



**Pyrenees**  
Shire Council

# Minutes

## Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 19 November 2024  
Council Chambers  
Beaufort Council Offices,  
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

*Wadawurrung Country*

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



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## 1. WELCOME

Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe welcomed all to the meeting.

## PRESENT

**Mayor:** Cr Tanya Kehoe

**Councillors:** Rebecca Wardlaw, Megan Phelan, Damian Ferrari, Simon Tol

**Chief Executive Officer:** Jim Nolan

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

**Director of Corporate and Community Services:** Kathy Bramwell

**EA to CEO and Councillors:** Chantelle Sandlant (minutes)

**Senior Communications Officer:** Leah Heinrich

## 2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe read the livestream preamble.

## 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

## 4. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

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

Cr Tanya Kehoe declared of conflict of interest (indirect) in relation to item 10.2.2 - Planning Application PA24040 - 325 Waubra - Talbot Road, Waubra, 2 Lot Subdivision.

## 6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 10 September 2024
- Closed Meeting of Council held on 10 September 2024 and
- Special Meeting of Council held on 24 September 2024

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

## CARRIED

## 7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the previous meeting held 10 September 2024.

## 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Trevor Davey of Waterloo

#### *Question one:*

With the massive cost cutting last year (2023) and continuation this year (2024) by the Victorian Government of road spending within VicRoads, what is the strategy of Pyrenees Council to source other or new funding to support your difficult period?

#### *Response:*

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

There has been a great deal of commentary and public statements made in respect of the level of funding by the Victoria Government on the state road network and I don't propose to make any comment about the adequacy of that funding. However, Council regularly meets with transport Victoria representatives, and we will continue to advocate for funding to ensure the standard of road maintenance and renewal of the state managed assets is in line with our community expectations.

In respect of the local road network for which Pyrenees Shire Council is responsible, the primary source of road funding that Council receives comes from the Commonwealth government through programs such as the Financial Assistance Grants and Roads to Recovery fund. Council partners with peak bodies such as the MAV, ALGA, the Australian Local Government Association and Rural Councils Victoria in developing a case for continued investment by the Commonwealth in local road funding. This is a critical part of council's advocacy to the Commonwealth government.

The Victorian government is also acutely aware of the need for additional road funding for rural councils and the Victorian government has recently initiated a Safer Local Roads funding program to address road safety issues on the local road network and council is actively working with transport Victoria in the local government sector to implement this program.

### Natasha Carlisle of Avoca

#### *Question one:*

Is there any plan for development of the land that backs onto 238 High Street, Avoca? In the Avoca Framework and Main Street Plan, there is a proposed retirement village, however no further planning that I can find.

#### *Response:*

Jim Nolan thanked Ms Carlisle for the question and provided the following response:

The Avoca Framework and main street plan was developed and endorsed by Council in 2019. At that time, there was a private developer that had proposed a retirement village for land in Avoca generally on the vacant land that backs onto properties in the vicinity of 238 High Street, for which council issued development approval. That development has not occurred, and that Planning Permit has now lapsed.

The property was recently placed on the market and council saw an opportunity to purchase the land and secure the site so that it could be appropriately developed in future. Council ownership of the land ensures that the land is not land banked and stays vacant for many years whilst there is a need for development in Avoca.

While council has secured the land, council has not yet allocated funding for the planning for a future development at this site. That will be a matter for the newly elected council to consider as part of the 2025/26 budget process.

*Question two:*

If there will be residential development of Question 1's land, will new roads be built? If so, will there be the opportunity for 238 High Street, Avoca to have a rear access driveway?

*Response:*

Jim Nolan thanked Ms Carlisle for the question and provided the following response:

Should funding be allocated, it would be appropriate to prepare a development plan for the whole of the site including access to the rear of adjoining properties and this would be subject to a planning permit and consultation process.

George Kirsanovs of Beaufort

*Question one:*

I preface my question by stating that I read with great interest the written material that all of the councillors that have been successful and the ones who haven't been successful in making themselves available to their communities for election, very interesting, very courageous because you put on the line those things that you think you can contribute to. I wish you all well and congratulations on being selected.

My question follows on from that, in most of the council meetings I have attended in the past, there is a section where councillors declare where they have been to members of the community or community organisations since the last meeting. This is very important because in a sense everyone sitting around the table made a point about representing their communities' interests. I would like to think that that practice will continue because it will be in fact be a form of evidence that you people have put your credentials on the line and I wish you well.

*Response:*

Cr Kehoe thanked Mr Kirsanovs for the question and provided the following response:

Reporting of Councillor activity will continue for at least tonight and I believe that is something that we would like to continue to do as councillors.



MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	10 September 2024 commenced at 1.00pm and closed at 5.15pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	<div>1. Pyrenees Libraries</div> <div>2. Western Renewables Link</div> <div>3. Brewster Windfarm</div> <div>4. Safer Local Roads and Street Program</div> <div>5. Capital Works Program</div> <div>6. Avoca Flood Mitigation Project</div> <div>7. Communications</div> <div>8. CEO Update</div>		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe		Cr David Clark Cr Ron Eason
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Rachel Blackwell (Manager Planning & Development Services) – items 2 & 3 Daniel Potter (Manager Engineering) – items 4 & 5 Jacinda Perry (Community Safety & Amenity Officer) – item 1		
Visitors	David Shapero (RE Futures) – item 3 David Heaton (RE Futures) – item 3 Sophie Gluyas (RE Futures) – item 3		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil			

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council notes this report.

**CARRIED**

## 10. ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 10.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

#### 10.1.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

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

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

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

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

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

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update councilors on the performance of the Shires economy and activities being undertaken by the Economic Development and Tourism team since July 2024.

#### BACKGROUND

According to the most recent data available, the Shires economy has generated \$835- million annually in output (gross sales) provides 2,219 jobs, a Gross Regional Product of \$443 million and as at June 2023, has an estimated residential population of 7,786.

