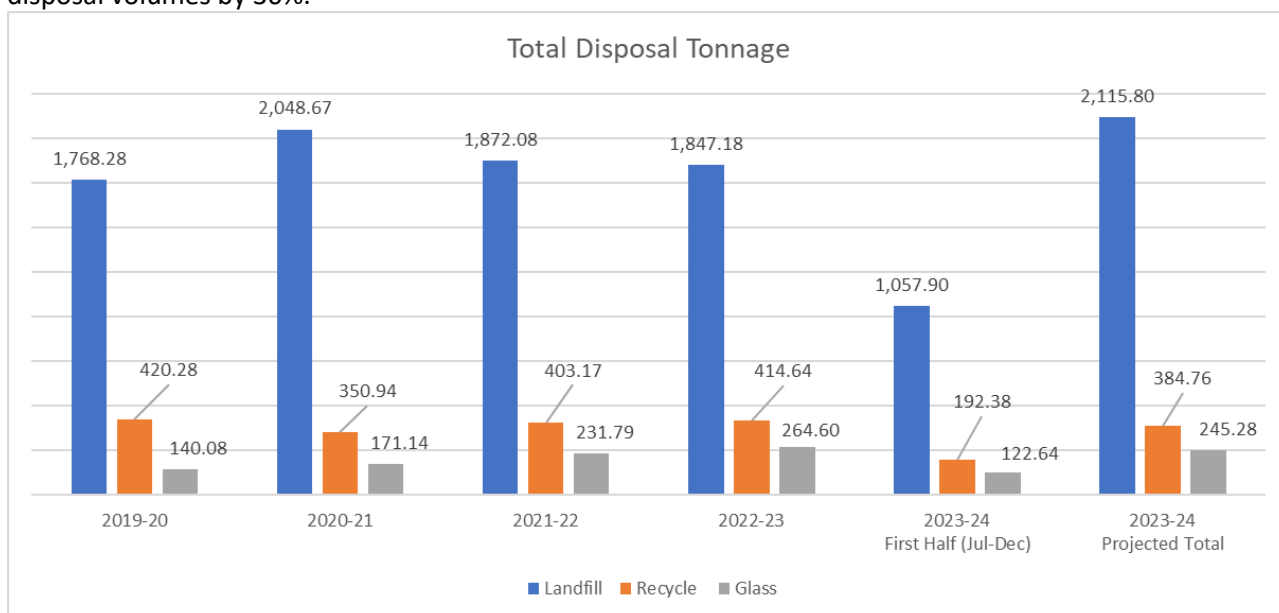
File No: 68/08/02

PURPOSE

This report provides an update on the waste quantities and cost implications generated from an increase in materials going to landfill from kerbside collections and transfer station operations projected for the 2023-24 financial year. This report also provides an update on the recycling and glass volumes/costs.

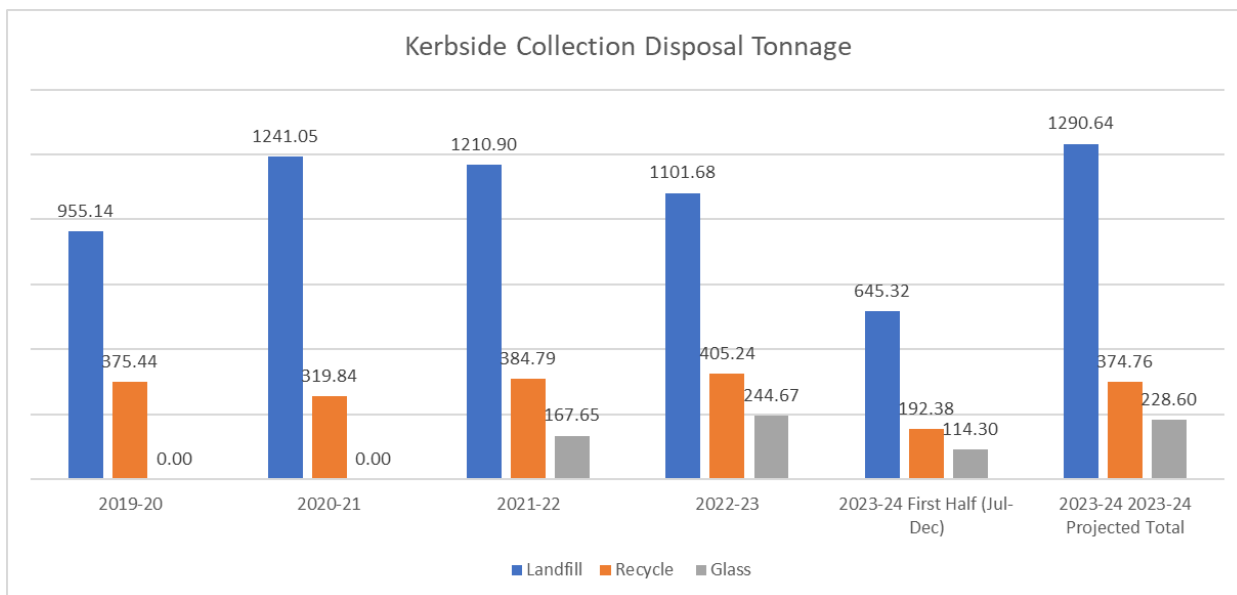
BACKGROUND

Below is a 5-year summary of the landfill & recycling volumes generated with a projection for the full 2023-24 financial year. Note the predicted volume of landfill generated for the 2023-24 financial year is similar to the volume generated in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic (covid started in March 2020). Also note that the implications to the recycling and glass tonnages due to the container deposit scheme (CDS), which started in November 2023, are still being determined but this is estimated to reduce the recycling and glass disposal volumes by 30%.



