



Pyrenees
Shire Council

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 18 January 2022
Virtual

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

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1. WELCOME

2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

As the meeting Chair, I give my consent for this Open Council Meeting to be streamed live, recorded and published online. Anyone who is invited to read out a question or a presentation will be recorded and their voice, image and comments will form part of the livestream and recording.

The Chair and/or the CEO have the discretion and authority at any time to direct the termination or interruption of livestreaming. Such direction will only be given in exceptional circumstances where deemed relevant. Circumstances may include instances where the content of debate is considered misleading, defamatory or potentially inappropriate to be published.

The stream will stop prior to the closed section of the meeting and will recommence for the conclusion of the meeting.

The public is able to view this livestream via our website at www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au. Should technical issues prevent the continuation of the stream, a recording will be made available on our website.

3. OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we ask you to give your blessing to this Council, direct and prosper its deliberations to the advancement of your glory, and the true welfare of the people of the Pyrenees Shire.

Amen

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire.

We pay our respect to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the elders and people of these tribes, on whose land we meet today.

5. APOLOGIES

6. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

7. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 14 December 2021; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 14 December 2021,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

8. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the previous meeting held 14 December 2021.

9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Question Time

- Members of the public are encouraged to ask questions of Council at Ordinary Council Meetings.
- Members of the public may attend the meeting in person to verbally ask a question. All attendees must register by midday on the day of the meeting to ensure Council adheres to the number of attendees permitted under its COVID-Safe Plan. To register either call 1300 797 363 or visit <https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/About-Pyrenees-Shire-Council/Council-Meetings/Council-Meeting-Attendance>
- Members of the public who are unable to attend in person can participate in question time by submitting their questions in writing either online through Council's website, by mail or hand delivered.
- A person can ask a maximum of two questions at any one meeting on any topic and the question(s) and responses shall not exceed five minutes.
- Questions are to be received by 12noon on the day of the meeting.
- Questions are read by the Chairperson during Public Participation.
- The Chairperson or Councillor or Council officer to whom a question is referred may:
 - Immediately answer the question;
 - Take the question on notice for the next Ordinary meeting;

Public Submissions

- Members of the public may present a submission to Council in the period immediately following public question time.
- Members of the public may attend the meeting in person to verbally make a submission. All attendees must register by midday on the day of the meeting to ensure Council adheres to the number of attendees permitted under its COVID-Safe Plan. To register either call 1300 797 363 or visit <https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/About-Pyrenees-Shire-Council/Council-Meetings/Council-Meeting-Attendance>
- Members of the public who are unable to attend in person to make a submission on an agenda item may do so in writing either online through Council's website, by mail or hand delivered.
- The Chair will allocate a maximum of five (5) minutes to each person who wishes to address Council.
- Submissions are to be received by 12noon on the day of the meeting.
- There will be no discussion or debate with the public attendees however Councillors may ask questions for clarification of the attendee.

10. ITEMS FOR NOTING

10.1. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

10.1.1. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT - QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT

Katie Gleisner – Manager Planning and Development Services

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

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

PURPOSE

This report provides Council with a summary of the Planning and Development Department's regulation activity during October, November, and December 2021.

BACKGROUND

The Planning and Development team is responsible for administering a range of regulatory functions identified within the following Acts, Regulations, Codes and Standards:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Planning and Environment Regulations 2015*
- *Building Act 1993*
- *Building Regulations 2018*
- *National Construction Codes*
- *Environment Protection Act 2017*
- *Water Act 1989*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Food Act 1984*
- *Tobacco Act 1987*
- *Domestic Animals Act 1994*
- *Domestic Animals Regulations 2015*
- *Country Fire Act 1958*
- *Impounding of Livestock Act 1994*
- *Road Safety Act 1986*
- *Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*
- *General Local Law 2019*

The following statistics represent activity undertaken in Q2 of the 2021-22 financial year.

Planning

	Oct 2021	Nov 2021	Dec 2021	Financial YTD Total
Planning Permits				
Applications received	6	1	1	22
Applications completed	11	6	6	59
Request for further information	9	4	7	45
Estimated cost of works (\$)	787,447	0	19,000	3,454,530
Sixty day time frame (%)	100	100	85.71	96.42

Number of enquiries	173	180	137	1096
Secondary Consents	3	2	1	12
Time Extensions	3	2	5	21
Planning Information Controls	13	7	6	38
Enquiries				
Pre-purchase enquiries	56	49	51	284
Pre-application enquiries	59	64	35	323
Current planning application enquiries	22	27	25	182
Existing planning permit enquiries	17	17	5	105
All other enquiries	19	23	21	202

Building

	Oct-2021	Nov-2021	Dec-2021	Financial YTD Total
Permits issued by private Building Surveyor	24	15	14	111
'Property Information Certificates' prepared and issued	23	24	10	125
'Report and Consent' issued	1	1	1	7
Building Notices	1	1	1	5
Building Order	0	3	1	16
Resolved Building Notices	0	0	0	1
Resolved Building Orders	1	2	1	8
Building Inspections	12	9	6	57
Place of Public Entertainment permits issued	0	1	1	2

Environmental Health

	Oct-2021	Nov-2021	Dec-2021
Wastewater			
Application to Install or Alter system	2	2	2
Permit to Install or Alter issued	2	2	0
Approval to Use issued	5	1	2
Wastewater inspections	3	3	2
Domestic Wastewater Management Plan inspections	0	19	26
Domestic Wastewater Service Agent reports	17	4	2
Wastewater related complaints	2	0	0
Fees Paid	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,210.00
Public Health			

