



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Minutes

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 16 July 2024
Council Chambers
Beaufort Council Offices,
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

Wadawurrung Country

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. WELCOME 3

2. STREAMING PREAMBLE 3

3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY 3

4. APOLOGIES..... 3

5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS 3

6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES..... 3

7. BUSINESS ARISING 3

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION..... 4

9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS 6

 9.1. Councillor Activity Reports - June 2024 6

10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS..... 8

 10.1. Assembly of Councillors - June 2024 8

11. ITEMS FOR DECISION 10

 11.1. Economic Development and Tourism 10

 11.1.1. Economic Development Update 10

 11.2. Asset and Development Services..... 17

 11.2.1. Adoption of 2024-2028 Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 17

 11.3. Corporate and Community Services 20

 11.3.1. Risk Management - Insurance Program Renewal 2024-2025 20

 11.3.2. Customer Contact - June 2024..... 23

 11.4. Chief Executive Office 34

 11.4.1. September 2024 Council Meeting 34

 11.5.1. 2024/001 - Notice of Motion (Cr Eason) - Prayer at Council Meetings 36

12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS 38

13. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS 41

14. CLOSE OF MEETING 41

1. WELCOME

Mayor Cr Robert Vance welcomed all to the meeting.

PRESENT

Mayor: Cr Robert Vance

Councillors: Tanya Kehoe, 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)

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

There were no apologies.

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 Tanya Kehoe

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 June 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 25 June 2024.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr George Kirsanovs of Beaufort

Question One:

The traffic lights out here, has the Council had any input into who makes decisions about the duration of which direction those lights operate in? It is quite clear that in recent days they favour the east-west traffic, regardless of whether it's low traffic across the north-south lane or not. As a local resident, I would have thought there would have been some sort of consultation and if there hasn't, there ought to be, about the degree to which those traffic lights are set. At the moment they are quite long in terms of allowing east-west traffic and local traffic is being held up.

Response:

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

Essentially the traffic lights on the Western Highway are the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Planning so essentially, they make the call on the timing of the lights and generally that has regard to traffic flow and the broader needs of transport and traffic management. That is the role of DOTP. I understand that through the Western Highway Alliance of Councils (WHAC), of which Pyrenees is one Council, there is an opportunity to advocate for or to provide input into activities on the Western Highway and the matter of traffic lights has come up through that group from time to time where the department has advised that there are adjustments made to the timing from time to time and some feedback is sort through WHAC to the Department of Transport and Planning and often times the reason for making those adjustments might be to do with events and activities so during Easter for example, I am aware that there were some adjustments made to enable through flow for east-west traffic to flow more freely during those peak periods. The department certainly do collect traffic data and base those decisions on evidence from that traffic data and we have some knowledge of that and have been made aware of it when those changes have occurred. Essentially it is the department's role and whether they choose to undertake consultation with the broader community, is a department matter. We are certainly happy to take on board your concerns that the community have around that and we can take that up with the department further, but at the end of the day, we have limited capacity to influence that decision.

Question Two:

My second question relates to a challenge laid down to me by Mr Gowans at the last Council meeting when I raised a matter of the pedestrian crossing here at Lexton Road and Mr Gowans said that I need to write letters to the appropriate authorities, well I haven't had too much time, but I've spoken to people who I think are appropriate authorities and the message they have given me is that a letter from the Council promoting and supporting that pedestrian crossing would go a long way towards achieving that result.

Response:

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

In respect of the rail crossing, it is certainly a matter that Council is happy to take up on your behalf to advocate and we really appreciate the fact that you've raised the issue with Council. It certainly is a matter for the rail authority and the state because essentially it will depend on their funding for that to occur. It does bring me back to a previous advocacy led by the previous Mayor, Cr Eason in Avoca when there was a need for a pedestrian crossing on the rail crossing on the Homebush Road in Avoca which Cr Eason strongly advocated for and wrote a letter to the Premier who was the Minister responsible for transport at the time, and that has resulted in action by the state government to commit funds to secure a pedestrian crossing,

which has now been built and that was initiated by Cr Eason. There was certainly some advocacy done there, the difference in that instance was that it was the Murray Basin Rail Project, and it was at the time, still a work in progress. There is certainly some support for the suggestion that if Council was to get behind things, then the Minister will consider it, there is no guarantee and money is a little tighter now but very happy to take that suggestion up.

9. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

9.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - JUNE 2024

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
11 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Avoca
11 June 2024	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Avoca
18 June 2024	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
28 June 2024	Western Highway Action Committee Meeting	Ballarat
Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward		
5 June 2024	Lexton Flood Study Drop In Session	Lexton
7 June 2024	MAV Board Meeting	Melbourne
11 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Avoca
11 June 2024	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Avoca
13 June 2024	HLEN Committee Meeting	Virtual
20-21 June 2024	MAV Rural & Regional Planning Conference	Creswick
25 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
28 June 2024	MAV Board Meeting	Melbourne
Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward		
5 June 2024	GBAC Committee Meeting	Ballarat
7 June 2024	Pyrenees Art Show Opening	Beaufort
11 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Avoca
11 June 2024	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Avoca
20 June 2024	Timber Towns Victoria General Meeting	Virtual
25 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
27 June 2024	National Timber Councils AGM	Virtual
Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward		
4 June 2024	Avoca Chinese Garden Meeting	Avoca
11 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Avoca
11 June 2024	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Avoca
18 June 2024	Audit & Risk Committee Meeting	Virtual
25 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
11 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Avoca
25 June 2024	Councillor Briefing	Beaufort
25 June 2024	Council Meeting	Beaufort

Cr David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

10. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

10.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - JUNE 2024

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	11 June 2024 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 4.51pm		
Meeting Location	Avoca RTC		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital Transformation Project Update 2. Frontline Service Review 3. Economic Development Update 4. Planning Update 5. Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance 6. Budget Submissions 7. Fire Recovery 8. CEO Update 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe (virtual)	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) Ray Davies (Manager Economic Development & Tourism) - item 3 Rachel Blackwell (Manager Planning and Development Services) - item 4 Noel McKeegan (Environment & Sustainability Coordinator) - item 5		
Visitors	Annika Kearton (CVGA) - item 5		
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	25 June 2024 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 5.15pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Applications 2. Customer Satisfaction Survey 3. Old Beaufort Primary School 4. Housing 5. CEO Update 6. Inspection of sites in Beaufort 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe (virtual)	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) Rachel Blackwell (Manager Planning and Development Services) - item 1		
Visitors	John and Marge Caulfield and Jason Nalder - item 1 (1.30pm)		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr David Clark

That Council notes this report.

CARRIED

11. ITEMS FOR DECISION

11.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

11.1.1. 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 over the June quarter 2024.

BACKGROUND

Economic Development Activities for the June quarter

Throughout the past quarter progress has continued on the projects and activities outlined below:

- The business case for the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply Project.
- Beaufort Linear Masterplan project.
- Beaufort Lake Caravan Park redevelopment.
- The Shop Façade Program follow ups.
- Tourism Midwest Vic Destination Management Plan and Local Area Action Plan.
- The digital connectivity project.
- Fire recovery from the Bayindeen bushfire
- Business support
- Events and tourism campaigns

SWNP Water Supply

The business case has now been drafted and circulated by GWMWater in the first week of July to members of the Project Control Group for review and identifies the level of funding required by State and Commonwealth Governments and key stakeholders.

The project cost is estimated at around \$160M and has a positive Benefit Cost Ratio.

A public meeting is proposed in the near future to update the community on progress to date, the next steps including those of landholders looking to secure water supplies.

A further update on this project will be provided to Council by the end of September.

Beaufort Linear Masterplan

The consultants' hydrological investigations have commenced at the time of drafting this report. This work is being undertaken to establish the impacts (positive or negative) of the proposed changes to the alignment of creek flows, introduction of swales etc. in the masterplan designs along the watercourse. Completion of any revisions to the masterplan can then be made together with completion of the economic assessment which was incorporated into the initial scope of the project.

Beaufort Lake Caravan Park

Council was invited to submit a full application for the \$1M Commonwealth Governments Growing Regions Fund at the beginning of the year and has been advised the application has been unsuccessful. Efforts are

now focused on funding alternatives through the Victorian Government Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund which is due to close on 19 July.

Planning approval for the parks redevelopment was granted by Council at its' June 2024 meeting and efforts are now turning to procurement of those cabins that are being jointly funded by \$500K from Council and \$500K from the Victorian Government through the Regional Infrastructure Fund.

Shop Façade Program

Council has approved 23 grants under the shop façade program over the previous two financial years. At the beginning of June 2024 there were nine incomplete projects and follow up contact has been made during June to each of these recipients to either secure a variation to finalise their projects by September 30 this year or forego their funding under the program.