A summary of the Shires key propulsive Sectors is provided in the table below which illustrates the importance of agriculture's contribution in generating 36.7% of output and providing 29% of jobs across the Shire noting the wine manufacturing also plays an important role in the contribution of primary production and tourism.

#### Key Propulsive Sectors

Industry Sector	Output		Jobs		Value Add	
	\$M	%	\$M	%	\$M	%
Agriculture (includes sheep grains and cattle)	306.6 (273.2)	36.7 (32.7)	651 (556)	29.3 (25.1)	143.1 (127.5)	35.7 (31.8)
Public Administration and Safety	98.6	11.8	359	16.2	56.5	14.1
Construction	88.7	10.6	168	7.6	26.2	6.5
Manufacturing (Includes wine manufacturing)	72.9 (56.1)	8.7 (6.7)	154 (113)	6.9 (5.1)	16.0 (11.8)	4.0 (2.9)
Tourism	31.0	3.7	136	6.1	11.4	2.8

Source: Remplan

The 2020 Economic Development Strategy identified the following priorities to support the agriculture sector:

- *Continue to invest sufficient funds from Council's annual budget (including access to funds from other levels of government) to improve and maintain the road network to facilitate safe and efficient freight of goods to and from farms.*



- *Maintain a focus on key infrastructure projects including reliable water and energy supplies for this industry and communities in general.*
- *Explore opportunities for improved telecommunications to support the adoption of innovation in agriculture, tourism, and to meet community needs.*

Hence the importance Council has placed on investing in its road network for the productivity of the sector in transporting inputs and commodities efficiently to and from farm properties over a long period of time. Councils' investment into roads in the current financial year is budgeted at around \$7.8 million.

Furthermore, Council has been active in partnering with Central Goldfields and Northern Grampians Shire Councils, GWMWater and Central Highlands Water to secure more reliable water supplies through the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply project. A separate report is provided in the Council agenda on this project which aims to provide a highly secure and reliable high quality water supply to farmers, intensive animal operators, vineyards and rural communities across an estimated 354,000 hectares.

Similarly, there has been collaboration undertaken with Telstra, NBNCo and Regional Tech Hub throughout 2024 to develop a Digital Connectivity plan for Pyrenees Shire. The aim of this plan is to support improved digital connectivity and literacy for residents across the Shire. A report to Council on this project is scheduled for the December Council meeting.

### **Seasonal Agricultural update**

Prevailing dry conditions in SW Victoria resulted in the Victorian Minister for Agriculture announcing the "On Farm Drought Infrastructure Grants Program" open on 18 October 2024.

Eligible farmers can apply for co-contribution grants of up to \$5,000 for on-farm improvements including water infrastructure upgrades, stock containment areas, grain and fodder storage and drought management tools.

The \$12.1 million grants program is open to farmers in Local Government Areas in the south west that have been most severely impacted by ongoing drought conditions. These Local Government Areas include Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Warrnambool, Moyne, Corangamite, Colac Otway, Surf Coast, Ararat, Pyrenees, Golden Plains and Greater Geelong, as well as the southern half of West Wimmera Shire.

These grants are part of a \$13.53 million Drought Support Package which also includes a \$1.43 million investment in farmer wellbeing, technical decision-making advice and a dedicated Regional Drought Coordinator who will help ensure support is reaching those who need it.

Details of these grants were circulated via Councils Industry Newsletter to Council's database of more than 500 businesses on 28 October.

Council also held a drop-in session at the Avoca Information and Community Centre on Friday 1 November which was advertised through social media, newspapers and agricultural networks.

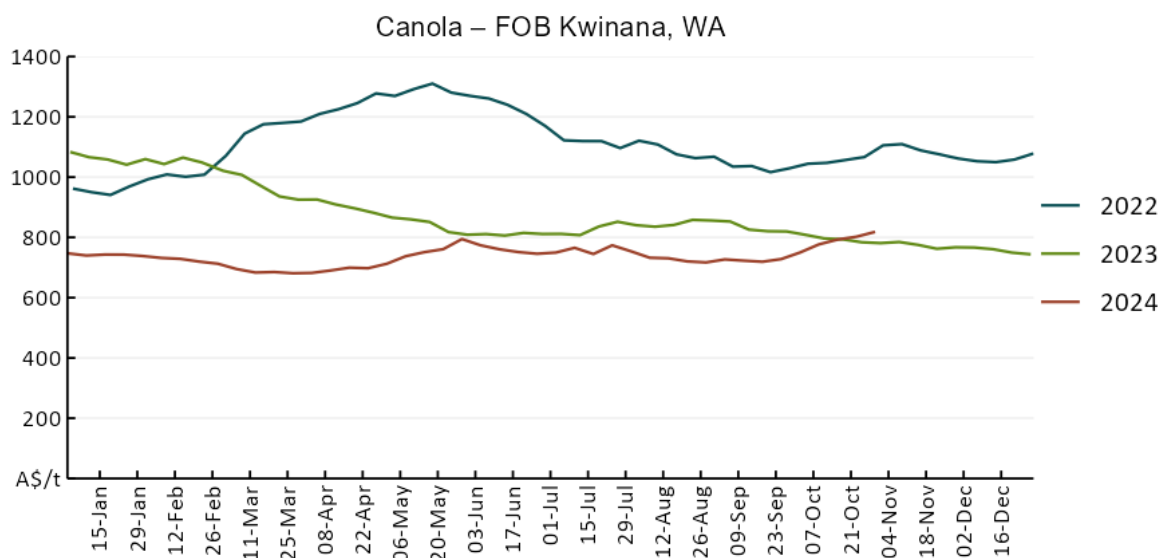
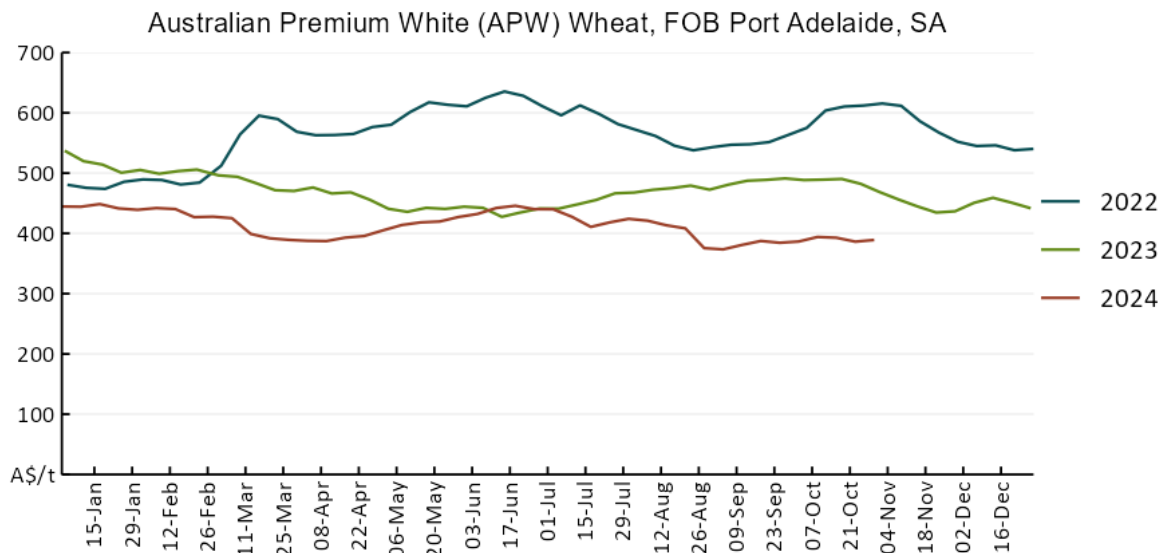
There have been reports of widespread frost damage across the region further impacting a dry season with many farmers making hay from crops that would normally be harvested. The full financial extent of these impacts is unlikely to be known until after harvest and somewhat dependant on demand for hay for those reliant on cropping while feed costs are ongoing for most livestock producers.