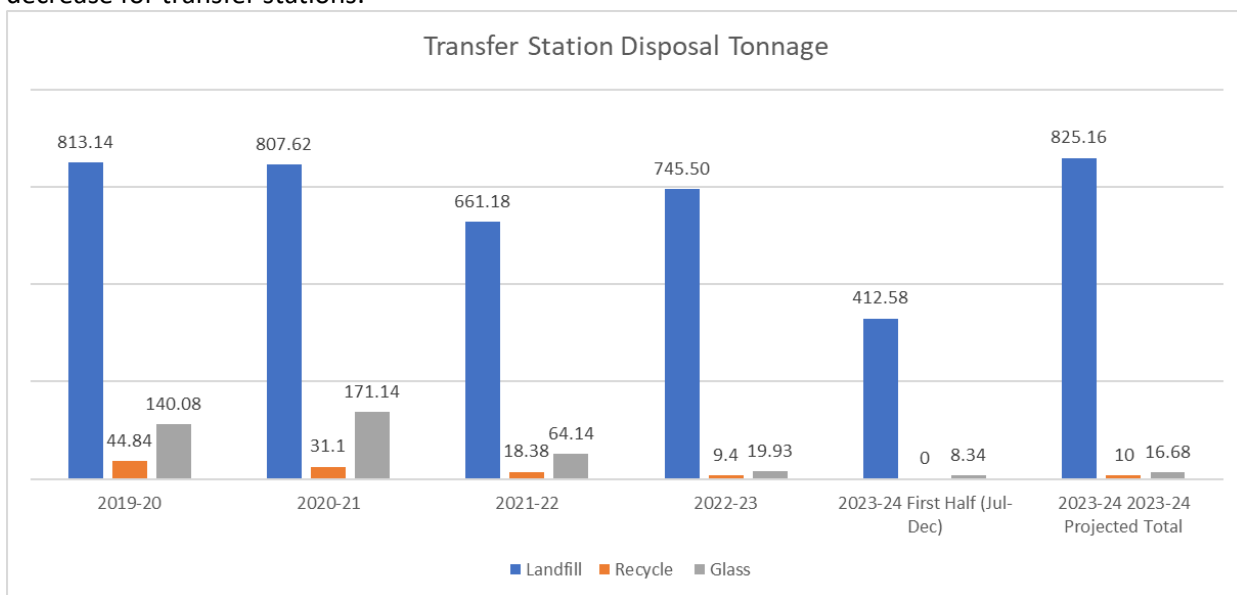
Graph 1: 5-year Summary of the landfill, recycling & glass volumes.

Below is a 5-year summary of the breakdown of kerbside volumes. Note the volumes generated by kerbside collections are heavily influenced by the presentation rate of bins on collection days. Typically, the presentation rate for each of the 4-bin system is roughly 80% landfill (red bin), 70% recycling (yellow bin), 30% glass (purple bin) & 50% Greenwaste (green lid bin). Also note that the glass kerbside collection was introduced in 2021-22 and is why the volumes increase.



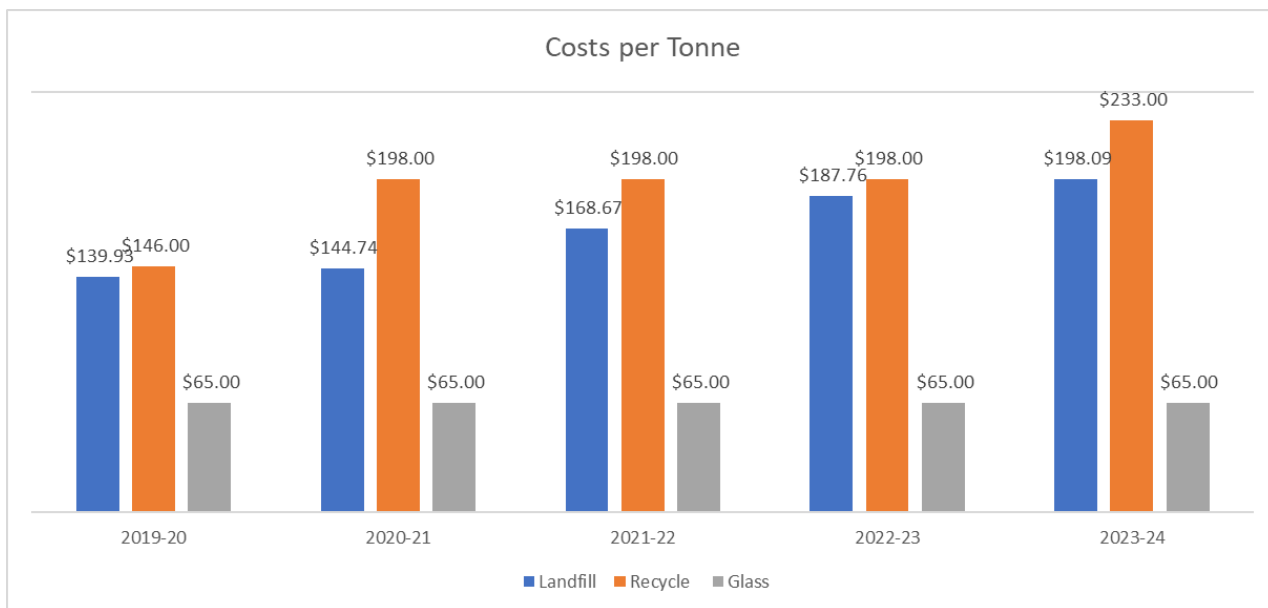
Graph 2: 5-year Summary of the landfill, recycling & glass volumes from kerbside collections.