In response to this contact:

- Five recipients have requested to extend their timelines for completion to 30 September,
- Three recipients (all from the 2022/23 grant round) have not responded to our offer of extending timelines as yet and,
- One recipient is no longer proceeding with their project and these funds will remain with council.

Tourism Midwest Strategies

The Destination Management Plan and Pyrenees Local Area Action Plan were reported to the June council meeting.

The DMP has now been endorsed by the board of TMV and the Pyrenees LAAP has been placed on public exhibit for a period of four weeks until 31 July, to receive submissions by community members and industry stakeholders. The Pyrenees LAAP indicates there were 223,000 visitors who spent \$37M in 2023. Direct email contact has been made to local tourism operators in this regard.

A further council report will be issued once submissions close, and these have been given due consideration.

Digital Connectivity Plan

Since February 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 is to improve both digital connectivity and digital literacy and identify any needs for installations of new telecommunications technology. While telecommunications remain a responsibility of the Commonwealth, council may have an advocacy role for funding of new infrastructure in due course. In the past this has included the Victorian governments "Connecting Victoria" Program which has been aimed at fast tracking mobile and broadband connectivity.

The <https://www.vic.gov.au/find-a-project> website indicates that eight projects across the Shire have been completed and three are in progress.

Of these eight have been mobile and three are broadband projects. The three projects in progress at this time are:

- NBN Broadband project for Lexton forecast for completion 24/25 Q1
- NBN Broadband project for Waterloo forecast for completion 24/25 Q1
- Telstra mobile project at Snake Valley forecast for completion 23/24 Q4

A survey was launched in June to understand the connectivity experiences of residents across the Shire. To date there have been 95 responses with the survey due to close 9 July. The survey is expected to highlight areas requiring improved connectivity and also the need for improved education to increase digital literacy. A series of digital roadshow drop in events occurred at the end of May at Cross Roads CFA shed (west of Beaufort), Moonambel and Lexton. Members of Telstra, NBN Co, Regional Tech Hub and Agriculture Victoria attended these sessions to respond to enquiries from Shire residents.

A workshop with council staff was also held at this time to help inform the Pyrenees connectivity strategy.

This workshop included information and feedback about considerations for telecommunications infrastructure when land is being subdivided, during emergency events and to support communities in times of natural disasters.

The drop-in sessions, interim survey results and conversations with telecommunications agencies have highlighted there is an ongoing need for:

1. Education about telecommunications technology that is already available and how to access it (Telstra, NBN Co and Regional Tech Hub have been instrumental in this)
2. An improved understanding of the functionality of smart phones. "Get Techy" sessions hosted at Pyrenees libraries include representation by Council and NBN staff. These sessions are being well attended and the demands for them will continue as technology evolves.
3. Supporting the transition from the 3G network which may have implications for 3G based agricultural technology and businesses which may still have 3G EFTPOS machines,
4. A better understanding by residents of the need to upgrade hardware as systems migrate to 5G, improved satellite and wireless aerial systems become available and growing demands for greater download speeds on computers etc.

The Digital Connectivity Plan is due to be finalised towards the end of July and identify actions required of Council. These will encompass advocacy for funding and delivery of educational programs. The plan will be subject to regular revision as new telecommunications infrastructure such as satellites and wireless aerials are installed, and digital technology evolves.

Fire Recovery

Tourism

Since the previous ED&T update in April there remain a number of tourism businesses in the vicinity of Mt Cole and the Mt Buangor State Park whose business models benefit from nature-based tourism. These businesses will therefore benefit from reopening of these parks in due course.

There has been ongoing advocacy by Council and Tourism Midwest Vic to support the reopening of these nature-based assets as soon as possible and once it is safe to do so.

Some positive announcements were made during the first week of July about access to campgrounds and some walking tracks at Mt Cole while the Mt Buangor State Park remains closed due to significant damage to campgrounds and walking tracks including the popular the Beeripmo Walk. There is a significant amount of work to be done to restore Mt Buangor State Park before it is operational again and no timeline has been given.

The Parks Vic website was updated at the beginning of Jul 2024 and indicates the Mount Buangor State Park "is closed and will remain so for some time due to extensive damage" while "a recovery program is being developed".

Agriculture

Dry seasonal conditions emerging in recent months are impacting the broader region now, including those farmers whose properties were subject to the fires at the beginning of the year. Most farmers across the region are having to provide supplementary feed to livestock due to the prevailing dry conditions.

Agriculture Victoria's weekly newsletters are running information on dry seasons and drought support and the Department also hosted an animal nutrition day at Elmhurst on 8 May.

The Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries June Crop report estimates that this year's winter crop production in Victoria will be 13% below that of 2023-24 but still 16% above the ten year average to 2023-24. The report goes on to say that the three month rainfall outlook (June to August) issued by the Bureau of Meteorology on 23 May 2024, indicates that below average to average winter rainfall is likely for Victoria (35% to 55% chance of exceeding the winter median).

General Fire Recovery

For the week ending 1 July BlazeAid report that fencing recovery encompassed:

- # Properties Registered: **79**
- # Properties Started: **23**
- # Properties Completed: **50**
- Overall Progress: 63% (Based on the number of property owners completed rather than kilometres yet to do)
- Total Fence Cleared: **109.63km** (*No cleaning work was done in the last 7 days, only rebuilding.*)
- Total Fence Rebuilt: **74.87km**
- Total Unique Volunteers: **192**
- Total Volunteer Days: **2,657**

Recovery outreach sessions at Raglan and Amphitheatre concluded after the first week of April and the Recovery Team are currently making themselves available to the community at the Beaufort Community Resource Centre on Wednesday of each week.

A mental Health Clinician is also attending these sessions having been funded through the Victorian Governments Partners in Wellbeing Program.

Business Support

A range of workshops have been delivered across the Shire and these include:

- Pyrenees Connectivity Roadshow with Telstra, NBNC0, Regional Tech Hub & Agricultural Victoria.
 - Tues 21 May – Crossroads CFA Shed
 - Wed 22 May – Summerfield Winery
 - Wed 22 May – Lexton Hub

Modest turn up at each, however valuable insight to understanding the community's challenges with connectivity. This feedback will help inform the connectivity activity plan.

- Digital Connectivity Survey opened 6 June 2024 – 12 July 2024
 - 95 responses to date
- Social media and content Market Workshop, Beeripmo Centre (Business Victoria)
7 May 2024
 - 17 people registered.
- Agritourism 101 session (Tourism Midwest Vic) Waubra Springs Hotel
19 June 2024
 - 6 people registered.

Staff also attended three networking Events hosted by Business for Beaufort (B4B):

- Community Recovery and Connect 30 April
- Women in Business 28 May
- Men in Business 25 June

Events

Pyrenees Shire events continue to thrive despite economic concerns. Highlights include:

- Pyrenees Unearthed: Strong attendance of 1,000.
- Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally: Successful turnout by around 4,000 patrons with favourable weather.
- Avoca Autumn Races
- Pyrenees Art Show
- Beaufort Market: New seasonal market attracting strong attendance.
- Avoca Market: Consistent monthly draw.
- Music Events at a range of cellar doors and hospitality venues continue to contribute to a vibrant events calendar.

The new Waubra Market closed due to competition from a new Ballarat Market on the same day and has struggled with numbers for the last couple of markets.

The free community event Avoca by the River which was postponed due to the fires was delivered in late April. Those who did attend enjoyed this free community event with perfect Autumn weather.

Tourism

Road to Red Winter Campaign

From May to August we run the Road to Red Campaign inviting visitors to celebrate the chilly days in the Pyrenees. The hero wines of the region are their Red Varieties, particularly the Shiraz and Cabernet. By developing Road to Red we are highlighting these varieties while promoting the Pyrenees as the best place in Victoria to find phenomenal wines and a must destination for red wine drinkers.

More than just a wine region, people can find themselves around a campfire, in cosy accommodation, exploring local art, enjoying wood fired cuisine and other comfort food.

Target Audience

- Ballarat has been identified as the key geographic target market for the visitor economy in the Pyrenees Shire Council Marketing Strategy.
- Lifestyle Leader. These people represent 29% of the population nationally or 1.4 Million Victorians AND are characterized as educated, affluent, socially active and influential. Importantly they buy into regional short breaks and like to experience nature and wilderness along with the finer things in life including food and wine.
- Food and Wine Lifestylers. This core target segment represents around 14% of the population nationally or 660,000 Victorians. They are more likely to be in a couple; they're attracted to interesting, authentic and new culinary experiences
- Melbournians living on the North and West side of the city.
- Educated, Higher discretionary spend, Professional/white collar, Socially active and influential

Objectives

Our campaign objectives are aimed at achieving the following:

- Increasing Visitation to the Pyrenees Region during winter.