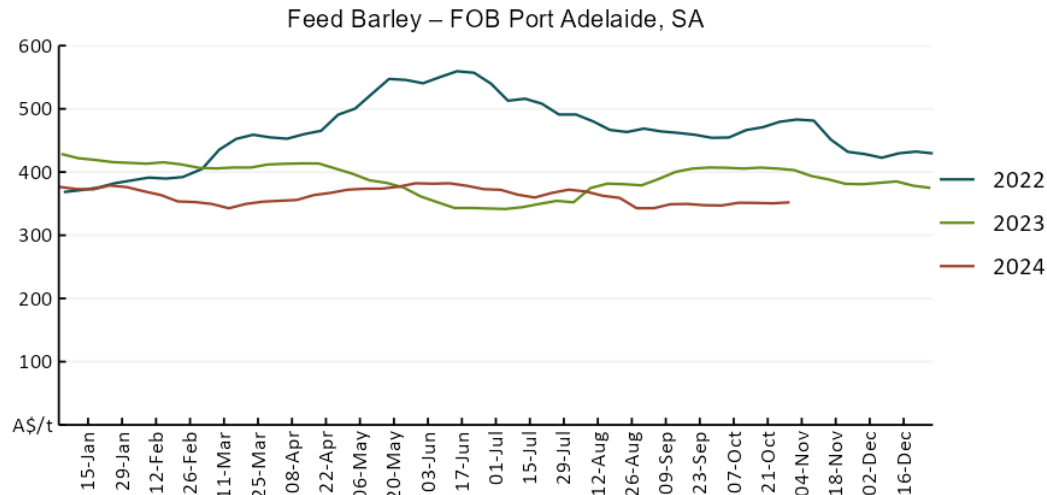
## Commodity Prices

Export grain prices quoted by the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fishing (DAFF) as at 31/10/24 are:

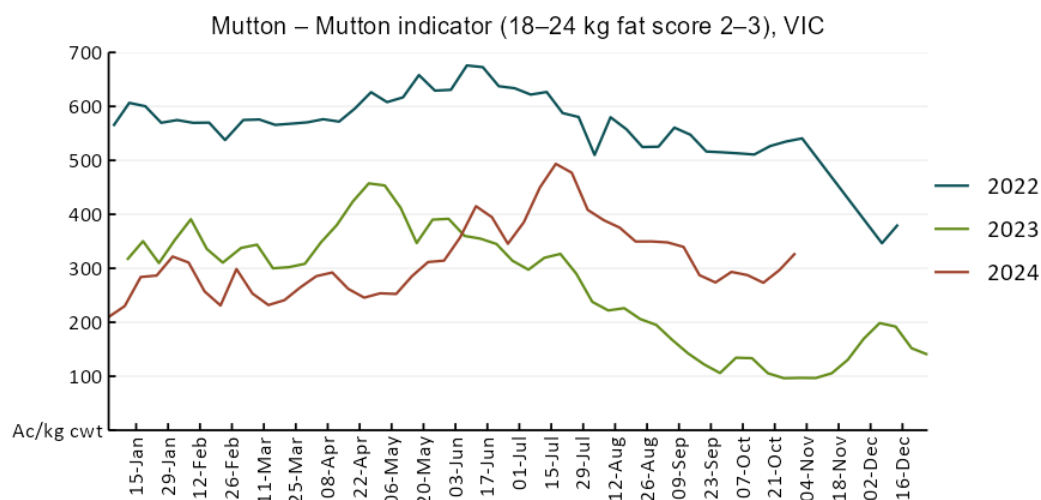
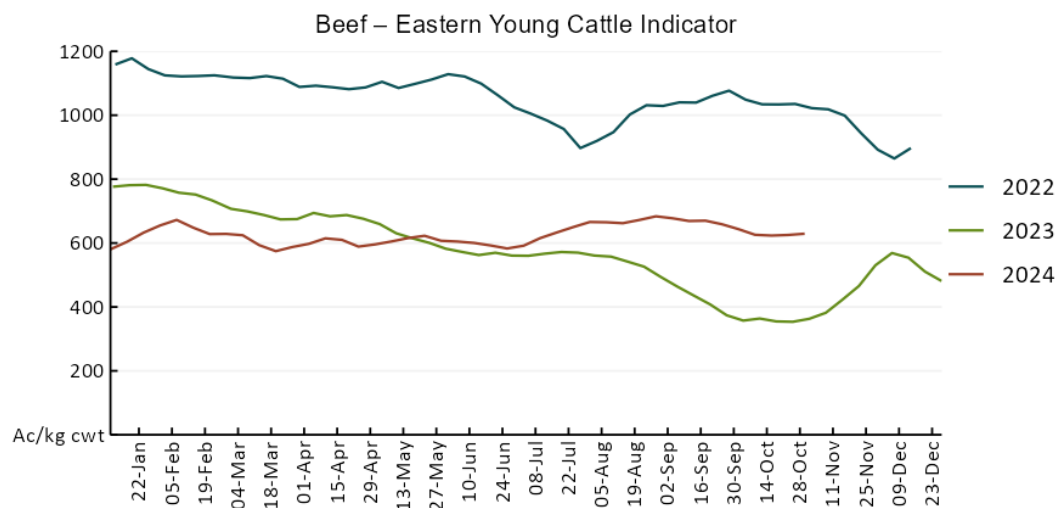
- APW milling wheat, Port Adelaide SA \$389- per tonne (annual change -15%).
- Feed Barley, Port Adelaide SA \$352- per tonne (annual change -11%).
- Canola – Kwinana WA \$818- per tonne (annual change +4%).