Below is a breakdown of volumes generated by the transfer stations. Note, there have been some issues with the recycling from the transfer stations in the 2023-24 financial year due to contamination which forces the recycling to be diverted to landfill. These issues are being discussed with the transfer stations contractor. Also note that the glass kerbside collection was introduced in 2021-22 and is why the volumes decrease for transfer stations.



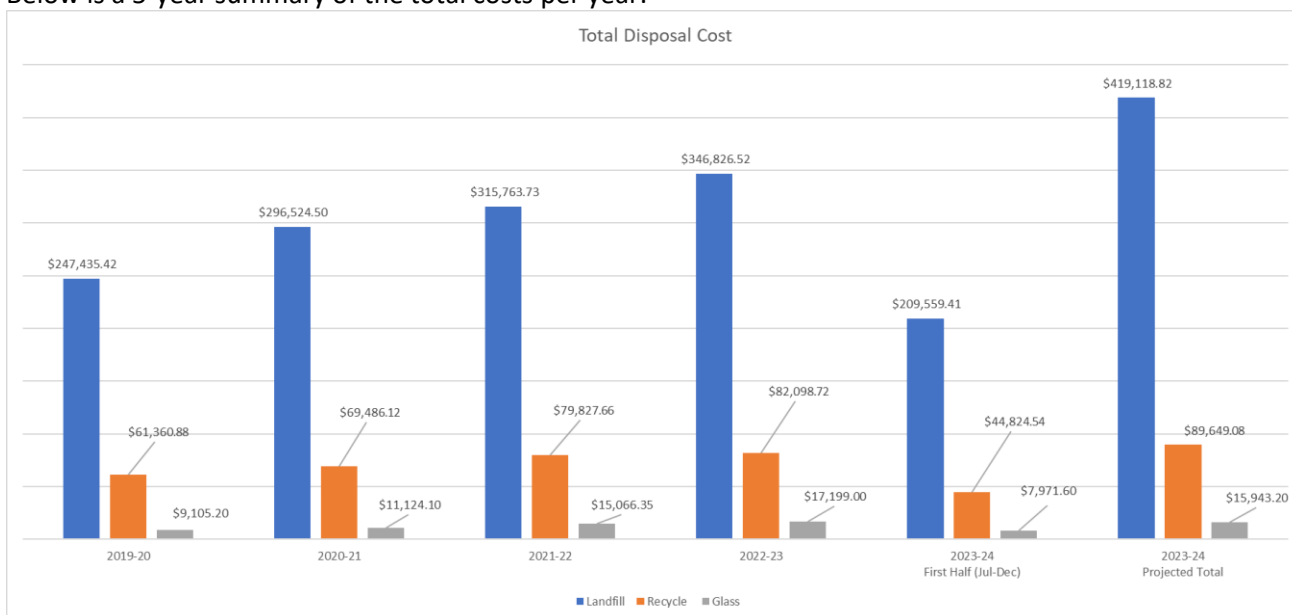
Graph 3: 5-year Summary of the landfill, recycling & glass volumes from transfer stations.

Below is a 5-year summary of the costs to dispose of landfill, recycling and glass costs per tonne. Note the costs of landfill has been a steady increase with limited disposal options of the Stawell landfill site or the Smythesdale landfill sites. The recycling/glass costs have been constant over the past 5-years due to negotiations with smaller disposal service providers.



Graph 4: 5-year Summary of the costs per tonne for landfill, recycling & glass disposal.

Below is a 5-year summary of the total costs per year:



Graph 5: 5-year Summary of the total disposal costs for landfill, recycling & glass disposal.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

This report is for Council to note and consider the increasing volume and costs of disposal of landfill waste, recycling and glass materials. The main increase in volume is from the landfill waste at an increase of around 25 tonne per month from 150t to 175t per month.

The 2023-24 budget of the waste services (roughly \$2.5 million) is still projected to be within the overall budget but the component for the disposal of landfill, recycling and glass included within the overall waste service budget is projected to be over budget by roughly \$80,000 on the \$450,000 23-24 budget for materials disposal. This overspend will be offset by reduced expenditure in the kerbside collection budget.

The disposal costs of landfill, recycling and glass are managed through agreements to ensure Council receives the best value for the service and ensures that rate payers get the lowest waste service fees.

Council's waste team is limited with disposal options for landfill due to the cost of transport and there are only 2 landfills in close proximity to Pyrenees Shire Council.

Options for material disposal are continually being discussed between surrounding Councils, including a recent collaboration for request for proposals for 3 options of material disposals which include waste to energy, green-waste/organics and recycling.

A full waste service review is also scheduled for the 2024-25 financial year which will review all aspects of the waste management service and include kerbside collections, transfer stations and material disposal.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 3 - Environment

3d. Improve waste management to reduce landfill and reduce harm to the environment.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report informs the community about disposal volumes of landfill, recycling and glass. There are regular education posts on council noticeboards and social media regarding the importance of recycling.