- Enhance awareness of the Pyrenees Wine Region by promoting it as a producer of premium red wines.
- Emphasise the difference of the Pyrenees wine region to other regions.
- Highlight cellar doors and accommodation venues etc. with wood fires
- Promote nature experiences including cycling, hiking and campfires
- Encourage visitation to venues that encompass the Road to Red theme such as woodfired cuisine at Wayward Winery and Summerfield
- Publicise comfort food from our local hotels, bakeries and cafes
- Highlight the many things to see and do in the Pyrenees to turn a day trip into a weekend long stay

Digital Statistics

Facebook

	Organic Posts Reached	Organic Page Visits	New Followers	Paid Ad Reach
Apr – June 2023	27,360	1,100	78	
Apr – June 2024	41,239	1,800	90	12,884

Instagram Organic Posts

	Posts Reached	Page Visits	New Followers	Paid Ad Reach
Apr – June 2023	1,646	267	32	
Apr – June 2024	2038	285	54	406

The number of Facebook followers for Visit Pyrenees has increased from 2,984 to 3,593 over the past twelve months and Instagram has risen from 1,658 to 1,807 in the same period. These increases have been due to the combined effects of:

- Themed seasonal campaigns, Road to Red during winter, Unplug and Unwind during spring to early summer and Play in the Pyrenees from mid summer to the end of autumn,
- Targeted Facebook boost messages about our campaigns and competitions.

Visit Pyrenees Website

- 8.2K Users
- 8.1K of those users were new users
- 570 visits have been through social media posts, 7.4K through organic search

Most visited pages were Road to Red Wine Region 2K, Winery Accommodation 572, Whats On 564, Mount Cole State Forest 522, Top Things to do in Beaufort 335.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

This report is for information only.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

Priority 2 - Place

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

2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 3 - Environment

3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.

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

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report is for information only.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

This report is for information only.

CONCLUSION

This report is for information only.

Cr David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

That Council:

1. Continues to work with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water and neighbouring councils to advocate to state and federal governments for commitment towards the Southern Wimmera Northeast Pyrenees Pipeline project highlighting the findings of the feasibility study and business case.
2. Acknowledges the input to the digital connectivity survey and incorporates these into the final Connectivity Plan to be used to inform Council's advocacy for ongoing investment in digital communication in the region.
3. In conjunction with Tourism Midwest Victoria, supports the Road to Red winter campaign to attract visitation to the region.

CARRIED

11.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

11.2.1. ADOPTION OF 2024-2028 ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

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: Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

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

File No: 50/26/04

PURPOSE

This report seeks a resolution from the Council to adopt the 2024-2028 Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP).

BACKGROUND

The council has a statutory responsibility to administer the use and installation of onsite wastewater management systems within the shire. It must also assess the risks and identify strategies to manage these systems, via a DWMP (Domestic Wastewater Management Plan).

The council's current Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015-18 (DWMP) has been in effect since being adopted in July 2015. There have been significant updates in legislation and guidelines which provide the framework for effective onsite wastewater management in recent years necessitating a review and rewrite of the plan.

In 2023, the Council was successful in obtaining a grant from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to undertake a project to review our DWMP.

The introduction of the EPA's General Environmental Duty (GED), which requires all Victorian to be responsible for the protection of the environment, gives Council the opportunity to extend the scope of the OWMP to capture all Wastewater Systems in the municipality onto our database.

Pyrenees Shire Officers engaged with the Catchment Management Authorities (CMA), Water Corporations (WC), and EPA inviting feedback and changing the draft prior to public consultation.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The new plan has been developed using a combination of the guidelines prepared by the MAV (Municipal Association of Victoria) (Municipal Association of Victoria), new legislation, guidelines, and frameworks prepared by EPA (Environmental Protection Authority) and DEECA, and a review of neighbouring council plans. The scope of the plan has not changed significantly, with the focus SWSCA (Special Water Supply Catchment Areas) on monitoring and compliance in SWSCA and high risk unsewered townships.

The OWMP was presented to the public for a consultation period of 2 weeks in May 2024. The council's engagement hub, website, and public notices were utilised and direct engagement via email invited local plumbers, land capability assessors, neighbouring Councils, and property owners with wastewater systems to provide feedback. The WC, CMA, EPA and DEECA were also invited to make further comments.

Council received extensive feedback from Central Highlands Water prior to public consultation period that allowed us to address areas of particular concern to them from a risk perspective prior to finalising the draft plan. Goulburn-Murray Water also provided feedback supporting the scope and actions of the plan.

During the public consultation period Council received formal submissions from Central Highlands Water, DEECA and Wimmera CMA as well as and two responses via the Engagement Hub.

DEECA provided excellent technical advice around some updates required to references relating to newly released guidance documents which has been incorporated into the final draft.

Central Highlands Water's formal response was supportive of the plan and required no further changes to be made. The extensive engagement with CHW (Central Highlands Water) throughout the development process contributed to this outcome.

Wimmera CMA provided a response that they found no issues with the plan.

Feedback from the Engagement Hub addressed general concerns around EHO's requiring progress inspections of septic tanks and that Council's seem reluctant to follow up un-serviced treatment plants. The other submission suggested it would be helpful to include a document noting the differences between the two plans. Future engagement will look to provide such an Impact Statement.

A summary of all consultation responses is provided as **Attachment 1**.

All the relevant feedback has been incorporated into the final plan as well as an extra Appendix reference which provides further information about the Declared Special Water Supply Catchment areas. The final Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2028 is provided as **Attachment 2**.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement, and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

- 2b. Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities.
- 2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 3 - Environment

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.
- 3c. Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values.
- 3d. Improve waste management to reduce landfill and reduce harm to the environment.

Priority 4 - Economy

- 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

As detailed in the report, direct consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders including an Engagement Hub presentation, information on Council's website and through Noticeboard promotion.

Details regarding the consultation engagement are contained as an attachment to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2024 OWMP Consultation summary [**11.2.1.1** - 7 pages]
2. 2024 2028 Pyrenees Shire OWMP Final [**11.2.1.2** - 45 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council has a statutory responsibility to administer the use and installation of onsite wastewater management systems within the shire under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*.

It must assess the risks and identify strategies to manage these systems, via an onsite wastewater management plan (OWMP) as set out in the *Order for Obligations of managers of land or infrastructure (Urban stormwater management and On-site wastewater management)*.

There is also a requirement set out in the *Planning permit applications in special water supply catchment areas guidelines* for Council's to protect via an OWMP.

CONCLUSION

The 2024-2028 Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP) has been finalised and is required to be formally adopted by the Council.

Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Adopts the 2024-2028 Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP).

CARRIED

11.3. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

11.3.1. RISK MANAGEMENT - INSURANCE PROGRAM RENEWAL 2024-2025

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: 38/02/04

PURPOSE

This report is presented for Council to endorse the insurance program renewal placed for the 2024/25 financial year.

BACKGROUND

As part of good governance, and mitigation of risk, the Council annually purchases and maintains insurance as part of sharing risk for various lines including public liability, professional indemnity, property, crime, cyber security, travel, and motor vehicles.

In line with previous years, the Pyrenees Shire Council has maintained its relationships with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) for liability and professional indemnity coverage through the Liability Mutual Scheme, and its risk advisor, JLT Public Sector.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The annual insurance program was successfully procured for another year, commencing 1 July 2024, at a total increase of 18.7% for the total program.

The largest percentage increase was for property protection, significantly impacted by the widespread flood event in October/November 2022.

Total insurance costs were almost 2.5% of Council's 2024/25 budgeted revenue which is a high percentage for a financially constrained council like ours. Potential strategies to minimise future premiums and reduce this percentage will be discussed and reported back to the Council in late 2024.

Commercial-in-confidence information relating to individual insurance line premiums has been provided to the Council separately. The insurance program renewal was required by 1 July 2024 and, as has been the case in previous years, renewal information was received too late to be provided to Council at its June 2024 meeting for advance approval. Indicative costs are, however, included within Council's budget.

Due to timing constraints and the mandatory nature of needing an insurance program in place, the insurance program has been accepted on behalf of Council and the Council is now requested to provide endorsement of the decision made to procure insurance at a total cost of \$614,127.07 for the 2024/25 financial year.

The insurance lines held by Council for 2024/25 include:

- **Property** – renewal made with the JMAPP Discretionary Trust Program.

Council renewed its membership with the JMAPP Discretionary Trust program for 2024/25. This arrangement is not insurance but is authorised and classified by ASIC (Australian Securities and Investments Commission) as a managed investment scheme and mutual risk product.

The structure of JMAPP is designed to reduce the reliance on the traditional insurance market using the managed Aggregate.

This program covers property located in Australia that is the responsibility of its members including Council's catalogue of artworks.

