

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD TUESDAY 20TH MARCH 2018 AT 6.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER BEAUFORT

Present: **Mayor:** Cr. David Clark
 Councillors: R. Eason, R. Vance, T. Kehoe, M. O'Connor

In Attendance: **Chief Executive Officer**– Jim Nolan
 Director Asset and Development Services – Douglas Gowans
 Director Corporate and Community Services – Evan King
 Minute Taker – Pam Burns

Apologies: **Nil**

Mayor Cr. David Clark welcomed the gallery and press, read the opening prayer and indigenous acknowledgement.

MINUTES:

CRS O'CONNOR / KEHOE

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on February 20th 2018 be confirmed.

That the Closed Minutes of Council held on February 20th 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Public Question Time and Submissions on Agenda Items:

George Kirsanovs

Thank you for supporting 'defying the drift program' a program that assists students in understanding the agri business. There have been at least three students in the area that have participated in this program and then gone on to do tertiary studies in agriculture.

Thank you for the support that Council provides for the Easter Take a Break that Rotary runs. The support is very much appreciated.

Would council consider placing additional rubbish bins in the CBD on weekends and public holidays to avoid the spectacle of over flowing rubbish bins. This is not a look that the town wants travellers to see.

Director of Asset and Development, Douglas Gowans advised that Council had become aware of the problem and there was an extra effort from community, staff and contractors to clean up after the fact. Council's view is that service provision needs to meet the demand and discussions will be held with relevant officers as how best we can do that.

Councillor Eason requested that Avoca be considered in those discussions as the problem there is very similar.

Ms Irene Eastick advised that her family is concerned about the DELWP public notice advising of the proposed amendment C43 to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. The area of

concern is 31 Camp Hill Road, currently a Public Use Zone, with a proposed change to Industrial 3 Zone.

Jim Nolan, Chief Executive Officer – explained that 31 Camp Hill Road was one of three sites in Pyrenees Shire declared surplus to the needs of the state government. DELWP has requested that the planning provisions of the sites be changed to facilitate sale of the properties. The information from DELWP has been provided to Council as part of the public exhibition process. The Advisory Committee will host an information session on the 27th March and submissions from individuals will be received until the 24th April 2018.

Warren Humphrey – As the owner of 11 Homebush Road, Avoca, I have a lot of problems with the railway crossing right next to me.. Boom gates have been installed as have red flashing lights. The advice from VLine is that bollards will be installed at the front of my home limiting parking. The angle of the driveway is to be changed causing difficulty on access and egress. Two meetings with VLine have had an unsatisfactory outcome for myself and family.

Cr Ron Eason

Have found in this process that VLine have been lacking in communication with land holders. Will be interested in what will come to Council for approval regarding the bollards. Council need to keep an eye on this issue.

Jim Nolan, CEO, acknowledged that this is obviously a significant issue for the Humphrey family and advised that Council is aware of the issue, and that council officers will advocate to VLine on behalf of the Humphrey family. Council should be meeting with VLine within the next couple of weeks and will certainly discuss the situation. Council officers will require more detail from Mr Humphrey before meeting with VLine.

Cr Vance – is the driveway Councils responsibility, and if so, Council should have the say as to whether bollards are going in or not.

Notice of Disclosure of Interest by Councillors and Officers:

Business Arising: Nil

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ITEMS FOR NOTING

ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING

1. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development

File No: 66/02/02 – 08/02/02 – 50/24/02 – 46/02/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on activities, project and compliance issues in Regulatory Services during February 2018. This report includes four parts:

- Part A: Planning
- Part B: Building
- Part C: Environmental Health
- Part D: Local Laws

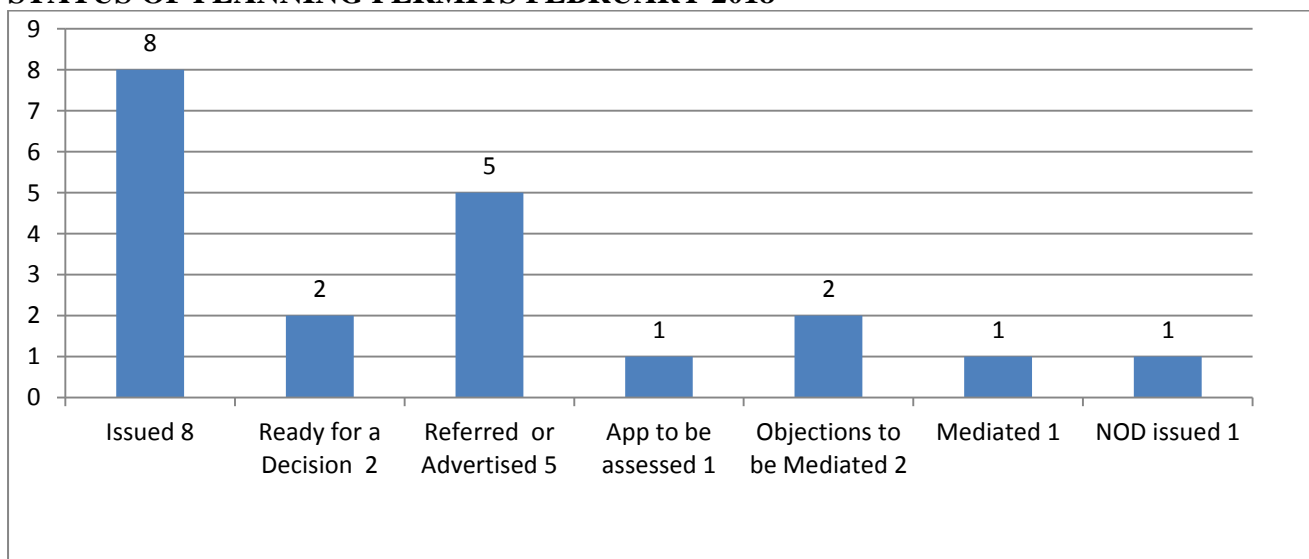
PART A: PLANNING

The planning activity statistics for January and February are summarized in the table below:-

Month	Applications received	Applications determined
January 2018	4	6
February 2018	2	10

The following chart identifies the total number and phase of permit applications within Council’s planning system including applications received in February 2018 and where in the planning system each application sits:

STATUS OF PLANNING PERMITS FEBRUARY 2018



KEY PROJECTS

Over February, Council's planning staff finalized community engagement work in Waubra as part of Pyrenees Futures. These activities included a drop-in session at the General Store, a Town Walk, which were both well-attended, as well as outreach work with community groups and a community survey.

As attention now shifts to starting engagement in Moonambel, Amphitheatre and Landsborough. Council staff are now developing draft framework plans for Lexton and Waubra, while working with consultants to complete draft plans for Avoca and Raglan.

STATUTORY PLANNING

Council has recently received a planning permit application for a telecommunications facility (monopole tower) in Amphitheatre on Greenhill Creek Road, 1.5km east of the town centre. Because the project is funded through the Commonwealth Black Spot program, it is exempt from any public notice requirements or third-party appeal rights under state planning provisions. Planning staff are now assessing the application.

Council staff also ran a planning mediation in Landsborough during February, related to a planning permit application to keep and train 20 greyhounds. The application has been placed on public exhibition and has received three objections. The matter will be reported to Council for a decision if the objections remain.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

The Victorian Government has informed Council that it will shortly commence a public engagement process around the rezoning of three sites of state-owned land that are considered surplus to requirements. These are the former Beaufort Primary School site, and former DELWP depot sites at 6 Lawrence Street in Beaufort and 31 Camp Hill Road in Beaufort.

These sites are all now Public Use-zoned, and the Department of Treasury and Finance (as proponent) intends to rezone them to facilitate sale of the land for private use. The rezoning will proceed through what is known as the "Fast Track Government Land Service", a separate service and process used by the State Government to rezone public land.

As part of the process, DELWP has advised that DTF's proposals will be placed on public exhibition for a six-week period to begin during March, with public information sessions and public hearings to be held subsequently. Following the public process, a "Government Land Standing Advisory Committee" will make recommendations to the Minister for Planning, who will then make a final decision regarding rezoning.

Council will be making a submission to the public process, and will be making information about the process available via its website in conjunction with DELWP. It is important to note that Council is not the planning authority for these proposals, but will be advocating to ensure community views are appropriately represented.

PLANNING SUMMARY

1. Council continues to receive increasingly complex planning permit applications. Despite this, Council continues to perform above the state regional local government average for permit application turn-around times.
2. Council has finalised community engagement in Waubra, and will be beginning engagement work in three towns in the north of the shire as part of the Pyrenees Futures project.
3. Council is working with DELWP to ensure community views are heard in relation to a government process to rezone three government-owned sites in Beaufort.