New Premises or Transfers	0	0	3
Registration Renewals	0	18	61
Premises Closures	0	3	2
Routine and Follow Up Inspections	25	8	0
Complaints about Registered Premises	0	1	0
Food Recalls	10	8	3
Mobile/Temporary Food Applications	1	9	7
Mobile/Temporary Food Inspections	0	1	0
Mobile/Temporary Food Statements of Trade	5	7	5
Fees Paid	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,030.50

Community Safety and Amenity

Item	Oct-2021	Nov-2021	Dec-2021	Financial YTD
Animal Registrations				
Cats Registered	575	576	577	-
Dogs registered	2334	2341	2347	-
Animal collections				
Cats impounded	5	4	3	24
Cats reclaimed	2	1	0	10
Cats Euthanised	1	3	1	8
Dogs impounded	9	3	1	22
Dogs Reclaimed	7	3	1	20
Dogs Euthanised/surrendered	0	0	0	0
Stock impounded	0	1	0	25
Fire Prevention				
Fire Prevention Notices Issued				467
Number of Fire Prevention Notices complied with	See financial year to date figures			394
Fines Issued				27
Properties cleaned up by council contractors				12

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.
- 1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.
- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Priority 2 - Place

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

Priority 4 - Economy

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

Enabling Principles

a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes this report.

10.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

10.2.1. CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS - DECEMBER 2021 UPDATE

Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 16/08/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on requests made through the Customer Action Request System (CARS) for the month of December 2021.

BACKGROUND

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

Service requests are received for operational issues regarding maintenance, pools, local laws, building maintenance and compliance matters. The system is also used for internal telephone messaging and case management of some matters (primarily local laws, dogs, and cats), although efforts continue to reduce this use.

Work commenced in late 2021 to identify complaints that may have been input as a customer action request and process them accordingly.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

312 CARs were logged in December 2021, 165 less than the previous month. Of these requests 138 related to telephone messages.

388 CARs were closed in the month, leaving a total of 174 outstanding, of which 17 related to telephone messages.

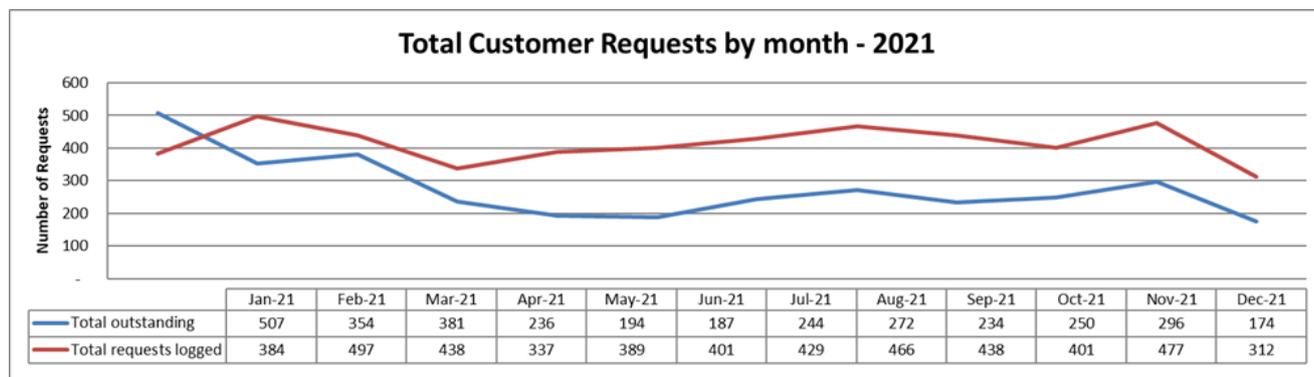
Of the non-telephone call requests received, the following represents those received and still outstanding for November by Ward:

