



**Pyrenees**  
Shire Council

# Minutes

## Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00pm Tuesday 15 March 2022  
Council Chambers  
Beaufort Council Offices,  
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. WELCOME .....	3
2. STREAMING PREAMBLE .....	3
3. OPENING PRAYER .....	3
4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY .....	3
5. APOLOGIES.....	3
6. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS .....	3
7. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.....	3
8. BUSINESS ARISING .....	4
9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	4
10. ITEMS FOR NOTING .....	12
10.1. Corporate and Community Services.....	12
10.1.1. Customer Action Requests February 2022 Update .....	12
10.1.2. Risk Management .....	17
10.1.3. Service Review Plan 2021-2025 Progress Update .....	21
10.1.4. Mid-financial year Performance Statement - December 2021 .....	25
11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS .....	27
11.1. Councillor Activity Reports - February 2022.....	27
12. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS.....	29
12.1. Assembly of Councillors - February 2022 .....	29
13. ITEMS FOR DECISION .....	31
13.1. Economic Development and Tourism .....	31
13.1.1. Sponsorship Application - Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers Association.....	31
13.1.2. Economic Development Update.....	35
13.2. Asset and Development Services.....	42
13.2.1. Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates (VEEC) .....	42
13.2.2. Waste Management Plan Review.....	44
13.2.3. Road and Bridge Condition Assessments 2022 .....	46
13.3. Corporate and Community Services .....	49
13.3.1. Naming of Avoca Hubs.....	49
13.3.2. Library Outreach Program .....	52
13.4. Chief Executive Office .....	55
13.4.1. Old Beaufort Primary School .....	55
13.4.2. Advocacy - 2022 Federal Election Campaign.....	58
13.4.3. 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review .....	63
14. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS .....	66
15. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS .....	68
16. CLOSE OF MEETING .....	69

## **1. WELCOME**

Mayor Cr Ron Eason welcomed all to the meeting.

## **PRESENT**

**Mayor:** Cr Ron Eason

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

**Chief Executive Officer:** Jim Nolan

**Director Asset and Development Services:** Douglas Gowans

**A/Director of Corporate and Community Services:** Martin Walmsley (virtual)

**EA to CEO and Councillors:** Jane Bowker (minutes)

**Senior Communications Officer:** Kate Deppeler (livestreaming - virtual)

**Communications Officer:** Rebecca Stewart (livestreaming - virtual)

## **2. STREAMING PREAMBLE**

Mayor Cr Ron Eason read the livestream preamble.

## **3. OPENING PRAYER**

The Mayor read the Opening Prayer.

## **4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

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

## **5. APOLOGIES**

Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

## **6. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

## **7. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr David Clark**

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 15 February;
- Closed Meeting of Council held 15 February;
- Special Meeting of Council held on 1 March; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held on 1 March,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

**CARRIED**

## 8. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising (items taken on notice) from the Ordinary Meeting held 15 February 2022 or Special Meeting held 1 March 2022.

## 9. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Ian Murdoch of Carngham

#### *Question one:*

In early October 2021 I presented a petition which was delivered to Council in the October 19th general meeting. Council directed the CEO Jim Nolan for a response which he duly provided to Council in the November 16th general meeting. I was heartened to see, via youtube streaming, Council's concerned response, including the motioned Cr Kehoe/Clark's response, as per minutes item 13.4.3. I was further heartened by personal exchanges with Councillors Kehoe & Clark, and CEO Jim Nolan and others at the December 7 'Cuppa' at Snake Valley Community Hall.

Despite Council's declared intent to seek "the views of the author of the petition" regarding an intended review of council's community engagement practices, I am left wondering when I can be expected to be contacted regarding this proposed action?

#### *Response:*

CEO Jim Nolan thanked Ian Murdoch for the question and provided the following response:

'Council has committed to seek the views of the author of the petition that came before Council and Council would undertake to get in touch within the next two weeks.'

#### *Question two:*

Now, 4 months after Council's resolution, I begin to doubt the currency of Council's concern. What does Council consider a reasonable period of time for a ratepayer to wait for Council to advise, acknowledge, pledge, or enact a considered and affirmed action? And how does Council feel that such a delay promises ratepayers a diligent and probing review?

#### *Response:*

CEO Jim Nolan thanked Ian Murdoch for the second question and provided the following response:

'In response, the first thing to understand is that any resolution of Council is appropriately recorded, tracked and monitored until it's properly enacted and so that is important to acknowledge. It is also important in respect of timeliness and timelines rely on a number of factors. The first factor is the nature of the matter that is being responded to and some of the considerations there relate to whether or not a timeframe is provided by Council, whether the matter is a community safety matter, a legal compliance matter or a matter that significantly impacts Council services. Obviously, the priorities that are given in terms of timeliness of these responses do have regard to those issues. The second factor does have regard to the resources and capacity of the organisation to respond to those things, and in respect of that matter, there are a couple of matters to consider, and I refer, Mr Mayor, to a report on the agenda today which relates to service reviews. Service reviews are considered very important by this Council and



Council has a range of services to review. Our services review program looks in a comprehensive way across all our service areas over a 10 year period. It would be nice to undertake those reviews in a more timely way, it does have regard to the fact that to undertake these reviews we are limited by the resources that we have. This component of community engagement and seeking the views of the community around how Council engages with the public is part of the Corporate Services Governance, Risk and Compliance review which is listed in the report referred as item 10.1.3 in the agenda, and that's to be undertaken in the 2022/23 period. That process has already commenced and in February of this year a report was put before Council around the Community Engagement Policy and Strategy, and Council resolved to approve the process to undertake that engagement to enable members of the community to have input on how we engage. The first part of that has commenced with the communications piece of work, which is part of the engagement task, with the use of the engagement hub on Council's website seeking the views of the community. The matter in respect of what Mr Murdoch is seeking in terms of reference to what does Council feel promises ratepayers a diligent and probing review, Council is taking this matter very seriously and is not something that can be undertaken in a short period of time. It does involve engaging with a broad ranging part of the community and Council is committed to do that and we report openly to the community about that through the council reports which was evident in the report in February. So in summary the timeliness does have to do with the nature of what is being sought on the one hand and the capacity of the organisation to deal with it in the other hand but timeliness is an important factor and is one we are very mindful of. Under the Local Government Act, I as the CEO, have the responsibility to ensure the actions of Council are enacted in a timely way. That's the undertaken that I give and that I'm responsible for and this is a matter we do take seriously and will continue to do so not only in respect of the Engagement Policy and Engagement Strategy but in respect of any other council relations.'

Trevor Davey of Beaufort

*Question one:*

Does the Council have a dress code for employees and if so, is there a standard on cleanliness and appearance on council workers?

*Response:*

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

'I'm pleased to say that Council does have a Uniform Policy and that Uniform Policy does set out a dress code for staff and the expectations of staff in respect of the wearing of uniform and also dress standards that relate to it. The uniform is appropriate to the nature of the work that's been done so in respect of indoor staff, for example, uniform is non-compulsory. In respect of our outdoor staff, the uniform forms part of their personal protective equipment and it is compulsory. Then there are other work areas such as our community care support staff and our community safety & amenity officers who have a combination of indoor and outdoor activities. The uniform and dress code is designed in a way that's appropriate for the nature of the work that's been undertaken. Council does provide an allowance for staff to be able to purchase uniform and that varies depending on the nature of the work whether it's full time or part time work and annually we have a fitting day when staff are able to replenish their uniforms that have either worn or need to be replaced. So, it is a matter that that we do take seriously and do take pride in how we present ourselves to community. Certainly, if Mr Davey has an issue with

a specific employee or an issue that he'd like to follow up further Mr Gowans or myself being happy to talk about that specific issue and if it is a concern, we will certainly make sure it's addressed.'

### Neville Grills of Landsborough

#### *Question one:*

Thanks for the answer from Mr Douglas Gowans at the February meeting regarding Land Management Plans. I'm pleased to hear that the Council sees that a Land Management Plan forms an important part of a planning application and adherence by the applicant is checked by the council. Can the Council please provide statistics on planning applications that included Land Management Plans and the number that have checked for adherence and their outcomes. My experience in this area is that 100% of LMP's have not even started.

#### *Response:*

Douglas Gowans, Director Assets and Development Services thanked Neville Grills for the question and provided the following response:

'Thank you, Mr Grills, for your follow up question from our February meeting. As stated in the February meeting, Council sees land management plans as a very important part of certain applications. Often those applications relate to land activities where the activity being sought or the permit being sought may not be entirely congruent with the underlying land use, so they're not used in every planning application but in the planning applications. Where they are used, Council officers take what's in the Land Management plan very seriously because it helps form the position of Council officers and potentially Council on what is intended for the use of the land in a particular location. I'm not sure I can readily give Mr Grills a plan by plan statistic on how many land management plans are used per application. That would use a fair bit of officer time and I'm not sure that's the greatest use of officer time however I can state that Council does check on adherence and generally would be doing that checking if there was a concern that a land management plan wasn't being adhered to and was impacting the amenity of someone's neighbouring experience. Council would absolutely undertake that check because it is, as stated in our previous meeting, really important what's in that land management plan is being adhered to by the applicant. I understand that Mr Grills has an experience of land management plans not being started but what I can say is that Council officers have in the past checked land management plans and there is compliance to them so I would not agree with the statement that Mr Grills has put forward.'

### SUBMISSIONS

The Old Beaufort Primary School 60 Committee presented a submission in relation to the Old Beaufort Primary School. The submission is attached to these minutes.

## COUNCIL SUBMISSION – OLD BEAUFORT PRIMARY SCHOOL 60 COMMITTEE

### THE PETITION PROCESS

We would like to acknowledge the Beaufort Service Group's assistance with financing this community work, which was undertaken by our committee, with support from other community members.

The business case was available to the public alongside the petition. Please note that we are now referring to the Social Enterprise Plan as our Business Case. We have provided **councillors with a copy of the Business Case updated in March 2022.**

The petition was distributed throughout the shire and beyond. There were two formats, a paper petition that was placed in various shops throughout Beaufort, and in Lexton, and the electronic petition, which was distributed via social media, mainly via our Facebook page: ***Save Beaufort PS60 for a Community Hub***. People set up a stall in various locations down the street, and at the Beaufort Market and at the truck and car show. There was also a mail drop to 600 Beaufort residents and to 500 Avoca residents. All in all, there were multiple ways to participate, and even for people with limited mobility.

Even though the petition was only open for 3 weeks we feel that it allowed quite comprehensive consultation and discussion, although we acknowledge that we were not able to reach everyone in the shire.

### THE FINAL TALLY

There was an overwhelmingly positive response for the plan to have the site retained as a community asset, and for the heritage buildings to be repurposed as a community hub, with Beaufort Community House and Learning Centre as the primary tenant, moving their operations into the Main School Building. Likewise, the social media engagement was overwhelmingly positive, with the main complaint being that those people living outside Victoria were not able to sign the petition.

**The total number of petition signatures was 2, 283:**

**1775 paper; 508 electronic**

### TABLED IN PARLIAMENT 8/3/2022

Both petitions were presented to the Legislative Assembly by Louise Staley, MP for Ripon last Tuesday (8<sup>th</sup> March 2022).

On Thursday (10<sup>th</sup> March 2022) Danielle Green, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria, asked for an adjournment to talk about the former school site as presenting a great opportunity for a Community Hub for Beaufort, and about Marth Haylett, ALP candidate advocating for this outcome. Danielle talked about organising a site visit with the committee, Martha Haylett and Anthony Carbines the Minister responsible for Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

Our committee, along with Councillor Ferrari, met Martha and showed her around the site on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March. We would also like to invite Councillor Ferrari to the site visit with Minister Carbines.

#### POLITICAL ADVOCACY

We recognise that to secure funding the site must firstly be secured for the community. Now that the petition has been tabled our next step is to write to the relevant ministers, including the Tim Pallas MP, Treasurer of Victoria, Jaala Pulford, State Minister for Western Victoria, Mary-Anne Thomas, Minister for Regional Development and Anthony Carbines, Minister for Disability, Aging and Carers. We are hoping that council will also write to these ministers requesting their support for the project.

#### OTHER OUTCOMES FROM THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

##### FORMATION OF WORKING PARTIES

##### YOUTH

What has emerged from community discussions is a consensus around the need for a Youth Space in Beaufort. Several committees in our community are already discussing this very topic. While we are allocating space (within a building and an external area to be developed into half courts for basketball, netball, volleyball etc) the next step is to form a working party for youth, to help grow the youth vision.

##### Sharon Roxburgh

I would like to add that a signature on the paper petition represents a valued conversation that showed enthusiastic support for the project. The overall impression from having these many conversations was an overwhelming sense of support for the project.

One of the recurring themes coming out of this face-to-face community engagement was the need for a youth space, which really reinforces our business case for including a youth space and youth programs.

This need was highlighted to me last week at a Girl Guides meeting when I was discussing the Community Hub with a 16-year-old girl. When I mentioned a youth space on the school, I immediately saw a real engagement and thinking that she was going to mention an area for games, sports, and activities, I was shocked to hear her say that we need Head Space there.

This also highlights the fact that youth have definite ideas about what they need, and this may be very different from our idea of what is needed.

To think that this is the first thing to come into her mind, the need for mental health services, is very concerning and really needs to be addressed.