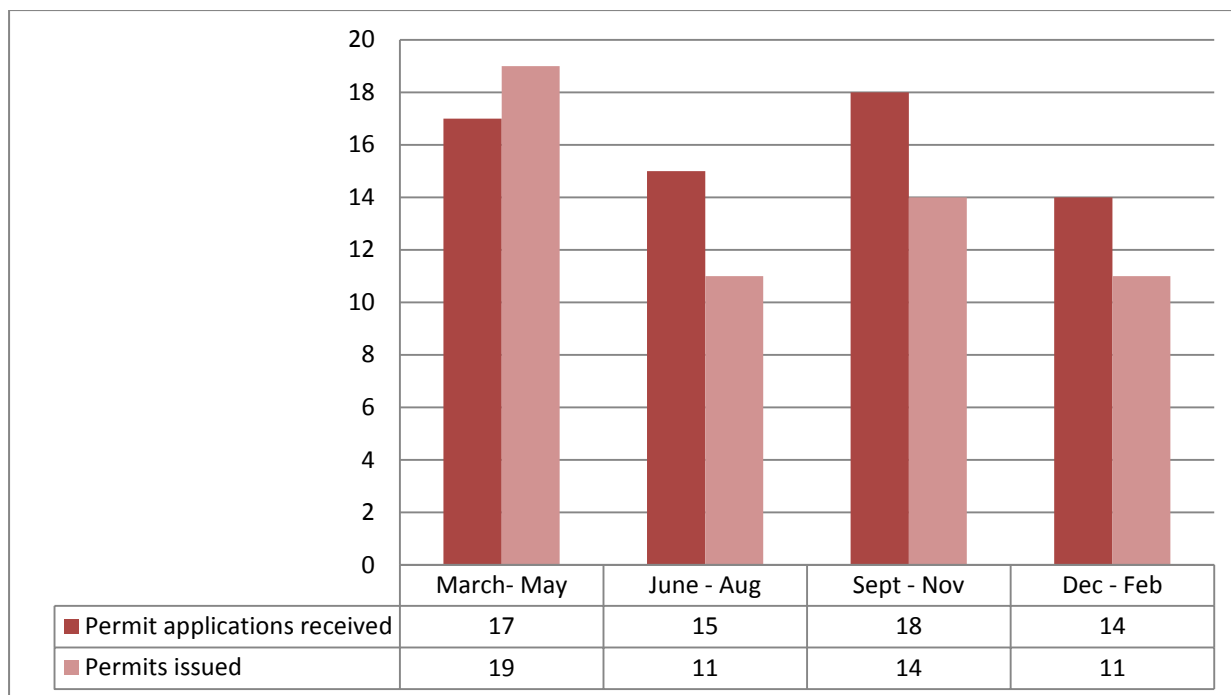
PART B: BUILDING

ACTIVITY

The building activity statistics as at 28/02/2018, are summarised in the table below:

CATEGORY	NUMBER	COMMENT
Permits issued by Council	6	Total value \$458,775.00
Permits issued by private Building Surveyor	11	Total value \$3,046,722.00
New applications made to Council	4	Total value \$148,000.00
In process	27	These applications (inclusive of new February applications) are pending receipt of further information requested from the applicants to achieve a NCC compliant application for full assessment by the Municipal Building Surveyor.

The following graph represents monthly building activity (applications received by and issued by Council) over the last 12 months.



KEY PROJECTS & COMPLIANCE

The building permit for construction of Avoca’s new Fire Station has been issued by a private building surveyor.

The Building Department is investigating a recent partial collapse of a shop verandah in Beaufort’s main street.

Building work is progressing on Beaufort IGA’s supermarket extension.

Building work has been completed on the new storage shed for Avoca Men’s Shed.

Court proceedings to commence mid March on a property owner for non-compliance with Notices and Orders issued by Council.

Emergency Order served on an Avoca property owner for erection of a non-compliant above ground swimming pool.

Council will continue to investigate reports of illegal and/or non-compliant swimming pools including inflatable pools. In Victoria, the design, construction and installation of swimming pools, spas and their safety barriers are subject to strict building requirements under the [Building Interim Regulations 2017](#) (the Regulations).

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- *Building Act* 1993
- Building Interim Regulations 2017

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The Municipal Building Surveyor must have regard to any relevant guidelines under the *Building Act* 1993 or subordinate regulations. The building services department must ensure that a responsive service is provided that meets the demand of the building industry within the municipality.

BUILDING SUMMARY

1. In February Council received four applications and issued six permits.

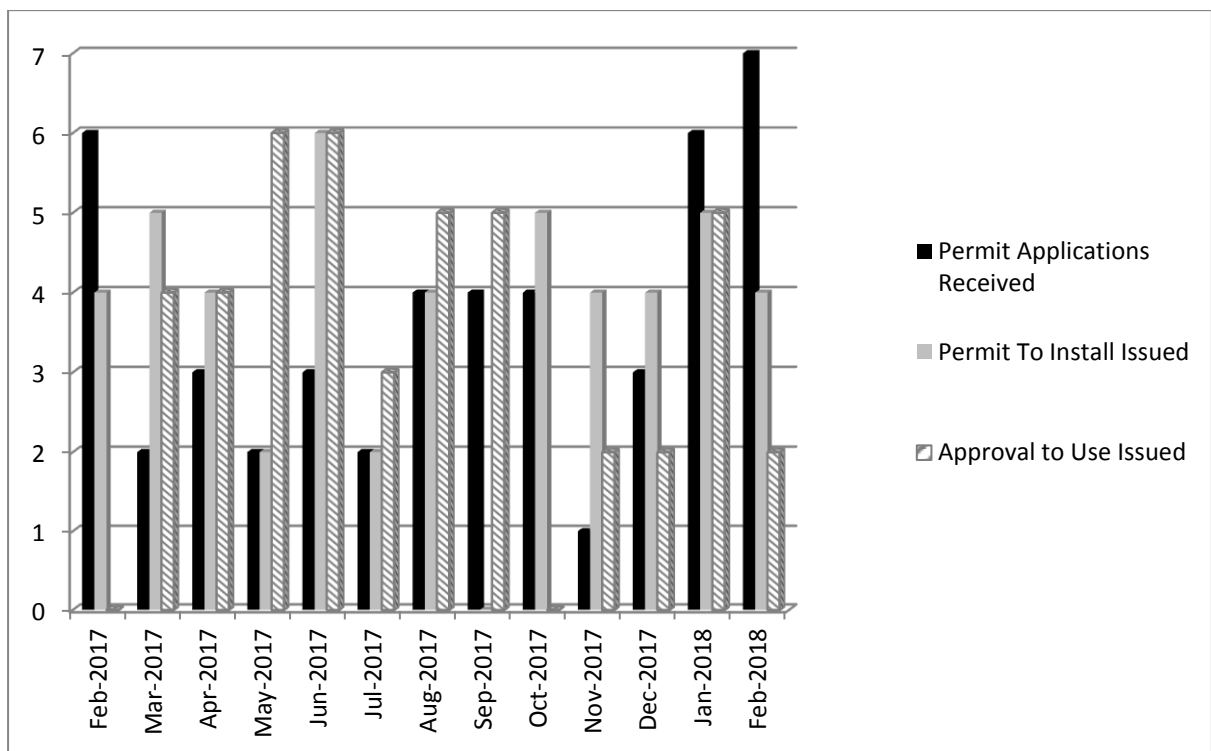
PART C: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

ACTIVITY: WASTEWATER

Wastewater activity statistics for February 2018 are summarised in the tables below:

Period	1 st to 28 th February 2018
Applications to Install New or Alter Existing Septic Tanks Received	7
Permits to Install Issued	4
Approval to Use Issued	2
Fees Paid	\$1,900

The below graph displays the monthly wastewater activity (applications received, permits to install and approval to use issued) over the last 12 months (February 2017 to February 2018).



The following table shows inspection data for Wastewater related Inspections conducted by the Environmental Health Officer in February 2018.

Period 1st - 28th February 2018	
Septic Tank Inspections	7
Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) Inspections	0

Domestic Wastewater Service Agent's Reports received (below).

Period	1st - 28th February 2018
Service Reports Received	10

Of the Domestic Wastewater Service Agent's reports received in February, 2 were in relation to service conducted in September 2017, 3 in October 2017, 2 in December 2017 and 3 in January 2018.

ACTIVITY: FOOD & HEALTH PREMISES

Food Act 1984 and *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* Premises activity statistics for February 2018 are summarised in the table below:

Period 1st - 28th February 2018	
New Premises Registered/Transferred/Upgraded	1
Inspections/ Assessments Conducted	6
Complaints Received	1
Food Recalls Applicable	1
Registration / Renewal / Transfer Fees Paid	\$1,884

Mobile and Temporary Food Premises in the Shire (Streatrader)

At 28th February 2018 Pyrenees Shire had 35 premises registered, 65 low risk notifications and 130 current Statements of Trade (SOT).

ACTIVITY: IMMUNISATIONS

EH did not run any immunisation sessions during February. The immunisation activity statistics for February 2018 summarised below represent opportunistic services performed by the Shire's Maternal Child Health Nurse:

Period	Number of Clients	Number of vaccines given
Infant to preschool	44	21
Primary Secondary Schools	0	0
Adult	0	0

KEY PROJECTS

- The implementation of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan continues with a review of existing records and the setup of electronic records on our Health software for all properties within declared potable water catchment areas. Inspections of properties should resume shortly.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Compliance action will be taken on a small number of Food and Accommodation Premises that failed to renew their registration for 2018 but continued to trade.

Other minor issues are being monitored with registered food premises with current non-compliance issues in regard to not keeping regular temperature records, ongoing cleaning issues and not having an accredited Food Safety Supervisor.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015-2018
- Food Act 1984
- Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008
- Environment Protection Act 1970
- Code of Practice for Septic Tanks

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) must work with regard to various legislative requirements with respect to Food Safety (*Food Act 1984*), Public Health (*Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008*, *Environment Protection Act 1970*) and Wastewater (*Environment Protection Act 1970*, *Domestic Wastewater Management Plan*, *Code of Practice for Septic Tanks*).

It is necessary for the EHO to adapt to any changes in regulations whilst still providing a service that both meets the demands of residents within the municipality and complies with legislation.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SUMMARY

1. EH received 1 Planning Referral for review and response in February
2. EH responded to a complaint that was received about a registered food premises and action has been taken to ensure they comply with food safety requirements in the future.
3. Tori Cochrane (Kernow) has begun work as Council's Environmental Health Officer.

PART D: LOCAL LAWS AND ANIMAL CONTROL

KEY PROJECTS

Council's Local Law Review project is progressing, with briefing material and instructions provided to Council's legal team last month.

- A number of business improvement projects are underway to strengthen local law administration.
- Fees for Local Law Permits are being reviewed, with likely increases recommended in the 2018-19 budget across all application types.
- Council is partnering with the RSPCA on a range of complex animal keeping matters.

STATISTICS

As of 28 February 2018:

	December 2017	January 2018	February 2018
Cats impounded (month)	2	4	-
Dogs impounded (month)	4	-	2
Stock impounded (month)	-	4	3
Domestic animal registrations	629 cats 2538 dogs	626 cats 2546 dogs	624 cats 2540 dogs
Infringements issued (month)	0	1	0
Prosecutions	1	0	1

LOCAL LAW REVIEW PROJECT

Council's Local Law team has handed over detailed briefing documentation to its legal team to enable the drafting of new Local Laws. Once draft Laws are received by Council, extensive community consultation will commence, including a one-month informal consultation period; and a formal notification period under section 223 of the Local Government Act.