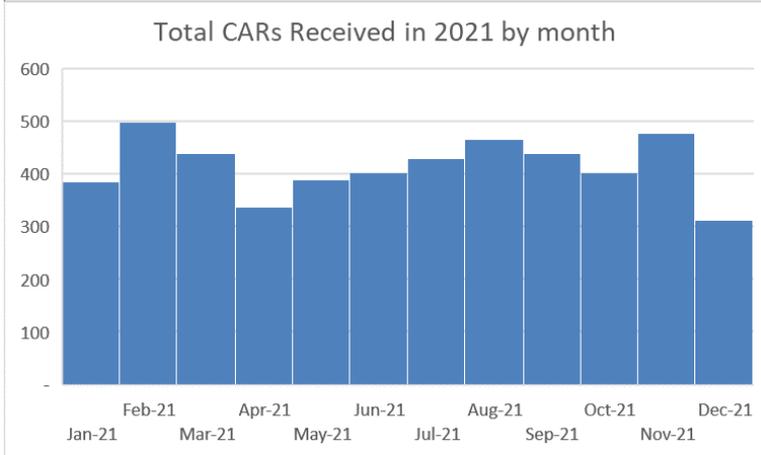
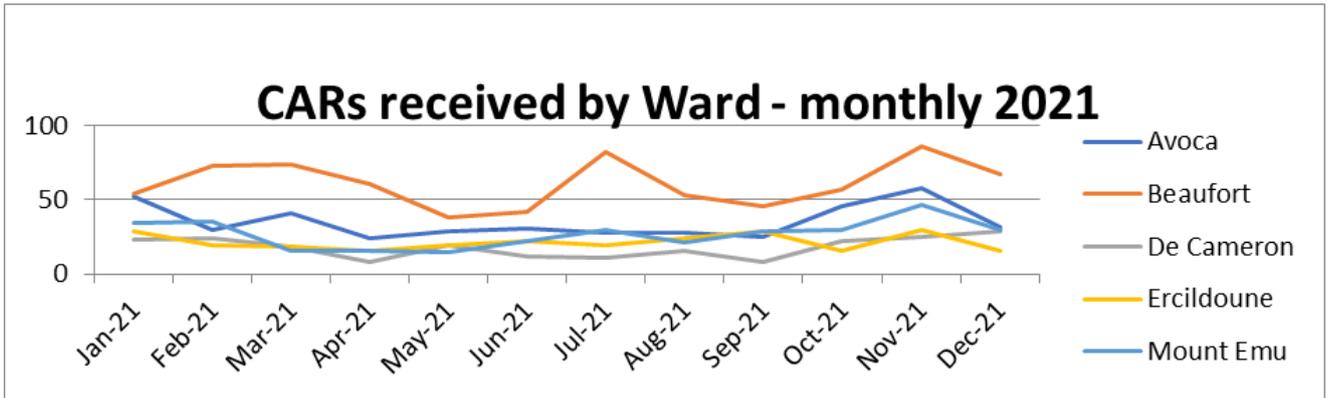
	Avoca Ward	Beaufort Ward	DeCameroon Ward	Ercildoune Ward	Mt Emu Ward
Number of requests received in December 2021 (previous month).	32 (58)	67 (86)	29 (25)	16 (30)	30 (47)
Requests received in December and closed in the same month (% of total received).	23 (72%)	55 (82%)	23 (79%)	11 (69%)	26 (87%)
Requests received in December outstanding.	9	12	6	5	4
Outstanding requests from 2020.	0	2	0	0	0
Outstanding requests from 2019.	1	0	0	0	0
Total outstanding requests (previous month).	43 (60)	57 (69)	11 (20)	24 (36)	26 (37)

Analysis:

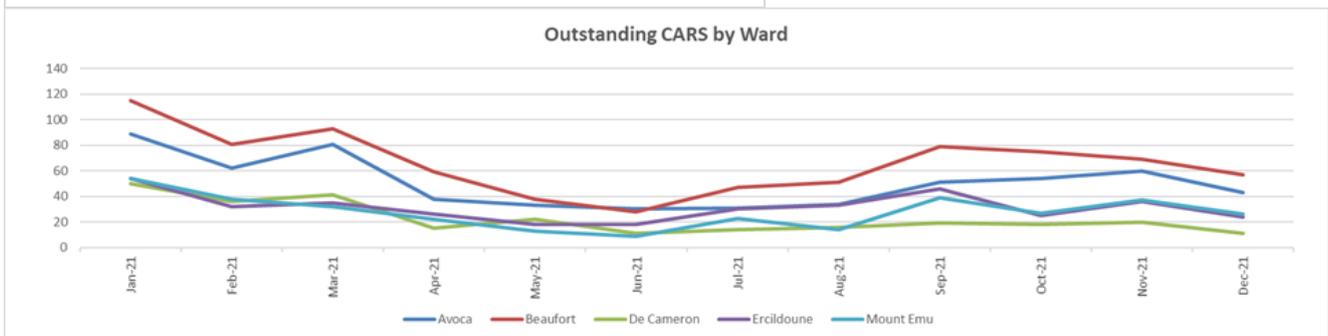
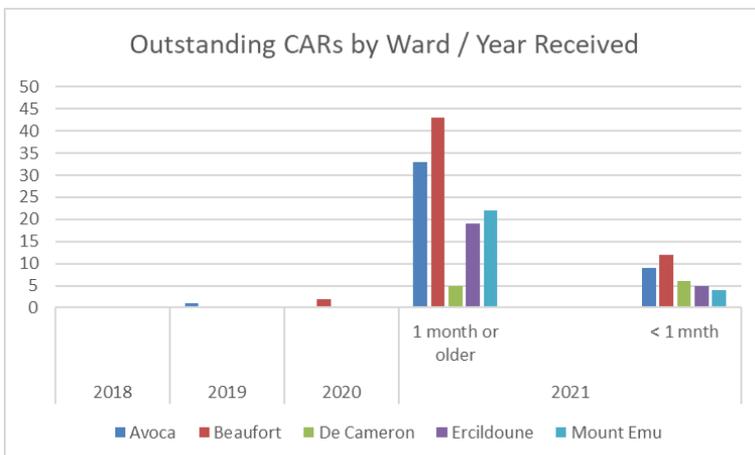
- Just 17 telephone calls remained open at the end of December.
- Outstanding CARs decreased by 30% in December from the previous month. 388 CARs were closed in December, 217 more than the number received, making good inroads on longer-term outstanding requests.
- No requests remain outstanding from 2017 or 2018. 1 request remains outstanding from 2019 and 2 from 2020, all of which relate to long-term drainage issues.
- The Council Plan 2021-2025 includes a performance measure that requires CARs to be maintained at a total outstanding of less than 300. At the end of 2021, 174 remained outstanding which is compliant with that measure.
- Rainfall in December and January caused additional drainage issues to be reported including -
 - Beaufort – Cummins Street (drain blockage) and Burge Street (water flooding property from high point in road)
 - Ercildoune – Russell Street, Lexton - flooding of sheds
 - Ercildoune – Barber Road, Waterloo – culvert need
- Checks of requests made during December identified the following that will be registered and monitored as service complaints -
 - Infestation of Patterson's Curse spreading from vacant farming land in Landsborough. May not be a Council matter but appears to be a recurring issue.