#### A MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

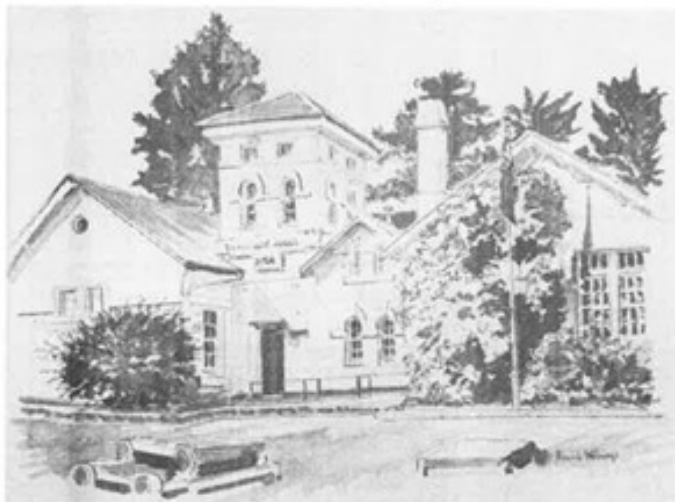
Another outcome of the community consultation process was that many people offered their expertise in taking the project forward. We acknowledge council's recommendation, back in March 2020 to establish an entity to manage the development of the site into the future. Now that the petition is finalised, we will establish a working party and start the process of researching the most appropriate community legal entity for the Community Hub. We want to examine the detail of what other Community Hubs have done, for example at Wedderburn and Rainbow, Clunes, and Creswick, and learn from them. The working party will consist of a couple of members of Old Beaufort Primary School committee, who will co-opt others with the necessary skills. We will also invite Councillor Ferrari to be in this working party, so that we are working closely with council to determine the most appropriate structure.

Also, it is important to note that we see the setting up a maintenance fund will be an essential part of a community management body. Not only will this guarantee finance for future works, but it will substantially alleviate any risk to council of having to maintain the Community Hub assets.

We will continue to work closely with council, with the CEO and with Councillor Ferrari, with regular updates on our progress.

## Business Case – March 2022

### Beaufort Community Hub



#### THE CASE FOR A NEW COMMUNITY HUB IN THE SCHOOL'S HERITAGE BUILDINGS

A new fully sustainable, not-for-profit Community Hub managed by an appropriate community legal entity will allow Beaufort to achieve improved social, educational, health and wellbeing outcomes for the evolving and growing needs of the community.

A new Community Hub will capitalise on the social, aesthetic, and historical heritage of the former primary school site, and protect and enhance Beaufort's unique identity for future generations.

A New Community Hub within a revitalised precinct within open recreational land in the heart of town will add to Beaufort's vitality once the Beaufort Bypass has been built.

#### A heritage overlay (2021) has been placed on:

*Main School building (1869)*

*Mt. Rowan building (1876 / 1950)*

*Higher Elementary School building (1925)*

*The 1936 Memorial Gateway*

#### BENEFITS OF A NEW FIT-FOR-PURPOSE HUB IN THIS LOCATION

It will allow room and opportunities for several tenants, with the prime tenant being Beaufort Community House & Learning Centre.

#### Beaufort CH&LC

Current premises are not fit-for-purpose, hindering its ability to provide the same wide-ranging supports as other Neighbourhood Houses. It is essential that Beaufort CH&LC is in a facility that enables it to deliver services that meet the needs of the community.

In this new location, it will be able to deliver new and expanded community programs, and to develop new partnerships. There will be much needed additional space including a commercial kitchen, larger base of volunteers, and expanded opportunities for partnership programs, especially with health services. There will be further opportunities for pre-accredited and accredited training in a fit for purpose building.

#### There will also be room for other viable and interested community groups:

##### Youth Group

A dedicated Youth Space is needed in Beaufort to provide vocational training courses, mental health services, and social and cultural opportunities integrated within a community setting.

##### Beaufort Municipal Band

A home is needed for Beaufort Municipal Band (formed early 1870s) allowing permanent space for rehearsal, tuition, storage and displaying heritage items.

##### Beaufort Tourist Radio

An appropriate home is needed for B48's Tourist Radio, with better community connectivity. In this new location there is opportunity for it to develop into a Community Radio Station.

##### Other Opportunities

There will be opportunities for smaller community groups (e.g., painting group and photography group) to collaborate and interact.

There will be room for community workspaces, and for the development of social enterprises responsive to community need.

#### WHAT THE COMMUNITY IS ASKING OF STATE GOVERNMENT

The Pyrenees community is asking the State Government of Victoria to support the

development of a new Community Hub at the former Beaufort Primary School, 7-25 Hill Street Beaufort.

1. That the school buildings be gifted / acquired for a Community Hub.
2. For a package of funding from the State Government to repurpose the school buildings and surrounds enabling the development of a fully sustainable, fit for purpose, not-for-profit Community Hub. \$3.5 million dollars is required to make this site fit for purpose.

#### THE ROLE OF PYRENEES SHIRE

Pyrenees Shire Council's expertise and guidance will be crucial in determining a successful outcome with the State Government. The shire's expertise will also be invaluable, alongside a community working party, in terms of the project management of the site.

#### Community Management

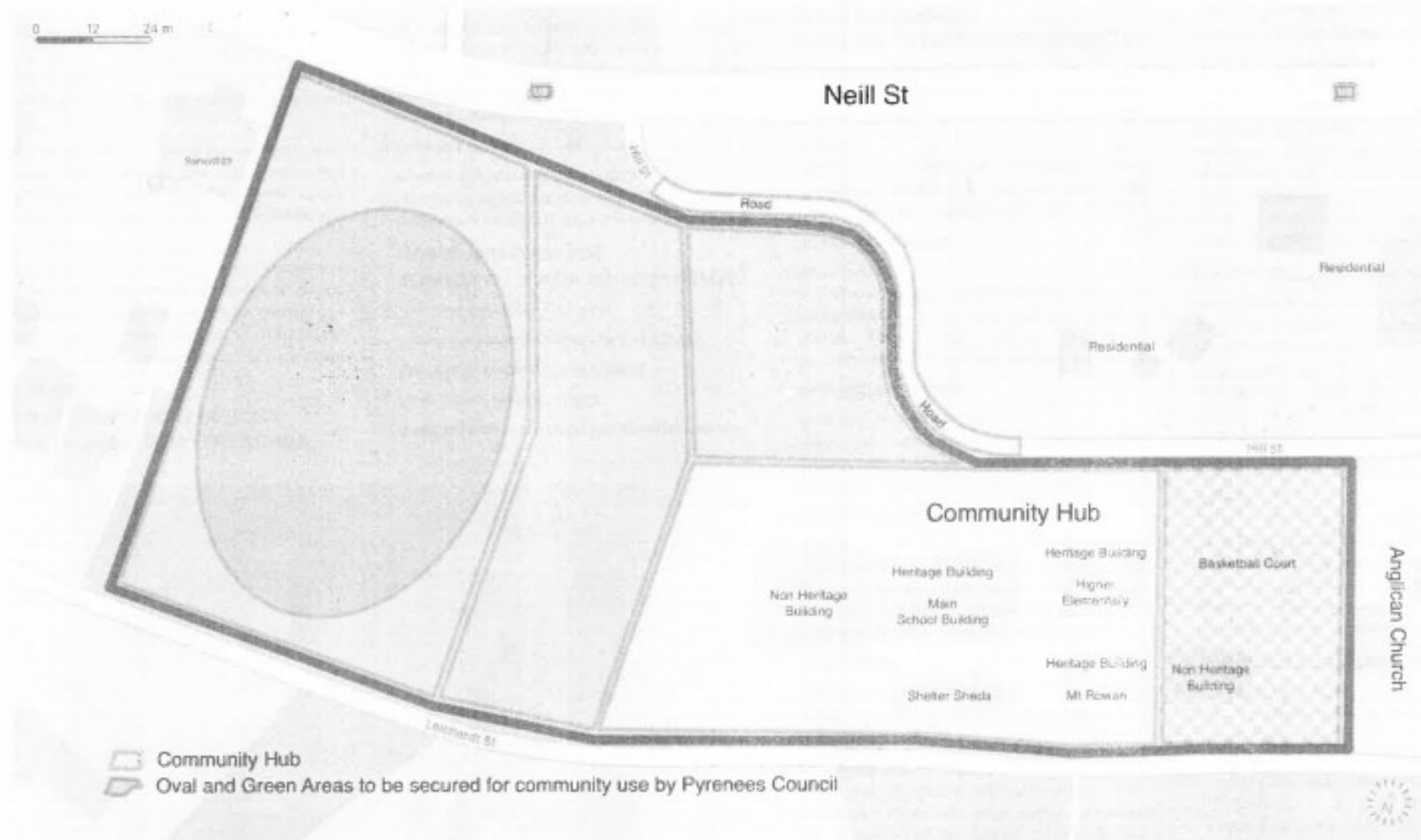
Once the site is secured and repurposed, the Community Hub will be managed by an appropriate community legal entity (determined through a consultative process between the shire and a community working party). A building maintenance fund will be established to minimise the financial risk.

#### COMMUNITY SUPPORT – PETITION

There is broad community support for this vision. A petition which gathered a total of 2,283 signatures (1775 paper, 508 e-signatures) over a three-week period was presented to the Legislative Assembly on 8/3/2022, by Louise Staley, MP for Ripon. There are letters of support from many community groups, and work pledges to the value of around \$200 000.

*This is a massive opportunity for Beaufort to secure a new fit-for-purpose Community Hub, in a brilliant location, which will serve unmet needs in the community.*

## Former Beaufort Primary School 60 New Community Precinct



**Committee**

George Kirsanovs (Chair), Barbara Blamey, Murray Walker, Bill Blackburn, Zbig Szczepanski,

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## 10. ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 10.1. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### 10.1.1. CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS FEBRUARY 2022 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 the Council on requests made through the Customer Action Request System (CARS) for the month of February 2022.

#### **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, to ensure appropriate and timely responses to our community.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

397 CARs were logged in February 2022, 88 more than the previous month. Of these requests 222 related to telephone messages.

390 CARs were closed in the month, leaving a total of 267 outstanding, of which 55 related to telephone messages.

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

	Avoca Ward	Beaufort Ward	DeCameroon Ward	Ercildoune Ward	Mt Emu Ward
<b>Number of requests received in February 2022 (previous month).</b>	36 (26)	51 (42)	23 (19)	36 (33)	29 (28)
<b>Requests received in February and closed in the same month (% of total received).</b>	21 (58%)	38 (75%)	16 (70%)	18 (50%)	19 (66%)
<b>Requests received in February outstanding.</b>	15	13	7	18	10
<b>Outstanding requests from 2020.</b>	0	2	0	0	0

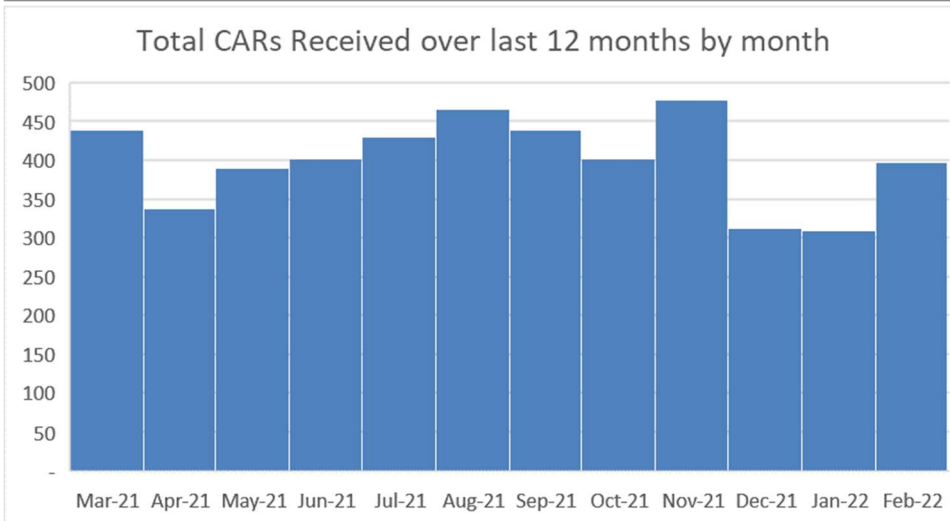
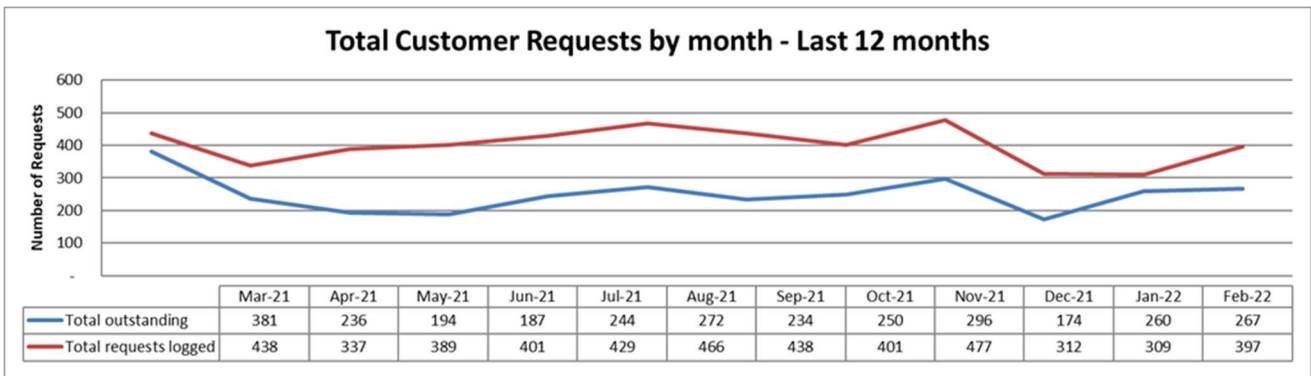