COMPLIANCE ISSUES

Council successfully prosecuted an owner of dog that was involved in an attack of another dog that resulted in the other dog's death. The incident occurred last year in Avoca during the month of August.

Council continues to monitor a complex compliance matter relating to an animal keeping and breeding establishment in Lexton, where Council has served a Notice on the landowner for breaches of the Domestic Animal Act. Council officers recently met Inspectorate staff from RSPCA to discuss a joint approach to compliance monitoring.

Council Rangers continue to proactively investigate properties where unregistered domestic animals are being kept, in breach of the Domestic Animal Act. These properties were initially identified in the Domestic Animal Audit completed early this year.

Council's suite of Local Law permit fees is being reviewed in preparation for the 2018-19 budget. A number of new fee classes will be added in-line with permit requirements being established under the Local Law review project.

New administrative processes are also being established, including: a range of template permit application forms; checklists that identify minimum application requirements for all permits; internal referrals; standard conditions; and scheduled auditing of issued permits. Fees will be applied to all Local Law types.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- *Domestic Animals Act* 1994
- Domestic Animal Management Plan 2012-2016
- Council Local Laws No. 2, No. 3 and No. 4

LOCAL LAWS AND ANIMAL CONTROL SUMMARY

1. Council continues to investigate a number of complex compliance matters across the Shire relating to public safety, roadside signage and unregistered domestic animals, and is cooperating with RSPCA on various issues.
2. New internal processes are being developed to strengthen Council's administration of its Local Laws.

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

2. CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS – MARCH 2018

Evan King - Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 16/08/04

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on our Customer Action Request System (CARS) for the month of February 2018.

BACKGROUND

Council has operated an electronic Customer Action Service Request system (CARS) for a number of years enabling residents to lodge service requests. Requests can be lodged in person, via telephone, via Council's website or by using a smartphone "Snap Send Solve" application.

Since December 2012, CARS has been promoted on a regular basis in Council's Public Notices published in the Pyrenees Advocate.

Predominantly, service requests have been for maintenance issues – potholes, road condition, drainage, signage, slashing and overhanging branches. Council receives between 400 and 700 service requests per annum.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

As at the 28th February 2018 the status of CARS was as follows:

- 18% decrease in 2016 Outstanding CARS
- 38% decrease in 2017 Outstanding CARS
- 33% increase in 2018 Outstanding CARS
- 17% decrease on total CARS outstanding
- Of the 139 outstanding CARS 51 relate to natural disasters
- For the month of February 98 CARS were closed

A concerted effort was made this month to review 2016 and 2017 outstanding CARS. As a result there is only 139 outstanding CARS which is the lowest level in 12 months.

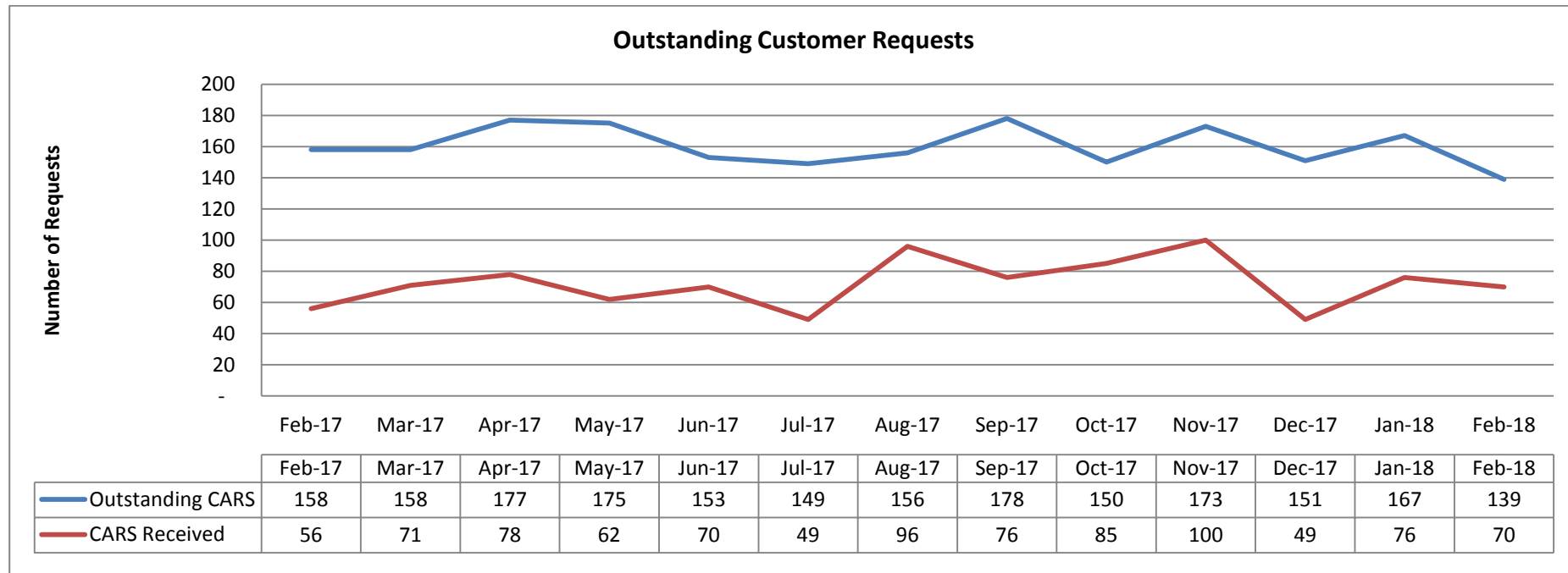
Of the 31 outstanding CARS from 2016 29 relate to natural disasters which are being dealt with through the flood office.

A CARS working group has been set up to undertake a complete review of the CARS system. Three meetings have been held with a number of recommendations in the process of being implemented.

Additional services have been added to the CARS system including pools, local laws, building maintenance and compliance.

To enable better analysis of outstanding CARS and the ability to identify CARS related to natural disaster a report has been created that categorises CARS by request type.

Total Outstanding Cars Requests														
Year	Feb-17	Mar-17	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	% Change
2015	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
2016	114	98	86	78	64	59	57	54	53	53	38	38	31	-18%
2017	44	60	91	97	89	90	99	124	97	120	113	90	56	-38%
2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	52	33%
Total	158	158	177	175	153	149	156	178	150	173	151	167	139	-17%
Total Received	56	71	78	62	70	49	96	76	85	100	49	76	70	-8%



Open Requests - Type	
Roads	15
Streetlights	2
Drainage	9
Footpaths/K&C/PL(VR)	3
Roadside Vegetation	11
Planning	1
Building Maintenance	20
Parks & Reserves	3
Local Laws	4
Building Compliance	1
Road Maintenance	11
Roads - Unsealed	3
Road Maintenance - Unsealed	4
Natural Disasters	51
Design & Assets	1
Total	139

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Leadership

1.1 - Communicate the Council's decisions, policies and activities and the reasons behind them, in a form relevant to ratepayer needs and expectations in accordance to Council's communication strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

2.1. CARS Analysis – February 2018

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report

CONCLUSION

There has been continued improvement demonstrated in resolution, inspection and acknowledgement of customer requests. Further focus and effort is required to reduce the level of outstanding requests.

That Council Note This Report

3. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward		
February	Activity	Location
Sun 4th	Ex-Prisoner of War Memorial Ceremony	Ballarat
Tues 6th	Local issues in Skipton, Landcare activity re Stockyard Hill windfarm.	Stockyard Hill
Wed 7th	MAV consultation Local Government Act	Ballarat
Thurs 8th	Pyrenees Transport Forum	Beaufort
Fri 9th	CHCV Forum for Councillors and Staff	Ballarat
Sat 10th	Community Hubs Announcement	Raglan, Barkly, Redbank
Mon 11th	Waubra Projects with Council	Beaufort
	Highlands LLEN Committee	Ballarat
Tues 13th	Councillor Briefing	Snake Valley
Wed 14th	MAV, CEO Interviews and Board Meeting	Melbourne
Thur 15 th , 16th	ALGA Strategic Planning Workshop	Canberra
Mon 19th	MAV Rural South Central Meeting	Ballan
	Sect 86 Committee Meeting	Waubra
Tues 20th	Constituent Meeting, Walkability Plan	Beaufort
Wed 21st	Lobby liberal and National Party Politicians	Melbourne
Thurs 22nd	CVGA Board Meeting	Ballarat
	Lobby labour politicians	Melbourne
Fri 23rd	MAV Human Services Committee	Melbourne
Mon 26th	Waubra Primary School Leadership presentation	Waubra
	UMEC Landcare Network AGM	Brewster
Tues 27th	Committee for Ballarat ,More than Gold Cmpn	Ballarat
March		
Thurs 1st	Launch of Radio 88	Beaufort
	VicRoads Consultation, Beaufort Bypass	
Fri 2nd	MAV Board Meeting	Melbourne
Cr Robert Vance – DeCameron Ward		
Feb		
19th	RSC	Ballan
20th	Council Meeting	Beaufort
26th	Mediation	Landsborough
March		
9th	Executive Committee RCV	Melbourne
Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward		
Feb		
8th	Pyrenees Transport Forum	Beaufort

9th	CHCV Forum	Ballarat
10th	Sustainable Communities Announcement	Raglan, Barkly, Redbank
13th	Councillor Briefing	Snake valley
20th	Council Meeting	Beaufort
23rd	Rail Freight Alliance	Melbourne
27th	Sunraysia Highway Meeting	St Arnaud

4. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS

Meeting Information

Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing
Meeting Date	13 th February 2018 commenced at 12.00pm and closed at 6.40pm
Meeting Location	Snake Valley Memorial Hall
Presentations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Members spoke to Council on local issues 2. Solar PV for low income households 3. VicRoads update to Council
General Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Midyear budget review 5. Hard court renewal program 6. Agenda review