The following graphs display requests received by Ward/month and totals received for 2021.



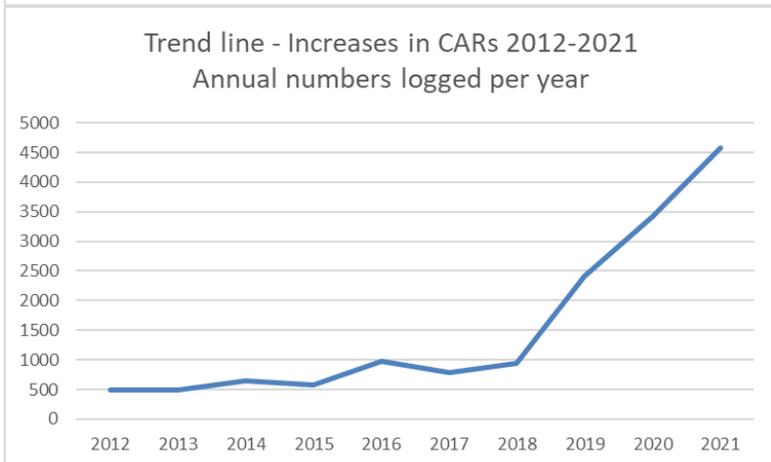
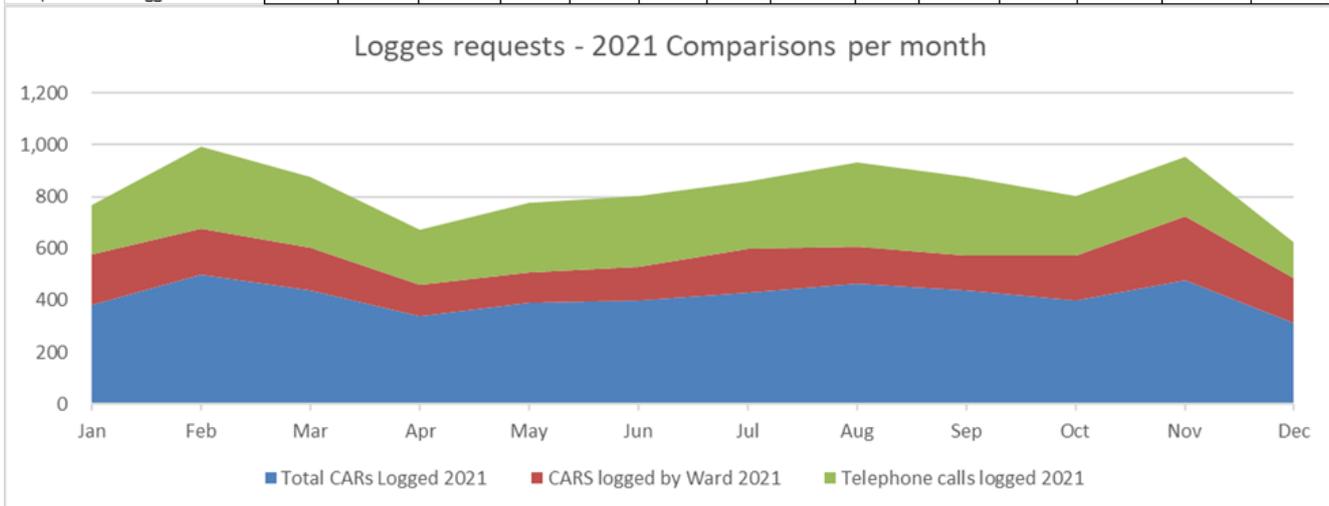


The following charts display outstanding cars by Ward/year received and the trend lines of outstanding CARs numbers over the past 12 months of requests received by Ward.



The following shows a comparison of logged requests for the whole of 2021.

Logges requests Comparison 2021														Totals	Ave/mnth
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec			
Total CARs Logged 2021	384	497	438	337	389	401	429	466	438	401	477	312	4585	382	
CARS logged by Ward 2021	192	181	167	125	120	129	170	142	137	171	246	174	1762	147	
Telephone calls logged 2021	192	316	271	212	269	272	259	324	301	230	231	138	2823	235	



The following table provides greater detail of the areas where outstanding requests remain, showing the functional areas and numbers of requests still outstanding, as at 31 December 2021.

Dec-21			
	Nov	Dec	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	61	36	-25
Streetlights	2	2	0
Drainage	34	27	-7
Footpaths	12	9	-3
Park & Reserves	5	4	-1
Roadside Veg	60	45	-15
Environmental Health	1	2	1
Planning	1	1	0
Bld maint	18	13	-5
Local Laws	4	3	-1
Cats	0	0	0
Dogs	5	3	-2
Livestock Act	1	1	0
Parking	1	0	-1
Fire Hazard	3	1	-2
Bld Compliance	3	0	-3
Waste Management	0	1	1
Natural Disasters	0	0	0
Pools	3	1	-2
Council cleaning	2	1	-1
EPA - Litter	0	0	0
Design & Assets	2	2	0
GIS	0	0	0
Community Wellbeing	1	1	0
Rural Addressing	1	0	-1
Road Naming	4	4	0
Telephone messages	72	17	-55
Total	296	174	-122

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.

4.1 - Continue to build and develop an engaged, responsive, accountable and capable workforce.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Financial and reputation risks apply with the receipt and timely resolution of customer action requests. Financial because of the need to address requests from the community where resource and budget capacity allows, reputation because of the adverse reaction within the community when it is perceived that insufficient attention or priority is provided to such requests – e.g., where a timely response is not received or where a request is not recognised as a complaint.