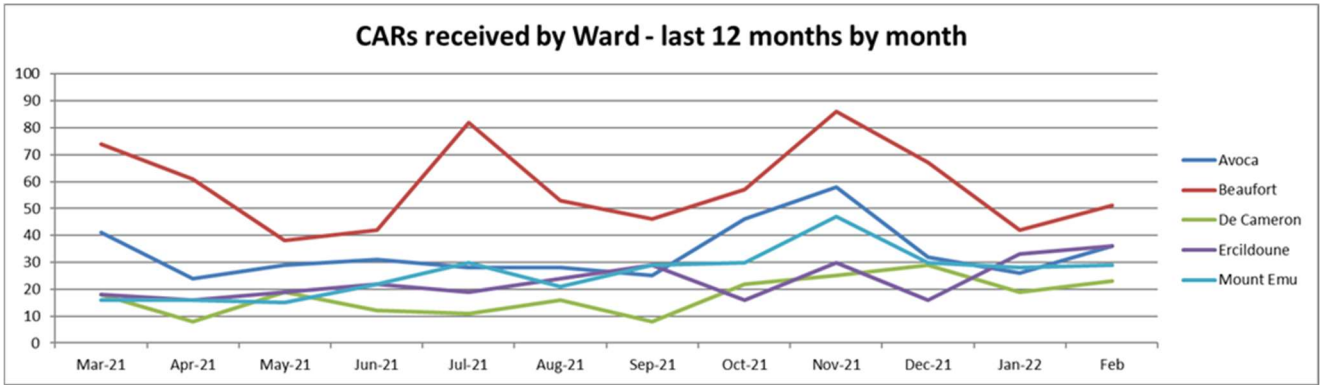
<b>Outstanding requests from 2019.</b>	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total outstanding requests (previous month).</b>	53 (45)	59 (70)	21 (18)	44 (40)	33 (31)

Analysis:

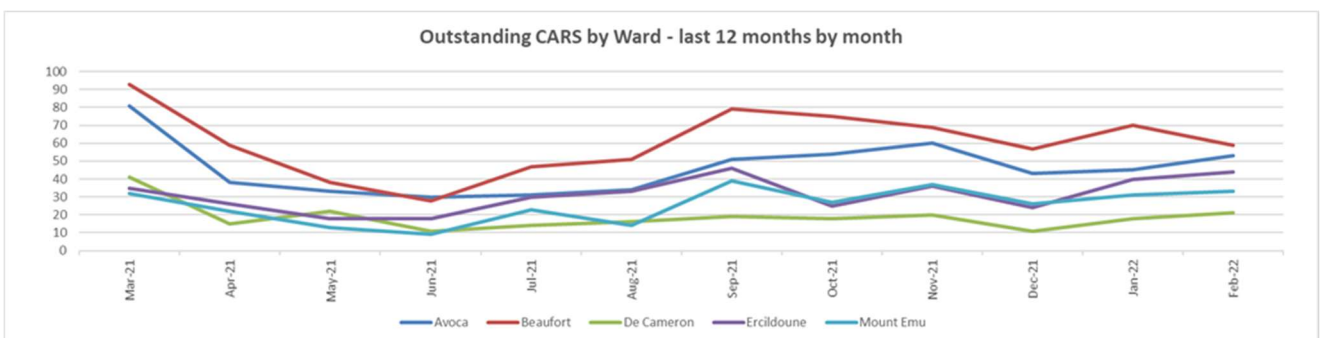
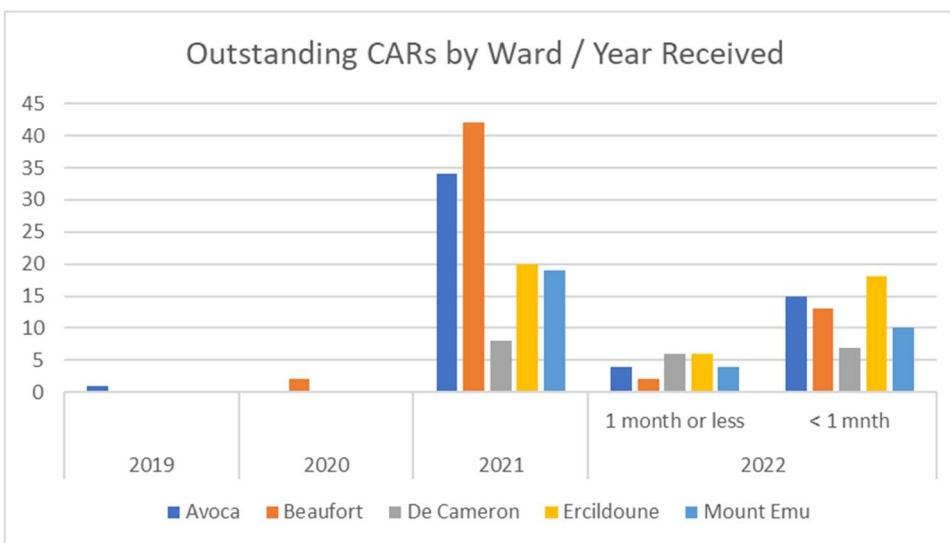
- At 267, outstanding CARs numbers remained below the target to maintain the total number of outstanding CARs below 300.
- 1 request remains outstanding from 2019 and 2 from 2020, all of which relate to long-term drainage issues.
- The largest increase in outstanding requests was seen in road maintenance (increased by 11).
- Checks of requests made during February identified the following that will be registered and monitored as a service complaint -
  - Ercildoune Ward – complaint of a lack of action regarding reinstatement of a telecommunications cable damaged by Council during slashing operations.

The following graphs display requests received by Ward/month and totals received for the last 12 months.





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



The following table provides greater detail of the areas where outstanding requests remain, showing the functional areas and numbers of requests still outstanding, as of 28 February 2022.

Open Requests Type			
	Jan-22	Feb-22	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	47	58	11
Streetlights	2	2	0
Drainage	29	29	0
Footpaths / Kerb&Channel	13	12	-1
Park & Reserves	8	9	1
Roadside Veg	61	62	1
Environmental Health	2	4	2
Planning	3	5	2
Bld maint	13	12	-1
Local Laws	6	3	-3
Cats	0	4	4
Dogs	3	2	-1
Livestock Act	4	0	-4
Parking	0	1	1
Fire Hazard	2	2	0
Bld Compliance	2	1	-1
Waste Management	0	0	0
Natural Disasters	0	0	0
Pools	1	0	-1
Council cleaning	1	1	0
EPA - Litter	1	0	-1
Design & Assets	2	2	0
GIS	0	0	0
Community Wellbeing	1	1	0
Rural Addressing	0	0	0
Road Naming	3	2	-1
Telephone messages	56	55	-1
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>7</b>

## COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

### Priority 1 – People

1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.

### Priority 2 - Place

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

### Priority 3 - Environment

3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.

### Priority 4 - Economy

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

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

### Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

## 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. 2022 sees 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 February 2022.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council notes this report.



### 10.1.2. RISK MANAGEMENT

**Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services**

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

**File No:** 16/24/06

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information relating to risk trends for 2022, provide an annual report on OHS activity, and information relating to the scheduled annual review of the Enterprise Risk Register

#### **BACKGROUND**

Effective risk identification and management is an integral part of business management and good governance. Risk management comprises of several elements, including business continuity, enterprise or business risk management, and occupational health and safety (OHS).

Council has a dedicated Risk Management Coordinator whose focus includes health, safety and wellbeing, and maximising safety in the workplace. Council has a Health, Safety & Wellbeing Strategy, plus a Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy which heads an OHS Management System (OHSMS) comprising support procedures, processes and guidelines.

Council maintains an Enterprise Risk Register, reconfigured in 2021 to focus on the whole of organisation risks. To maintain currency of this register, Council Officers regularly scan the global risk environment to identify new and emerging risks with the potential to impact on Council operations and advise Council on changes required to the register.

Under the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, risk management reports must be provided to Council at least every six months. This report forms part of that compliance obligation. The last report to Council on risk management was provided in July 2021.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

##### **Risk trends**

As part of its enterprise risk management activities, Council maintains a risk register detailing key risks with the potential to adversely impact the operations and sustainability of the organisation. Council officers support Council in this endeavour by the regular scanning of global and Australian risk reports to identify changes in risk trends that could change the focus of Council's risk identification and mitigation activities.

As 2022 begins, economic and societal consequences from COVID-19 continue to pose a threat locally and globally. The societal divide and social exclusion caused by mandatory vaccination requirements to continue working and participating socially, have resulted in foreseeable frustration and aggression (albeit by a small percentage of the population) toward the people on whom the burden has fallen to police and enforce those requirements on behalf of state and federal governments. This adds to the stresses already borne by our workforce resulting from entering the third year of pandemic-induced uncertainty – evidenced through social cohesion erosion, livelihood crises, and mental health deterioration over the past two years.

The *World Economic Forum risk report 2022* highlights societal and environmental risks as the most concerning for the next five years. However, over a 10-year horizon, the health of the planet

dominates concerns: environmental risks are perceived to be the five most critical long-term threats and most potentially damaging to people and the world. Climate action failure, extreme weather, and biodiversity loss rank in the report as the top three most severe risks. Debt crises and geo-economic confrontations are also considered severe risks over the next ten years. Technology risks – such as digital inequality and cybersecurity failure – are also identified as critical short to medium-term threats.

A report "2022 Risk in Focus: Hot topics for internal audits"<sup>1</sup> forecasts that 'change and uncertainty will define 2022 and the years that follow', stressing that:

- 'COVID-19 will continue to have deep and lasting consequences, a new reality that organisations must accept.'
- 'Large sections of the workforce are reflecting on their futures ... many countries are witnessing a resignation crisis, staff shortages and high vacancy rates.'
- 'Workforce and labour market disruptions have major implications for culture with CEOs having to develop a clear vision for the future of their companies and re-embed core values amid the transition to hybrid operation models ... and shifting job expectations.'
- 'Although economic recovery is promising, businesses are contending with critical supply chain issues and inflation risks.'

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) themes have now established themselves as principal risk priorities and businesses must accept accountability, not only for their environmental and social impacts, but their approaches to diversity and inclusion.

So, what do all the global and Australian reports on risk forecasts indicate for the Pyrenees Shire Council, its operations, its people, and its communities? Some updates on key enterprise risks are provided below:

**Cyber / Data Security:** Cyber-attacks continue to grow and remain the number one risk globally. We have already experienced one council significantly impacted by a ransomware attack disrupting services and it is expected that attacks will increase on critical infrastructure, such as food and energy supply lines. This places immense pressure on Council's need to continuously monitor and improve data protection services, diverting valuable resources away from day-to-day operations.

**Climate change and environmental sustainability:** Climatic trends<sup>2</sup> are already impacting Australia's ecosystems and are amplified by existing environmental stresses. Climate-related risk includes the impacts on our townships, roads, supply-chains, and services – emerging from the interaction of disasters like bushfires, floods, droughts, heatwaves, and storms – on top of COVID-19 ongoing stresses. This threat is increased for vulnerable members of our communities, such as those with inadequate health care, poor quality housing and unstable employment and is considered by some to now be a 'forever risk'.

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<sup>1</sup> [FINAL-Risk-in-Focus-2022-V11.pdf \(eciia.eu\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [New IPCC report shows Australia is at real risk from climate change – Griffith News](#)

**Financial and liquidity risks:** After weathering a global recession, growth is returning. This macro recovery may hide other risks including withdrawal of stimulus funding (that has contributed strongly to additional staff resources throughout the COVID period). Inflationary pressures will impact Council, with its greatest impact from rising supply and raw materials costs, and wage negotiations in 2022/23, opposed to low foreseeable increases income due to rate capping. The latter will be pertinent in 2022/23 financial year as re-negotiation of Council's Enterprise Agreement is undertaken.

**Health and Safety amid the continued COVID-19 threat:** Uncertainty remains on how the pandemic will play out and the challenge for Council will be to ensure that we safeguard the physical and mental wellbeing of staff, customers and suppliers, at the same time as maximising productivity and minimising business interruptions.

**Workforce fatigue and cultural erosion:** Reportedly, productivity levels either held steady or increased during the homeworking environment of the last two years. However, a lack of social interaction between colleagues may be eroding team cohesion and culture, with staff losing their sense of belonging or becoming fatigued and disengaged with their work, suggesting an extended period of staff turnover could be ahead. This may be compounded by reduced oversight weakening of the soft controls environment and increasing the likelihood of undesirable behaviour. As Council weighs up what working models to embed post-pandemic, the risks to culture, morale and staff cohesion should not be underestimated.

### **OHS Management**

Council's second annual OHS management system report for 2021 is provided as an attachment. The report provides a summary of the key OHS activities undertaken over the year, including consultation, OHS Committee attendance, policy and procedure amendment, incidents and injuries management, and other OHS improvement initiatives.

### **VBI Data**

The Vested Benefit Index (VBI) update for the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Defined Benefit Plan has increased from 109.9% as at September 2021 to 111.2% as at 31 December 2021. This estimate is included in the table below, along with some recent estimates for comparison.