Attendees

Councillors	<p>Mayor David Clark Cr Michael O'Connor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Ron Eason arrived at 2pm and left at 6.25pm. Cr Robert Vance</p>
Apologies	Nil
Staff	<p>Mr Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer Mr Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services Mr Douglas Gowans – Director Asset and Development Services Mr Terry McAlicee – Environment and Sustainability Officer – Item 2 Ms Michelle Richards – Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator – Item 2</p>
Visitors	<p>Karl Barratt Project Coordinator CVGA- Item 2 Chris Dunlop, Aaron Hui, Mal Kersting, Alissa Carr from VicRoads - Item 3</p>

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Matter No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
N/A			



Meeting Information			
Meeting Name / Type	Councillor Briefing		
Meeting Date	20 th February 2018 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 5.50pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber Beaufort		
General Business Presentations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site visit to Trawalla to inspect site of proposed asphalt batching plant 2. Goldwind – Stockyard Hill windfarm 3. Visit Ballarat Quarterly 		
General Business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Agenda Review 5. Review of the Audit Committee 6. Budget Surplus 		
Attendees			
Councillors	Mayor David Clark Cr Michael O’Connor Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr Ron Eason Cr Robert Vance arrived at 3.35pm		
Apologies	Nil		
Staff	Mr Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer Mr Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services Mr Douglas Gowans – Director Asset and Development Services Mr Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism – Item 3 Mr Matthew Novacevski – Planning Officer – Item 1		
Visitors	Michael Quirk, Western Victoria Asphalt (applicant) - Item 1 Ian Courtney, Peter Marriott, John Smith, David Rogers, Andrew Monaghan, Steven Evans, David Davies, Ken Wood, Shaun Gutsell – Goldwind Reps - Item 2 Maria Murnane, Marketing, Visit Ballarat Item 3		
Conflict of Interest Disclosures			
Matter No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
N/A			

CRS VANCE / EASON

That the items for noting be received.

CARRIED

ITEMS FOR DECISION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

5. FROST DAMAGE TO AGRICULTURE AND VITICULTURE INDUSTRIES

Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

File No: 22/04/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform council about the impact of the November 2017 frost on the agriculture and viticulture sectors.

BACKGROUND

On 4 November 2017 the Grampians region experienced a severe frost event that has had a significant impact on the agriculture and viticulture sectors. Figures ranging from \$100M to \$400M have been quoted in regional and national newspapers which will have significant impacts on the local economy resulting in reduced expenditure and jobs.

An article appearing in the Weekly times dated 22 November 2017 reported as follows:-

“FROSTS have wiped as much as \$180 million from the value of Victoria’s winter crop. That’s the early estimate from the Victorian Government after the late spring snap ripped across western and central Victoria this month, causing extensive damage to wheat and legumes.

Some Western District growers have reported their whole crops being destroyed just weeks from what was shaping up as a bumper harvest. The worst frost hit on November 4.

Agriculture Victoria’s southwest grains regional manager Rob O’Shannessy estimated farmer losses from the frosts at \$100-\$180 million. This included frost damage this month, as well as earlier, smaller frosts in the North East and northern Wimmera.”

Locally the most significant impacts have been felt south of the Western Highway in an area extending from Skipton to Willaura, with substantial losses in viticulture predominantly but not exclusively around Great Western and to the south of Landsborough.

A number of local farmers have reported substantial losses to cereal and canola crops. Feedback suggests the most affected cereal variety is wheat, which is the staple crop for this area. To illustrate the importance of wheat locally, a survey of eight cropping enterprises which between them crop around 22,500 hectares annually reveal the following percentages in terms of area sown:-

- Wheat 47%
- Canola 30%
- Barley 9%
- Beans 8%
- Other crop varieties including oats and lupins making up the remaining 6%.

Reports of damage exceeding \$1M on individual farms and vineyards are not uncommon, but the financial impacts will vary from farm to farm depending on:-

- The extent and severity of frost from farm to farm and paddock to paddock.
- The ability of farmers to sell frost affected hay at profitable amounts.
- The diversity of farm operations. Those most affected will be operations totally dependent on cropping.
- The financial capacity of the business:-
 - Some have taken on additional financial risk by entering into loans prior to the frost event to buy land and expand operations. In some cases the contracts included established crops in the transaction which, following the frost, will diminish the ability of these farmers to consolidate their positions.
 - Some will have savings either in Farm Management Deposits or otherwise to even out the losses.
 - In other cases the business may need to borrow funds to plant the next seasons' crop which will depend on their capacity to have finance approved.
 - Off farm income will be available to some farms.

A number of farmers have commented that they cut and baled their crops for hay following the frost. Due to the large volumes of hay from this source the increased supply is having a negative impact on prices. Anecdotally the price of wheat hay at present is little more than the cost of production.

The frosts have also had a significant impact on the viticulture sector.

A survey of eleven Pyrenees wineries indicates the retail value of lost product exceeds \$6M-.

The Weekly Times report from last November included the following quote regarding the Grampians wine region:-

“Meanwhile, Tom Guthrie from Grampians Estate Winery at Willaura said the frost had wiped out “several millions” of dollars worth of potential wine sales from the region.

“Our vineyard is relatively small, but 100 per cent is gone — frosted,” Mr Guthrie said.”

The economic impact of \$180M in losses from the agriculture and viticulture sector has been assessed using Remplan impact data. This indicates that there will be a loss of 980 jobs as the effects of the frost damage flow into the local economy.

In response to these circumstances the Ararat branch of the Victorian Farmers Federation is convening an event on 27 March at the Tatyoon Recreation Reserve to address the issue further. The event is being supported by Agriculture Victoria and a draft agenda at the time of developing this report includes:-

- Dealing with the financial and emotional impact of frost
- Managing cash flow and finances – what growers can do now
- Making good decisions for the 2018 crop
- The likelihood of late frost events in the future
- Optimum crop and stubble management choices for your landscape
- Crop phenology management to reduce risk of frost damage
- Latest frost research findings from the National Frost Initiative

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

In order to understand the impacts of the frost event, further investigation is required to quantify the overall economic impact. Having said this, preliminary estimates by Agriculture Victoria last November estimated the damage at a figure of \$100-180M (pre harvest) with expectations for that figure to climb once the viticulture industry is factored in.

Simon Ramsay MP is noted as having reported to Parliament that the “*financial impact could be losses of \$400 million or more.*”

Government measures are usually available for natural disasters and events that have impacted adversely on the agriculture sectors, but at this time have not been extended to include the frost event.

It is noted that the current information available from the Commonwealth Government for support during droughts impacting on the agriculture sector include:-

- Farm Household Allowance
- Farm Management Deposits
- Taxation measures
- Rural Financial Counselling services
- Farm Business Concessional Loans Scheme
- Drought Assistance Concessional Loans
- Drought Communities Programme
- Managing Farm Risk Program
- Enhanced social support
- Pest and weed management

Further to the above a dairy-specific support package was announced to help dairy farmers affected by the Murray Goulburn and Fonterra decisions to reduce farm gate milk prices. On 30 December 2016, Dairy Recovery Concessional loans became available to Victorian dairy farm businesses affected by the National Dairy Products retrospective price reduction in 2015–16.

There have also been government initiatives previously to provide off farm employment opportunities to the agriculture sector in times of hardship.

Pyrenees Shire Council has itself recently extended measures of rates assistance via its revenue collection policy to support local farmers.

An officer report was provided to the December 2017 Council meeting in relation firstly to the frost and secondly a heavy rainfall downpour in November that damaged crops and rates assistance that could be made available under these circumstances.

Council passed the following motion in response to this report:-

That Council:

1. *Varies the implementation of its Revenue Collection Procedure in relation to farm rate assessment properties to ensure that no farm rate assessment properties are sent to Council's Debt Collection Agency in 2018 for the non-payment of 2017-2018 Council rates and waste charges.*

The rates assistance measures were reported in the local press on 15 December.

Further to this Council, with the support of funding from the State Government, has over the past fifteen months been working with local farmers on a project that has investigated the potential to add value to stubble straw from winter crops which is currently being burnt in the autumn. As a result of these investigations a range of bioenergy prospects have been identified. These investigations have resulted in two projects progressing to business cases, the first for a rural hospital and the second a regional manufacturer.

These proposals have the potential to illustrate that the agricultural industry could become a supplier of energy (via straw) to the regions health and manufacturing sectors with prospects that these may also include food processing.

The VFF event at Tatyoon will provide an avenue for council officers to further understand what support the industry may be seeking at a local level.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 5 - Development and Environment. We will undertake forward planning, and facilitate growth in our local economy while protecting key natural and built environmental values.

2.3 - Maintain strategic partnerships, and participate with peak bodies for support and to enhance advocacy.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The agriculture and viticulture sectors are the two key propulsive private industry sectors in the Pyrenees Shire. An accurate assessment of the economic and financial impacts of last November's frost are as yet unknown but the reduction in job numbers is expected to be significant as outlined in this report.

The extent of officer time to be dedicated to this issue is as yet unknown until the extent of the problem can be quantified and the level of service and support more accurately identified.

It is expected to gain a better understanding of this following attendance at the VFF event scheduled for 27 March at Tatyoon.

CONCLUSION

While the impacts of the November 2017 frost event on the regional economy are not fully understood at this time, economic data suggests significant job losses have and will result, and that a collaborative approach is required by all levels of government and industry agencies to mitigate these consequences.

CRS VANCE / KEHOE

Council continues to work in collaboration with industry stakeholders, government and industry agencies to:-

1. Gain an accurate understanding of the extent of the economic impact of the November 2017 frost event;
2. Develop initiatives which mitigate the extent of the impacts at this time and in potential future events.
3. Advocate for natural disaster support from the Victorian State Government, and Commonwealth Government.
4. Continue to pursue current bioenergy investigations to convert straw into energy as an additional income stream to the agriculture sector.

CARRIED

ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

6. DUST SUPPRESSION PETITION REDBANK BARKLY ROAD

Doug Gowans – Director Assets and Development

File No: 5210

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with details on the process used to determine the applicability to have 273m of Redbank Barkly Road sealed between Cemetery Road and Wild Grape Road, Redbank, to prevent dust.

BACKGROUND

Council received a petition, containing 29 signatures, in late December 2017 requesting that 200m of Redbank Barkly Road between Cemetery Road and Wild Grape Road be improved to prevent dust.