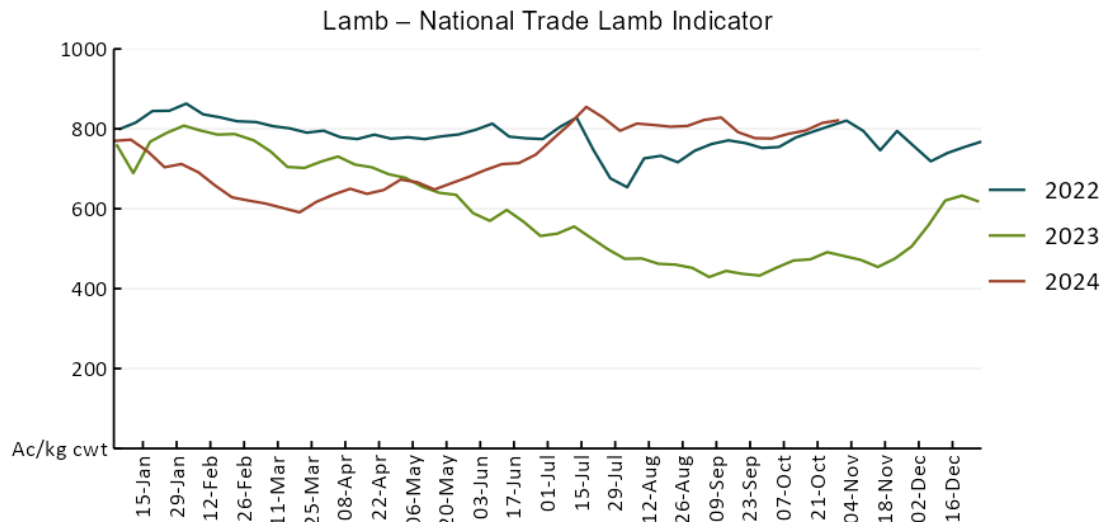
The following graphs from ABARES illustrate changes in commodity prices.