As at	30 Jun 2019 (actual)	30 June 2020 (actual)	30 June 2021 (actual)	30 Sept 2021 (est.)	31 Dec 2021 (est.)
LASF DB	107.1%	104.6%	109.7%	109.9%	111.2%

Not shown on this estimate is the possibility that things may have recently change following global market impact due to the Russia / Ukraine conflict. Any changes notified in this position will be reported to Council.

### **Enterprise Risk Register Update**

The Enterprise Risk Register is being updated with key operational risks in preparation for a Councillors workshop scheduled for May 2022, following which the register will be submitted for Council formal adoption.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. OHSMS Summary Performance Report 2021 [10.1.2.1 - 11 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

All risk implications are included within the body of the report.

## **CONCLUSION**

The risk report has been provided to Council as part of its regular risk management reporting regime. This report focuses on risk trends for 2022, an OHS 2021 update, and updates to Council's Enterprise Risk Register. Council's annual review of the Enterprise Risk Register will be conducted in March 2022.

## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council notes the information contained in this report.



### 10.1.3. SERVICE REVIEW PLAN 2021-2025 PROGRESS 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:** 16/24/17

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with a progress report on the service review plan 2021-2024.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Council has a strong commitment to continuously plan, review and improve its services. In line with the Service Planning Principles included within the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must ensure that community expectations and standards are met in a cost-effective manner, and that service outcomes are aligned to Council's long-term strategic objectives and plans.

Service reviews help clarify the needs of our community and organisation and use an evidence-based approach to assess our effectiveness in meeting those needs.

Service reviews are processes that review the delivery of Council services and ensure they are:

- Appropriate – services that meet current community needs and wants and can be adapted to meet future needs and wants.
- Effective – that Council delivers targeted, better-quality services in the most effective way.
- Efficient – that Council improves resource use (people, materials, plant and equipment, infrastructure, buildings) and redirects savings to finance new or improved services.

Service reviews also strive to address increasing financial pressures and the widening gap between revenue and expenditure, while ensuring that Council meets community expectations to be environmental and socially responsible and provide a wide range of quality services.

Key benefits of a service review should include:

- Alignment of services with community needs and a more engaged community.
- High quality service provision.
- Cost savings and sometimes income generation.
- Increased efficiency of often limited resources.
- Partnerships and networks with other local governments and service providers.
- Increased capacity of staff to respond to the changing needs of the community.
- Staff who work cooperatively across departments or business units.
- A more systematic approach to understanding future community needs.

At its meeting in April 2021, Council endorsed a service review plan for 2021-2025.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

At its meeting in April 2021, Council endorsed a service review plan for 2021-2025. This report provides a progress update on the delivery of that plan.

In 2021, it was reported that the disruptive nature of 2020 had interrupted service reviews for that calendar year and that the process was intended to be re-established for 2021. Unfortunately,

2021 proved to be just as disruptive which was a factor in failing to deliver the whole plan for 2021.

The program has been updated with a view to keeping the original criteria as a basis for determining what reviews are required:

- Identification of existing service issues or record of ongoing complaints,
- Mandatory or non-mandatory service (non-mandatory takes priority to evaluate it need),
- Cost or value of the service to the organisation (high cost / value takes priority),
- Importance of the service to the community, and
- Topical issues or potential for change in legislation or government / Council direction.

The progress update on the plan is provided for Council information below. It remains the intention to conduct two service reviews per year.

Service	Scheduled / Status	Scope	Comments / Outcomes
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	2022/23 not yet started	To review the statutory planning function in response to community and Councillor feedback. The scope of the review may include an assessment of the policies, procedures and key controls in place for the effective management of risks associated with statutory planning, including the need to comply with the Pyrenees Shire Planning Scheme.	A shortage of staff in the department in 2021/22 reduced the capacity to deliver this review. This review will now be conducted in 2023.
<b>Economic Development – Beaufort Caravan Park</b>	2021/22 Complete	Internal Audit identified the need for a change in direction for the caravan park, combined with the disruption of the tourism sector in 2020/21. The scope of the review included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Options for future management of the Park, and</li> <li>- Modernisation of the Park to reflect contemporary standards and expectations.</li> </ul>	This review was conducted by an external consultant and a report provided to Council under separate cover, with draft plans. Funding has been sought to implement changes through the Building Better Regions Fund.
<b>Information Management</b>	2021/22 In progress	To investigate opportunities arising from a proposed change in electronic records / information management system and increased external obligations relating to data security. To align information management processes and practices with the proposed Information Management Strategy.	This review has been scoped and an initiation document provided to project owners for consideration.

<b>Avoca Community Car</b>	2021/22 In progress	Focus on mitigating exposures existing within a high-risk activity. The key objective will be to determine what lower risk alternatives are available to provide a similar service to customers from the Avoca region to attend medical appointments.	This review has been scoped and identification and consideration of options is underway.
<b>Asset Management</b>	2021/22 In progress	The development of a 10-year asset management plan will include a review on asset management and asset life-cycle planning.	The development of the Plan is in process.
<b>Home-based aged care</b>	2022	A revisit of the 2019 review of the provision of aged care in the home to determine the future of service provision in the Pyrenees Shire.	
<b>Community Safety &amp; Public Health</b>	2022/23 Not yet started	Community safety is spread across various business units – opportunity to focus on interdependencies, areas of priority focus for Council and consideration of functions that may not be mandatory or essential services for Council to deliver.	
<b>Corporate Services – Governance Risk &amp; Compliance</b>	2022/23	A wide range of services is provided within one department – to identify and investigate opportunities: For systematic improvement to reduce workload; to continue organisational culture change re customer first focus, to identify potential for shared services, and to ensure appropriate functional alignment with other departments.	
<b>Operations / Works</b>	2023/24	Scoping yet to be completed.	
<b>Waste management</b>	2023/24	Review of service provision in preparation for new waste contract arrangements.	
<b>Community Wellbeing &amp; Development</b>	2024/25	Scoping yet to be completed.	

## COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

All risk implications have been discussed in the body of this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

Council's program of conducting service reviews was interrupted in 2020 and 2021 due to the pressures arising from COVID-19. However, the review plan has commenced and this report provides a progress update on the review plan over the past 12 months.

## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council notes this report.



#### 10.1.4. MID-FINANCIAL YEAR PERFORMANCE STATEMENT - DECEMBER 2021

**Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services**

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

**File No:** 32/08/30

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to receive the Local Government Performance Report for the mid-financial year 2021/22 as of 31 December 2021.

#### 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 several 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 and sustainable system of local government.

Legislation was introduced in early 2014 that 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 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* and are changed periodically by the State Government.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

To provide a comprehensive picture of council performance, four indicator sets are used for annual performance reporting:

<b>1. Service Performance</b>	40 service performance indicators across nine common service areas calculate the service performance comparison measures relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of local government services.
<b>2. Financial Performance</b>	11 financial indicators across five sub areas, which cover key financial objectives. The indicators provide relevant information about the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of financial management in local government.
<b>3. Sustainable Capacity</b>	A council's performance can be influenced by the broad social and economic environment in which services are delivered. This indicator set acknowledges the external factors placed upon councils, including population size and socio-economic disadvantage.

<b>4. Governance and Management</b>	<p>In light of all the legislative requirements and best practice models placed upon local government, the governance and management checklist summarises the required and recommended frameworks, policies, procedures and practices that councils can have in place to ensure strong and effective governance.</p>
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The information contained in the attached mid-financial year Performance Report is for the period 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2021. Some information is only available on an annual basis and therefore not included in the mid-year report. Financial information has been based on former forecasts and will be verified / updated at the end of the financial year.

#### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Enabling Principles

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

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Mid Year PSC Performance Statement 2021 22 December 2021 [**10.1.4.1** - 12 pages]

#### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

As this is a mid-year interim report, financial implications will be discussed more fully at the end of the financial year.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The report of operations attached is for the first half of 2021/22. 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 collection remains ongoing, and all statutory obligations will be met at year end.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

<p>That Council notes this report.</p>
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## 11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

### 11.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - FEBRUARY 2022

<b>Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward</b>		
Tue 8	Councillor Cuppa	Trawalla
Tue 8	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Council Meeting	Virtual
Sun 20	Beaufort Bowls Club Centenary Celebrations	Beaufort

<b>Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward</b>		
Tue 8	Councillor Cuppa	Trawalla
Tue 8	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Council Meeting	Virtual
Thu 17	Timber Towns Victoria Meeting	Virtual
Fri 25	RCV Committee Meeting	Virtual

<b>Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward</b>		
Tue 8	Councillor Cuppa	Trawalla
Tue 8	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Council Meeting	Virtual
Thu 24	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	Virtual

<b>Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward</b>		
Tue 1	Trawalla Hall roof restoration gathering with The Hon. Dan Tehan MP	Trawalla
Tue 3	Grampians Health meeting	Avoca
Thu 3	Meeting with Andy Meddick ((Member of the Legislative Council for Western Victoria)	Avoca
Tue 8	Councillor Cuppa	Trawalla
Tue 8	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Council Meeting	Virtual
Sun 20	Beaufort Bowls Club Centenary Celebrations	Beaufort
Mon 21	Presentation of Awards - Big Summer Read Competition	Beaufort
Mon 28	Meeting with Martha Haylett (Labor Candidate for Ripon)	Avoca

<b>Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward</b>		
Tue 1	MAV Advocacy Update	Virtual
Wed 2	MAV – Rules review consultation	Virtual
Thu 3	MAV – Rules review consultation	Virtual
Thu 3	MAV – Board briefing	Virtual
Fri 4	MAV – Board Meeting	Virtual
Mon 7	MAV – CEO KPI's	Virtual
Mon 7	MAV – Renewables working group	Virtual
Tue 8	MAV – Briefing Surf Coast Council	Virtual
Tue 8	Councillor Cuppa	Trawalla
Tue 8	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort / Virtual
Thu 10	MAV – Metropolitan East Region	Virtual
Thu 10	Highlands LLEN – Finance and Administration Comm.	Virtual
Thu 10	MAV Rules review workshop	Virtual
Fri 11	MAV – Advocacy Update	Virtual
Fri 11	Cost pressures on Councils, Jim Nolan	Virtual
Mon 14	MAV – Briefing City of Whittlesea	Virtual
Mon 14	Lexton Landcare Group	Toll Bar Park
Tue 15	MAV - Advocacy Update	Virtual
Tue 15	CVGA Finance Committee	Virtual
Tue 15	Councillor Briefing Session	Beaufort
Tue 15	Council Meeting	Virtual
Wed 16	MAV – Circular Economy with Minister De'Ambrosio	Virtual
Fri 18	MAV – Homes Victoria rate exemption briefing	Virtual
Fri 18	MAV – Briefing Murrundindi Shire	Virtual
Mon 21	MAV – Media / Council discussions rates exemption	Virtual
Tue 22	MAV – Media / Council discussions rates exemption	Virtual
Tue 22	MAV – Greens Leader Samantha Ratnam	Virtual
Wed 23	MAV – Sustainable Water Strategy briefing	Virtual
Wed 23	CVGA Board Meeting	Virtual
Wed 23	ALGA – Strategic Planning Session	Virtual
Thu 24	ALGA – Board meeting	Virtual
Thu 24	MAV – Digital Cadasta roundtable	Virtual
Thu 24	MAV – Metropolitan Transport Forum, Active Transport	Virtual
Fri 25	Raglan Hall Afternoon Tea	Raglan
Mon 28	MAV – Board performance assessment	Virtual
Mon 28	MAV – Councillor development weekend planning	Virtual
Mon 28	UMEC Landcare Network event	Burrumbeet

**12. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS****12.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS - FEBRUARY 2022**

<b>MEETING INFORMATION</b>			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	8 February 2022 commenced at 1.30pm and closed at 4.46pm		
Meeting Location	Hybrid - Beaufort Council Chambers, 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort and via MS Teams		
Items Discussed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning Matters</li> <li>2. Projects Update</li> <li>3. Advocacy and Pipeline Projects</li> <li>4. Silobration Event</li> <li>5. COVID Update</li> <li>6. Agenda Review</li> </ol>		
<b>ATTENDEES</b>			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Ron Eason Cr Damian Ferrari (virtual) Cr Tanya Kehoe (virtual)	Cr David Clark (from 2.00pm) 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 and Development) – Item 1 Claire Pepin (Planning Officer) – Item 1 Nicholas Brasier (Student Planner) – Item 1		
Visitors	Nil		
<b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES</b>			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			



<b>MEETING INFORMATION</b>			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	15 February 2022 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 4.40pm		
Meeting Location	Hybrid – Beeripmo Centre, 1-3 Lawrence Street, Beaufort and via MS Teams		
Items Discussed	1. Brewster Wind Farm 2. Beaufort Caravan Park Strategic Plan 3. Internet Connectivity Outcomes 4. Financial Update 5. Agenda Review		
<b>ATTENDEES</b>			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Ron Eason Cr Tanya Kehoe	Cr David Clark Cr Robert Vance (from 1.15pm)	
Apologies	Cr Damian Ferrari		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Jane Bowker (EA to CEO & Councillors) Katie Gleisner (Manager Planning and Development) – Item 1 Ray Davies (Manager Economic Development & Tourism) – Items 2 and 3 Glenn Kallio (Manager Finance) – Item 4		
Visitors – Item 1	Jim Gaylard Bruce Vowles Alex Little Neil Ham Joanne Ham Ivan Vowles	Lauren Maher Brett Swan Daniel George Jeff Smith Gary Swan Glenn Pretty	
<b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES</b>			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

**Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

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

### 13. ITEMS FOR DECISION

#### 13.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

##### 13.1.1. SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION - PYRENEES GRAPEGROWERS AND WINEMAKERS ASSOCIATION

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**Author:** Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

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

**File No:** 32/13/06

##### **PURPOSE**

To seek Council's approval of a sponsorship submission from Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers Association.