- **Public Liability and Professional Liability** – renewal made with the MAV's Liability Mutual.

Council renewed its membership with the MAV's Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. This scheme covers liability for personal injury and property loss arising through Council's actions or absence of action, plus professional indemnity against decisions made by council officers.

- **Motor Vehicle Policy** – renewal made with Vero Insurance.

This policy provides fully comprehensive coverage for all registered motor vehicles, including heavy fleet vehicles, owned, and operated by the Council.

- **Personal Accident Policy** – renewal made via Victor Underwriting with Chubb Insurance.

This policy provides coverage for Councillors, officers and volunteers working or engaged on behalf of the Council where that work is officially organised by and under the control of Council, except where such expenses are covered by Medicare.

- **Corporate Travel Policy** – renewal made via Victor Underwriting with Chubb insurance.

This policy provides coverage in respect of Council business provided such travel involves a destination fifty (50) kilometres or more from the covered person's home or normal place of business.

- **Community Liability Pack Policy** – renewal made with QBE Insurance.

This policy provides coverage for:

- Uninsured casual, ad-hoc and regular hirers of Council Owned or Controlled Facilities for activities conducted at and from the hired facility, provided hire occurs no more than 52 times per annum (per hirer).
- Uninsured Council-run or Council-approved events or programs include performers, stallholders, artists, buskers, street stallholders, artists occupying studios, tutors, instructors and similar. Coverage includes the various activities of the insured whilst participating in an event or program organised by Council or an event or program organised by others where Council requires coverage.
- Uninsured permit holders (liability coverage) including:
 - Local trader permit holders for the placement of advertising boards and other merchandise on footpaths or areas deemed to be Council property under a permit issued by Council.
 - Community garden permit holders – residents setting up and maintaining gardens on Council property including nature strips or planter boxes, under a permit issued by Council.

- **Cyber Liability Policy** – renewal made with a panel of insurers, led by Chubb Insurance.

Cyber-security is one of the highest rated risk concerns in 2024 and has potential impacts on other key risks including financial sustainability, business interruption, and statutory / regulatory requirements.

The cyber insurance market has seen the greatest volatility over the past few years and in the last 12 months the market has changed with new entrants and refined risk selection from insurers, including the introduction of co-insurance clauses for ransomware, shared computer system limitations, widespread events definitions along with premium and deductible increases.

- **Councillors' & Officers' Liability Policy** – renewal made with AXA XL.

This policy provides coverage for claims brought against Council or insured persons (Councillors and Council Officers). Changes in legislation reducing the coverage permissible for Councillors under investigation for misconduct may have contributed to premium easing for this policy.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 4 - Economy

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 considered a method of informing our community on Council meeting its mandatory obligation to protect Council people, assets, and operations through an appropriate insurance program.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Significant financial and risk implications are inherent in a poorly procured insurance program. Risks include insufficient coverage in the event of a disruptive incident, inability to obtain appropriate insurance, and exposure to an extremely variable cost impost year on year.

Financial risk exists small rural councils with the high cost of insurance when compared to revenue. In 2024 the insurance procurement cost represents approximately 2.5% of Pyrenees Shire Council's budget revenue for the year.

CONCLUSION

Insurance has been procured for the 2024/25 financial year through MAV/JLT Public Sector with premium detail provided to Council separately. The Council is asked to endorse payment of the 2024/25 insurance premiums, which reflect an overall increase of 18.7% over the previous year.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Notes the information provided in this report, and
2. Endorses payment of \$614,127.07 for the procurement of the 2024/25 insurance program.

CARRIED

11.3.2. CUSTOMER CONTACT - JUNE 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 June 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.

Although the 2024 Customer Satisfaction Survey Report, received in June 2024, indicates a possible halt to the declining trend in customer satisfaction over the past 10 years, effort to improve in this regard continues and this report will continue to be reformatted in the future to expand information on officer response to community contact to demonstrate efforts to not just halt the trend, but to reverse it.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER CONTACT

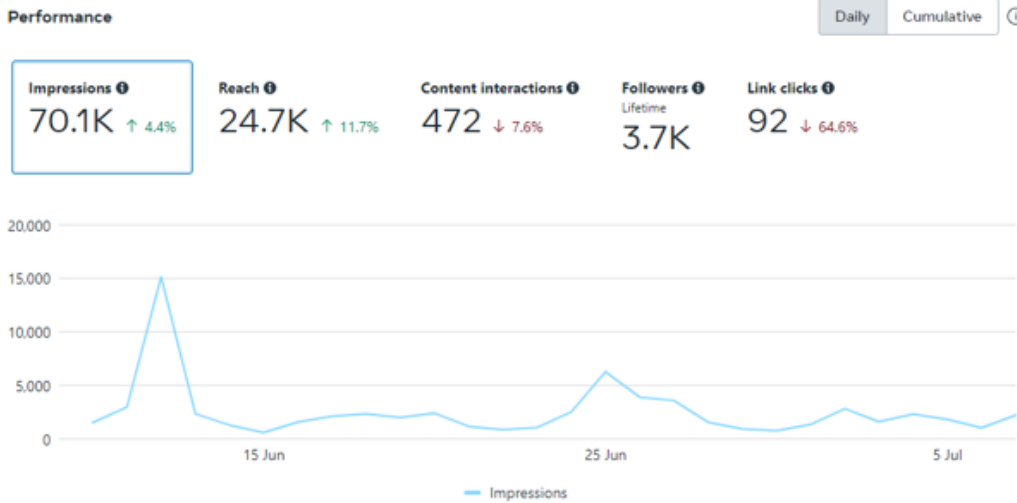
The following provides data on community contacts with employees, other than that recorded through the customer requests system, providing a more comprehensive view of our customer experience.

Customer contact media	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 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	23,720	24,977	22,664
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%	6,516 22%	7,505 23%	6,476 22%
Inbound malware detected	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	2	2
Emails sent by organisation (external)	8,349	9,169	9,529	10,138	8,439	7,295	6,485	11007#	8,825	9,220	10,212	8,843
External complaints received	3	4	2	2	4	2	3	6	7	5	3	2
FOI Requests	1	4	2	10	0	0	0	1	2	2	3	3
Requests for infringement reviews	1	2	0	2	1	6	15	0	6	2	3	3
Website page views	17,970	17,086	17,242	16,133	15,891	12,638	16,047	20,521	17,342	18,311	15,324	14,074
Website users	5,472	5,570	6,017	5,556	5,893	5,000	6,015	8,081	6,314	7,325	5,452	5,373
Website contact us page views	645	614	473	542	413	354	410	600	540	462	420	361
Website customer enquiry form	54	65	57	69	60	40	56	50	57	52	54	40
Telephone Calls Received by PSC (total)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,276	2,249	2,264	2,043
Calls answered by Switchboard / Customer Service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,997 88% of total	1,988 88% of total	1,959 87% of total	1,785 87% of total

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

Email traffic impacted by fire response (increase).

Facebook snapshot



Comments:

- Top website pages viewed: recruitment/employment, waste management (transfer stations and collection dates), fire recovery information, and events.
- Customer enquiries received via the website focused on roads, rates, and pets.
- Complaints related to the differential rating of a property, and animal registration reminders.
- Infringement appeals all related to parking fines for parking in a disabled zone without a permit.
- FOI requests related to historical information about a motorcycle race held on private land, property records relating to the winding up of an estate, and evidence of professional indemnity insurance cover for building inspectors and environmental health officers.