Council currently has funding from Sustainability Victoria for education regarding recycling. This funding includes the kerbside bins audits that are currently scheduled around the shire and will provide information about areas that Council can improve the waste/recycling services.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The additional costs from the increase in volumes and costs for landfill, recycling and glass are currently manageable within Council's Waste budget due to reduced expenditure from the kerbside collections.

There are future financial risks with increasing disposal volumes and costs which will be closely monitored by Council's waste team.

CONCLUSION

Council's waste management team will continue to investigate options for the disposal of landfill, recycling and glass materials to ensure the best value and to ensure a low waste service fee to rate payers.

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Ron Eason

That Council

1. notes the data contained in this report
2. Continues to investigate options to reduce waste to landfill having regard to Council's limited financial capacity and noting that a full waste service review is scheduled for 2024/25.
3. Communicates the findings of the kerbside bin audit as part of the public education program on waste and recycling.

CARRIED

12.3. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

12.3.1. INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND AUTHORISATION

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: Dean Miller – Manager Governance and Performance

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

File No: 16/20/08

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for the Council to adopt Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation appointing two Council Officers under the Local Government Acts 1989 and 2020, and various other Acts and regulations.

BACKGROUND

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation need to be updated when new officers are employed by Council in roles that require them to exercise statutory powers.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Some positions within the Council Administration benefit from having individual Instruments approved for individual officers as they may be regularly challenged by members of the public when undertaking their official duties. Such positions include those of Environmental Health Officer and Building Inspector.

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation for the following individual officers are now provided for the Council's consideration and adoption:

- Maria Galea, Environmental Health Officer
- Gavin Tauschke, Building Inspector

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

External community consultation is not required for this report. Copies of all Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation are publicly available upon request.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Instrument of Appointment Authorisation Maria Galea EHO April 2024 (2) [**12.3.1.1** - 3 pages]
2. Instrument of Appointment Authorisation Gavin Tauschke BI April 2024 (2) [**12.3.1.2** - 2 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council officers would be unable to fulfil statutory duties and powers without appropriate delegation or authorisation from the Council.

CONCLUSION

To legally allow officers to enforce various legislation and regulations, the Council must have appropriate Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation in place.

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Ron Eason

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Government Act 2020 and other legislation referred to in the attached Instruments:

1. Considers and adopts the following Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation:
 - a. S11/S11A/S11B - Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation for the Environmental Health Officer.
 - b. S11/S11A/S11B - Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation for the Building Inspector.
2. Resolves that the Instruments be sealed.

CARRIED

12.3.2. PYRENEES AQUATIC 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: Baylie Lang – Recreation Development Coordinator

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

File No: C2021-020

PURPOSE

To provide an end of season summary of the 2023-24 pool season, including a review of the community participation and operational outcomes. The report also provides some context of current asset conditions and an option concerning the operations contract.

BACKGROUND

The 2023/24 Pyrenees Pool season was positive, with targeted participation growth and an increase in season pass attendance. The summer was affected with some operational challenges including necessary venue closures due to bushfires and some reactive maintenance obligations.

This was the third season of service delivery for the current operational contract with Belgravia Leisure.

Beaufort Pool

Beaufort's patronage was consistent throughout the season, with no attendance decrease experienced even following the end of the school holidays. An attributing factor was the introduction of gentle exercise classes and instructor led water walking sessions.

There was an influx of positive feedback and comments throughout the school holiday period when Belgravia Leisure implemented their Friday Fun Days, which included swimming races, lawn games, mini golf and a BBQ hosted by the Beaufort Friends of the Pool.

Throughout the season there were continued positive comments on the cleanliness and presentation of the facility, with praise and appreciation to facility staff.

Avoca Pool

Avoca had a delay to the beginning of summer, due to a water leak detected just prior to season commencement. Following investigation and rectification, the pool opened within the third week of the season.

Due to the colder weather throughout the season, Avoca experienced lower patronage numbers, with intermittent increases on hot days and hosted event days. As summer temperatures increased mid-way through the season, average daily attendances increased, including strong attendance at several school fun days, carnivals, and community celebrations.

Positive patron feedback was provided all season on the temperature of the pools and in relation to professional and supportive engagements with venue staff.

Landsborough Pool

Belgravia Leisure introduced a point of sales system that enabled patrons to purchase season passes onsite, which boosted sales and patronage at the beginning of the season.

Towards the mid-point of the season, attendances started to increase, partly due to the warmer weather, but also at several events hosted by Belgravia.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Community Attendances

The aquatic leisure industry in general has yet to return to pre-covid attendance levels. This year, Pyrenees' pool attendance levels were affected by weather (2023/24 summer was warmer but had less extreme hot weather spikes) and negatively impacted by closures for necessary maintenance and the bushfire emergency at the end of the season.

Venues saw a collective decrease of 15.83% (or 1,275 visits) compared to last season. This is attributed to enforced closures due to infrastructure maintenance, colder weather, and the bushfires. Beaufort is an outlier being the only pool to record growth in patronage, increasing on last year by 695 visits. Landsborough and Avoca experienced decreases in patronage by 29.28% and 42.17% respectively.

The pools were collectively open for a total of 258 days, which is 11 less than last season, with Avoca being the biggest contributor - closed for 24 days.

Table One provides a trend of total attendances across the last 3 years. It is noted that patronage pre-covid in 2019-2020, trended higher at 12,004 total visits and a combined daily average visit rate of 45.13 patrons. Over last three years, daily average attendances have remained consistent.