##### **BACKGROUND**

Council has supported the growth of the wine industry for many years. It is the second largest private sector employer in the Pyrenes Shire and one of the key propulsive industry sectors. The industry generates tourism activity in the Shire which supports a wide range of local businesses.

Events have been important activity of the Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers marketing group over the years as they contribute to brand awareness of Pyrenees Wines. Pyrenees Unearthed which is hosted annually on the Avoca River flats is now becoming an anchor tourism event in the annual event calendar.

Following a series of lock downs during the Covid19 pandemic over the past two years cellar door operators are looking forward to being able to hold the festival annually again as a means of generating sales and encouraging customers back to their cellar doors after the event was cancelled in 2020.

Some of the past wine marketing initiatives supported by Council have included but are not limited to:-

- Seduction by Tastebud lunches, a series of five to six annual lunches at local wineries was project managed by Council to feature celebrity chefs in the years 2005-13
- 2009 Pyrenees Escapade; \$5,000 in Council sponsorship and Events Officer support provided
- 2014 Avoca River Festival; \$5,000 in Council sponsorship and officer time during planning and operation of the event
- 2015; \$7,500- Council sponsorship to assist PGW hold its Slow Boat to Pyrenees event as part of the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, and the Avoca River Festival
- 2016; \$7,500- Council support towards Pyrenees Unearthed Avoca Wine Festival held in partnership with a combination of other local events over ANZAC day weekend
- 2017; \$7,500- Council sponsorship towards Pyrenees Unearthed Avoca Wine Festival for the same structure as the previous year

- 2018; \$6,500- Council sponsorship towards Pyrenees Unearthed Avoca Wine Festival
- A three-year sponsorship proposal was approved in 2019 for \$6,500 p.a. over three years to support Pyrenees Unearthed

Council officers have also provided in kind support during the earlier years for many of the above events and PUF in marketing, planning and event coordination, plus providing staff support at the event to assist it develop in its infancy. The event planning and coordination has been managed by PGW over the past few years and Council officer support is no longer a requirement on the day of the event.

Crowd numbers over the years have grown from 400 – 500 patrons to last year being a sellout event with tickets capped at 1,000 people. This year tickets are being capped at 1,200 following feedback from stallholders at last years' event. While the increased ticket numbers will allow the event to grow, maintaining a cap at this level of patrons will still allow a relaxed atmosphere the event has become known for, part of which is for attendees to have conversations with the winemakers.

The event has allowed the region to showcase product from around twenty wineries from the Pyrenees and Grampians wine regions allowing them to build on their wine club lists with local food entities and entertainers making for a variety of food, beverages and entertainment.

The event has generated genuine interest in and sales of local wine, and created economic activity for the benefit of the small business community in and around Avoca and Moonambel.

Council sponsorship has also enabled PGW to leverage support from the State Government on a number of occasions and also supported its cash flow position to participate in other events throughout the year. Past examples include but are not exclusive to:-

- Melbourne Good Food and Wine Show at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre
- 2017 China Road Trip (coordinated by Wine Australia, and attended by six Pyrenees wineries)
- Seriously Red event at Ballarat Mining Exchange during Ballarat's Winter Festival

PGW intend to continue to participate at events in Ballarat and Melbourne like those listed above and where the profile and awareness of the region's wines can be increased. Sponsorship of the Avoca event will continue to allow PGW to leverage the cash flow required to participate in these other events throughout the year.

PGW have requested Council enter into another three year sponsorship agreement amounting to \$6,500 per annum- commencing from 2022.

### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on cellar door activity due to both state wide and also Melbourne Metropolitan lock downs at various times over the past two years.

The Pyrenees Unearthed Festival is establishing itself as an important regional event which will assist support local businesses in the Pyrenees recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic.

After the event had to be cancelled in 2020 due to Covid19, all 1,000 tickets were sold out by PGW in 2021, with the capacity of patrons being limited due to pandemic restrictions in place for events at that time. Capacity is being increased to 1,200 patrons this year to examine the effects of a larger crowd while maintaining the relaxed nature of this family friendly event.

The wine industry, along with the agriculture and construction industries are described in council's 2020 Economic Development Strategy as key propulsive sectors in the local economy. The wine industry is the second largest private sector employer in the Shire.

The wine sector also generates tourism activity throughout townships across the Pyrenees by encouraging people to visit the twenty plus cellar doors and in some cases encouraging new residents and/or investors to the Shire.

Councils Economic Development and Tourism Strategies both mention that council continue its support for the wine industry to help it build brand awareness in the market and generate tourism activity which economic data indicates is continuing to trend upwards.

An objective of the Economic Development Strategy is *"To attract new residents, visitors and investment"*.

Action 4 in the Tourism Strategy mentions that council should *"support the development and promotion of the wine sector, including events."*

Council's ongoing support of the Pyrenees Unearthed Festival will enable the PGW to build on recent market awareness in a very competitive industry and to bounce back after the pandemic.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The PGW have requested sponsorship of \$6,500 per annum over a three year term.

There may be a low risk to Council that its reputation be affected through its sponsorship support due to some adverse incident at, during, or as a result of the event.

This risk is considered to be minimal as the event is tailored to being a family friendly outing and which has been held without any adverse incidents since its inception as the Avoca River Festival in 2014.

## **CONCLUSION**

An investment of \$6,500- per annum over three years to support the second largest industry employer in the Shire is considered warranted, due to the flow on benefits of attracting visitors, investment and new residents. This is a key objective of Council's Economic Development Strategy.

The event will also assist small businesses in Avoca and Moonambel recovering from economic impacts of the pandemic by bringing visitors to the area.

### **Cr Robert Vance / Cr Damian Ferrari**

That Council approves sponsorship support of \$6,500 per annum over a term of three years for the Pyrenees Unearthed Festival subject to Council's usual sponsorship terms and conditions.

**CARRIED**

### **13.1.2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

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

**Author:** Ray Davies – Manager Economic Development and Tourism

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

**File No:** 22/02/02

#### **PURPOSE**

This report is to seek Council's endorsement of a recent grant application and to provide an update to Councilors on recent activities of the Economic Development team and state of the local economy.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Council endorsed the 2020-25 Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan in early 2020.

The strategy identifies three overarching objectives for economic development:

- Attract new residents, visitors and investment
- Foster the capabilities of key economic sectors
- Develop local business and employee capacity

During the development of the 2021-25 Council Plan the community identified the economy as one of the four key pillars to assist achieve Council's vision.

The three objectives under this pillar are:

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

This report is to update Council on economic development activities over the past three months and provide the latest data available on the performance of the local economy.

#### **Grant Application – Enabling Tourism Fund**

##### Victorian Government Enabling Tourism Fund

The Victorian Government has recently offered funding through the Enabling Tourism Fund program which was open for applications between 25 January and 4 March.

The objectives of the ETF are to accelerate the planning and investigation of tourism product development projects to shovel ready status where the project will:

- Build a strong pipeline of demand-driven, public and private tourism infrastructure projects and progress them towards investment ready status
- Develop strategic tourism infrastructure projects that will increase visitation, improve quality of customer experience, and increase visitor yield and length of stay
- Develop projects that will broaden Victoria's tourism offering, and support and encourage year-round visitation and dispersal across regional Victoria



- Leverage and facilitate private sector investment, including through strengthening public tourism infrastructure

To broaden the range of tourism experiences in the Shire the opportunity has been taken to submit a \$48,000- grant application to complete a \$60,000- “Cycle the Pyrenees Masterplan”. The aim of the project is to identify recreational cycling routes in the Pyrenees as an added attraction for visitors to the Pyrenees Shire to increase economic activity and tourism yield.

Council’s contribution to the project if the grant application is successful is \$12,000-.

The scope of the project includes stakeholder engagement, completion of designs for the proposed routes, feasibility study, business case and activation plan.

### **North East Pyrenees Pipeline**

This project has previously been reported to Council regarding funding sought by GWM Water to complete a feasibility study and business case for the proposed water scheme. This was in response to a community meeting initiated by the Natte Yallock Landcare Group in March 2021. The meeting was well attended and illustrated strong community support for the project.

The project aims to deliver a reticulated water supply encompassing a proposed area of approximately 150,000- hectares located predominantly north of Avoca with properties also being located in Central Goldfields and Northern Grampians Shires.

A reticulated water supply is expected to generate a significant economic uplift to farmers, wine grape producers and tourism operators. In some cases farmers are carting water three to four years in every decade, and in the case of vineyards, suffering significantly diminished grape harvests (quantity and quality) and having to cart water for their tourism accommodation.

The project also has the potential to provide alternative urban water supplies to those towns that currently rely on saline ground water sources or are without a town supply.

Council’s project partners include GWM Water, Central Highlands Water, Northern Grampians Shire Council and Central Goldfields Shire Council.

A response to a submission by GWM Water to the Victorian Government for funding of \$300,000- in September 2021 remains outstanding at the time of developing this report. Matching funds amounting to \$75,000- have been pledged by the project partners who are ready to proceed once funding is available.

## **Integrated Water Management Projects**

### Beaufort Closed Loop Water Recycle Project

This project will deliver treated wastewater to various sporting fields in Beaufort and alleviate the need for water to be pumped from Beaufort Lake to irrigate the Goldfields Recreation Reserve.

The project has entered the construction phase with contracts having been let by Central Highlands Water and works have commenced for:

- The upgrades necessary at the Beaufort wastewater treatment plant
- The construction of the trunk pipeline to pump treated water to the golf club, Goldfields Recreation Reserve, Beaufort Primary School and Secondary College and the Croquet Club.

## **Business Concierge**

The Victorian Governments Business Concierge Program has allowed Councils across the state to employ Business Concierge Officers to support small businesses meet their Covid compliance measures as well as providing access to a range of resources to assist small business with the economic recovery from the impacts of the pandemic.

In addition to direct contact by visits, emails and phone calls on a weekly basis, by Council's Concierge Officer electronic newsletters are being sent to a current list of 532 businesses on at least a monthly basis. Group emails are also being sent where more immediate communication is required such as changes to mandatory Covid19 controls that apply and when funding opportunities arise with short timelines.

The Victorian Government has recently extended the Business Concierge program until the end of May.

A more detailed report on the impacts of the pandemic on small businesses will be provided in the agenda for the April Council Meeting.

## **Tourism and Events**

### Kick Starting Events

Funding of \$30,000- was provided by the Victorian Government in June 2021 to provide support and resources to events organisations to stimulate economic activity following the impacts of the Covid19 pandemic.

The events held to date that received support under this program include:

- The reactivation of the monthly Beaufort Town Market coordinated by Beaufort Progress Association
- Wild Beeripmo Run, organized by Tour de Trails
- Beaufort Agricultural Society Summer Horse Show
- Beaufort Football and Netball Club fireworks at their annual Truck and Car Show

### Upcoming events include

- Walkability Beaufort,
- Beaufort Golf and Bowls Clubs Brass on the Grass
- Avoca Community Arts and Gardens “Silobration”

The Economic Development team has also have been providing support with roll out of the “Play in the Pyrenees” series of events to activate outdoor dining settings across the Shire. This series of events has also received support through funding from the Victorian Government.

### State of the Local Economy

The following data is provided as an indication of the current state of the economy in the Pyrenees Shire.

#### Population Growth

The Estimated Residential Population figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate the Shires population has grown at an average annual rate of 1.1% from 6,721 people in 2009 to an Estimated Resident Population of 7,555 in 2020.

While the Shires population will reach 8,274 people in 2030 if the abovementioned growth levels are maintained, the impacts of migration to the regions throughout the pandemic and recent demand for residential properties could further influence population growth as will the capacity for the Pyrenees Shire to cater for the growing needs of education, health, commerce, industry and employment.

Further clarification of the data presented here will be available upon release of the 2021 Census data.

#### Gross Regional Product

Gross Regional Product (GRP) is a measurement of the total of everything produced in the region. It only measures the final value of a product, but not the parts that go into it.

The table presented below represents nominal GRP for the Pyrenees.

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

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
GRP	278	306	314	329
GRP per worker PSC	\$0.156	\$0.157	\$0.161	\$0.164
GRP per worker Grampians Region	\$0.151	\$0.151	\$0.156	\$0.156

#### Unemployment and Jobs

The percentage of unemployment in the Pyrenees has fluctuated during the pandemic as reflected by Remplan figures compiled from the Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment data.

Dec 2017	4.2%
Dec 2018	4.2%
Dec 2019	4.6%
Mar 2020	3.9%
Jun 2020	4.4%
Dec 2020	6.1%
Mar 2021	6.5%
June 2021	6.4%
Sept 2021	5.3% (latest available data)

The number of people employed in the Shire is as follows:-

2016 Census	2,001
April 2020	1,954
August 2020	1,959
December 2020	1,979
March 2021	2,005
June 2021	2,011

### Business Counts

Business Counts provided by Remplan are based on snapshots of actively trading businesses as at June 2018, 2019 and 2020 from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Business Register (ABSBR). The ABSBR contains counts and rates of business entries and exits from the Australian economy as well as counts and rates pertaining to the survival of businesses. This count only includes businesses which actively traded in goods or services during the reference period.