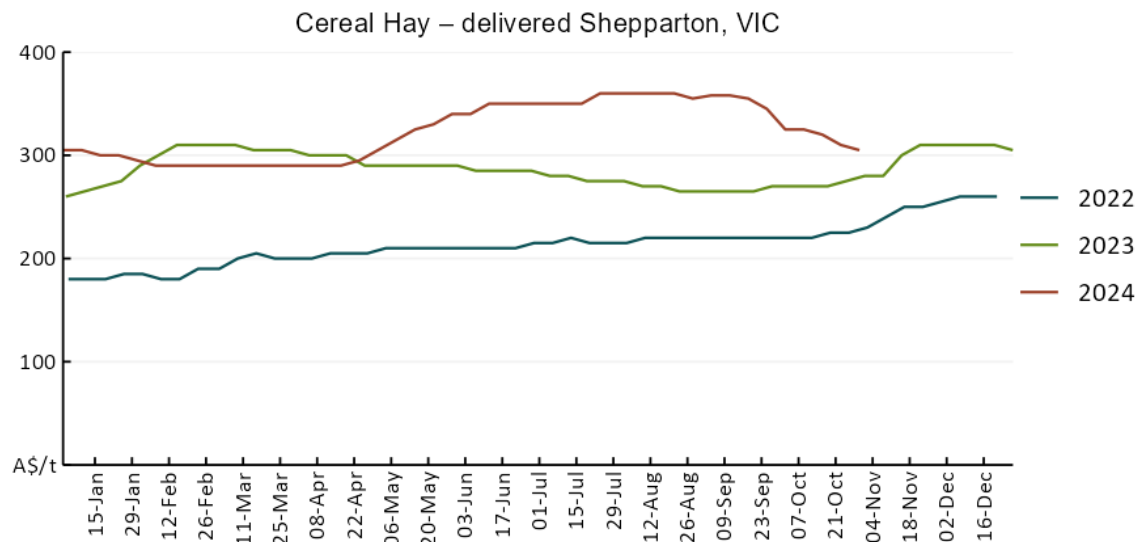


### Livestock Prices





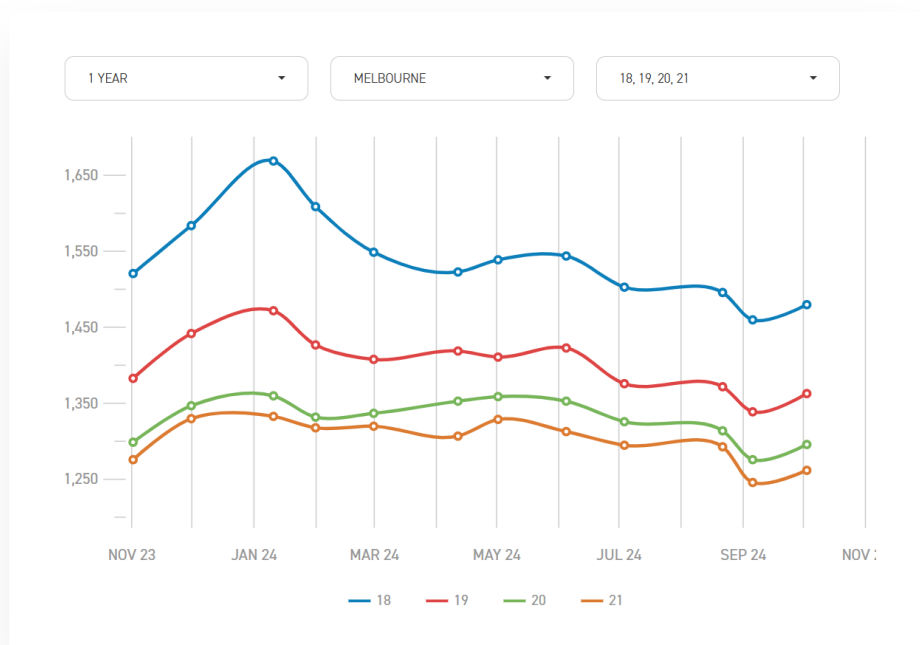
## Hay



Source: <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/data/weekly-commodity-price-update/australian-agricultural-prices>

## Wool





Source: <https://www.wool.com/market-intelligence/weekly-price-reports/20242025/week-18-october-2024/>

### **Livestock Farm Monitor Project**

The LFMP estimates the economic performance of surveyed sheep and cattle farms by collecting detailed physical and financial farm information.

The objective and timely data generated through this project is relied on by industry and government decision-makers. The project has been funded by Agriculture Victoria for more than 50 years.

Financial parameter bars:	Northern Victoria (38 farms)		South West Victoria (64 farms)	
Year	20 year average	2022-23	20 year average	2022-23
Gross farm income (\$/ha)	\$668	\$961	1009	\$1,227
Variable costs (\$/ha)	\$247	\$380	403	\$581
Overhead costs (\$/ha)	\$285	\$400	302	\$360
Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) (\$/ha)	\$136	\$181	\$304	\$286
Return on assets (%)	1.8%	0.8%	3.3%	1.50%
Return on equity (%)	1.2%	1.3%	3.3%	1.4%
Physical parameter bars:				
Effective area (ha)		882		1,658
Stock rate (DSE/ha)	9.8	12.1	15.6	15.7

Key points from the Farm Monitor Report for the Southwest area are:

- Gross farm income decreased for the first time in 10 years
- Second highest regional variable costs in 18 years
- Prime lamb and wool sheep gross margins fell 28% and was below the 3-year average
- Phosphorus application rates to pasture reduced by 30% from 2021-22 levels and for the fourth consecutive year
- Earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) halved from the record highs of 2021-22
- Average annual increase in equity (net worth) by \$787/ha.

Source: Agriculture Victoria

### ***Timber Industry***

An announcement was made by the Victorian Government on 23 May 2023 that native timber harvesting is due to cease in Victoria on 1 January 2024, having been brought forward from 2030.

The decision has had a direct influence on timber industry operators nearby to Beaufort.

The government has announced an additional \$200M in support for workers and their families to transition away from native timber logging which brings the total government support for the sector to \$875M.

The Forestry Transition Program May 2023 included:

- Support for workers
- Training, employment and mental health support to native timber workers and supply chain workers and their families
- Transition packages for mills
- Support for harvest and haulage workers

While a \$36M Forestry Transition Fund to support timber industry communities has also been announced and was opened for applications in August 2023, the Pyrenees Shire falls outside of the locations eligible for funding.

The Fund was announced to support actions to grow businesses and generate economic activity that will create or retain jobs in towns and communities affected by the transition away from native timber harvesting.

### **Recent Economic Development Unit Activities**

Economic Development activities since the beginning of July 2024 have included:

- Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply Project (SWNP)
- Beaufort Linear Masterplan
- Beaufort Lake Caravan Park Development
- Digital Connectivity Plan
- Drought response
- Tourism and Events activities

The Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply project and Beaufort Linear Masterplan have been reported on separately in this council agenda.

## **Beaufort Lake Caravan Park Development**

After completing an operational review and masterplan of the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park in early 2021 Council was successful in having a \$500,000- grant approved by the Victorian Government under the Regional Infrastructure Fund in October 2022. These funds are being matched by a \$500,000- contribution by Council allowing a \$1 million dollar budget to deliver phase one of an estimated \$3.84 million redevelopment program.

Phase one includes installation of three accommodation facilities:

1. A two bedroom cabin designed to be compliant for people with disabilities
2. A duplex unit comprising two cabins and
3. A motel block consisting of four rooms with ensuites available in each room

Planning approval was passed by Council in June this year and Council awarded contracts for construction of the above buildings at the September Council meeting. Construction of these transportable accommodation facilities is now under way and delivery expected in February - March 2025.

Further to the above, civil works are being undertaken during phase one to connect utilities, address wastewater connections, stormwater requirements, drainage and parking. These works are being scheduled to minimise impacts on tourists over the peak Christmas holiday period.

A subsequent application has been made to the Victorian Government for an additional \$1.5 million to complete phase two and a portion of phase three of the redevelopment plan. If successful then these funds will be used to implement the following phases.