CONCLUSION

The customer action request system remains an integral part of Council’s reactive identification of issues that need attention. 2021 sees an ongoing review of how the system is used, including finding proactive ways to improve speedier resolution and reporting against progress. This report provides a statistical overview of requests received and actions during December 2021 and as at the end of the calendar year.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes this report.

10.2.2. QUARTERLY PROJECT UPDATE

Jerry van Delft – Project Management Facilitator

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

File No: 16/21/04

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the progress of projects funded to \$50k or more in the current financial year.

BACKGROUND

There are currently 29 active projects (23 community projects and 6 internal council projects) worth \$9.5m across the municipality ranging from road and bridge upgrades, including the \$1M Bridge 139 on the Raglan Elmhurst Road and the \$3.8M Lexton Community Hub project. Progress against milestones is updated monthly on the Project Management Dashboard. A detailed list of current projects is attached.

The Dashboard is also reporting that 12 projects have been completed in the first half of the current financial year. Some of the projects successfully completed include the Avoca War Memorial upgrade, the Begg Street toilet renewal, the road construction of Orme St, Avoca (Pyrenees Hwy to Pearson St) and the Activate Avoca - Former Shire Office Building Renovation.

The dashboard can be found at <https://dashboard.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/public-dashboard>.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

There are currently 29 projects in progress (as reported on the Project Dashboard). There are 3 projects which have rescheduled milestones.

1. The Lexton Hub, which continues to face delays resulting from issues relating to waste water management. It is anticipated that the waste water system will be installed in February. At this point the Lexton Hub should be completed by the end of March 2022.
2. The Beaufort Cricket nets quotes have come in substantially above the grant allocation. The Manager Assets is currently working on alternative build options to bring the project in on budget.
3. The Waubra Hit-up Wall faced supply issues. These have been resolved and the Hit-up Wall has been delivered and is on track for installation shortly.

Drought projects have concluded successfully and Rounds 1 and 2 of the Drought Projects have been acquitted and the audited statements submitted to the Commonwealth in December 2021.

In summary:

- Round 1 Expenditure of \$1,045,979 on a grant of \$1,000,000
- Round 2 Expenditure of \$1,013,807 on a grant of \$1,000,000
- The Audit found that “Pyrenees Shire Council has complied, in all material respects, with the requirements of the grant agreement between the organisation and the Commonwealth”

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2022 01 10 Council Report Projects [**10.2.2.1** - 2 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All risk implications have been included in the body of the report.

CONCLUSION

It is anticipated that all projects due for completion this financial year will be completed.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes this report.

11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS**11.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - DECEMBER 2021**

Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward		
Tue 7	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Fri 10	Beaufort Primary School Presentation	Beaufort
Sat 11	Councillor Xmas Gathering	Beaufort
Mon 13	Launch Event - Beaufort Closed Loop Water Recycle Project	Beaufort
Tue 14	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 14	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Thu 16	Beaufort Primary School Grade 6 Graduation	Beaufort

Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward		
Thu 2	CVGA AGM	Maryborough
Thu 2	CVGA Board Meeting	Maryborough
Fri 3	MAV Board Meeting	Melbourne
Mon 6	Rural South Central Region MAV Meeting	Virtual
Mon 6	Highlands LLEN Meeting	Ballarat
Mon 6	Highlands LLEN COM Meeting	Ballarat
Tue 7	MAV Advocacy Update	Virtual
Tue 7	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 7	Waubra Primary School – Grade 6 Graduation	Learmonth
Sat 11	Councillor Xmas Gathering	Beaufort
Tue 14	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 14	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Thu 16	Climate Change in the Council Plan Webinar	Virtual
Tue 21	MAV Advocacy Update	Virtual

Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward		
Mon 6	Rural South Central Region MAV Meeting	Virtual
Tue 7	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Thu 9	RCV Dinner	Castlemaine
Fri 10	RCV Committee Meeting	Ballarat
Sat 11	Councillor Xmas Gathering	Beaufort
Tue 14	Official Launch - Mobile Library Van	Beaufort
Tue 14	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 14	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Thu 16	Moonambel Primary School Graduation	Moonambel
Thu 16	Timber Towns Victoria General Meeting	Virtual
Wed 22	Meeting with Richard Riordan and Rural Councils Victoria	Beac

Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward		
Fri 3	CHCV Mayors and CEOs Forum & AGM	Virtual
Mon 6	Rural South Central Region MAV Meeting	Virtual
Tue 7	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Wed 8	Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid Media Event	Clunes
Wed 8	Mayor / CEO Meeting	Avoca
Thu 9	MAV Mayoral Welcome – Day 1	Virtual
Thu 9	Avoca Primary School Grade 6 Graduation	Avoca
Fri 10	MAV Mayoral Welcome – Day 2	Virtual
Sat 11	Councillor Xmas Gathering	Beaufort
Mon 13	Launch Event - Beaufort Closed Loop Water Recycle Project	Beaufort
Tue 14	Official Launch - Mobile Library Van	Beaufort
Tue 14	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 14	Council Meeting	Beaufort
Thu 16	Mayor / CEO Meeting	Avoca
Thu 23	Mayor / CEO Meeting	Avoca

Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward		
Fri 3	MAV Social Media Training	Virtual
Tue 7	Councillor Cuppa	Snake Valley
Tue 7	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Sat 11	Councillor Xmas Gathering	Beaufort
Tue 14	Official Launch - Mobile Library Van	Beaufort
Tue 14	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 14	Council Meeting	Beaufort

12. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS**12.1.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - DECEMBER 2021**

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	7 December 2021 commenced at 3.00pm and closed at 6.00pm		
Meeting Location	Beaufort Council Chambers, 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Matters 2. Shipping Containers 3. Western Bulldogs Youth Leadership Program 4. Beaufort Closed Loop Water Recycle Project 5. Mobile Library Bus Show and Tell 6. Agenda Review 7. Issues Raise by Councillors 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Ron Eason Cr Tanya Kehoe	Cr David Clark Cr Robert Vance	
Apologies	Nil		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) – Item 1 Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Katie Gleisner (Manager Planning & Development) – Items 1 and 2 Claire Pepin (Planning Officer) – Items 1 and 2 Marcus Murrell (Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator) – Item 3 (virtual) Martin Walmsley (Manager Community Wellbeing) – Item 3 (virtual) Ray Davies (Manager Economic Development & Tourism) – Item 4 Terry McAliece (Environmental and Sustainability Officer) – Item 4 Peter O'Rourke (Librarian and Community Development Officer) – Item 5		
Visitors	Wes Gaylor – Central Highlands Water – Item 4 (virtual)		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	14 December 2021 commenced at 2.00pm and closed at 5.45pm		
Meeting Location	Beaufort Council Chambers, 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stockyard Hill Wind Farm Update 2. Planning Matters 3. Planning Application PA21110 4. Strategic Planning Update 5. Waste Services for Community Facilities 6. Grant Program 7. Advocacy Program 8. Australia Day Award Nominations 9. Agenda Review 		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Ron Eason Cr Tanya Kehoe		Cr David Clark Cr Robert Vance
Apologies	Nil		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Katie Gleisner (Manager Planning & Development) – Item 1, 2 & 3 Claire Pepin (Planning Officer) – Items 1, 2 & 3		
Visitors	Ian Courtney – Stockyard Hill Wind Farm – Item 1		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
1	Cr Tanya Kehoe	Neighbouring Agreement for Stockyard Hill Wind Farm	Cr Kehoe remained in the meeting
4	Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate & Community Services	Beaufort Off Leash Dog Park – Residential Amenity - discussions of locations near personal residence	Kathy Bramwell remained in the meeting

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the items for noting in Sections 10, 11 and 12, be received.

13. ITEMS FOR DECISION

13.1. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

13.1.1. RATE CAP 2022/23

Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 52/04/20

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's determination as to whether an increase should be sought on the rate cap for the 2021/22 financial year.

BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government introduced rate capping effective from the 2015/16 financial year. In previous years, the rate cap set has been set at a maximum of 2.5%, with the rate cap for the current 2021/22 financial year set at 1.5%, the lowest it has been since the Fair Go Rates system was introduced.

Where appropriate, councils may apply for higher rate cap consideration subject to meeting certain criteria. Pyrenees Shire Council successfully applied for increases in the rate cap in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017.18:

- 2015/16 - additional 1.33% making a total rate cap of 3.83%
- 2016/17 - additional 1.5% making a total rate cap of 3.5%
- 2017.18 - additional 1.25% making a total rate cap of 3.5%

Financial sustainability was the key driver for Council seeking a higher rate above the rate cap imposed for these years and all the additional revenue raised was quarantined for road renewal works.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A new rate cap of 1.75% has been set for all Victorian councils during the 2022/23 financial year.

This rate cap means that own sourced revenue will once again increase at less than administrative expenses, particularly those relating to staffing where Council's Enterprise Agreement has set a salary increases for banded employees of 2% in the 2022/23 financial year, in addition to the approximate 0.5% increase in salary costs caused by banding increases and other staff level movements. The current Enterprise Agreement expires on 30 June 2023 with renewal negotiations expected to commence in late 2022.

A rate cap set at 1.75% continues to limit Council's capacity to raise revenue and reinforces its dependence on external grants to achieve an asset renewal rate of more than 85% of depreciation and a lack of capacity to increase staff numbers beyond maintaining existing levels.

The Essential Services Commission publishes guidance for councils seeking to make a higher cap application, which details six matters considered by the Commission when judging a rate cap increase application:

- The proposed higher cap and the specified year(s) in which it would apply,
- The reasons for which the council seeks the higher cap,
- How the views of ratepayers and the community have been considered in proposing the higher cap,
- How the higher cap is an efficient use of council resources and represents value for money,
- Whether consideration has been given to reprioritising proposed expenditures and alternative funding options and why the council does not consider those options to be adequate, and
- That the assumptions and proposals in the application are consistent with the council's long-term strategy and financial management policies set out in the council's planning documents and annual budget.

Council must take the above into consideration when determining whether to apply for a rate cap increase for 2022/23.

An important consideration for Council in deciding whether to seek a higher rate cap in the past has been the financial impact on the community and the ability of ratepayers to pay. In the current environment, amid ongoing strictures of COVID-19, this becomes of greater import.

While the assessment of Council's assets identifies an ongoing infrastructure gap, and other project opportunities can always be identified, that would benefit from capital investment, Council officers consider it unlikely that the community would support a 2022/23 rate cap increase in the current financial environment.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Council's long-term financial sustainability has been identified as a risk for the Pyrenees Shire Council and is clearly demonstrated in the 10-year Financial Plan.