June 2019	June 2020	June 2021
842	828	849

### Building Approvals

Year	Residential in \$M	Non Residential; \$M
2017/18	\$13.5	\$7.36
2018/19	\$15.24	\$2.93
2019/20	\$17.44	\$5.45
2020/21	\$17.48	\$6.42

## **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

### **Grant Application – Enabling Tourism Fund description and scope**

The "Cycle the Pyrenees Masterplan" project will produce a plan for shovel ready recreational cycle routes to broaden the range of nature-based tourism experiences available in the Pyrenees Shire.

The masterplan will be accompanied by a feasibility study and business case to illustrate return on investment and the ability to maintain the routes into the future.

Increasing the number of visitor experiences in the Pyrenees was a recommendation of the “2017-2020 Grampians Pyrenees Wine Tourism and Culinary Masterplan” as a means to grow visitor numbers, length of stay and yield.

The “2018 Grampians RDV Region Cycling and Trails Infrastructure and Business Masterplan” identified a wine cycle route between Avoca and Moonambel as a “Tier One” project.

Council established a cycle link between the two towns in 2021 and the next phase of this route is to develop connections to wineries, tourism operators, scenic and historical points of interest. The Grampians RDA Region Cycle Plan also identified possibilities for Beaufort which can encourage tourism activity once a highway bypass of the town is established. The Western Highway has been duplicated to freeway standards on the eastern and western approaches to town and environmental planning for a highway bypass is entering the final stages.

The scope of the cycle masterplan project will incorporate co-design principals and include:

- Identifying key stakeholders with an interest in the project
- Initial communications via local media, social media, direct stakeholder contact and tourism networks
- An initial round of stakeholder engagement sessions to inform development of a draft masterplan and feasibility study
- The draft masterplan will be used during a second engagement phase to allow stakeholders to comment on the preliminary plan to inform the final masterplan report
- The final masterplan will incorporate detailed plans, a business case and investment plan to deliver the construction phase.
- Completion of an activation strategy to promote use of the tracks once the routes identified in the masterplan are delivered

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The submission to the Victorian Governments Enabling Tourism Fund for a grant of \$48,000- requires a matching commitment of \$12,000- by Council. These funds are available from existing budgets allowances for the 2021/22 Financial Year.

The other projects mentioned in this report do not encompass any new or additional financial commitments or risks to Council.

## **CONCLUSION**

The "Cycle the Pyrenees Masterplan" will map out recreational cycle routes in the Pyrenees to a shovel ready stage. Subject to funding being approved, this project will allow Council to accelerate the development of cycle product, diversify tourism experiences and increase economic activity.

The project aligns with both the “Nature” and “Epicurean” pillars of the Enabling Tourism Fund with the proposed scenic routes linking to cellar doors and restaurants and places historical interest.

The masterplan will be undertaken using co-design principals engaging with first nations peoples, local communities, tourism operators and government agencies to identify the most viable routes for increased economic and community wellbeing.

**Cr David Clark / Cr Robert Vance**

That Council:

1. Endorses the grant application for the Enabling Tourism Fund; and
2. Notes the updates provided in this report

**CARRIED**



## 13.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### 13.2.1. VICTORIAN ENERGY EFFICIENCY CERTIFICATES (VEEC)

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

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

**Author:** Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development

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

**File No:** 30/04/02

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the opportunity to benefit from the Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates (VEEC) that were secured as a result of upgrading the major streetlights to Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs).

#### BACKGROUND

Council replaced all 80W mercury vapour residential streetlights with LEDs three years ago as part of a Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) program.

Recently Powercor has completed replacing the major road network (250W) with LEDs and as a result Council has secured a number of VEECs. These certificates are similar to the rebate received when installing solar panels. The VEECs can be sold on the open market and the price varies depending on demand. Currently the price is considerably higher and it would be an ideal time to consider selling. This has also been recommended by Ironbark who has been coordinating the project.

1 certificate = 1 tonne reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council has generated 432 certificates and the current price is around \$82.00/certificate (price as at 28/02/2022) which is equivalent to a total \$35,000.

The process in selling the certificates involves:

- collating documents from Powercor
- submitting documents to National Carbon Bank Australia (NCBA)
- NCBA and the Essential Services Commission (ESC) will review the documents and certificates will be created and sold.
- NCBA will provide a purchase order and Council will raise an invoice for the said amount.

The alternative is to hold onto the certificates and use them in the future to potentially offset Councils carbon footprint. The risk is that the price of certificates may fall.

An option is to sell now while prices are high and use the funds for future projects to further reduce Councils GHG emissions.

#### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 3 - Environment

3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There is a risk that if the VECC price drops, Council may not be able to realise the benefit of a current sale.

## **CONCLUSION**

Council continues to strive to reduce its carbon footprint. Council could potentially utilise funds from the sale of current certificate holdings to reinvest in further Green House Gas reductions.

## **Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr David Clark**

That Council:

1. Officers proceed with the sale of the 432 Victoria energy efficiency certificates resulting from the installation of LED streetlights.
2. Reinvests these funds in future Green House Gas reduction projects.

**CARRIED**

### **13.2.2. WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

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

**Author:** Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development

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

**File No:** 68/08/02

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the Pyrenees Shire Council Waste Management Plan 2021-2025.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Council's previous Waste Management Plan dated 2016 has been reviewed and an updated Waste Management Plan has been developed incorporating major changes to Council's waste and recycling services that were implemented from July 2021.

In February 2021, Council committed to a universal Shire-wide waste and recycling service to meet changes introduced by the Victorian State Government, following a comprehensive community consultation process.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

A review has been undertaken of Pyrenees Shire Council's Waste Management Plan to ensure that the waste management services offered by Council are appropriate to meet community expectations and that they comply with the State Government requirements outlined in the State Government's 10-year plan to transform recycling in Victoria.

The waste management service provided to the community is very visible and involves significant customer contact. It is important for Council to define the levels of the service it will provide the community in the provision of waste management services.

The Pyrenees Shire Council Waste Management Plan 2022-2025 provides detail on the services provided in 2021/22 and any improvements planned over the life of the plan.

Objectives include:

- Ensuring that Council's waste management services continue to meet community expectations,
- Ensuring that Council's waste management services move towards meeting government expectations within its Circular Economy and 10-year recycling improvement plan, and
- Including improvements adopted from Council's 2016 review of Municipal Waste Services.

Following the review undertaken the attached plan includes the following actions for Council's consideration:

<b>Action plan 2021-2025</b>	
<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeframes</b>
Investigate models Council will implement for the inclusion of organic food waste in kerbside collection and disposal of green waste.	2024/25
Street litter bin hygiene maintenance agreement.	2022
Review of transfer station opening hours: following introduction of mandatory kerbside collections to all residential households in July 2021, this may reduce the demand upon transfer stations. The contract for transfer station operation has been renewed for one year 2021-2022 to allow for the impact upon demand to be evaluated prior to June 2022.	2022
Transfer station upgrades (funding dependent).	2023
Continue to monitor and improve the percentage of recoverable material from going to landfill.	2022/25
Investigate and implement methodologies to accurately measure green waste for reporting purposes.	2023
Advocate for local sites to be accessible for State introduced container deposit scheme.	2023

### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 3 - Environment

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

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. PSC Waste Management Plan 2021 2025 (1) [**13.2.2.1** - 18 pages]

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Councils forecast cost of waste management for the 2022/23 financial year is \$2,275,390. This cost is passed on to ratepayers through Council's waste charge. The risk in introducing any higher level of service will result in a higher waste charge.

The actions currently proposed will need to be costed prior to implementation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The reviewed Waste Management Plan provides transparency to the community regarding the levels of service currently provided and provides future actions to improve this important service.

### **Cr Robert Vance / Cr David Clark**

That Council:

1. Adopts the Waste Management Plan 2022-2025.
2. Commits to implementing the actions as outlined in the report.

**CARRIED**

### **13.2.3. ROAD AND BRIDGE CONDITION ASSESSMENTS 2022**

**Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services

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

**Author:** Tim Day – Manager Assets

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

**File No:** 06/04/04

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council endorsement for the Moloney Asset Management Systems (MAMS) methodology and forecasting in undertaking roads and bridges condition surveys.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Moloney Asset Management Systems were engaged in September 2010 to undertake condition surveys of Council's roads and bridges network. Every three years, Council is required by Accounting Standard AAS 27 to complete these Asset Condition Surveys. Council have now completed four surveys which allow accurate degradation graphs to be produced for the asset classes involved in the surveys. The Road Survey includes sealed surfaces, sealed pavements and unsealed pavements, and a separate condition survey is undertaken for bridges.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The 2022 bridges condition survey was only undertaken on the 27 bridges with condition scores of 6 or more from the 2019 survey. As long-life assets, the balance of the bridges are assumed to reflect condition change based on age over the intervening three years. The condition survey does not include major culverts as these are being assessed in-house.

The 27 bridge assets were found to be in "Fair" to "Poor" overall condition. This overall condition reflects the fact that the worst 27 bridges within the municipality were assessed. The overall condition of all bridges has, nevertheless, improved as a result of the large structure bridge replacements that have occurred during the last three years. The overall bridge asset condition is defined as "Fair". In comparison to 26 other Councils, Pyrenees' has a low weighted average asset condition score for bridges reflecting the high average age of bridges within the municipality. There remains a backlog of minor improvement work required to protect these aging bridges – predominantly deck sealing and concrete spall repairs. The report recommends that load limits be imposed on 4 bridges.

Road assets were found to be in "Excellent" overall condition. The report recommends annual renewal expenditure of \$3.15M over the next ten years (excluding CPI adjustment). This figure makes an allowance for expected upgrade costs associated with network improvements such as seal widening. Council has a low level of over intervention assets. The graph below shows the change in condition for sealed pavement between this and the 2018 survey reflecting an overall improvement in condition.



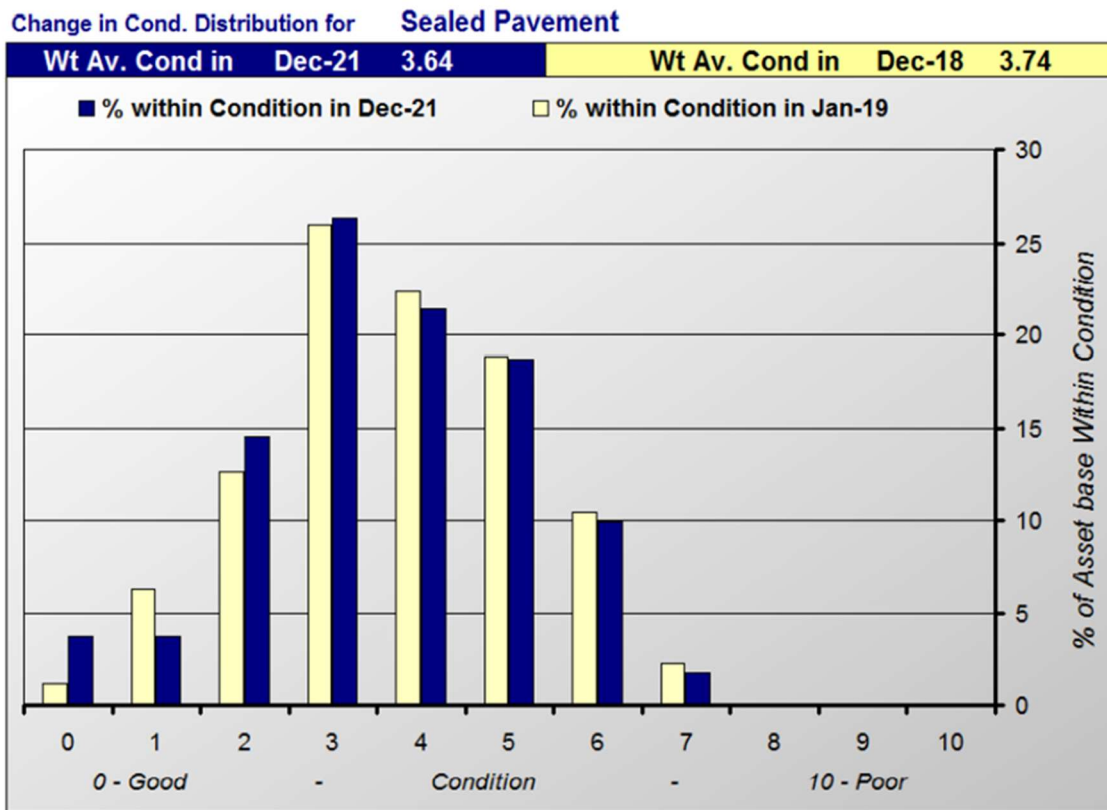


Figure P1 Condition Distribution Comparison Graph – Between Surveys

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

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

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. MAMS Road Report 2022 [13.2.3.1 - 62 pages]
2. MAMS Bridge Report 2022 [13.2.3.2 - 38 pages]

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

In each budget, Council allocates funds that allow MAMS to apportion payments over a three year period, this arrangement benefits both Council and MAMS.

The very strong performance in all asset groups since 2019 has been on the back of relatively high levels of external funding. If external funding were to be substantially lowered in future years council would need to review their approach to renewal funding on the road and bridges assets.

**CONCLUSION**

MAMS undertake condition surveys and financial forecasting for 71 Councils throughout Australia. Their methodology and financial forecasting systems have been developed and proven over 25 years. This approach allows the condition of Council’s assets to be benchmarked against others in the sector.