Table One: Total Attendances – 3 years

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Beaufort	3,946	4,461	5,156
Avoca	3,521	4,225	2,443
Landsborough	274	642	454
Total Attendance	7,741	9,329	8,053
Average daily visits	32.39	34.68	31.58

The average daily patronage for each pool for 2023-2024 were as follows:

- Beaufort – 58.59 patrons;
- Avoca – 32.14; and
- Landsborough – 4.83.

Operational and Maintenance Expenditure

The season saw a continuation in an annual escalation of the cost to provide leisure swimming services for our communities.

Over the last 5 years, the cost to provide Pyrenees pools has doubled from approximately \$300,000 per annum to over \$600,000.

Each pool is experiencing growing requirements and costs for repair and maintenance to pool plant, operational equipment and assets continuation (including pool shells, liners, paths and buildings).

Strategic direction of the Pyrenees Pools

Council's aquatic facilities are at the end of their life with any work currently undertaken on the infrastructure largely being reactive in nature. Ageing public pool infrastructure is a national issue with 40% of public pools reaching the end of their lifespan this decade (the average public pool in Australia was built in 1968).

Issues facing Pyrenees' pools include:

- Financial and operational viability.
- Pool shell integrity, failing plant, assets non-compliant to relevant standards, no longer fit-for-purpose, and the absence of ancillary income streams that could assist to compensate for rising costs.
- Future decisions to repair or replace.

Without some form of strategic analysis and planning for Council's public pools, the future will see a continued escalation of the cost of operations and maintenance, with an increased risk of asset failures resulting in a pool/s being unavailable during future seasons and no justification for making improvements at the facilities.

Contract Extension

The service contract with Belgravia Leisure ends on the 30 August 2024. The initial contract period was three years with the capacity to extend by three single-year extensions.

It is recommended that officers initiate a review of the current contract extension options. Extension of the contract with Belgravia Leisure will afford officers capacity to undertake the necessary strategic planning to ensure these assets continue to be viable and compliant from both a financial and operational perspective and continue to meet community expectation of cost and service levels by Council.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 4 - Economy

4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

Feedback from pool users across the season has been positive with strong feedback on the professionalism and support provided of staff, the quality and temperature of pool water, the range of special events provided and the introduction of new programs by Belgravia Leisure.

Two Friends of the Pool groups operating in Avoca and Beaufort have been supportive of operations, providing feedback throughout the season and post season. These groups have also delivered a range of community initiatives to support pool access and the enjoyment of the pools for the season.

Belgravia Leisure have met all contractual obligations associated with the management of complaints and incidents to officer satisfaction.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council's aquatic operational budget has increase by 69.22% since 2019-20 (pre-covid). The increase can be partially attributed to a general increase on goods and services following the pandemic. The pools and plant infrastructure are reaching their ends of life with the 2023-24 season experiencing some challenges through ageing assets, including liner and pool shell integrity issues and the need for replacement of key pieces of plant and equipment such as filtration and pump systems.

Based on total operational and maintenance spend for the season, Table Two provides cost subsidy for each pool visit:

Table Two: Council Financial Subsidy per visit

ASSET	21-22	22-23	23-24
BEAUFORT	\$39.74	\$37.49	\$55.08
AVOCA	\$40.89	\$35.73	\$83.13
LANDSBOROUGH	\$172.40	\$131.99	\$195.99
TOTAL	\$49.60	\$43.46	\$75.43

Aquatic and Recreation Victoria (ARV) provide a benchmark average for regional seasonal swim facilities as \$50 per visit. Considering the comparison of the ARV figure to Pyrenees 2023-24 summer, Beaufort is currently the only facility within a reasonable margin of the benchmark, with Landsborough almost four times the cost per visit than the benchmark.

CONCLUSION

Council recognises the importance of swimming pools to the community and invests significantly into their provision. Council continues to balance challenges associated with its ability to maintain and develop ageing pool infrastructure, ensuring that the cost of management and operations of the pools is proportionate to demands from other equally important services.

Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Notes the information contained within this report.
2. Approves the negotiation of an extension of the existing contract with Belgravia Leisure for a period of two years, to allow for appropriate strategic planning for the future.
3. Approves the development of a Pools Strategy to be developed utilising condition and options data obtained from external experts with strategic options developed in-house.

CARRIED

12.3.3. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

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: Adam Boyle – Team Leader - Community Development

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

File No: 36/22/16

PURPOSE

To provide Council with an update on the direction and commitment of future community engagement practice with Pyrenees Shire young people.

BACKGROUND

As measured at the 2021 Census, 12% of the Pyrenees Shire population is made up of young people. This equates to approximately 938 young people. A young person is defined as a person aged between 12 to 24 years. This represents a significant proportion of our population who have a want and need to represent their unique views, needs and aspirations in our community.

Council identifies with two separate cohorts of young people, as defined at **Table One** :

Table One: Youth population, 2021 Census

Young people	Total	% of Total Population
12 to 17	512	6.7%
18 to 24	426	5.6%
Total 12 – 24	938	12.3%

It is noted in **Table Two** that there is an equitable spread of our youth population across a geographically large and disparate shire, where young people are affected by transport disadvantage, forms of social isolation and varying degrees of disconnection from peer networks, youth services and assets.