CONCLUSION

The annual rate cap for 2022/23 has been announced at 1.75%. This remains below the annual expenditure increases forecast for the financial year and adds to Council's long-term financial sustainability risk. Should Council choose to make an application to the Essential Services Commission for a higher rate cap for the 2022/23 financial year, notification of its intention should be provided to the Commission by 31 January 2022.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council, having considered relevant reasons for raising additional revenue to meet the service and asset needs of the community, the requirements set by the Essential Services Commission, and other issues raised in this report, do not make application to the Essential Services Commission for a higher rate cap for the 2022/23 financial year.

13.1.2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY

Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 16/24/18

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval of seeking community input into the review of Council's Community Engagement Policy and the development of a Community Engagement Strategy.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) was proclaimed on 6 April 2020 with transition from the former Act being implemented in stages between 1 May 2020 and 30 June 2022.

Section 55 of the Act required Council to adopt a Community Engagement Policy by 1 March 2021. A Policy was developed in late 2020, exhibited for public feedback in December 2020 / January 2021, and subsequently adopted by Council in February 2021.

Public feedback provided suggestions, the majority of which were included within the adopted policy.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

During the development of the current Community Engagement Policy in late 2020 / early 2021, it was acknowledged that:

1. The Community Engagement Policy adopted in February 2021 was likely to need further revision in accordance with lessons learned during the 2021 deliberative engagement process used for the creation of the Community Vision 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025, and
2. A Community Engagement Strategy may be needed to provide more robust operational guidance to officers on when, how and with whom engagement should be undertaken.

When recommending Council adoption of the existing Policy, commitment was made to undertake a review of that policy approximately 12 months from the date of adoption (February 2021) and develop a Community Engagement Strategy at the same time.

It is proposed that this document review and development activity be undertaken in consultation with our community via the Engagement Hub portal available on Council's website and some direct contact where needed. Some feedback already received in 2021 will be utilised in this process:

- To ensure Council's commitment to community engagement is clear and not just to meet a legal requirement,
- Include a statement of intent to drive Council's commitment and relationship with the community, and
- Detail the tools available to support genuine community engagement.

To ensure that engagement is facilitated as widely as possible, consultation will be enabled through electronic means, local media and through notices displayed in local townships to ensure that engagement is not limited to community members with internet access. Face to face engagement may be conducted subject to community interest and COVID-19 protection recommendations.

Council Officers are seeking Council's endorsement of the community engagement processes needed to ensure processes are developed that meet the needs and expectations of our community.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Officer follow-through on commitments made in 2021 is essential to ensure that Council does not damage its reputation nor impact community satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Council adopted an initial Community Engagement Policy in February 2021 and, to fulfil further consultation and development commitments, officers now propose to review that Policy and develop a new Community Engagement Strategy in consultation with the Pyrenees Community.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves community engagement activity to review the 2021 Community Engagement Policy and develop a Community Engagement Strategy in collaboration with its community members.

13.1.3. DELEGATION UPDATE

Helen Swadling – Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance

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

File No: 16/20/08

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to review and adopt an updated Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act).

BACKGROUND

The Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) requires Council to review its delegations, appointments and authorisations, as required. Council is advised by Maddocks Lawyers in preparation of Instruments of Delegation, Appointment & Authorisation as and when updates are required. Further updates were received in July 2021.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A change of officers in the role of Environmental Health Officer requires that the S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation be amended to include the appointment of Anthony Komives, as an Authorised Officer.

Advice from Maddocks in 2019 indicated also that individual S11 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisations should be done for individual officers, this is considered best practice and allows for separate officers to provide original Individual Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation documents in evidence where legally required.

A new Individual Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation relating to S11 have been created for this appointment and Council is requested to consider and adopt this document. The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation is attached for Council's information.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

ATTACHMENTS

1. Instrument of Appointment & Authorisation S 11 EHO Anthony Komives Jan 2022 [**13.1.3.1** - 3 pages]

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Enter Financial/Risk Implications

CONCLUSION

To legally allow staff to enforce provisions of legislation, Council must review its delegations and instruments of appointment and authorisation as and when required to maintain currency. A new Instrument of Authorisation has been prepared for the new officer and is provided for Council authorisation.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Government Act 2020 and other legislation referred to in the attached Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation, adopt the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation for Anthony Komives, the new Environmental Health Officer, allowing officers to undertake the duties of an Environmental Health Officer.

13.1.4. FRONTLINE SERVICES - OFFICE & RESOURCE CENTRE CLOSURES

Helen Swadling – Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance

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

File No: 16/08/02

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's endorsement for the Frontline Service Team to attend team meetings four times per year in 2022. To do this, we would require the closure of the Beaufort Office and Resource Centre as well as the Avoca Information Centre. The office and centres would then re-open at 1.00 pm.

The reason for the office closure is to ensure that as many frontline staff as possible can have the opportunity to contribute and attend these meetings whilst active projects are underway that impact and involve frontline staff.

BACKGROUND

It is Council's common practice to hold staff meetings within teams to build rapport and create unified and cohesive teams where everyone can receive necessary information and to have input into relevant matters.

Frontline Services faces unique difficulties in holding team meetings due to the range of working locations and the need to maintain the ability for our community and visitors to attend open facilities. To allow all Frontline Services staff to attend a meeting together in normal working hours requires our public counters to close.

To facilitate these team meetings, the Council currently allows the public counters to be closed for four hours twice per year. When the front counters are closed, the switchboard service remains open and is staffed by staff from other areas.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The introduction of two new projects impacting the Frontline Services Team requires active participation of team volunteers, including -

- Implementing the recommendations from the Frontline Services Review, and
- A Customer-First project to build customer service focus and capability throughout the organisation.