The petition was presented to the January 2018 Council meeting in line with Council’s Local Law No. 1 – Meeting Procedures in that any petition received is to be tabled at the next ordinary meeting of Council.

Council resolved to receive the petition and request a report be presented to the March meeting of Council for a decision.

A review of Council’s Customer Actions Requests Systems (CARS) was undertaken by Council staff and it should be noted that only requests for the road to be graded due to ruts and corrugations have been received.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The petition signatories requested to have 200m of Redbank Barkly Road between Cemetery Road and Wild Grape Road sealed with blue chip gravel to prevent dust. The onsite measurement has been verified as 273m between Cemetery Road and Wild Grape Road.

This segment of road is a rural gravel road and is classified as a Local 1 category road within Council’s adopted hierarchy. A Local 1 Road is classified within Council’s Road Management Plan as having a primary function to provide access to private properties. As detailed within the attached map, this section of road provides access to 3 properties between Cemetery Road and Wild Grape Road.

Operationally, a decision flow chart is used by officers to process “unsealed road candidates” in both rural and urban areas, to determine if a move from an unsealed to a sealed pavement is warranted or if the road is to remain as an unsealed pavement. This internally developed assessment flow chart is attached.

For rural roads, the process asks officers to consider safety, improved maintenance attributes and completion of a segment in the sealed network for the shift in service level to be initiated.

Speed zones, as defined in the Victorian Road Rules, provide definition for urban “built up” areas and would be relied upon to help categorise urban and rural roads. It is the current process that the classification of “urban” and “rural” are function and purpose based and these classifications are used to determine the flow chart directions. An urban road is located within the boundaries of a built up area and are typically characterised by the presence of buildings and housing close to the road, reduced speed zones, street lighting and maybe, the presence of kerb and channel. A rural road outside this urban area is typically in a 100km/h zone.

This unsealed segment of road fails to meet the proposed criteria for upgrade to a sealed pavement due to it being classified as a rural road. However, Council could use its discretion to allow this road to be considered as a candidate for upgrade. If Council did consider this segment to be a candidate, council officers would recommend that this only be considered if all other candidate roads were assessed to determine a priority order.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Roads and Townships. We will plan, manage, maintain and renew infrastructure in a sustainable way that responds to the needs of the community.

1.1 - Ensure local roads are maintained and renewed in line with adopted plans and strategy to provide a safe transport network and meet community needs.

Local Law No. 1 – Meeting Procedures

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The current budget allocated to dust suppression activities is \$20,000.

The estimated cost to place a Gatt seal on this 273m section of the Redbank Barkly Road, exclusive of construction costs, is \$21,294.

It is in the opinion of Council officers that the road in its current condition offers an acceptable level of service when measured in accordance with Councils adopted Road Management Plan, and currently requires no additional works.

Council may wish to assess the list of potential road segments that would currently meet the proposed decision flowchart. See attached list.

ATTACHMENTS

- 6.1 Petition
- 6.2 Gravel to Seal Flowchart
- 6.3 Road segments currently on the gravel pavement upgrade list – *circulated separately*

CONCLUSION

The roadway offers the residents of Redbank and the general community an acceptable level of service.

CRS O’CONNOR / EASON

That Council:

1. Determines that the rural section of the Raglan Barkly road, as identified in the petition for sealing works to be undertaken, does not meet the requirements to be upgraded to a sealed road.
2. writes to the petition signatories’ to advise the outcome of Council’s decision.

CARRIED

7. UNUSED ROAD LICENCE

Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development Services

File No: 405018200

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of a request received by Robert Benn to lease an unused road reserve and provide a recommendation in regards to the request.

BACKGROUND

Mr Robert Benn is seeking to lease an unused road reserve for the purpose of conservation. The unused road reserve is located north and north east of Mr Benn’s property Crown Allotment 28A, Section 3, Parish of Raglan.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) approved the lease subject to Mr Benn not removing any native vegetation, that the intention to grant the licence is advertised, and that Mr Benn submit to Council, for a decision in declaring that the road is not required for public traffic. The notice of intention was advertised in the Pyrenees Advocate on 2nd December 2016.

Mr Benn then submitted the application to Council officers. He was instructed to receive written advice from neighbouring property owners abutting the road reserve advising whether they have an objection or are supportive of the proposal, prior to the request being presented to Council. One neighbouring property owner (CA52, Section 3, Parish of Raglan) provided to Council officers written advice on the 23 October 2017, that he had no objections to Mr Benn leasing the road reserve.

Council officers reviewed the request and can advise that the road reserve requested to be leased does not provide any strategic access required for Council, nor does it, in the opinion of Council officers, restrict access to neighbouring properties.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The aerial map attached shows the area to be leased in red with the adjacent property, owned by Mr Benn, shown in green. As can be observed from the aerial photography, the area to be leased does not restrict access to neighbouring properties.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Roads and Townships. We will plan, manage, maintain and renew infrastructure in a sustainable way that responds to the needs of the community.

1.1 - Ensure local roads are maintained and renewed in line with adopted plans and strategy to provide a safe transport network and meet community needs.

Pursuant to s.400(1) of the *Land Act 1958*, A municipal council may give notice to the Secretary that any road or part of a road which is within the municipal district of that municipal council and which it considers is not required for public traffic is an unused road and upon the giving of any such notice any road or part of a road specified therein shall be an unused road.

ATTACHMENTS

7.1 Aerial map

7.2 Copy of correspondence from DELWP – *circulated separately*

7.3 Copy of public notice – *circulated separately*

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is considered by Council officers that the leasing and declaring of the road reserve to be unused does not offer Council any financial exposure and minimal organisational risk.

CONCLUSION

The request to lease the unused road reserve by Robert Benn offers minimal risk and does not obstruct access to neighbouring properties.

CRS KEHOE / EASON

That Council:

1. receives the request from Robert Benn to lease the unused road reserve located north and north east of Crown Allotment 28A, Section 3, Parish of Raglan.
2. declares that the unused road reserve located north and north east of Crown Allotment 28A, Section 3, Parish of Raglan is not required for public traffic.

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROCURMENT POLICY

Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 32/20/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the revised Procurement Policy March 2018.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 Section 186A (7), Council is required to review the Procurement Policy at least once a year.

Council last reviewed the Procurement Policy in March 2017.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The purpose of a Procurement Policy is to:

- Provide policy and guidance to the Council to allow consistency and control over procurement activities;
- Demonstrate accountability to ratepayers;
- Provide guidance on ethical behaviour in public sector purchasing;
- Demonstrate the application of elements of best practice in purchasing; and
- Increase probability of obtaining the right outcome when purchasing goods and services.

The Policy applies to all contracting and procurement activities of Council and is binding upon Councillors, Council Officers, temporary employees, contractors and consultants whilst employed by Council.

A desktop review of the policy has been undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team with no changes proposed.

The Local Government Bill Exposure Draft proposes that Councils set their own procurement and investment policies consistent with principals of sound financial management and opportunities for collaboration which will ensure fair and open competition.

The directions paper proposes that a Council at the start of a council term will be required to adopt a procurement policy that is consistent with the principals of sound financial management. The Regulations will require a procurement policy to include provision for when the Council will go to tender for the provision of goods and services including thresholds, the process for going to tender and what collaborative arrangements have been explored to deliver value for money.

In light of the Local Government Bill Exposure Draft, and the proposed changes to procurement and procurement policies and that no major gaps have been identified with the current policy it is proposed that no changes be made to the existing policy.



COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Under Section 186A (7) of the Local Government Act 1989 Council is required to review their procurement policy annually.

ATTACHMENTS

8.1 Attachment - Procurement Policy March 2018 - *circulated separately to this report*

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of this policy.

CONCLUSION

The annual review of the procurement policy has been undertaken with no changes proposed.

CRS EASON / O'CONNOR

That Council adopts the Pyrenees Shire Council Procurement Policy March 2018.

CARRIED

9. ANNUAL REPORT ON AUDIT COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE

Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 16/30/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the performance of the Audit Advisory Committee for the last twelve months. A report has been received from the chair of Council's audit committee on the operations of the committee over the past twelve months.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the Audit Committee Charter an annual review of the Audit Committee is conducted after receiving the annual report from the chair of the committee.

The 2018 review was conducted at the 20th February 2018 briefing session.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A key objective of Council is to ensure effective corporate governance through the implementation and application of strong and appropriate internal policies, procedures and controls which encompass all areas of risk management, Councils control framework, its external accountability responsibilities, Councils compliance with legislation and its internal and external audit activities, and in particular the implementation of audit recommendations.

To assist in the ongoing achievement of this objective Council has established an Audit Advisory Committee, in accordance with the provisions of S139 of the Local Government Act 1989.

The key objective of the Audit Committee is to provide independent assurance and assistance to the Chief Executive and the Council on the Shire's risk, control and compliance framework, and its external accountability responsibilities.

The audit committee charter requires the committee to regularly, but at least once a year, report to the Council on its operation and activities during the year. This report should include:

- A summary of the work the committee performed to fully discharge its responsibilities during the preceding year
- A summary of Council's progress in addressing the findings and recommendations made in internal, external and any other special audit reports
- An overall assessment of Council risk, control and compliance framework, including details of any significant emerging risks or legislative changes impacting Council
- Details of meetings, including the number of meetings held during the relevant period and the number of meetings each member attended

Performance Assessment of Audit Committee

The charter of the audit committee also requires Council, after receiving and considering the Audit Committee's annual report, to review the performance of the audit committee. The relevant section of the audit committee charter is reproduced below.

“The Mayor, Councillors and Chief Executive Officer will undertake an annual review of the performance of the Audit Advisory Committee after receiving and considering the Audit Committee’s annual report.”

To facilitate this review an Audit Committee Performance Assessment Form was created that guided Councillors and the Chief Executive Officer through the review.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Leadership

1.1 - Communicate the Council's decisions, policies and activities and the reasons behind them, in a form relevant to ratepayer needs and expectations in accordance to Council's communication strategy.

Under Section 139 of the Local Government Act 1989, Council is required to maintain an audit committee. The requirements of the Act in relation to the audit committees are detailed below.