Table Two: Distribution of young people across ward boundaries

Council Ward	Number of Young People	% of youth population
DeCameron	100	11%
Mount Emu	193	21%
Avoca	204	22%
Ercildoune	207	22%
Beaufort	234	25%
Total	938	100%

Council has identified the need for a sustainable, consistent approach to working with and supporting Pyrenees young people. As an outcome, a Youth Engagement Framework (YEF) is currently under development. Finalisation and implementation of the YEF will ensure that young people are continuously

engaged through a coordinated approach that is genuinely connected with Council, other relevant stakeholders and the broader community.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Local Government Sector traditionally defines a young person from 12 to 24 years of age. Given challenges, particularly surrounding experiences in transitions from primary to secondary schooling (external to the Shire) and Council having no direct delivery of a children's service (traditional programming from 6 to 11 year old), it is recommended that Youth Engagement and associated youth services be structured from 10 to 24 years of age. This results in an estimated catchment of 1,102 (or 14% of total Pyrenees population).

Pyrenees Shire Council's support to young people historically has been through programs like the State Government's Engage! Program (2015 – 2017, 2022 – 2024) and the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation's Leadership Program (2018 – 2023). This model of engagement is project based, resulting in periods of inactivity and some lapse in connection between the Council and young people.

In recognition, Council seeks to nurture the relationship with a committed, sustainable and consistent presence of engagement and connection, that meaningfully consults, and where possible collaborates and involves young people in our projects, services and assets.

The development of a Youth Engagement Framework will be undertaken in a co-design process that combines the expertise of council officers with the lived experience of young people. The framework will take a capacity building and partnership approach, focused on short term place-based projects and events, with a longer-term strategic planning focus. A model of the Framework can be found at Attachment One.

The Framework will provide, but not be limited to, the following:

- A Governance Framework that formally connects Council to young people; This will include a process to connect and collaborate with other relevant stakeholders (i.e. education providers and other partners / service providers).
- Establishment of a Youth Engagement Committee (YEC), which considers the age disparity of the 12 – 18 and 19 – 24 cohorts. This will consist of approximately 3 young people from each council ward boundary making up a smaller place-based support groups, that feeds into a Shire wide committee (i.e. each ward forming a sub-committee to inform the larger group).
- A program of unique engagement processes that may include youth forums, events, focus groups and consultations on identified themes /topics, and co-design processes of new programs and assets etc.

The key outputs of the 2024/25 Engagement Program will be a series of participatory processes including focus groups, a youth survey, and stakeholder interviews. This will provide an evidence base of current and future needs and wants of young people, collection of attitudes, opinions and ideas and the identification of issues, barriers and opportunities facing young people. This will importantly remove and avoid assumptions of the needs of young people and empower them to design their futures in Pyrenees. Officers will work with the YEC in 2025 to use this data to inform a Youth Strategy for Council and other relevant stakeholders.

Post the 2024/25 program, the Youth Strategy may recommend continuance of the Youth Engagement Committee structure, providing opportunity and delivery of ongoing engagement opportunities for the sector or it may recommend evolution into alternate decision-making and empowerment models such as a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Committee.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

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

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The development of a Youth Engagement Framework has been informed by officer insights, learning and informal engagement practice with young people. This has been mainly through the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation's Youth Leadership Program, delivered in Pyrenees Shire over the last 5 years. A core group of 3 of these graduates, presented to Council in December 2023, sharing their learnings through the program and advocating for the need to establish an ongoing voice for young people through council.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Youth Engagement Council Report App One [12.3.3.1 - 2 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Establishment of the Youth Engagement Framework is being financially supported through current funding via the State Government Engage! Program. This funding is supporting the delivery of programs that support Youth Participation and Engagement, Youth Development and Youth Celebrations.

The Engage! funding ceases in December 2024. To ensure continuity of the YEF and confidence to young people, officers seek Council support to continue to fund permanent youth officer resources, with continued seeking of third-party grants to subsidise our investment into young people.

In delivering a Youth Strategy in 2025, this will enable officers to strategically raise future budget new initiatives and seek external funding partnerships or grant funding opportunities, to deliver youth projects via an Annual Implementation (Action) Plan.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of the Youth Engagement Framework will establish meaningful, genuine and ongoing engagement approaches with young people that are importantly community led. It will be multifaceted in design and delivery, assisting to advance the skills and learning of young people, and empowering them to help shape our community.

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Ron Eason

That Council:

1. Note and receive this report as Council's commitment to improving ongoing engagement with young people; and
2. Provide resourcing in Council's 2024/25 budget to ensure continuity of the Youth Engagement Program.

CARRIED

12.4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

12.4.1. FIRE RECOVERY PLAN

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: 28/14/50

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to approve a draft Fire Recovery Plan for the Bayindeen Rocky Road fire event.

BACKGROUND

Council received a report at the 19 March 2024 Council Meeting on the Bayindeen Rocky Road fire event which impacted communities including Amphitheatre Avoca Bayindeen Beaufort Buangor and Buangor East Elmhurst Raglan Mount Cole Lexton.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Since the previous report to Council there has been considerable recovery underway, and the following items are reported for Council information.

Secondary Impact Assessments

Teams of Council staff have visited properties that have been significantly impacted, and more accurate data has been gathered. SIAs have been mostly completed. There is likely to be further impacts emerge as time goes on when residents are either contacted or reach out for assistance.

Council's ability to conduct secondary impact assessments and move into recovery mode has been hindered by the initial lack of initial Rapid Impact Assessments (RIA).