The reports demonstrate that overall, Council is achieving good results in its management of road and bridge assets. The report makes recommendations as to ongoing funding levels for asset renewal in these classes.

**Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari**

That Council:

1. Endorses the findings of the Moloney Asset Management Systems Roads and Bridges report.
2. Supports the continued use of the Moloney Asset Management Systems methodology and financial forecasting.
3. Reflects the report recommendations for funding of asset classes in Council's Long Term Financial Plan.

**CARRIED**

### 13.3. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### 13.3.1. NAMING OF AVOCA HUBS

**Presenter:** Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

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

**Author:** Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services

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

**File No:** 229042910

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to move into the public consultation phase for a proposed naming of two Council properties in Avoca.

#### BACKGROUND

Council received government funding to develop two hubs in Avoca:

- a. The refurbishment of the old shire offices, next to the Avoca Shire Hall, with a view to using the facility as a community hub or for business, and
- b. The setting up of a digital hub at the rear of the Avoca Information Centre, with a view to using the facility as a technology space including for small or start-up businesses.

The facilities will be available for use by the community and business soon as the projects are completed.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

To ensure clarity and differentiation between the two hubs, Council officers propose to implement a process to name the two hubs, subject to Council approval. The Victorian Government *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities* (that provides guidance to naming authorities) recommends that community facilities and infrastructure should be officially named and registered to ensure emergency services can locate them for the sake of public safety.

Section 2.3.3 of the Pyrenees Shire Council's Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2024 commits Council to "explore opportunities to advocate for the naming of new sites, and dual naming existing significant sites within the Pyrenees Shire to include traditional language place names."

Names considered appropriate for the type of facility were explored and approval was sought from the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (trading as Djaara) for the following names to be used:

- a. **Gunga** – proposed as the name of the community hub in the old shire offices. The English translation of 'Gunga' is 'to do, to work, to create, to make something'.
- b. **Wurreka** – proposed as the name of the central meeting room within the community hub in the old shire offices. The English translation of 'Wurreka' is 'to yarn, to talk'.
- c. **Balaki Wuka** – proposed as the name of the digital hub at the rear of the Avoca Information Centre. The English translation of 'Balaki Wuka' is 'giving to community'.

Council officers considered that these names appropriately conveyed the purpose behind the redevelopment of the two facilities, primarily providing spaces for our community to work, to interact, and to communicate with each other. A letter was received from Djaara in January giving approval to the use of the Dja Dja Wurrung language as proposed.

Other names may also be considered, and one name that was suggested by Cr Eason for the old shire offices building is the Avoca Hall Hub.

It is proposed that a place naming process be started to formally name our two new community hubs in Avoca, commencing with a public consultation process for the following names:

- The ***Gunga Community Hub*** – as the formal name of the old shire offices,
- The ***Wurreka Community Meeting Place*** – as the formal name of the meeting room within the old shire offices, and
- The ***Balaki Wuka Digital Hub*** - as the official name of the new digital hub at the back of the Avoca Information Centre.

Public consultation will be undertaken through:

1. Publication on Council's *Engagement Hub* section of the website, seeking feedback to the proposal,
2. Promotion and request for feedback via Council's Noticeboard published in the local media on a weekly basis,
3. Promotion and request for feedback via a flyer to be developed and displayed at:
  - a. Council's resource / information centres,
  - b. Posted on the entrances to the new community hubs in Avoca,
  - c. Local businesses in the Avoca area, and
4. Promotion and request for feedback via social media.

Council's approval in principle to the proposed names is now requested, and authority to commence the public consultation phase of the place naming process.

Following the consultation process, Council may choose to endorse the names suggested or to seek to use another name.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 1 - People

1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.

Priority 2 - Place

2a. Sustain and enhance unique character of our communities.

Enabling Principles

a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. DJAARA Language Approval Letter\_ [13.3.1.1 - 2 pages]

### FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

Risk implications may arise through the proposal to use Aboriginal names, rather than the names of early pioneers or others who might have contributed to the local community. However, the Victorian Government *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities* (that provides guidance to naming authorities) encourages the reflection of a rich Aboriginal history using Aboriginal languages in the naming of roads, features and localities, subject to agreement from the relevant Traditional Owners. The public consultation process will identify community sentiment on the proposed names and may provide other suggestions for Council consideration.

The process for naming the facilities will be covered by existing budget allocations.

### CONCLUSION

The naming of nearby community facilities is important to ensure public safety through clear location identification for emergency services response. Victorian naming rules encourage the use of Aboriginal language by naming authorities for this purpose and Council offices have successfully sought approval from the Traditional Owners of the Avoca region, the Dja Dja Wurrung, to consider the use of names in this regard. Council is now requested to authorise entering the formal naming process as detailed in this report.

### Cr Robert Vance / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Gives in principle approval to the following names for the refurbished community facilities in Avoca:
  - a. 'Gunga Community Hub' as the name for the community hub located in the old shire offices, Avoca.
  - b. 'Wurreka Community Meeting Place' as the name for the central meeting room within the community hub at the old shire offices, Avoca.
  - c. 'Balaki Wuka Digital Hub' as the name for the new digital hub under development at the rear of the Avoca Information Centre, Avoca.
2. Authorises Council offices to enter the public consultation phase of the formal naming process in this regard.

**CARRIED**

### **13.3.2. LIBRARY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

**Martin Walmsley – Manager Community Wellbeing and Development**

**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 14<sup>th</sup> 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, Barkly, 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:

- Weekly services to Snake Valley
- Fortnightly services to Trawalla, Landsborough, and Redbank
- Monthly services to Moonambel, Lexton, Waubra, and Barkly
- Fortnightly services to the residential aged care facilities in Avoca and Beaufort.

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 early in 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 with minimal budget implications, able to be accommodated within existing budget.

## **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, Barkly, 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 early in the 2022 school year and within existing budget allocations.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr David Clark**

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.

**CARRIED**

## 13.4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

### 13.4.1. OLD BEAUFORT PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**Author:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 515021100

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for Council to consider the submission proposed to be made to the Ordinary Council Meeting in respect of the Old Beaufort Primary School Site.

#### BACKGROUND

At the time of preparing this report, it is understood that the community committee for the Old Beaufort Primary School are proposing to make a submission to Council on the future of the site and the level of community interest achieved for their petition which they are seeking to be presented to the Victorian Parliament.

A copy of the unsigned petition addressed to the Victorian Legislative Assembly, and the revised business case (brief) have previously been circulated to Councillors. The petition reads:

*We, the undersigned residents of Victoria ask the Legislative Assembly of Victoria to recommend to the State Government:*

*That the ownership of the school oval and green areas on the former Beaufort Primary School 60 site, 7-25 Hill Street Beaufort be transferred to Pyrenees Shire Council for community use, at no cost to the community, in line with a council decision made on 10/12/2019.*

*That the remaining land and buildings on the former site be gifted to the community for a Community Hub in collaboration with Pyrenees Shire Council.*

*For a package of funding (\$3.5 million) for repurposing the buildings and surrounds (see point 2), enabling the development of a fully sustainable, fit for purpose, not-for-profit Community Hub.*

Council has previously received reports on the old school site and below is a copy of the resolutions previously made by Council.

At the December 2019 meeting, Council resolved as follows:

That Council:

1. Confirms its intention to have control over the land containing the drainage assets and described in this report as the former creek line by means of an easement or ownership of the land for drainage purposes and in order to provide a north-south access link.
2. Agrees to support further input into the Social Enterprise Plan in order to strengthen the long term sustainability of the proposal and seeks that a revised plan be considered at a future meeting of Council and no later than March 2020.
3. Allocates no more than \$10,000 towards achieving recommendation 2 above.

4. Seeks to determine its position on the site at the March 2020 Ordinary Council meeting.
5. Writes to the Minister for Planning advising of Council's position and the timelines for deciding its position.
6. That Council seeks to purchase the open space land as described as 3 & 4 in the report (overleaf) for community purposes.

In March 2020, Council resolved as follows:

That Council:

1. Notes the progress of the Social Enterprise Plan for the former Beaufort Primary School site.
2. Supports the community's desire that the State provide the former Beaufort Primary School site for community purposes into the future.
3. Supports the development of site being self-funded, as far as is practicable, by the sale of specific parcels of land within the site, as well as from the proceeds of other public land sales in the Beaufort area.
4. Supports the site being zoned appropriately to facilitate such sales.
5. Advises the Minister of Planning and the Department of Treasury and Finance of its position.
6. Encourages those involved with the social enterprise plan to establish an entity to manage the development of the site into the future.

In November 2021, the Victorian Planning Minister made an amendment to the Pyrenees Planning Scheme to rezone the land from Public Use Zone to General Residential Zone and introduced a Heritage Overlay over land containing the Heritage Building assets.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

While it is practice of council to receive submissions and then seek a report on the matter to be brought back to Council at a later date, Councillors are familiar with the substance of the submission and the petition which has been in circulation within the Beaufort Community and which is understood to have strong community support.

In the context of Council's previous position on the matter, and the submission by the community committee, Council may wish to consider the matter.

#### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 2 - Place

2c. Promote responsible development.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

#### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

While there are no direct negative financial implications for Council should it choose to advocate to the state government for financial support for the site, there would be implications should council decide to take on any management or ownership of the buildings, and it is recommended that council undertake further investigation into the financial implications of this before it makes such a decision.

While Council has previously sought to purchase the open space land, there would be a financial saving for council if the state were to "gift" the land to Council.

**CONCLUSION**

Having considered the level of support by the community for the old school site, Council may wish to consider its response.

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That Council continues to support the community in its petition to the state government.

**CARRIED**

### **13.4.2. ADVOCACY - 2022 FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**Author:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 34/02/08

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to support an advocacy campaign by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) in the lead up to the 2022 Federal Election Campaign.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The next Federal Election is expected to be held in May 2022.

Working in conjunction with its member state and territory associations, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) has developed a framework and resources for a national advocacy campaign that will run in the lead up to this election.

Based around the tagline of “Don’t Leave Local Communities Behind”, the goal is to secure funding and policy commitments that will support every Australian council and community, and ensure all Australians have an equal opportunity to share in the benefits of Australia’s post-pandemic recovery.

All Australian councils have been asked to participate in this campaign to ensure a coordinated approach that will deliver the best possible outcomes.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The Don’t Leave Local Communities Behind campaign will promote 17 priority asks in the portfolios of economic recovery, transport and community infrastructure, building resilience, circular economy and intergovernmental relations.

These priorities are based on motions passed by councils at ALGA’s annual National General Assembly and have been endorsed by ALGA’s Board which is comprised of representatives from all state and territory Local Government Associations.

They have been assessed by independent economists and would add around \$6.46 billion per year to Australia’s Gross Domestic Product while creating 43,444 jobs.

The Don’t Leave Local Communities Behind campaign will run for five weeks, with each week focussing on one of the five portfolio areas.

The full list of national Federal Election priorities that will be promoted through this campaign is outlined below:



**Economic recovery**

1. An initial injection of Financial Assistance Grants to local government of \$1.3 billion to support communities and jobs and also resolve the current practice of bringing forward two quarterly Financial Assistance Grant payments each year.
2. A commitment to return Financial Assistance Grants to at least one percent of Commonwealth taxation revenue via a phased approach.  
Transport and community infrastructure
3. \$500 million per annum for a four-year continuation of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.
4. A strategic local roads investment program of \$300 million per annum over four years to address road transport first and last mile issues and congestion on local roads.
5. An increase in Roads to Recovery to \$800 million per annum (an additional \$300 million per annum) and the Black Spot Program to \$200 million per annum over four years, while addressing the South Australian road funding anomaly by making the additional \$20 million per annum to SA in 2021-22 and 2022-23 permanent.
6. Continuing the Stronger Regional Digital Connectivity Package at \$55 million over four years.
7. \$200 million over four years to assist councils to develop and implement innovative housing partnerships.

**Building resilience**

8. A targeted disaster mitigation program of \$200 million per annum for four years which will reduce the costs of response and recovery and strengthen community resilience.
9. A commitment to ensuring betterment funding as a core element of disaster recovery funding arrangements.
10. A commitment to include community infrastructure that is publicly accessible and owned, and local government waste, water and wastewater assets under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.
11. A Local Government Climate Response Partnership Fund of \$200 million over four years to enable planning and preparation to minimise the impacts of climate change in local communities and enable councils to achieve climate neutrality as soon as practicable.
12. \$100 million per annum over four years provided directly to local governments to support the capabilities of Indigenous councils and the implementation of the Closing the Gap local/regional voice.

**Circular economy**

13. Support to provide guidance and advice to councils on how to unlock the circular economy locally, particularly in rural, regional, and remote areas.
14. Support to investigate and, if feasible, implement a national bin harmonisation program that will improve kerbside recycling, reduce contamination, and maximise opportunities for reuse.
15. \$100 million per annum over four years to fund local government circular waste innovation projects.

**Intergovernmental relations**

16. Reinstating local government representation to the primary intergovernmental forum in Australia, the National Cabinet.
17. Ensuring local government's ongoing voting membership of other relevant Ministerial forums. ALGA has developed free campaign resources that can be adapted and used by all councils to ensure a consistent and effective approach.

Participating in a national advocacy campaign does not preclude this council from advocating on additional local needs and issues, but it will strengthen the national campaign and support all 537 Australian local governments.

### **Specific local priority projects**

Specific local priority projects of Pyrenees Shire Council are described below:

#### **Project 1 Beaufort Caravan Park rejuvenation**

A strategic Review of the operations and park assets undertaken by Innoviv was completed in January 2022.