139. Audit committee

- (1) A Council must establish an audit committee.
- (2) An audit committee is an advisory committee.
- (3) An audit committee must be constituted in the prescribed manner.
- (4) An audit committee has the functions and responsibilities prescribed for the purposes of this section.
- (4A) Sections 76D and 79 apply to members of an audit committee as if they were members of a special committee of the Council.
- (5) The Minister may make guidelines for the purposes of this section.
- (6) Guidelines made under subsection (5) must be published in the Government Gazette.
- (7) A Council may pay a fee to a member of an audit committee who is not a Councillor or member of Council staff.

ATTACHMENTS

8.1. Annual Report Audit Committee 2018 – *circulated separately to this report*

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

The Chairman’s Audit Committee report is attached for Councillors information.

The Council at its briefing session on Tuesday 20th February 2018 reviewed the performance of the Audit Committee for the previous twelve months. The review included the completion of the Audit Committee Performance Assessment Form

The review also included a discussion on the overall performance of the Committee and how it is discharging its responsibilities. Council expressed its confidence in the committee and the way in which it is currently functioning.

CRS VANCE / KEHOE

That Council;

1. receives the information provided by the chair of the Audit Committee in his annual report and having reviewed the performance of the Audit Committee for the past twelve months;
2. endorses the actions of the committee in the way that it has discharged its responsibilities during the preceding year

CARRIED

10. REVIEW OF THE S11 INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND AUTHORISATION

Kathy Bramwell – Manager Governance, Risk & Compliance

File No: 16/20/08

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider a review of the S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act (1989) (Section 98)* requires Council to regularly review all delegations, appointments and authorisations that are in force or have been made by Council under this section.

Council is advised by Maddocks Lawyers in preparation of Instruments of Delegation. Advice is received after each sitting of Parliament on the changes to legislation affecting local government.

In addition, reviews are undertaken when changes in personnel occupying Authorised Officer roles occur.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation

The S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation has been revised and updated to reflect the following changes in officer titles and incumbents within specific roles:

- Removal of an officer in a role (resignation) – Local Laws Officer
- Implementation of an authorisation under section 72A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (Vic) which authorises contractors or contracted staff to lawfully fulfil duties as Local Laws Officer under this Act.
- Implementation of an authorisation under section 48A of the *Environment Protection Act 1970* (Vic) which authorises officers to take action with respect to noise nuisance.
- Implementation of an authorisation under section 87(8) of the *Road Safety Act 1986* (Vic) which authorises contractors or contracted staff to lawfully fulfil duties and exercise powers under this Act.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Under Section 98 of the *Local Government Act (1989)* Council is required to regularly review all delegations, appointments and authorisations that are in force or have been made by Council.

ATTACHMENTS

- 10.1. S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - March 2018- *circulated separately to this report*

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is a requirement under the *Local Government Act (1989)* for Council to regularly review all delegations, appointments and authorisations that are in force or have been made by Council.

CONCLUSION

In order to legally allow staff other than the Chief Executive Officer to enforce provisions of legislation, Council must review its Delegations at regular intervals throughout the year, or when significant changes occur.

Amended Delegations once approved by Council will remain in force until further reviews are conducted following ongoing legislation changes.

CRS EASON / KEHOE

That Council:

In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 224 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) and other legislation referred to in the attached S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (the instruments), Pyrenees Shire Council (Council)

RESOLVES THAT -

- The members of Council staff referred to in the Instrument be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instrument.
- The Instrument come into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.
- Council affix the Common Seal to the Instrument.

CARRIED

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING – HALF YEAR REVIEW 31ST DECEMBER 2017

Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 32/08/08

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to review the Local Government Performance Reporting half year report.

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government established the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) in 2014 to ensure that all councils are measuring and reporting in a consistent way.

The primary objective of the LGPRF is to provide comprehensive performance information that meets the needs of a number of audiences. In meeting this objective:

- Councils will have information to support strategic decision making and continuous improvement
- Communities will have information about council performance and productivity
- Regulators will have information to monitor compliance with relevant reporting requirements
- State and federal governments will be better informed to make decisions that ensure an effective efficient and sustainable system of local government

Legislation was introduced in early 2014 which set up the requirement for councils to report on their performance through their annual report to their community. The reporting format for the indicators and measures in the annual report is prescribed by the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

To provide a comprehensive picture of council performance, four indicator sets have been developed:

1. Service Performance
2. Financial Performance
3. Sustainable Capacity
4. Governance and Management

Service Performance

Quantitative measures have been developed to provide relevant information about the effectiveness and efficiency of local government services.

Financial Performance

Quantitative measures have been developed to provide relevant information about the effectiveness of financial management in local government.

Sustainability

Quantitative sustainability measures and qualitative governance and management measures have been developed to provide relevant information about whether local government have the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of their community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future.

The information contained in the Report of Operations is for the period 1 July 2017 to 31 December 2017. Some information required for reporting purposes is only available on an annual basis and therefore is not included in the attached report.

As this is an interim half year report some of the information is yet to be verified and is provided for demonstration purposes only.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Leadership

1.1 - Communicate the Council's decisions, policies and activities and the reasons behind them, in a form relevant to ratepayer needs and expectations in accordance to Council's communication strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

11.1 Local Government Performance Reporting – Half Year Report 31st December 2017 –
circulated separately to this report

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the tabling of this report.

CONCLUSION

Local Government Performance Reporting was introduced by legislation in 2014. The Report of Operations attached is for the period 1 July 2017 to 31st December 2017. It is important to note that some data for indicators is not available for half yearly reporting and some data is only relevant for annual reporting. The purpose of this report is to demonstrate to Council that data is being collected and all statutory obligations will be met at year end.

CRS O'CONNOR / EASON

That Council receives the Local Government Performance Report for the period 1 July 2017 to 31 December 2017.

CARRIED

12. OUTSTANDING RATES AND CHARGES

April Ure, Property Revenue Officer

File No: 52/08/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to outline the level of Rates and Charges currently outstanding, and indicate the level of instalment payments not yet due.

BACKGROUND

Rates and Charges are raised against assessable properties annually and form a major part of Council's income in the Annual Budget.

Diligent follow-up of the collection of this revenue ensures that Council's policies for collection are equitably imposed across the shire.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

As at 2nd March 2018, an amount of \$1,398,274.93 for Rates and Charges was classified as being outstanding to Council. This represents 12.72% of the amount due this financial year. Further, Council has fourth Instalment payments totalling \$1,049,673.03, due by 31st May 2018.

A summary of the current Rates and Charges balance is as follows (please note the different reporting months):

	March 18 \$000's	March 17 \$000's
Instalment ratepayers outstanding	1,050	802
Current Years Rate & Charges Arrears	1,398	990
Credit Balances	-44	-28
Total Outstanding	2,404	1,764

Breakdown of Arrears	March 18 \$000's	March 17 \$000's
General arrangements with Council	80	160
Existing Debt Collection Agency (DCA)	249	151
Arrears without Arrangements (inc Minor Balance and Hardship)	25	24
Special Consideration Arrears - Farms	221	0
Unassigned (DCA after 16March)	823	655
	1,398	990

Balance 30 June 2017	489
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	March 18 \$000's	March 17 \$000's
Rate & Charges Income	10,996	10,506
Rate & Charges arrears as % of rate income	12.72%	9.42%

The table above shows a breakdown of arrears totalling \$1,398,274.93 over 842 assessments. (2016/17 year was \$989,403.35 over 648 assessments).

Outstanding Notices were issued to all ratepayers with outstanding balances on 19th February 2018, and were delivered from the 28th February 2018, which is later than previous years.

Ratepayers have until the 16th March 2018 to pay the outstanding balance or to contact the Pyrenees Shire Rates Department to make alternative payment arrangements. Outstanding balances after this date will be sent to the Debt Collection Agency, and processes will be undertaken to collect the outstanding arrears.

As per the Council resolution in January 2018, Farming assessments will follow an altered payment pathway and will not be referred to the Debt Collection Agency after the 16th March 2018. Farming assessments were sent a letter on the 19th February encouraging those who found themselves in financial hardship as a consequence of the severe weather events of November 2017 to apply for Financial Hardship. Farming assessments account for \$321,723.30 (inclusive of those assessments already held by the Debt Collection Agency).

Of the unassigned outstanding balances, due by 16th March 2018, totalling \$822,352.10, the following breakdown of rating differentials occurs.

Of Unassigned Outstanding Ratepayers	Outstanding Balance	Overall total raised during annual billing	% Outstanding against Rates Raised
0. Non Rateable (Waste Services/FSPL)	\$5,019.85	\$479,731.06	1.05%
1. Vacant Land <2Ha	\$47,245.98	\$297,331.90	15.89%
2. Vacant Land Other	\$95,940.51	\$822,544.08	11.66%
3. House Flats etc	\$450,437.32	\$4,138,365.43	10.88%
4. Commercial	\$12,509.27	\$221,632.12	5.64%
5. Industrial	\$207,065.80	\$301,090.15	68.77%
6. Farms ***	-	\$4,708,151.77	-
7. Recreational & Cultural	\$4,309.35	\$27,623.05	15.60%
Arrears Balance	\$822,528.08	\$10,996,469.56	7.48%

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Leadership

1.1 - Communicate the Council's decisions, policies and activities and the reasons behind them, in a form relevant to ratepayer needs and expectations in accordance to Council's communication strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Costs associated with the collection of outstanding rates and charges are incurred by the ratepayer.

CONCLUSION

As at 2nd March 2018, an amount of \$1,398,274.93 for Rates and Charges was classified as being outstanding to Council. Non-Farming Ratepayers who have not contacted Council and entered into a payment arrangement will be sent to the Debt Collection Agency for recovery after the 16th March 2018.

CRS VANCE / O'CONNOR

That Council receives the Outstanding Rates and Charges report as at 2nd March 2018 and requests a further report on the outstanding Rates and Charges at the end of the financial year.

CARRIED

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION FUND UPDATE

Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 48/08/06

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the current status of the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Defined Benefits Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (LASF) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1947 to provide superannuation to Victorian local government and the water industry. The defined benefit scheme was set up by the Victorian Government in 1982 and was compulsory for all councils until it was closed to new members in 1993.