These projects will be led by the Director Corporate & Community Services along with working groups primarily comprising staff from the Frontline Services Team. It is planned for these working groups to be finalised in late January and as these projects directly impact the full team, regular reporting back and allowing input from the full team will be needed.

To facilitate the increased input needed by the Team, it is proposed that full team meetings increase from twice per year to four times per year in 2022. Council's approval to close the front counters for these meetings for four hours each time is now requested. Switchboard operations will be maintained during these closures.

While face to face meetings are preferred to develop connections across the team, the use of online meetings will also be explored with the potential for two of the four meetings being virtual and thereby saving in travel time allowing for reduced closure time if the closure of the counters is a concern to Council.

A schedule of closure dates will be provided to Council and our community once confirmed.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

Enabling Principles

a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk implications exist with the closure of front counters leading to community dissatisfaction. It is proposed to minimise this dissatisfaction by full transparency on the reasons for the proposed closures and details of the proposed dates well in advance of closure.

CONCLUSION

These meetings will be held quarterly to ensure that all frontline service staff are empowered to participate in the decision-making impacting their area of working.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approves the closure of the reception area of the Beaufort Council offices, the Beaufort Resource Centre, and the Avoca Information Centre four times during 2022, for a period of four hours each time, with the areas re-opening at 1.00 pm each time, and
2. That Council Officers provide a firm schedule of Frontline Services Team meetings for 2022 within the next month.

13.1.5. LIBRARY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

File No: 42/02/02

PURPOSE

This report is to update the Council and its community on the forthcoming expansion of the Pyrenees Shire Council's mobile library outreach program.

BACKGROUND

In January 2020, Council received funding from the State Government Living Libraries Infrastructure Program to purchase a mobile library van for the Pyrenees Shire.

The funding was to buy and fit-out a purpose-built mobile library van that could be used to improve library outreach services to the shire's more remote areas without easy access to library facilities.

The project was originally meant to be completed by July 2021, but COVID-19 interruptions to construction, delivery, and fit-out caused significant delays with the library van being finalised in late 2021.

A formal opening for the van was held on 14th December 2021, attended by Danielle Green, MLA, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria, representatives from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, and our Mayor Cr Eason.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The purchase of the mobile library van provides a much-welcomed opportunity to expand the service of Council's existing mobile library outreach service.

The outreach program has been a much-loved service in the past, reaching primary school students and other residents in the townships of Landsborough, Snake Valley, and Lexton on a fortnightly or weekly basis. Hostel and Aged Care Housebound services, presently provided by periodic supply of materials delivered by bags, will be supplemented and enhanced by fortnightly visits of the library outreach vehicle, which is equipped with a tail hoist to facilitate access to an expanded range of materials by less ambulant and wheelchair bound residents.

Public libraries play an essential role in supporting education and literacy, facilitating access to other information and services, and helping to build communities. The mobile library service brings this role to our more remote communities, supporting primary schools with books not available through school libraries (particularly fiction) and helping residents maintain connectivity with their communities.

As promised to our communities, plans are underway to expand the service to other Pyrenees townships, including Trawalla, Moonambel, Redbank, and Waubra. A service to Amphitheatre is also under consideration but has not yet been confirmed due to uncertainties of school size and public demand.

The schedule is yet to be confirmed but a draft program under consideration is detailed below:

- Monday fortnightly – Trawalla.
- Tuesday fortnightly – Landsborough Resource Centre, then Moonabel Primary School, then Avoca Aged Hostel and Residential Home, finishing for the day at Redbank Community Hall.
- Tuesday – alternate fortnights – Lexton RTC, then Waubra Primary School.
- Wednesday – weekly – Snake Valley Primary School.
- Thursday – alternate fortnights – Beaufort Aged Hostel and Residential Home.

Some of the new outreach sessions are being aligned with local activities like:

- Trawalla outreach will align with activities conducted with fortnightly Pyrenees Cluster Days in which regional primary schools and librarian are involved.
- Redbank program will align with proposed gathering of community groups and a food van.

The new program is aimed to commence at the start of the 2022 school year. Marketing is planned via our normal communications forums, plus the designing and printing of marketing materials such as bookmarks. Some townships will have A-frame boards in prominent areas directing residents to the library service – e.g. Snake Valley and Lexton.

The program above is subject to change as it progresses, and prospective demand information is updated and confirmed. The library van will also provide the opportunity for residents to access Council publications and, in the longer term, to conduct Council business transactions as technology is improved.

At present, it is proposed that the outreach expansion will be achieved within existing budget allocations.

COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

Priority 2 - Place

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

Enabling Principles

- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Any risk implications are discussed in the body of this report.

CONCLUSION

With the purchase of the state government funded mobile library van, the existing library outreach program will be expanded to include the townships of Trawalla, Moonambel, Redbank, and Waubra, additional to the existing services in Snake Valley, Landsborough, Lexton, and to housebound residents in Beaufort and Avoca. It is anticipated that the expanded service will commence at the start of the 2022 school year and within existing budget allocations.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the information relating to the proposed expanded mobile library outreach service due to commence from the start of the 2022 school year, and actively promotes the service across the communities within the shire.

14. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

Cr Damian Ferrari

Cr Tanya Kehoe

Cr Ron Eason

Cr David Clark

Cr Robert Vance

15. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

RECOMMENDATION

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

15.1 - Lease Arrangements – Avoca Community Arts and Gardens.

RE-OPENING OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, having considered the confidential items, re-opens the meeting to members of the public.

16. CLOSE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at

Minutes of the meeting confirmed

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2022

Mayor, Ron Eason