### Phase Two

- Renovate five ensuite blocks
- Instal 3 superior two-bedroom cabins
- Road construction work

### Phase 3 (a)

- Demolition and replacement of the camp kitchen to include an indoor recreation room overlooking the lake
- Renovate the current amenities block to comply with DDA requirements
- Build 12 new powered sites
- Connection of underground utilities, power, water, sewer etc to cabins and powered sites

## **Drought**

Council is working closely with Agriculture Victoria and the Rural Financial Counselling Service to link farmers to support on managing dry seasons and drought conditions presently.

Regular updates to farmers are provided through Industry Newsletters which are sent to a business database of over 500 email addresses.

The Commonwealth Government has also funded the development of Regional Drought Resilience Plans throughout rural regions across Australia. The Central Highlands RDRP has been under development over the past two years and identifies seven themes which are to be addressed to build the resilience of agricultural communities to drought.

Council has been an active member of the reference group formed to develop the plan which has recently been published.

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/central-highlands-rdr-plan.pdf>

Now that the plan has now been endorsed by higher levels of government the next phase is implementation of the plan and a Council representative has been included in the implementation group.

The role of the implementation group will be to roll out programs that address the seven key themes identified in the plan which are summarised as:

1. Collaboration, coordination and networking
2. People and communities
3. Farm enterprises
4. Industry, businesses and agencies
5. Landscapes
6. Education and learning

### **Tourism**

Tourism activities since June have included:

- The Spring marketing campaign “Unplug and Unwind”
- The Summer “Play in the Pyrenees” marketing campaign will be launched shortly
- An update to the Pyrenees Visitor Guide is about to take place. The guide is distributed to Visitor Information Centres throughout the state and amongst accommodation providers across the Shire.

Council has also been in discussion with DEECA about recovery and repair of walking tracks at Mt Buangor State Park, and Mt Cole following fires earlier this year.

Endeavours are also being made to create gravel cycle routes on existing DEECA roads in State Forest areas nearby to Beaufort. Developing cycle tourism has been identified as a priority tourism objective in the recently endorsed Local Area Action Plan, which outlines Councils tourism strategy to 2033.

### **Events**

The spring summer period is a busy time for events and this year is no exception.

Some of the larger events include Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally, Avoca Cup and the Beaufort Agricultural Show.

The following events occur during November:

- Little halls tour - Mojave Echo - Trawalla Friday 1 November, 6.30pm
- Trawalla Hall
- Halloween dress up party - Flywheel Friday 1 November, Flywheel Bar & Cafe, Beaufort
- Lake Goldsmith steam rally 2 & 3 November 10.00am - 5.00pm Lake Goldsmith
- Barkly Outdoors, Saturday 2 November, 4pm Barkly Hall
- Beaufort Art Trax - 10th birthday, Sunday 3 November, 3.00pm Beaufort Railway Station
- Grim Fawcner & Friend - Flywheel Friday 8 November, 7pm, Flywheel Bar & Cafe, Beaufort
- Paint & Sip sessions @ Mrs Bakers Still House Saturday 9 November, 1.00pm - 4.00pm  
Mrs Bakers Still House, Glenpatrick
- Waterloo Car Boot sale Saturday 9 November, 9.00am - 2.00pm, Waterloo Hall
- Two Vintage Ducks pop up shop 9 & 10 November, 10.00am - 4.00pm, Grape Farm Winery
- Daybreakers car show & BBQ; Sunday 10 November, 11.00am-3pm Snake Valley Recreation Reserve
- Wimmera Hills pop up @ The Flywheel Bar & Café, Friday 15 November, 5.00pm - 7.00pm Flywheel Bar & Cafe, Beaufort



Council is taking a lead role in delivering Beaufort by Twilight which has been scheduled for Friday evening 6 December to activate the towns shopping precinct in the lead up to Christmas. Once again, the event will include a town market, roving entertainment and face painting while some businesses will host their own entertainment activities on the evening.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Redevelopment of the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park is estimated to inject a further \$2M per year into the local economy and create twenty new jobs during construction and two new ongoing jobs.

The business case reflects a cost benefit ratio of 1.53, demonstrating a good return on investment for the community long term and worthy of additional investment to complete the redevelopment of the park.

The outcome of a grant application for \$1.5 million from the Victorian Governments Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund should be known shortly according to the program guidelines.

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

Priority 4 - Economy

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

Enabling Principles

- b. Provide transparency and accountability

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

This report provides an update on Economic Development and Tourism activities undertaken since July.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

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

There are no additional financial or risk elements arising from this Council update.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Council continues to invest in projects that deliver positive outcomes for business enterprises and residents across the Shire through the economic development projects summarised in this report and through ongoing support for events organisations and initiatives that support the tourist sector.

#### **OFFICE RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Notes the market trends impacting the agriculture sector and other aspects detailed in this report.
2. Continues to participate in regional coordination activity in response to the dry seasonal conditions impacting the region.
3. Continues to invest in, and advocate for infrastructure projects that support the productivity of the farm sector and provide broader community and economic benefits to the region.
4. Receives a further update on the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park in early 2025.

## **AN ALTERNATIVE MOTION WAS PUT FORWARD**

### **Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Notes the market trends impacting the agriculture sector and other aspects detailed in this report.
2. Continues to participate in regional coordination activity in response to the dry seasonal conditions impacting the region.
3. Continues to invest in, and advocate for infrastructure projects that support the productivity of the farm sector and provide broader community and economic benefits to the region.
4. Receives a further update on the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park in early 2025.
5. Undertake a detailed study on agricultural options for the region giving consideration to the natural and built assets and those issues affecting the agricultural sector including drought, climate change and options for value added agriculture.

**CARRIED**

### 10.1.2. SOUTHERN WIMMERA AND NORTHEAST PYRENEES WATER SUPPLY

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

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

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

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

**File No:** 60/12/04

#### PURPOSE

To seek Councils endorsement of the business case for the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply project and to confirm Councils commitment to advocate for the funding necessary to deliver the project.

#### BACKGROUND

Communities in the districts north of Avoca and between Elmhurst, Beazley's Bridge and Glenorchy are primarily reliant on rainfall runoff for domestic and stock water supplies. During extended periods of drought in the past two decades water security and access have been severely impacted. The proposed Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply project could improve water access and security for these drought affected communities.