Compliments

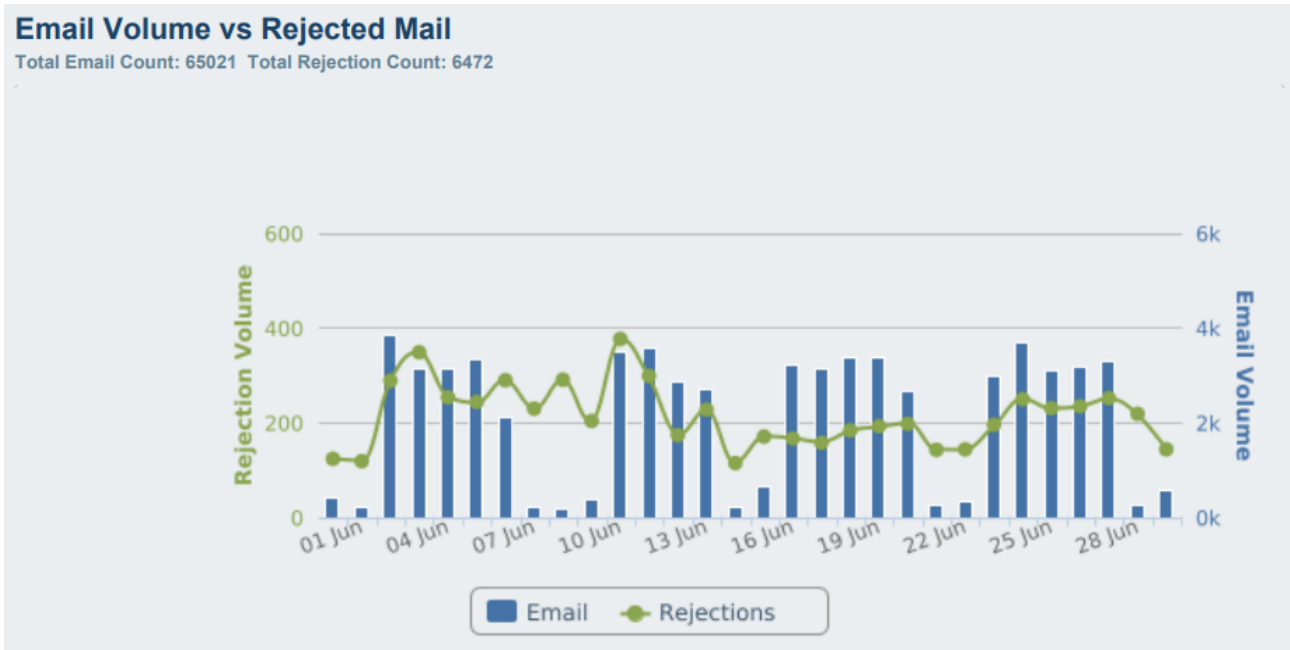
At the June 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting, Councillors highlighted a gap in customer contact reporting in that compliments received were not reported. Over the next months, efforts will be made to improve recording of compliments received which will be reported to Council as part of this report.

In June 2024 we received:

- A letter of appreciation from the State Department of Health, thanking Council for the delivery of Regional Assessment Services (RAS) in Victoria, on behalf of the Department. Council's contract for the delivery of these services ended on 30 June 2024 and will not be renewed thereafter.

Cyber security assurance:

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



- 46% of inbound emails rejected were for IP addresses found to be in remote block lists known to be sources of spam or malware infection.
- 205 (3% of all rejections) messages were rejected as spam.
- 2 cases of inbound Malware were detected during the month.
- Zero emails were detected during the month that were attempts to impersonate someone – e.g., attempting to look like emails from another member of staff.

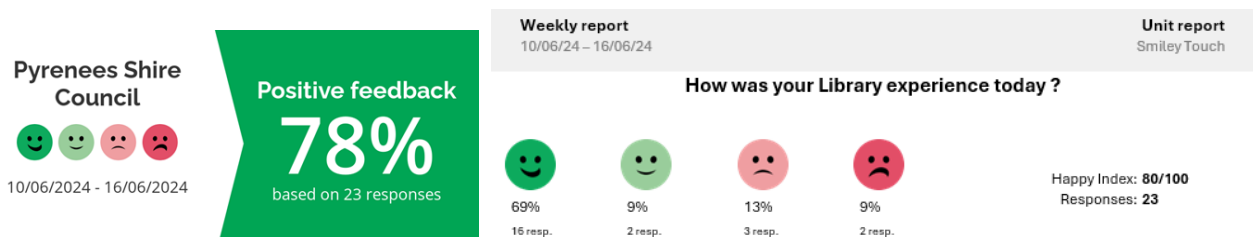
Other means of identifying potential spam or malware includes spam signature detection, virus signature detection, anti-spoofing lockouts, invalid recipient address, and where the sender failed to retry after initial rejection.

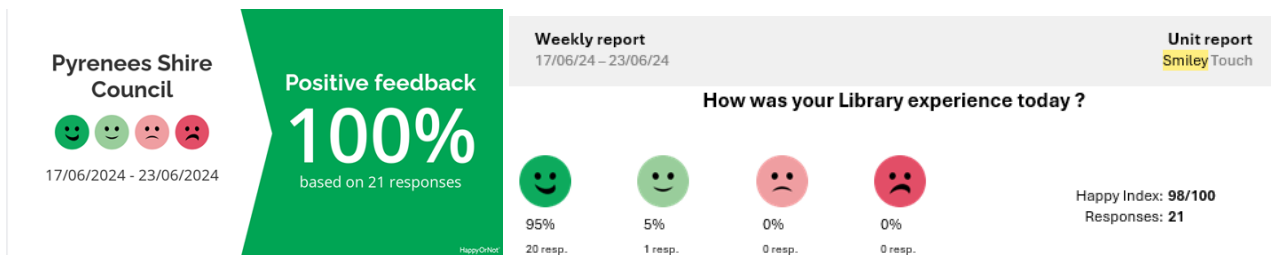
The system also holds emails where they may be suspected, but not confirmed spam. These are notified to the email recipient for checking and approval. 280 emails were held for this purpose during the month.

Library Daily and Weekly Feedback – Smiley Touch

The frontline counters have commenced a trial using a technology – Smiley Touch – that measures customers’ satisfaction as they interact with our staff. It is early days but this will allow a growth in the ability to receive, and respond to, immediate feedback. The system allows for customers to input feedback on their experience at the front counters and for us to respond quickly to issues raised. The following provides statistics for June 2024.

44 responses were received, of which 89% were recorded as happy experiences. An increase was seen in the second half of the month:





In the early part of June, open feedback provided one positive and two negative comments which will be acted upon – one related to staff acknowledgement of customers upon entry and the other regarding the quality of the computers. No feedback was received in the latter part of the month.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS

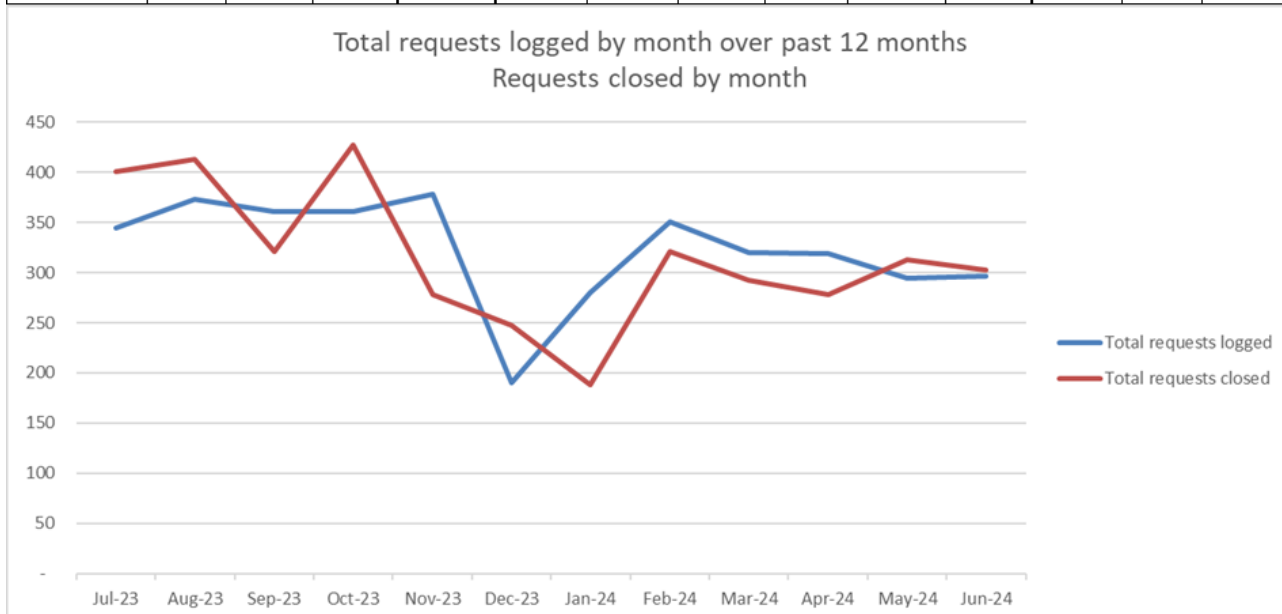
1. Logged and closed requests

296 CARs (Customer Action Requests) were logged during the month, 2 more than the previous month. Of these, 67 related to telephone messages.

303 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.