Much of the parks' existing assets, such as the amenities blocks ensuites and cabins are over 50 years old, in poor condition and no longer meeting visitor expectations.

An application has been made to the Building Better Regions Fund – Round 6 for a \$2M project (seeking \$1M from BBRF and \$1M PSC).

The project includes a new amenities block and camp kitchen, 6 new cabins, power and sewer upgrades and internal road improvements.

The project will provide a significant uplift in the visitor economy, to support the growth of Beaufort as a destination town in anticipation of a future bypass of the Western Highway.

The Caravan Park currently also provides much needed short and medium term worker accommodation due to the lack of housing rental options in Beaufort.

#### **Project 2 Power and Lighting Upgrades for Community Reserves**

Community sport and recreation is central to the life of our small rural towns.

Many of the facilities have limited power supply impacting on the use of facilities and the ability to upgrade sorts lighting to current standards.

In 2021 Council engaged a power and lighting expert (Martin Butcher) to undertake an assessment of the power and lighting needs of five community recreation reserves (Beaufort, Avoca, Waubra, Lexton and Snake Valley)

The cost to upgrade power and lighting to these facilities is estimated at \$4.3M

\$230,000 has been allocated from the Pyrenees LRCIP phase 3 funding to a stage of the Beaufort Goldfields Reserve upgrade, and an application has been made for \$250,000 to the state funded Community Sports Lighting Program.

#### **Project 3 Beaufort Carngham Road – Bridge 10**

The Beaufort Carngham Road is a strategic link road among the highest traffic volume roads in the Pyrenees, providing an important transport link into western Ballarat and beyond.

Higher Mass Vehicles are restricted on this road due to the load limit / capacity of bridges on the route.

Two bridges on this route need to be replaced to enable future HVM access – One of the bridges (Bridge 11) is scheduled for replacement in 2021/22 - 2022/23 funded in part through the Roads to Recovery program.

Funding for Bridge 10 will remove the remaining weak link in this important route and enable the road to be gazetted for HVM and B-Double access.

The estimated cost of replacement of Bridge 10 is \$1.4M, and an application is being prepared under Round 6 of the Australian Government's Bridges Renewal Program.

Pyrenees Shire Council has around 150 bridges on its local road network and a history of delivering innovative and cost effective bridge renewal projects.

**Project 4 Moonambel Water**

The Moonambel township serves as a centre for wine tourism with numerous wineries within proximity.

Moonambel does not have a potable water supply, and this is a significant disadvantage for residents and for the tourism sector especially in the provision of food and accommodation services.

A feasibility study, technical work and a concept design funded by state, federal and local sources was completed recommending a pipeline from Avoca to supply the town with a potable water supply. Subsequently a business case completed in 2019 identified that the project would add \$6.3M additional value to the regional economy and create 36 new jobs in construction. It also identified a risk of 24 FTE jobs lost due to a lack of reliable water if the project was not undertaken. Council has previously indicated a willingness to commit 1M towards the project providing a further \$7M is sourced from state and federal governments.

**Project 5 Strengthening and making Beaufort Bypass ready**

The future Bypass will have a significant impact on Beaufort, and some businesses will suffer because of the loss of trade and economic activity.

There is an opportunity to strengthen Beaufort and position the town to accommodate future population growth.

Investment in Beaufort is needed to accommodate this growth and to strengthen to economy to mitigate the impacts of the bypass. Investment is needed including for trunk infrastructure for housing, amenity improvements to Beaufort Lake and the recreation reserve precinct, and to support the community in the development of the Old Beaufort Primary School site, and for business transition.

**Project 6 Activate Avoca**

Avoca is a significant population centre within the Pyrenees Shire servicing a large agriculture and wine tourism-based economy.

Council, with the support of the Victorian government has undertaken a range of improvements in Avoca to improve the amenity and safety of the town, and in conjunction with the business and community to develop tourism product.

The town needs additional investment to continue to grow and thrive including the next stages of streetscape works to improve the central business area, and at the rail station arts and events precinct to rejuvenate heritage assets and develop the site for future tourism and community activities. Further investment in trunk infrastructure to support housing will also be needed to increase the housing stock and to accommodate a workforce.

**Project 7 Community Halls**

The various small communities across Pyrenees are dependent on their remaining public halls to serve as meeting spaces for communities to come together for events and activities which is essential in a healthy community.

Halls are used as a place for celebration as well for mourning and as relief and hospitality centres during emergencies.

Many of these halls are in a desperate need of renewal or restoration which is beyond the capacity of a small rural council.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

### Priority 1 - People

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

### Priority 2 - Place

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

### Priority 4 - Economy

- 4b. Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity for commerce and community.
- 4c. Encourage and invest in assets and infrastructure for commerce and community.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

## **CONCLUSION**

This report outlines an advocacy campaign by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) in the lead up to the 2022 Federal Election Campaign. Council support for the campaign is sought through the recommendation below which includes advocacy for a range of local priority projects described in the body of the report.

### **Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That Council:

1. supports the national funding priorities of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), which would contribute an estimated \$6.46 billion per year to Australia's GDP and create 43,444 jobs; and
2. agrees to support and participate in the Australian Local Government Association's advocacy for their endorsed national funding priorities by writing to the local Federal Member(s) of Parliament, all known election candidates in local Federal electorates and the President of the Australian Local Government Association to:
  - a. express support for ALGA's funding priorities;
  - b. identify priority local projects and programs that could be progressed with the additional financial assistance from the Federal Government being sought by ALGA; and
  - c. seek funding commitments from the members, candidates and their parties for these identified local projects and programs including those described in this report.

**CARRIED**

### **13.4.3. 2021 REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REVIEW**

**Presenter:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**Author:** Jim Nolan - Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 22/24/02

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council about a recently completed Regional Telecommunications Review and to advocate for improved telecommunications.

#### **BACKGROUND**

A Regional Telecommunications Review was completed in December 2021 by an independent review committee and reported to the Australian Government.

The committee identified a “step change” in the demand for telecommunications which warranted a “step change” in the policies and programs which support the delivery of telecommunications services in rural and regional Australia.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

A copy of the Review report is attached to this report and a summary of the Key Findings is copied below:

##### ***The ‘Patchwork Quilt’ of connectivity***

- 1. Increased coordination and investment between the Australian, state and territory governments is needed to address a ‘patchwork quilt’ approach to connectivity in the regions.*
- 2. Local councils and other regional stakeholders are increasingly expected to facilitate telecommunications service delivery, but are not appropriately resourced to identify connectivity needs and support the deployment of suitable solutions. Relates to Recommendations:*
- 3. Supply side issues, including backbone fibre and spectrum access, are barriers to competition and innovation in regional telecommunications markets.*

##### ***Reliability, resilience and redundancy***

- 4. There is an urgent need to consider the future of the Universal Service Obligation in order to provide reliable voice services to rural and remote consumers.*
- 5. There are significant issues with the maintenance and repair of telecommunications networks, particularly copper landlines, in regional, rural and remote areas.*
- 6. In instances of natural disasters and emergencies, connectivity is significantly impacted by power and network outages. This reduces access to recovery and support.*
- 7. Mobile coverage continues to improve but expanding reliable coverage to priority areas is becoming more difficult.*

##### ***The demand for data***

- 8. Increased ongoing demand for data on regional, rural and remote mobile and fixed wireless networks is not always being met, causing network congestion issues.*
- 9. Although Sky Muster Plus has improved access to data, Sky Muster users are frustrated by insufficient data allowances, high latency and reliability issues.*
- 10. Current minimum broadband speeds are mostly adequate but will need to increase over time.*

11. *There are emerging technology options to meet the demand for data but their service performance has not yet been validated.*

### **Connectivity literacy and digital inclusion**

12. *Regional consumers, businesses and local governments experience difficulty in resolving telecommunications issues and providers are not adequately addressing the complex needs of regional users.*

13. *Regional consumers, businesses and local government need access to independent advice and improved connectivity literacy to support them in making informed connectivity choices.*

14. *Predictive coverage maps and other public information do not accurately reflect on-the-ground telecommunications experience. There is significant misinformation about the availability of telecommunications services.*

15. *The cost of telecommunications services remains high for vulnerable groups in remote Australia. This is impacting on their access to essential services.*

16. *Continued engagement with Indigenous Australians in regional, rural and remote communities is needed to address ongoing issues of access, affordability and digital ability*

### **Specific Telecommunications Proposals for Pyrenees**

In respect of internet connectivity, Council officers have been working with nbnCo to develop proposals for improved internet access in communities in the Pyrenees. This work has principally involved Moonambel and Lexton involving proposals for fixed wireless services at these towns. Funding has been sought through the (Commonwealth) Regional Communication Infrastructure Fund and a case made to the (state) Connecting Victoria Fund for Lexton where a better business case can be established. The proposals involve several hundred thousand dollars and contributions from the state are required to match any commonwealth funding. This is currently a work in progress; however, it is important for Council continues to advocate for funding for these improvements.

The Mobile Blackspot Funding Program is another commonwealth fund for which Pyrenees and other Central Highlands Councils have long advocated. Five rounds of the fund have resulted in several base stations (towers) being funded including at Landsborough West, Landsborough, Moonambel, Amphitheatre, Waubra, Lexton and Mena Park. A further round of this funding is underway, and a site in the vicinity of Yalla-Y-Pora / Stoneleigh (in the vicinity of the Lakaput grain receival centre) has been put forward as a priority site.

### **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2021-rtirc-report-a-step-change-in-demand [**13.4.3.1** - 112 pages]

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

### **CONCLUSION**

The 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review has been completed and the key findings highlighted in this report. In addition, specific proposals for improved internet access and mobile phone coverage are outlined seeking ongoing advocacy by Council.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Robert Vance**

That Council:

1. Notes the 2021 Regional Telecommunications Review findings; and
2. Continues to advocate for improved internet access and mobile phone coverage for communities across the shire.

**CARRIED**



## 14. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

### Cr Ferrari

- Attended the Councillor Cuppa in Carranballac and the March Briefing Sessions.
- Attended the opening of the new synthetic green at the Beaufort Bowls Club which was a good day.
- Had a number of meetings with the Old Beaufort Primary School Committee.
- Also attended the Beaufort Football Netball Club's Truck and Car Show. It was a great event, albeit the weather, with many fantastic trucks and cars on view.
- Was involved in the Business 4 Beaufort (B4B) strategic planning session.

### Cr Kehoe

- Attended the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meeting. Main discussions were on the fire activities over the summer period and also the COVID pandemic. Council is assessing the roadside slashing program to make the program as effective as possible.
- It is so important to thank CFA for their attendance of a number of fires.
- Also attended the Councillor Cuppa at Carranballac.
- The Library Van is a great resource for smaller towns.
- Highlight at how lucky we are living where we live, considering what is occurring around the world.
- Thoughts go out to our fellow Australians in QLD and NSW in the flooded areas.

### Cr Clark

- The MAV has had a little win with the State Government in relation to rate exemption which is really pleasing.
- Advice to Councils in relation to the floods in NSW and QLD to use existing channels to provide support such as Red Cross.
- Attended HLLN meetings and also CVGA meetings. Rob Law was recently farewelled from CVGA and Rob made a great impact on CVGA.
- Attended the Raglan Hall afternoon tea to celebrate the work they have done recently. It is looking really good and is a credit to the Raglan community for their persistence in securing funding.
- Attended the Stop Ausnet Towers Group meeting in Waubra. The group has held community meetings along the length of the proposed line. Looking forward to having the group address Council if this can be organised.

### Cr Vance

- Attended the Timber Towns meeting and one of the main discussions was around the State Government closing the forests which impacts on our own forests.
- Attended the Rural Councils Victoria meeting. Had an address from the Royal Life Saving Society. There was a recommendation from RLS that Councils would be responsible for all waterways which is not the case.
- Regional Development Victoria has approved a grant of \$500K for rural councils in Victoria.
- There is likely to be a Federal election in early May.
- Attended the Carranballac Cuppa.

- Chaired the AGM of Glenpatrick Recreation Reserve Committee of Management.
- Reiterate Cr Kehoe's comments on the flooding in NSW and QLD and also the terrible events in Europe.
- Looking for the O'Connor Park to be completed and opened which will be a great attribute.

#### Cr Eason

- We are really lucky where we live however we aren't immune to natural disasters so it's really important to be prepared.
- Commenced discussions with various members of parliament and local members, both federal and state for the up coming elections.
- Attended the bowls centenary in Beaufort.
- Attended a meeting with the Avoca Primary School regarding cyber safety. Susan McLean ran a children's session and also an adult's session. We need to be aware of what our children are doing on their devices and to guide them to make good choices. Cr Clark added that there are sessions coming up in Ballarat and Maryborough and it would be good to advertise these sessions.

## 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.

#### Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari

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

15.1 – Awarding of Contract C2021-022 Bridge 86

**CARRIED**

*The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council 15 March 2022 stopped at 8.18pm to consider confidential items.*

### RE-OPENING OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

#### Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Tanya Kehoe

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

**CARRIED**

*The live stream re-commenced at 8.37pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential item discussed in closed Council which is noted below.*

The contract for the bridge replacement on Lamplough Greenhill Creek Road has been awarded to Enoch Civil P/L and the work will proceed as soon as possible.

## **16. CLOSE OF MEETING**

Ordinary Meeting of Council 15 March 2022 closed at 8.37pm.

Minutes of the Meeting confirmed \_\_\_\_\_

2022

Mayor Cr Ron Eason