In March 2021 a public meeting held at Natte Yallock involving a range of key stakeholders and members of the community was facilitated to explore longer term, strategic water supply options for the areas described above.

The Victorian Farmers Federation and Northern Grampians Shire Council also advised the interests of the farming communities between Navarre, Beazley's Bridge and Glenorchy in having access to a more secure water supply. The lack of a reliable water supply threatens the long-term viability of many local agribusinesses and inhibits future investment and development in the region. This lack of a reliable water supply has also adversely impacted the availability of water for social and recreational pursuits, water for essential fire-fighting requirements and for environmental purposes. It was also noted that a number of towns within the project area currently rely on ground water supplies, some of which require desalination, and that Moonambel, one of the Shires wine tourism destinations, remains without a reticulated town water supply.

In response to the lack of water security experienced in the region, the Pyrenees Shire Council (acting as the proponent for the project) was successfully applied for and received funding of \$300,000 from the Victorian Governments Infrastructure Fast Track Fund to undertake a feasibility study into a fit for purpose water supply for the region. The project commenced at the beginning of 2023 with matching funds for the government grant comprised a contribution of \$15,000- from each of the project partners, GWMWater, Central Highlands Water, Pyrenees, Northern Grampians and Central Goldfields Shire Councils.

A Project Control Group was established to provide governance input from key stakeholders throughout the delivery of the project and comprises membership of representatives from Regional Development Victoria, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Department of Agriculture, the Wimmera and North Central Catchment Management Authorities, Dja Dja Wurrung, Barengi Gadjin and Eastern Maar Traditional Owners, Victorian Farmers Federation and the abovementioned project partners.

Council engaged GWMWater as the lead contractor to deliver the feasibility study as in the event the project is successful then the proposed water infrastructure will become the responsibility of the water authority. Furthermore, the anticipated supply is from GWMWater storages, and the authority has a vast technical experience and expertise in delivering this type of project. Examples include the Wimmera Mallee

Pipeline, Landsborough Valley Pipeline, South West Loddon Pipeline and currently has the East Grampians Water Supply under construction.

The proposed area of interest for the Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply covers 354,000 hectares across a significant portion of the Pyrenees Shire and into neighbouring Northern Grampians and Central Goldfields Shires as illustrated in the map attached to this report.

Each of the council partners issued letters to landowners within the project footprint at the outset of the project. The 2,500 or so property owners who were written to were invited to submit expressions of interest where they would like a water connection to their property.

The feasibility study was completed in mid 2023 after a positive response to the expression of interest phase and technical investigations demonstrated the project was feasible.

With surplus funds remaining available from the project budget upon completion of the feasibility study the project progressed to a business case in the latter part of 2023.

The draft business case was circulated to members of the PCG in mid-2024 and has now largely been completed following a workshop at Moonambel in early August 2024. The workshop was attended by around 30 key stakeholders including farmers, wineries, Country Fire Authority, traditional owners and community members. The objective of this workshop was to present the draft business case to understand whether any important elements were missing.

Throughout the delivery of the project to date there have been a series of events to engage the communities of interest. These included:

- Public meetings at Natte Yallock and Navarre in February and October 2023 and August 2024, plus a meeting at Bealiba in October 2023,
- Drop in sessions were held at various locations across the three Shires in October 2023,
- Quarterly newsletters have been issued to landholders who have submitted expressions of interest,
- A workshop at Moonambel in August 2024

## **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

To date the project is being delivered well within the project budget and Council has received

- A feasibility study which confirmed the project as being feasible
- An Investment Logic Map and Benefits Map. ILM's are used by the Victorian Governments Department of Treasury and Finance to inform its potential investment decisions
- A draft business case. While the business case is largely completed it is being maintained in draft pending further consultation with traditional owners with the aim of including a cultural watering plan.

The draft business case has been reviewed by members of the Project Control Group and a copy of the document has been circulated separately to Councillors. The document however requires state agency clearance before it is ready for public circulation.

With project expenditure falling well within the project budget at this time, a variation to the project is being sought to further explore cultural watering objectives of traditional owners as noted above and to undertake further landholder liaison.

The business case shows a Cost Benefit Ratio of 1.47 with the cost of construction estimated \$139-million and contingency allowance of \$20.6million taking the anticipated project cost to \$158.6 million. The funding strategy for the project can be found in Section 9.4 on page 61 of the business case.



The business case indicates there are significant contributions required from the Federal and State Governments to allow the project to proceed to construction. There are no cash contributions expected of local governments to fund the construction phase of the project.

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

Priority 4 - Economy

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

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

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

Broad consultation of the community has occurred throughout completion of the feasibility study and business case as outlined in this report.

This has included consultation with community members, primary producers, traditional owners and various government agencies throughout the project via:

- Public meetings
- Drop in sessions
- Expressions of interest
- Project Control Group meetings and
- Workshops.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. SWNP Water Supply - Map 5 Aug 2022 V 2 all Towns [10.1.2.1 - 1 page]

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The feasibility study and business case were funded by:

- The Victorian Government who contributed \$300,000- from the Investment Fast Track Fund
- Each of the project partners contributing \$15,000- towards the project making an overall budget of \$375,000- plus in kind contributions of officer time of each of the project partners.

No contributions by local government are identified in the business case towards the construction phase of the project.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Water Supply Project has investigated whether a permanent 'fit for purpose' water supply can be provided to communities north of Avoca and between Elmhurst, Beazley's Bridge and Glenorchy.

The investigations have involved an area of 354,000 hectares and has engaged with farmers, wineries, accommodation providers, traditional owners, government agencies, service providers, townships and recreation groups to determine their long-term water needs.

The project has proven feasible with an estimated construction cost of \$158.6- million. With the business case largely completed and a Cost Benefit Ratio of 1.47 the proposal is now dependent on funding from the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to allow the project to proceed to the construction phase.