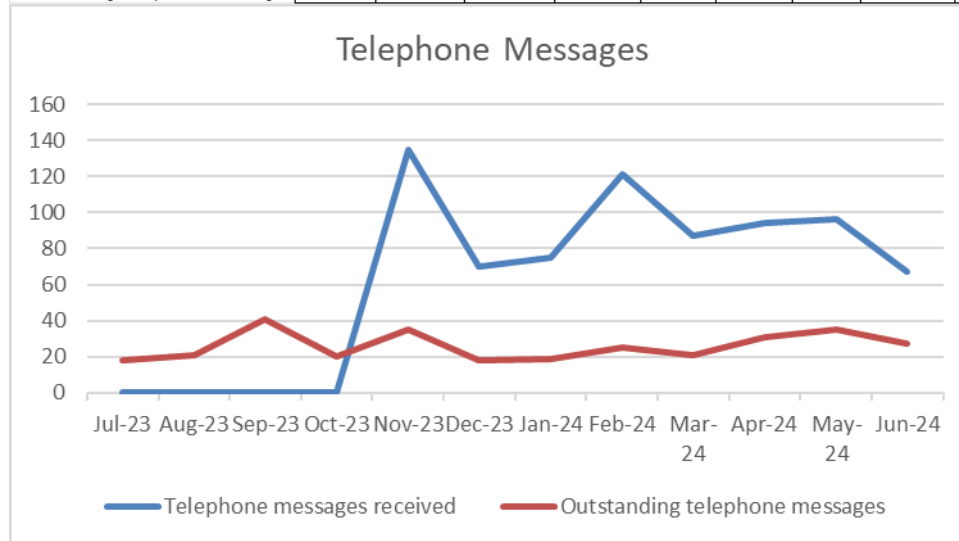
Year	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	% Change
Total requests logged	344	373	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	319	294	296	1%
Total requests closed	401	413	321	427	278	247	188	321	292	278	313	303	-3%



2. Telephone requests

67 telephone calls were transferred into requests during the month, with 27 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											
	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24
Telephone messages received					135	70	75	121	87	94	96	67
Outstanding telephone messages	18	21	41	20	35	18	19	25	21	31	35	27



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 279 active or open requests, of which 132 were assigned for action. These include:

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

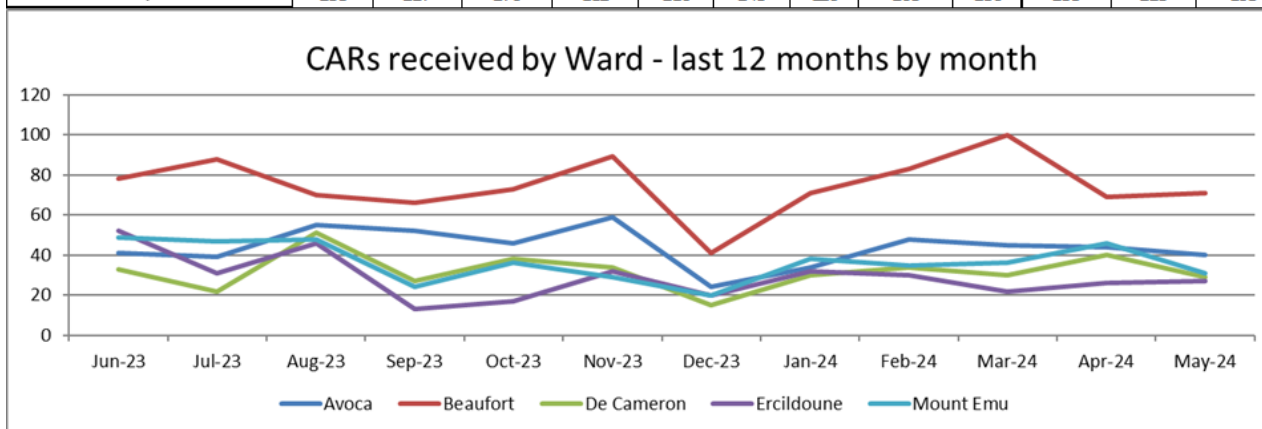
Open requests – the balance of this report will focus on the open requests, but statistics relating to requests marked as on-hold or referred-to-budget have been included in the table.

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)	50(40)	87(71)	32(29)	30(27)	24(31)
Requests received and closed in the same month (%)	35(70%)	66(76%)	23(72%)	20(67%)	16(76%)
Requests received remaining open and assigned for action	10	13	8	8	4
Requests received that are on hold or in progress	5	3	1	2	4
Requests received referred to budget	0	0	0	0	0
Total open (assigned) requests as at the end of the month	24(25)	37(38)	16(11)	13(8)	18(20)

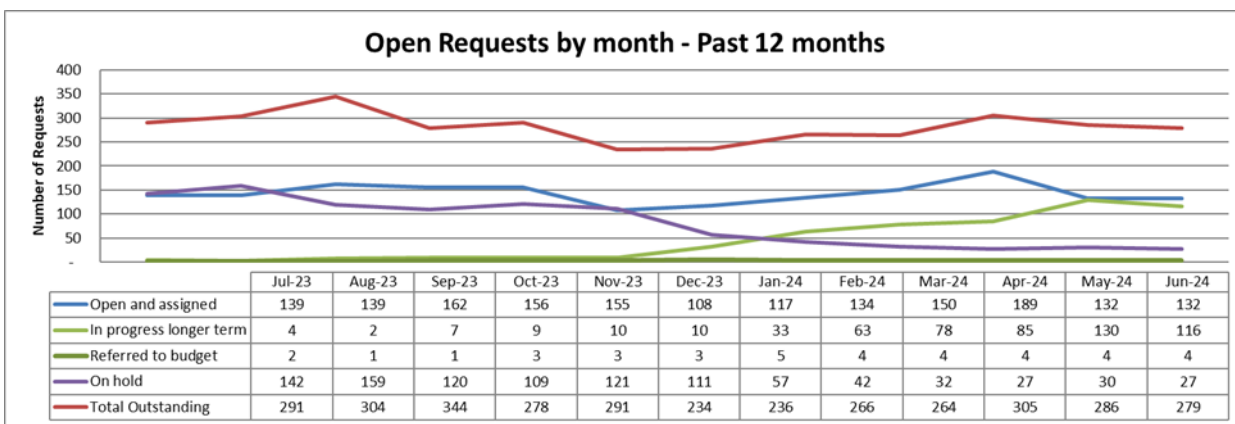
The following charts show the numbers of requests received by Ward per month for the past 12 months.

CARS by Ward received by month Rolling - Past 12 months												
Ward	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24
Avoca	41	39	55	52	46	59	24	34	48	45	44	40
Beaufort	78	88	70	66	73	89	41	71	83	100	69	71
De Cameron	33	22	51	27	38	34	15	30	34	30	40	29
Ercildoune	52	31	46	13	17	32	20	32	30	22	26	27
Mount Emu	49	47	48	24	36	29	20	38	35	36	46	31
Total by month	253	227	270	182	210	243	120	205	230	233	225	198



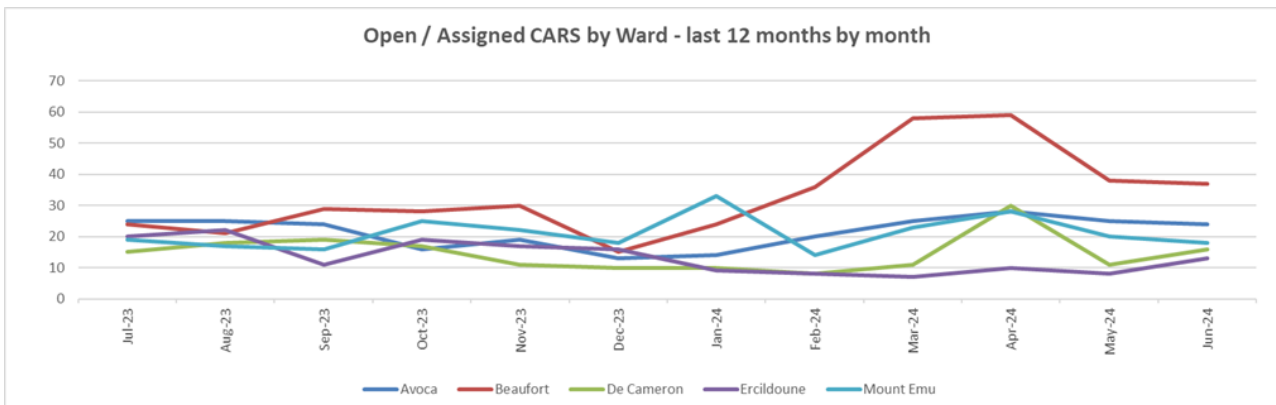
The following charts show the statistics for requests that remained open each month for the past 12 months. These charts now include requests put on hold or referred to budget.