Defined benefit schemes provide a prescribed benefit based on how long an employee has been a scheme member and their salary at retirement. Employers, rather than employees, must shoulder investment risks.

Accumulation schemes, which are the norm today, reverse this model and when investment market returns are down, the total accumulated super funds in an employee's account will also decline. Since 1 January 1994 new local government employees have only been able to join a standard accumulation plan.

Although the scheme was closed in 1993, Victorian Councils including Pyrenees Shire Council are obligated to continue to make payments in respect to staff who were members of the scheme at the time of closing. The LASF Defined Benefit Plan became a 'regulated fund' under Commonwealth legislation on 1 July 1998, which required it to be fully funded. Prior to this date it was exempt from being fully funded. Other public sector (state and federal government) defined benefit super schemes continue to be exempt up to this day.

In accordance with Commonwealth regulations, Vision Super must complete an actuarial review at least every three years to ensure that assets are adequate to meet the benefits previously promised to members now and into the future. If a shortfall arises that cannot be addressed through an investment plan, then employers may be required to make top-up contributions.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

As the superannuation fund regulator, APRA monitors the financial condition of all Defined Benefit (DB) arrangements and has set a number of requirements that DB trustees must adhere to. These requirements include:

- Appointing a Fund Actuary to undertake, and report on, regular actuarial investigations into the financial position of the DB plan
- Arranging for an interim actuarial investigation in circumstances where required under the superannuation legislation
- Implement a funding plan where the financial position of the DB plan is not satisfactory, and

- Arranging for regular actuarial oversight of any self-insurance arrangements in the DB plan.

APRA has issued a prudential standard (Prudential Standard SPS 160 – Defined Benefit Matters (SPS 160)) which sets out the funding requirements for a DB plan. Under this standard:

- The vested benefits index (VBI) is the measure to determine whether there is an unfunded liability, and
- Any unfunded liability that arises must be rectified within three years.
- Under SPS 160, DB plans are generally required to be in a ‘satisfactory financial position’. For these purposes, the value of the assets of the DB plan must be sufficient to cover the vested benefit liability of the DB plan.
- The vested benefit liability of a DB plan is equal to the value of the total benefits that would be payable by the DB plan if all the members voluntarily terminated their service with their employer at that time. Any lifetime pension benefits in a DB plan are also included in the vested benefit calculations.

Under SPS 160, the VBI is used to determine if a DB plan is in a satisfactory or unsatisfactory financial position.

The VBI is calculated as follows:

$VBI = (\text{Market value of assets} / \text{Total of vested benefits})$

A VBI of 100% or greater means that the value of the assets supporting the DB plan are more than sufficient to cover the vested benefit liabilities of the plan at that date.

As a result, the DB plan is in a satisfactory financial position.

A VBI less than 100% means that the value of the assets supporting the DB plan are not sufficient to cover the vested benefit liabilities of the plan at a particular date.

As a result, the DB plan is in an unsatisfactory financial position.

Vision Super reviews the VBI position of the LASF DB plan at regular intervals.

While the LASF DB plan’s VBI is above 100%, the VBI position is reviewed on a quarterly basis using the same methodology used by the Fund Actuary during the Fund Actuary’s investigations/reviews.

The usual timetable for the quarterly measurement of the VBI and the relevant shortfall; thresholds are as follows:

QUARTER ENDING VBI THRESHOLD

- 30 September 97%/100%
- 31 December 97%
- 31 March 97%
- 30 June 100%

As the LASF DB plan is a closed plan, the VBI is very sensitive to the performance of investment markets. When the investment market is more volatile and trending downwards, the VBI position is monitored more regularly.

As at the 31st December 2017 the VBI was 106.4% which satisfies APRA's Superannuation Standard 160.

- 30 June 2015 – 105.8%
- 30 June 2016 – 102.0%
- 30 June 2017 – 103.1%
- 30 September 2017 – 103.8%
- 31 December 2017 – 106.4%

At this stage no action is required.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 1 - Leadership

1.1 - Communicate the Council's decisions, policies and activities and the reasons behind them, in a form relevant to ratepayer needs and expectations in accordance to Council's communication strategy.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The monitoring of the Vested Benefit Index provides Council with guidance on the performance of the Defined Benefits Fund.

Any future shortfalls will be managed based on the size of the shortfall.

CONCLUSION

The 31st December 2017 Vested Benefit Index was 106.4%. At present there is no action required.

CRS EASON / KEHOE

That Council receives the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund update report and requests that any significant movements be reported to Council.

CARRIED

14. WORKING CAPITAL SURPLUS UTILISATION

Evan King – Director Corporate and Community Services

File No: 32/08/30

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for council to consider the utilisation of the Working Capital Surplus including the Waubra toilets and hard court renewal program.

BACKGROUND

Council through prudent financial management over a number of years has built up a Working Capital Surplus of \$1,839,000 as at 30 June 2017.

A Working Capital Surplus is generated when current assets (cash, receivables & inventories) are higher than current liabilities (payables, trust funds, deposits and employee provisions).

The current Working Capital Surplus of \$1,839,000 was generated over the following years:

Year	Working Capital Surplus	Working Capital Surplus Utilised	Cumulative Working Capital Surplus
212/13	\$132,000	\$nil	\$132,000
2013/14	\$501,000	\$nil	\$633,000
2014/15	\$108,000	\$421,000	\$320,000
2015/16	\$318,000	\$nil	\$638,000
2016/17	\$1,201,000	\$nil	\$1,839,000

The Victorian Auditor General measures Council's Liquidity Ratio (Current Assets/Current Liabilities). This ratio measures the ability of a Council to pay its existing liabilities in the next twelve months. A ratio of one hundred percent or more means there is more cash and liquid assets than short term liabilities.

The Victorian Auditor General's risk rating for the Liquidity Ratio is:

Risk	Measure	
High	Less than 75%	Immediate sustainability issues with insufficient current assets to cover liabilities
Medium	75% to 100%	Need for caution with cash flow, as issues could arise with meeting obligations as they fall due
Low	Greater than 100%	No immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due)

As at 30th June 2017 Pyrenees Shire Council's Liquidity Ratio was 309.32% reflective of \$3.4 million worth of grants paid in advance and the working capital surplus.

In order to ensure that Council has sufficient funds to meet its obligations when they fall due and to be able to fund unexpected events such as natural disasters it is prudent for Council to maintain a certain level of Working Capital Surplus.

Based on a working Capital Surplus of \$1,839,000 Council should retain \$639,000 for unexpected expenditure such as natural disasters. This provides the opportunity for Council to consider funding \$1,200,000 worth of projects.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

In developing a list of potential projects a review of Community Action Plans, current strategies, Long Term Financial Plan and Council's project pipeline register was conducted. During three briefing sessions Councillors and officers have developed the below list. It is proposed to fund the following projects from the Working Capital Surplus:

Rural Drainage - \$100,000

Rural drainage program identified in the Gravel Road Strategy

Walkability Strategy (Stage 2) - \$130,000

Contribution of funds towards stage two of the Walkability Strategy. Total cost of project \$300,000.

New Footpath - \$50,000

Construction of new footpath Hains Close to Gregory St Beaufort

Lexton community Hub - \$100,000

Additional contribution towards the Lexton Community Hub. Council currently has a contribution of \$72,000 included in its current budget. The expected cost of the project is \$2,760,000. It is anticipated that funding will be one third Federal Government, one third State Government and one third Council and Community.

Avoca Swimming Pool - \$25,000

Amenity improvements at the Avoca swimming pool

Beaufort Swimming Pool - \$25,000

Amenity improvements at the Beaufort swimming pool

Landsborough Swimming Pool - \$15,000

Amenity improvements at the Landsborough swimming pool

Waubra toilet block - \$75,000

The installation of a new toilet block at the Waubra Recreation Reserve to replace the old toilet that has been removed. Total project cost is \$85,000 with \$10,000 contribution from the Waubra Windfarm Community Fund

Activate Avoca - \$250,000

Contribute of \$250,000 to a funding application for \$750,000. The project will improve parking, drainage and connectivity to the Avoca Railway Station, undertake renovations to the Shire Hall to create an improved community space and beautification works in High St.

Hard Court Renewal Program

Crowlands Tennis Court - \$50,000

Resurface the tennis court with Laykold resurfacer, gel repairs, acrylic coatings, new net posts, net & foundations.

Landsborough Tennis Court - \$70,000

Resurface the tennis court with Laykold resurfacer, gel repairs, acrylic coatings, new net posts, net & foundations.

Waubra Tennis Court - \$45,000

Resurface tennis court with Laykold asphalt resurfacer, acrylic coatings, line marking, fencing, new net posts, net and foundations to accommodate both tennis and netball. Total project cost is \$60,000 with a \$15,000 contribution from the Waubra Football Netball Club.

Electronic Information Screens at the Beaufort & Avoca Resource Centres - \$35,000

The installation of two electronic information screens at Beaufort and Avoca Resource Centres. The installation of the screens will provide information for visitors to the shire that are looking for information outside of operating hours.

Signage Improvement Project - \$50,000

The allocation of funds to update and install new signs across the shire, to improve the signposting of important landmarks.

Council System Improvement - \$130,000

Investment in Council's Information Technology Systems to drive efficiency and improved customer service. Potential system improvements include, Health Manager, Contracts, Electronic Purchase Orders, Infringements and Records Management.

Energy Efficiency in Council Buildings - \$50,000

Sustainability Victoria is offering Local Government grants on a 1:1 basis for implementation of upgrade projects costed through the detailed facility energy audits currently being undertaken. Funds could be used for energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy projects, with priority given to efficiency improvements.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 4 - Financially Sustainable, High-performing Organisation. Our organisation will respond to community needs, attend to our core business, and strive for excellence in service delivery in an ethical and financially responsible manner.

1.2 - Maintain and renew Council's facilities and built assets in line with community service needs.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council's current Working Capital Surplus is \$1,839,000. It is proposed that Council allocate \$1,200,000 of the current Working Capital Surplus to priority projects. The allocation of these funds will leave a Working Capital Surplus of \$639,000.