Transition to Recovery

The official transition to recovery from the ICC occurred on 5 April 2024. This formal process identified an initial list of activities needing to be included in an ongoing Recovery Plan. It also identified a range of risks to achieve full recovery including the financial limitations to deliver recovery actions.

Recovery Planning

Recovery planning is now well underway, and a draft recovery plan has been prepared and attached to this report.

The plan provides some context and background information about the event, initial recovery activities, as well as the agencies to be involved in the activities, the internal structure to oversee the implementation of the plan, and the stakeholders with an interest in having input into the recovery.

It is important to note, that the extent to which recovery activities can be delivered is dependent on available funding. While several key activities are funded within the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) guidelines, others are subject to Victorian government funding support.

It is proposed that both the fire and flood recovery activities be managed within one Recovery team. The full structure of the team will also depend on funding.

Given the dynamic nature of the disaster recovery, it will be necessary to make changes to the plan to reflect the changing needs of communities. It has been designed to evolve over time and has the community at its core.

The initial draft recovery plan is provided to Councillors by separate circulation.

Road Management

As reported to the previous Council meeting, roadside trees have been impacted creating significant risks to road users. A range of activities relating to the management of these risks are currently underway and others in development. Council has engaged an experienced arborist to provide advice on the dangers and risks. Tree removal contractors have been engaged and have commenced the work of removal of trees that present unacceptable risks. Other advice and support is being sought.

This activity is a high priority recovery activity to enable roads to be made safe in a timely way to enable safe access to properties for residents, businesses, visitors and other road users. This is the highest cost recovery activity contained in the draft plan.

At the time of preparing this report, Council is working with a group of interested residents who have expressed concerns over the extent of tree removal that has taken place to date. The management of safety risks on one hand, and conservation values of trees on the other will require considerable effort and support from other agencies including Emergency Recovery Victoria and DEECA to obtain a long-term best outcome for Council and communities. This is very much a dynamic and evolving activity.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

A range of agencies and stakeholders have an interest in the recovery, and engagement will be a critical factor to effective implementation of the plan. The plan is dynamic to enable it to evolve.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There has been a significant risk to public safety caused by the 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

This report seeks to provide further information on the Bayindeen Rocky Road Fire event and Council's recovery activities and seeks approval of the draft Recovery Plan.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr David Clark

That Council:

1. Approves the draft Fire Recovery Plan with or without any changes that may be needed noting the dynamic nature of the recovery activity.
2. That a status update on the Fire Recovery Plan be brought to a Council meeting in 3 months' time.

CARRIED

13. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Eason

- We had the governor general in Beaufort for a morning tea and he and his wife let us know that they are thinking about us and then they moved on up to Pomonal which had quite a severe fire just before us. It is not the kind of job that he would enjoy but it is part of the role as Governor General.
- I represented Council at the opening of the breast screening facility at the Maryborough Hospital. Providing this sort of service within our area for women that need it is great, the information coming to me on that day was that a number of women that don't utilise those facilities that are available to them because they are too far away. We now have a wonderful facility.
- The Audit & Risk Committee meeting was as usual, investigating what's happening and providing support to us as Council.

Cr Ferrari

- I Attended the usual cuppa and chats, the last one was in Landsborough which was a lovely little evening.
- I have spoken to a number of constituents relating to the recovery process from the recent fires and I encourage those people to keep engaging with the Council. If it is not our responsibility, I am sure that we can point people in the right direction. Please engage with the Council, continue to do so and we'll probably need to do that for quite some time.
- I have had a number of discussions with DEECA and the CMA regarding recovery activities. I have also had discussions with some constituents about the dangerous tree removal process which has been a bit of a topic of discussion. Although the fire was a couple of months ago now, it is still very active in people's minds understandably, and it has certainly affected people in many varied ways and that's quite evident in some of the people I've spoken with recently. I encourage people to please reach out and seek help if you need it and encourage everyone else to look out for the for their neighbours, friends, loved ones and people in the community. Don't be afraid to ask 'are you okay?' this is going to affect people for a long time. It affects people in different ways, we're all different and it's just devastating. Some people will find it quite difficult to recover in the near future or if at all, so we just need to keep an eye on those people and encourage them to seek help.
- I just want to finish on a really tragic note and acknowledge the tragic death of Hannah McGuire who lost her life recently to a very devastating family violence incident. She was part of the Beaufort Football / Netball club team and I was very pleased to see that at the recent game on the weekend, Beaufort and Daylesford undertook a minute silence at the game in respect of Hannah, that was really pleasing for them to do that and it was just a fantastic gesture. My sincere condolences go out to Deb, Hannah's mother who was a work colleague of mine and my thoughts and prayers are with the family. I pray that Hannah's death will cause some serious and necessary reviews of the legislation around family violence and the current justice procedures.

Cr Clark

- I have still got some things going on with the Bayindeen Rockyroad fire and community meetings, obviously the stuff this week around tree removal. I encourage people with a wish to reach out to me as the Councillor, please do.
- Just in terms of going around my local communities, I had the pleasure at Lexton in March to be MC for the Small Halls event, for those of you that haven't been, the Small Halls event is basically 15 small halls between Port Fairy Folk Festival and Canberra Folk Festival where folk artists come and do a concert for the local community. There was about 120 people there and it was a really good night out. There was only two people in the room who had been to Iceland, and that was me and Martha Haylett

so we had a really good chat about Iceland. There were a couple of fantastic acts and it was really good.