Open requests by age													
Year	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	% Change
2013													
2020	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2022	19	19	27	29	20	13	7	7	7	7	2	2	0%
2023	119	119	135	127	135	95	43	24	22	17	13	13	0%
2024							67	103	121	165	117	117	0%
Open and assigned	139	139	162	156	155	108	117	134	150	189	132	132	0%
Outstanding but on hold	142	-	120	109	121	111	57	42	32	27	30	27	-10%
In Progress / Scheduled	8	6	7	10	12	12	57	86	78	85	120	116	-3%
Referred to budget	2	1	1	3	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	0%
Total Closed	401	413	321	427	278	247	278	321	292	278	313	303	-3%
Total requests logged	344	373	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	319	294	296	1%
Total outstanding requests	291	304	344	278	291	234	236	266	264	305	286	279	-2%

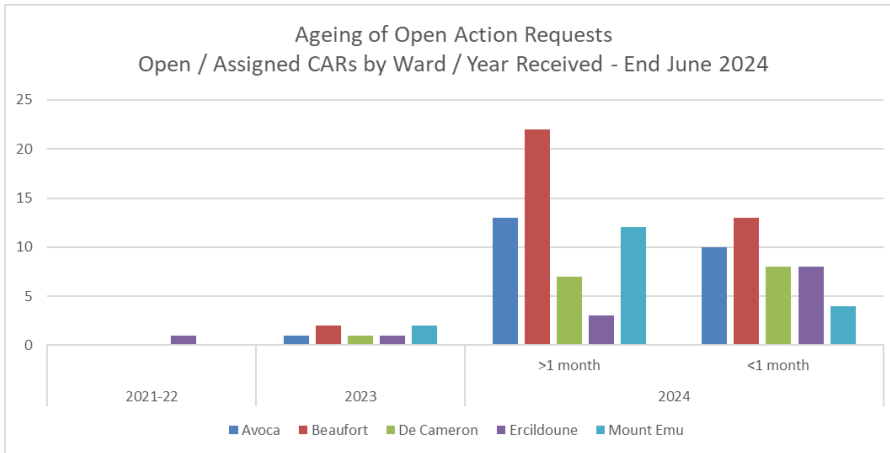


The following charts show the ageing of open assigned requests by Ward as at the end of the month, excluding those referred-to-budget or on-hold.

Open Assigned Requests by Ward - Past 12 months												
Ward	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24
Avoca	25	25	24	16	19	13	14	20	25	28	25	24
Beaufort	24	21	29	28	30	15	24	36	58	59	38	37
De Cameron	15	18	19	17	11	10	10	8	11	30	11	16
Ercildoune	20	22	11	19	17	16	9	8	7	10	8	13
Mount Emu	19	17	16	25	22	18	33	14	23	28	20	18
Total by month	103	103	99	105	99	72	90	86	124	155	102	108



Ageing CARS by Ward - Open/Assigned					
Ward	2021-22	2023	2024		Total
			>1 month	<1 month	
Avoca	0	1	13	10	24
Beaufort	0	2	22	13	37
De Cameron	0	1	7	8	16
Ercildoune	1	1	3	8	13
Mount Emu	0	2	12	4	18
Total by month	1	7	57	43	108



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.

	May-24	Jun-24	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	76	79	3
Streetlights	0	0	0
Drainage	12	13	1
Footpaths / Kerb&Channel	7	8	1
Park & Reserves	10	12	2
Roadside Veg	67	62	-5
Environmental Health	0	0	0
Planning	4	6	2
Bld maint	11	4	-7
Local Laws	7	12	5
Cats	7	6	-1
Dogs	11	10	-1
Livestock	3	3	0
Parking	2	4	2
Fire Hazard	1	1	0
Bld Compliance	0	0	0
Waste Management	0	0	0
Local Government Act	0	0	0
Rates	0	4	4
Natural Disasters	29	24	-5
Pools	0	0	0
Council cleaning	0	0	0
Litter	0	0	0
Design & Assets	4	4	0
GIS	0	0	0
Community	0	0	0
Rural Addressing	0	0	0
Road Naming	0	0	0
Telephone messages	35	27	-8
Total	286	279	-7

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

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Damian Ferrari

That Council:

1. Notes this report;
2. Acknowledges the need to continue to invest in measures to combat the increasing cyber security risk to council highlighted in this report.

CARRIED

11.4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

11.4.1. SEPTEMBER 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

Presenter: Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

Report Author: Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

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

File No: 16/02/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to change the date of the scheduled September 2024 Council Meeting, Briefings and Community Cuppa.

BACKGROUND

Council at its meeting held 12th December 2023 adopted the meeting schedule for 2024. The schedule includes dates for Council meetings held monthly, as well as Assemblies of Councillors (Briefing Sessions), Special Meetings, Community Cuppas and the annual Statutory meeting.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The schedule adopted in December 2023 considered the election period dates for the 2024 Council Elections. At the time of the report, the election period was from 24th September 2024 to Election Day on 26th October 2024.

Amendments to the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 have resulted in key changes in the dates pertaining to the 2024 Election Period. The Election Period will now commence on 17th September 2024, 7 days earlier than formerly required.

At its June 2024 Council Meeting, Council adopted the updated Policy – Governance Rules Appendix B PSC Election Period Policy 2024.

As a result of the change in dates for the Election Period, it is proposed that the meetings scheduled for September 2024 be amended as follows:

Current	Proposed
Tuesday 10 th September, Briefing (Beaufort)	Tuesday 3 rd September – Briefing (Avoca)
Tuesday 10 th September – Community Cuppa (Natte Yallock)	Tuesday 3 rd September – Community Cuppa (Natte Yallock)
Tuesday 17 th September – Briefing (Beaufort)	Tuesday 10 th September – Briefing (Beaufort)
Tuesday 17 th September – Council Meeting (Beaufort)	Tuesday 10 th September – Council Meeting (Beaufort)

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council has made provisions in its 2024-2025 budget to meet the costs associated with the meetings.

CONCLUSION

Subject to Council's agreement to the meeting date amendments, it is proposed that public notice be given in accordance with Council Policy – Governance Rules 2022.

Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Ron Eason

That Council:

1. Amend the September meeting dates as follows:
 - Tuesday 3rd September 2024 – Council Briefing – Avoca
 - Tuesday 3rd September 2024 – Community Cuppa – Natte Yallock
 - Tuesday 10th September 2024 – Council Briefing – Beaufort
 - Tuesday 10th September 2024 – Council Meeting – Beaufort
2. Gives public notice, in accordance with Council Policy – Governance Rules 2022, of the amended meeting dates.

CARRIED

11.5.1. 2024/001 - NOTICE OF MOTION (CR EASON) - PRAYER AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Cr Ron Eason has given notice of his intention to move the following motion at the meeting:

That Council examine the loss of the Prayer at Council Meetings and find a suitable replacement for future meetings.

Received:	Via email, 10 July 2024
Authorised by:	Jim Nolan, Chief Executive Officer
Officer comment prepared by:	Jim Nolan, Chief Executive Officer

OFFICER COMMENT

Part 4 of Council's Governance Rules - Meeting Procedure for Council Meetings provides that Councillors may ensure that an issue is listed on an agenda by lodging a Notice of Motion. (Rule 4.5.1)

Cr Eason's notice of motion has been received and, in accordance with the Governance Rules is provided for Council's consideration.

The Notice of Motion (NOM) follows a decision of Council made at the February 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting at which Council considered a report containing legal advice stating that the prayer previously used at the start of Council Meetings may be in breach of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (the Charter). After considering the report, and the legal advice, Council resolved

That Council:

- 1. Resolves to discontinue including or reading an Opening Prayer as part of council meeting agendas, noting that continuing to do so would unlawfully infringe on the rights contained within the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (the Charter)*

Following the Council decision, the below statement has been included in the meeting agenda and read by the Mayor at the start of Council Meetings:

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.

The Governance Rules further provide that:

4.5.1 (b) The Chief Executive Officer must inform Councillors about any legal and cost implications of any proposed notice of motion. The Chief Executive Officer may suggest revised wording to the draft notice of motion to facilitate compliance with the requirements for notices of motion under these Governance Rules.

In respect of Cr Eason's NOM,

- There are no cost implications for Council should Council support the NOM, other than in officer time.
- The legal advice previously considered at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 20 February 2024 applies, however there is no risk for Council should Council support the NOM. A subsequent report on the matter would ensure any suitable replacement does not breach provisions of the Charter.

4.5.1 (c) A notice of motion must relate to the objectives, role and functions of Council as outlined in the Act

The NOM is considered to comply with this provision

4.5.1 (d) A notice of motion must call for a Council report if the notice of motion proposed any action that:

- impacts the levels of Council service,
- commits Council to expenditure greater than thresholds in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy that is not included in the adopted Council Budget,
- proposes to establish, amend, or extend Council policy,
- proposes to impact the rights of any person who has not had the opportunity to contribute their views,
- commits Council to any contractual arrangement, or
- concerns any litigation in respect of which Council is a party.

Should Council support the NOM as it reads, then a further report would be brought to a Council Meeting to consider suitable replacement wording.