CONCLUSION

Through prudent financial management Council has accumulated a Working Capital Surplus of \$1,839,000. The Working Capital Surplus provides the opportunity for Council to invest \$1,200,000 into priority projects. This allocation of funding will fast track a number of projects that may have taken longer to implement without this injection of funds.

CRS O’CONNOR / EASON

That Council,

1. Determines to allocate \$1,200,000 of the Working Capital Surplus towards approved priority projects;
2. Approves the allocation of the \$1,200,000 to the individual projects itemised in this report.

CARRIED

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

15. ART INSTALLATION CONCEPT FOR BEAUFORT

Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

File No: 04/12/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council in principle support to investigate a concept for an art installation project in Beaufort.

BACKGROUND

Beaufort artist, Angela Gerrard has approached Council with a concept for an art installation project in Beaufort, seeking Council support for a funding application through Regional Arts Victoria.

The project titled “Easel Art” seeks to create public art spaces within Beaufort to be established and used ongoing for artists and as part of an annual Easel Arts festival.

The specific installations involve art easels and art frames installed in the open space area adjoining the rotunda, at the Beaufort lake and at Camp Hill. It is also proposed that a shelter be provided at the Camp Hill location.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The locations for the proposed installations are on land that is managed by Council, and in principle support for the purpose of the grant application has been provided by the CEO in consultation with the Beaufort Ward Councillor Cr O’Connor. The in principle support was provided subject to any necessary regulatory approvals.

Applications for the funding round closed on 13 March 2018, for projects commencing after 1 July 2018. The funding application did not include any financial contribution from Pyrenees Shire Council.

The sites for the installations are high profile sites, and Mrs Gerrard has engaged with a range of community groups to seek support prior to the application being made. These groups have included Business for Beaufort, Pyrenees Arts Council, Beaufort Rotary and Beaufort Secondary College. There has also been interest in the project from a range of artists and art workers.

Details of the proposal including an outline of the benefits of the proposal, and photo montages are contained in the attachment to this report.

It is important to understand that while in principle support has been provided for the concept, this should not influence any decision should that be required as part of any regulatory approvals process which may necessarily have regard to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme and any broader community input.

It is worth noting that the community consultation undertaken in 2017 as part of the Pyrenees Futures project identified strong community support for the arts with the following theme being identified:

Priority 3: An arty town

Beaufort's growing arts scene continues to become more vibrant, and can play an important role in bringing more life to public places and making Beaufort a destination in its own right.

- *Public art should be incorporated into the landscape through murals, sculptures and bollards in the appropriate locations.*
- *The arts scene is making a growing contribution to community life and the economy.*

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 3 - Community Connection and Wellbeing. We will engage with communities to provide responsive, efficient services that enhance the quality of life of residents and promote connected, active and resilient communities.

3.3 - Community Development - Supporting communities to build connections, capacity and resilience.

ATTACHMENTS

15.1. Easel Art project proposal

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

The project is not seeking a financial contribution from Council.

There are potential long term economic and social benefits to the community by investing in the arts.

CONCLUSION

Beaufort Artist Angela Gerard is seeking Council support for an Easel Art project involving art installations and an arts festival, and the following recommendation is made.

CRS KEHOE / EASON

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the in principle support provided for the Easel Art project proposal which is subject to any necessary regulatory approvals
2. Seeks to engage further with Angela Gerard and the broader community over the proposed art project.

CARRIED

16. AVOCA RAIL PRECINCT MASTERPLAN

Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

File No: 44/06/02

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

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about a masterplan that has been prepared for the Avoca Rail station and surrounds, and to seek in principle support.

BACKGROUND

The Avoca railway station is located on land owned by the state (VicTrack). In 2017 Council entered into a long term head lease agreement with VicTrack covering the land and buildings for railway lots 1, 18 and 21 generally south of the rail line. Council subsequently entered into a sub-lease with the Avoca Arts and Gardens Group (AA&G) over the site. AA&G have also entered into a long term lease with GrainCorp over the land and structures on the north side of the line in the vicinity of the station.

The 1876 heritage listed station was restored in 2016 and has since been activated by AAG as an art gallery.

Council has sought to support the group by engaging a contractor, Liz Cummins of Bricolage Design to work with the group to develop a masterplan for the precinct which covers an area of around 2.8 hectares and includes a number of significant buildings.

Mr Hugh Forster, representing AA&G, attended a Council briefing in 2017 and briefed Councillors on the plans for the site, and identified a number of initial priorities to enable the site to be developed as an arts and gardens precinct.

A community workshop was held to provide opportunity for input into the plan, and the draft masterplan was placed on exhibition at the Station Gallery in November 2017.

A copy of the document titled Avoca Arts & Gardens Precinct Plan Report December 2017 is attached to this report.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The masterplan is conceptual and includes probable costs for the development, priority actions and artistic impressions of how the site is proposed to be activated.

While some individual development components are subject to planning approval, the use of the site for arts and gardens is approved activity under the head lease with VicTrack.

The gallery is run by community volunteers, and to ensure the long term sustainability of the activity, it is considered necessary to develop the site to attract visitors to the gallery as a means of raising revenue to offset costs associated with the facility and the activities.

The development of the site will add to the tourism product offered at Avoca and thereby contribute to the visitor economy, as well as provide an avenue for community gathering enhancing the social wellbeing of the community.

Council and AA&G are currently seeking funding support from government through a range of funding programs.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Strategic Objective 3 - Community Connection and Wellbeing. We will engage with communities to provide responsive, efficient services that enhance the quality of life of residents and promote connected, active and resilient communities.

3.2 - Physical activity - Ensure our residents have access to facilities and programs that allow them to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.

3.3 - Community Development - Supporting communities to build connections, capacity and resilience.

ATTACHMENTS

16.1. Avoca Arts & Gardens Precinct Plan Report December 2017 – *circulated separately*

16.2 Avoca Rail Precinct Draft Masterplan – *circulated separately*

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council is currently seeking funding through the Victorian government for its Activate Avoca project of which the rail precinct is one component.

The operating costs associated with the activity on the site are met by AA&G.

CONCLUSION

Council has assisted the Avoca Arts and Gardens Group to prepare a Masterplan for the Avoca Railway Station precinct to enable it to be developed as an arts and gardens precinct.

The development of the plan has included engagement with the Avoca community, and the draft plan dated December 2017 is attached to this report for Council consideration.

CRS EASON / VANCE

That Council

1. Provides in principle support for the Avoca Railway station Masterplan
2. Assists the Avoca Arts and Gardens Group with any relevant regulatory approvals, and
3. Works with the Avoca Arts and Gardens Group to pursue funding for priority activities contained in the plan

CARRIED

17. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Vance – attended a planning mediation meeting in Landsborough related to a planning permit application to keep and train 20 greyhounds.

Attended the RCV Executive Committee meeting in Melbourne earlier in the month. Discussion took place on the KPMG report which backs up the submission that RCV has put in to the state government regarding the budget. Also a delegation of four reps met with Minister Donellan last Friday to push the budget submission. RCV are asking for \$200m over four years which really replaces the ‘Country Roads and Bridges’ program.

Had been advised recently that quite a few vehicles are being stored on a block behind the shop in Waubra. It appears that vermin may also be at home in the vehicles.

CRS VANCE / O’CONNOR

That Council acknowledges the retirement of Pam Burns and thanks her for her long and devoted service to the Pyrenees Shire.

CARRIED

Councillors individually thanked Pam for support to them over the years.

Cr Kehoe – The Progress Association held a very successful dinner dance at the hall recently.

The Snake Valley Progress Network and CFA headed up the Snake Valley clean up the valley day which was very successful. It was a small contingent, but a strong contingent.

An Easter egg hunt followed by a BBQ will be trialled by the Progress Association and Recreation Reserve Committee on Easter Sunday.

Snake Valley youth will be holding a paint fun run in the near future.

Friends of the RSL have met recently; one of the members advised that there will be a fund raiser in the form of a book launch on the 23rd April at 2pm in Ballarat at the Midlands Golf Club. The book ‘Victoria Cross Remembers’ will be on sale with all proceeds from the book sale and the afternoon tea going to TPI services.

Cr O’Connor – attended many meeting this month that all seemed to revolve around roads:

- The WHAC meeting was very productive, there was a lot discussed on the current repairs and the duplication of the Western Highway.
- The Public Engagement group for the Beaufort Bypass.
- A series of sessions on the options of the bypass run by VicRoads

It would appear that some residents are using the street bins to discard household rubbish. This is not very helpful particularly on long weekends and public holidays.

The Secondary College extension is well and truly on the way. The work is quite phenomenal with the slab down and the build is really moving quickly.

Also would like to express appreciation of the local laws and planning staff under difficult circumstances are extremely helpful.

Cr Eason – Attended the AGM of the Avoca op shop. It was very interesting to note that the four incumbents took on the roles again. It was a real pleasure to attend. The op-shop is doing a wonderful job in the community.

Attended the Rail Freight Alliance recently. The Executive have met with representatives of both major parties and minor parties looking for support for the Alliance, these conversations will continue over the coming months as the 2018 Policy Statement is presented. Key messages are a continuation of the Mode Shift Incentive Scheme, a dedicated Portfolio and Statutory Authority for Freight and Logistics in Victoria and getting the next rail investments right for Victoria.

The Sunraysia Highway meeting was held last week. Funding from VicRoads was the main discussion.

Avoca will be holding a masquerade ball this year. Anyone interested in attending will have a really fun night. The proceeds support various charities in the area.

Cr Clark – It has been a busy month again attending:

- MAV
- LLEN
- ALGA Board meeting

Attended and opened the West Region 1st Annual VFBV Rural Championships in Waubra on the 18th of March. Several teams did have to leave due to the fires in the south. There were 20 junior and 20 senior teams in attendance.

Have had discussions with the Trawalla hall committee in regards to some planning thoughts that they have and that will be very useful.

A highlight was attending and launching radio 88, a radio station local to Beaufort. It is a fantastic little project and it will be great to have the local ads playing in town.

With the CEO visited and lobbied politicians in Melbourne and we will be looking to do that again in a couple of months. Also looking forward to having the Ripon candidates present to Council over the next couple of meetings.



18. CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at 8.02pm

Minutes of the meeting confirmed

2018

Mayor