- The other bit of news out of Lexton is that the committee working on the purchase of the hotel has made an offer to the owners and the owners have said that is not acceptable in relation to the terms and conditions at this stage. That is not the end of the road for the community, they have just got some more work to do on that but in the interim the Lexton Hub Pub bar and bistro, courtesy of the renovations that we have done at the Lexton Hub is very active from Thursday to Saturday night and we will get a chance to have a look at that when we go there on Friday for the formal opening of the hub.
- In Evansford, I chaired the annual meeting of the committee and welcomed three new committee members of the seven so it is really good to see that committee renew themselves and have plans for the future.
- Central Highlands Football Netball started on the weekend. Waubra was hosting Clunes and Clunes is where Hanna McGuire's family live, so like Beaufort and Daylesford, we also had a minute silence on the netball courts and it was really moving and we absolutely stand in solidarity with that family.
- Not this weekend but next weekend on the 27 April, all roads lead to Waterloo for their Back to Waterloo and I hope I'll see everybody there.

Cr Vance

- I had the privilege of attending a Rural Council's meeting in Melbourne instead of on the screen, it is always good to get together with your fellow committee members and we did have quite a gathering from right across the Rural Victoria of Councils. CEO's, Mayors and councillors had the privilege of going over to Parliament House after a two and a half hour session at the Windsor Hotel, we had lunch together and spoke about swimming pools and a few other issues and then we had the opportunity to hear from Gayle Tierney and our Minister for Local Government and the Premier. I did grab the opportunity to have a discussion with the Premier and she assured me that assistance would be available for council, and she has stood by her word and sent official people along for discussions with Jim and we are hopefully going to get some more irons in the fire and get some reward out of that shortly.
- I had the opportunity of entertaining the Governor General just prior to the meeting with the public at the fire station and then when we had luncheon together. We had about 20 minutes at the Resource Centre with the Governor General which was very good. The Governor gave me a ring the day before and said it was David Hurley speaking and he said that he was the Governor General. He was very easy to speak to and his wife has a very pleasant voice, she loves to sing. We had quite a good time together and then they ventured off to Pomonal.
- I went to Raglan on the 7th of March and meet with the CFA volunteers. They were probably at the stage where the smoke had died down and they were still frustrated about how things didn't work out, but I guess to be fair, with Incident Control in Ballarat and the fire in Beaufort, it is easy to get upset when you see a fairly decent wall of fire going over your head heading to the Back Raglan and not being able to get the support that you need there and then because the radio communication is broken. These are a few issues that have been raised since and hopefully they are worked out.
- We had our briefing here in Avoca and then we went off to Redbank and met with a group of ratepayers, which was very good.
- I had a meeting in Ballarat with the GBAC Mayors and CEOs and councillors around the area, we were a bit small on numbers so the fire did get a fair bit of discussion at that meeting. I had the opportunity to thank Ballarat City Council for their support during the fire, they didn't hesitate in setting up the Relief Centre at the Wendouree football oval and they really bent over backwards to help us which was really good.

- I had a meeting on the 21st of March in Melbourne as an elected representative on the Mayoral Advisory Panel and that was an interesting little session. There were five Mayors from the city region, we had the Mayor from Wellington Council, one from Baw Baw and the discussion was basically around councillor conduct, and I have got to say that my fellow councillors are excellent students, because some of the antics that obviously go on at some of the larger municipal councils in Melbourne are different. I was reminded at our Rural Councils meeting last week, it is not only Melbourne that have their problems, there are a few Councils out in the country regions that don't show the due respect that we all deserve. We are representatives of the people, but you should, in my opinion anyway, respect one another. It was interesting to hear that one Councillor in a city council has never attended a meeting in person over three and half years, the councillors join the meetings virtually. I always find it rewarding that we can look one another in the eye, and we can have differences but we get over our differences and that's what it's all about, we're here to represent people, not ourselves, but the people. The beauty of the Pyrenees Shire is that there would be very few patrons or residents in the Council who don't know us personally, we are all known to our rate payers so that makes us a little more honest. I did speak after the discussion around councillor conduct and what's going to happen with the upcoming election, it's obvious that the current labor government are very keen to get more female representation on council which is a good thing. I believe if the right people put their hand up, they will get elected whether they be male or female, but we certainly need to go out there and encourage our female counterparts to be part of local government. I did at the end of meeting take the opportunity to remind Minister Horne that we were still out of pocket for quite a deal of money from the 2022 floods and we would be keen to get a bit of support in getting some of our applications over the line. I'm hopeful that even though the state government is probably hard pushed to find too many spare dollars, they might just give us a decent hearing and a bit of financial support.

14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

That, pursuant to the provisions of Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, the meeting be closed to the public in order to consider confidential items.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari

That the meeting be closed to members of the public in accordance with Section 4.1.1(c) of Council's Governance Rules, and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, in order to discuss the confidential reports listed below:

15.1 - Council to Chief Executive Officer Delegation – Emergency Powers

CARRIED

The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council 16 April 2024 stopped at 7:18 pm to consider confidential items.

The live stream re-commenced at 7.43pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below:

Council resolved to update the Council to Chief Executive Officer Delegation - Emergency Powers to authorise the CEO to undertake whatever action is necessary during a declared emergency event.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari

The Ordinary Meeting of Council 16 April 2024 closed at 7.43pm.

CARRIED

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed _____

2024

Mayor Cr Robert Vance