4.5.1 (e) The Chief Executive Officer may reject any notice of motion which:

- is vague or unclear in intention,
- relates to a matter that can be addressed through the operational service request process,
- relates to a matter that has been previously resolved by Council or is acted upon,
- is beyond Council's power to pass, or
- if passed would result in Council otherwise acting invalidly. but must:
 - give the Councillor who lodged it an opportunity to amend it prior to rejection, if it is practicable to do so, and
 - notify in writing the Councillor who lodged it of the rejection and reasons for the rejection.

In respect of the second dot point, while the motion follows a previous decision, it does not seek to amend the decision nor to rescind the previous decision, but rather to take a new action.

Furthermore, it is considered that there is no impediment under the rules to the motion being debated because the original motion has not been acted on. No one's material interests have been affected by the passing of the original motion, and no statutory process have been commenced to vest enforceable rights in or obligations on Council or any other person.

If Council were to change the NOM and seek to amend or rescind the decision of February relating to the prayer, it would need to consider the provisions of Rule 4.6.3 Amend *Something Previously Adopted*, and Rule 4.6.2 *Rescission Motions*.

Cr Ron Eason / Cr David Clark

That Council examine the loss of the Prayer at Council Meetings and find a suitable replacement for future meetings.

CARRIED

12. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Eason

I had a meeting with the Avoca Chinese Garden over some issues at the Chinese Garden. A group of people who do a wonderful job maintaining and with support of council, maintaining that structure in Avoca that draws people from all over the countryside. We don't have a counter to actually give figures, but people often are found to be moving around town asking where the Chinese Garden is, so we know people come for that purpose.

Had a cuppa at Avoca where it was well represented by the locals, asking questions, and finding out issues which is what the cuppa is for and then attended the Audit and Risk Committee which shows the Shire running a reasonably tight ship with what we do and how we do it and constantly being questioned over should we or how can we do things better. It is one of the more important committee meetings that I feel that I attend.

Cr Kehoe

It has been relatively quiet again the last month. There is some gravel road maintenance that's occurring where possible across the Mt Emu ward. Recently the TAC has been running an education program with a speed sign monitor at the Linton entrance of Snake Valley so that's been a great way just to make sure people are ensuring that they're driving at a safe speed when entering that township area.

Recently you would have got your recycling and waste calendars that have come out in the mail. Please really check that information that is on there, it is tried to be very clear and concise but the little steps that we can take in managing our waste can make a big difference in assisting us on the other end, so washing containers all that sort of stuff, it means a lot more can be recycled and we can be a lot more sustainable.

Also, in relation to bins, I still notice, particularly in regional areas, sometimes with the wind and particularly with the wilder weather we are having, they can sometimes be disturbed or knocked over. The council has some great little rubber clasps which go on the side of the bin, and they are very effective, I use them on my own bins and I know many neighbours that use them. They can be purchased at a minimal cost at the council office and at the Information Centres, they are very useful if you want to grab some of those your bins. In this crazy flu season, please check on those that are vulnerable, anyone that you know in the community that may need a bit of extra support or chicken soup. Please keep warm and keep well.

Cr Ferrari

Attended the usual Council briefings and cuppa and chats which I really enjoy and I think, as I have said a number of times, we do tend to get better attendance because we've shifted the to the afternoon which is really good and that's what it's all about because we do hear more stuff and have the ability to have more interaction so that was really good.

I had some constituent meetings and phone calls. I'd like to remind the community that Council responsive grants of up to \$750 are open and I think they are open all year round, so check the council website for more information and about what you need to qualify for that and what you can use those grants for.

I also sit on the Audit and Risk committee with Cr Eason and it's just another layer of governance and risk management to assist us in that space and to validate that our risk mitigation strategies are working correctly.

Cr Clark

Last week I took the change to have a drive up to Mt Cole now that the forest is open and it's a pretty sobering experience just to remind you of the damage it's done, but particularly there is almost no ground cover on most of the parts of the forest which is just an indication again of how hot that fire was.

I attended the drop in sessions for the Lexton Flood Study which again was well attended, just people dropping in over a couple of hours to talk for the consultants and the next session for that is on 31st of July so certainly encouraging any Lexton people listening tonight to come along at that night.

I attended the Rural Regional Forum that MAV runs in my role as President, interesting listening to the speakers and talking about things like housing targets that we talked about here at our last meeting of Council in terms of some of the activity that's happening in that spot.

The chat at Avoca was very good, and of course last week we were at Waubra for the cuppa and chat there and that was actually really valuable I think for councillors to hear about a couple of projects in the town and also just about the assets committee that runs the recreation facility and how we might look to that in the future. The actual recreation facility, the hub, had a meeting about a fortnight earlier which I attended and thank you to Douglas and a couple of your council officers who attended, that was really good and quite extensive speaking about the master plan which is really important because there is certainly a couple of community groups at the moment who are very excited to do some things like a playground and stuff there but we need a master plan to get it in the right place so that's good.

I also attended with my MAV Presidents hat on the National General Assembly in Canberra last week and took that opportunity to obviously seek further funding more broadly for councils but of course that affects Pyrenees, and we will get an increase this year in our Roads to Recovery money which is really valuable and some other black spot type funding and again made the point about some of the challenges that we're having with the DRFA with the disaster recovery arrangements in terms of getting funding through for those floods in 19/20, 21/22 and the pressure that is put on us budget wise with the fire in February.

Cr Vance

Early last month I attended a GBAC meeting along with the CEO in Ballarat.

I had the privilege of being at the opening of the Pyrenees Art Show which once again was brilliant I thought, it's a highlight of our region and a lot of local artists taking place and I was pleased to see a tribute to the late Rodney Read right near the doorway, it was a great memento for Rob and what he has done for the Beaufort region over the years, especially in that art field, he was very talented.

I had a Timber Towns General meeting.

Like the other councillors, I attended Avoca and Waubra for the cuppa and chat.

Last week along with the CEO, I attended the National General Assembly. It was quite an eventful two days for me, more than 1200 local government leaders from across Australia gathered in Canberra, so you can imagine there was a lot of people in that main assembly hall for the discussions and the guest speakers I felt were extremely well picked out, a credit to the organisers. There was one speaker who mentioned the era from the baby boomers through to the current date in 10-year brackets and by golly, life has changed, as we remember it, the older ones of us, to where it is today, technology has really gone bonkers.

We also had some financial sustainability research speakers which highlighted that sustainable federal funding to councils would deliver a \$7 billion increase to Australians GDP in the year 2024. The national state of the assets report was also launched outlining the condition of one third of Australia's public infrastructure which is part of a \$643 billion worth of assets that councils manage. This new research

reinforces the urgent need for federal financial assistance grants to local government to be restored, to at least 1% of commonwealth taxation revenue, at the moment it's at 0.5%, it started out at 1% but slowly but surely, it's dwindled away. As I have said, across the two days there were numerous presenters on the theme of building community trust and how local government is integral to holding and building this trust. We are the form of government that is closest to our people and when you come to the Pyrenees Shire you are known by all your constituents personally, so you have got to be pretty straight up and down with our voting public.

We had sessions on housing, emergency management, roads and transport and energy, the usual stuff that we love to talk about, there were 160 motions put before the assembly and they were passed through. These motions included solutions to address the financial sustainability of councils and to support councils to deliver cost of living relief, facilitate more affordable housing, maintain safe and productive local roads, cycleways, and footpaths, better prepare for and recover for natural disasters and close the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. In the lead up to the next federal election, ALGA will work with our state and territory member associations and Australia's five hundred and thirty-seven local governments, and they will advocate for critical financial assistance grants to be restored to at least 1%.

Also, whilst there, Jim and I had the opportunity to meet with the Senior Adviser to Minister Watts who is the Minister for Emergency Management, just to impress upon her the importance of assistance to the smaller councils, especially like ours, who were affected with the floods in 2022 and then the bush fire in Bayindeen this year. We cannot afford to carry the debt, while these senior government parties allow us to do it, we need the assistance money to come through and help us do our day-to-day functions. We also had the opportunity to meet with Dr Anne Webster in the National Parties room and had a couple of senior members that spoke to us from the National Party and especially their leader, David Littleproud who really impressed me, he is straight up and down, he is a Queenslander so probably talks our language a bit, he is very keen to come down and visit the area to see the ramifications of the bushfire that was mentioned before.

13. 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 David Clark / Cr Ron Eason

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 - CEO Performance Progress Report

15.2 - Extension for Management of Municipal Swimming Pools C.2021-020

The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council - 16 July 2024 stopped at 6:49 pm to consider confidential items.

The live stream re-commenced at 7:04 pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below:

- Council received the CEO Performance progress report.
- Council authorised the CEO to finalise a contract extension for Management of Municipal Swimming Pools.

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 16 July 2024 closed at 7.05pm.

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed _____

2024

Mayor Cr Robert Vance