It is recommended that Council continues to support the project through advocacy to higher levels of government for the funds necessary to progress to construction.

**Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft business case subject to further alterations
2. Advocates for funding of the project by the Federal and State Governments in partnership with project partners.

**CARRIED**

### 10.1.3. BEAUFORT LINEAR MASTERPLAN

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

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

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

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

**File No:** 22/17/06

#### **PURPOSE**

To present the final version of the Beaufort Linear Masterplan to Council for its endorsement.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Beaufort Linear project was initiated through Council's participation in the Central Highlands Integrated Water Management Forum.

Integrated Water Management is a Victorian Government framework for a collaborative approach to water planning and management that brings together organisations with an interest in all aspects of the water cycle.

Green Blue Infrastructure is the reference used to describe green spaces such as parks, gardens and other recreational areas while blue represents various sources of water from storms, recycled water, drainage etc.

A Green Blue Infrastructure for Small Towns Project was identified in 2018 as a regional priority by the Central Highlands IWM group, to enable guidelines to be established for the benefit of towns with populations of between 100 and 10,000 people. Pyrenees Shire Council was a partner in the development of the GBI Small Towns Guidelines along with Golden Plains (project lead), Moorabool and Central Goldfields Shire Councils and Central Highlands Water.

During the course of the GBI Small Towns project the Beaufort Linear project was identified as a concept to be explored with the Beaufort community and funding of \$85,000- was approved by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) in October 2022 to develop a Masterplan. Council contributed matching funds of \$25,000-, a requirement of the IWM funding guidelines.

The intent of the Beaufort Linear project is to create a nature based recreational corridor along the Garibaldi Creek from the Beaufort Lake spillway to the point where the creek joins with Yam Holes Creek north of the railway line. Proposed walking and cycling paths will provide linkages between the Lake and the Beggs St playground area.

The Beaufort Linear Masterplan project's aims are:

- To develop a Master Plan for the Garibaldi Creek from Beaufort Lake to the railway line in the north with scope for an entry statement north of the railway line at the junction of Yam Holes Creek
- Complete an economic assessment, quantifying benefits and costs, using the DEECA adopted Investment Framework for Economics of Water Sensitive Cities tool (INFFEWS) and
- Create a 10-year action plan with capital costings for infrastructure provision.

The objectives of delivering improvements and infrastructure identified in the Masterplan include:

- Improving water quality and environmental outcomes for the Garibaldi Creek
- Engaging with the local community and first nations peoples to seek their input to the project such as considerations for interpretive signage and/or extending the Koori Art trail from Beaufort Lake, installation of street furnishings and tree planting
- Encouraging visitors to the Beggs St playground area to explore the town in more detail, thereby lengthening their visits and creating more opportunity for them to visit businesses in town.
- Formalising pedestrian linkages between the lake, schools precinct, RV park, swimming pool and Beggs St playground
- To improve the amenity of the area for visitors camped at the adjacent RV free camp at Audas Lane
- Rejuvenate and landscape the area north of the railway line which is expected to become the town entry in the event of a highway bypass

The construction of elements identified in the Masterplan will be dependent on external funding to allow different phases of the project to be constructed over time as funding opportunities arise.

### **Strategic Context**

The **Council Plan** (2021) guides planning for council's major strategies and plans. Objectives from Council Plan relevant to the Beaufort Linear Park project are;

- Sustain and enhance the unique character of our communities,
- Enhance the liveability and resilience of our communities,
- Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation,
- Foster a climate change resilient community,
- Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values.

The Council plan is informed by and responds to the **Community Vision**:

*"Our Vision is for inclusive, happy and healthy connected communities that create sustainable and welcoming townships, natural environments and rural areas.*

*We attract diversity through promoting innovation, growth and partnerships while addressing climate and community needs such as reliable and responsive infrastructure, affordable services and housing whilst protecting our natural environments."*

Other strategic documents this project aligns to include:

- The **Beaufort Lake Action Plan** (2016) outlines key actions for the future protection and enhancement of Beaufort Lake for water quality and recreation public open spaces.
- The **Beaufort Walkability Plan** (2016) outlines an approach to strategically adding footpaths, wayfinding and connections between existing routes. The plan is being implemented by Council opportunistically.
- The **Recreation Strategy** (2017) guides strategic action around sport and recreation for the shire. The strategy recommends one or more off road recreational trails for large



towns. Beaufort Linear Park provides an opportunity to deliver this direction for Beaufort.

- Part of the **Lake Beaufort Foreshore** was redesigned in 2020 and recently delivered. The redesign includes new landscaping, picnic areas and play spaces. The linear park Masterplan has the opportunity to link to the path which runs around the periphery of the lake and on to the foreshore with the central business district and Beggs Street playground.
- A **Masterplan for Goldfields Recreation Reserve** adjacent to the lake has recently been developed to understand community needs and identify future upgrades. The recreation reserve is an important community asset which can be better served by the linear park site in terms of access and interaction with Beaufort town centre.

The project also aligns with strategic objectives within;

- **Council Plan**, where benefits of this project align with each of the four pillars within the plan of People, Place, Environment and Economy
- **Beaufort Walkability Strategy**, where a range of community wellbeing benefits are identified by creating walking paths to increase participation in physical activity
- **Pyrenees Shire Councils Recreation Strategy** which references the social, health, environmental and economic benefits of recreation and open space
- **Economic Development Strategy**, where the objectives of Beaufort Linear include encouraging visitors to spend longer in Beaufort to generate economic activity, to improve township amenity and thereby standard of living for local residents and to make Beaufort a more attractive proposition to potential new residents and investors.

The project aligns with six of the seven priority outcomes for the Victorian Governments IWM framework:

- Objective 1 - Safe Secure and affordable water supplies in an uncertain future
- Objective 3 - Avoided or minimised existing and future flooding
- Objective 4 - Healthy and valued waterways, wetlands and water bodies
- Objective 5 - Healthy and valued landscapes
- Objective 6 - Community values reflected in place-based planning
- Objective 7 - Jobs, economic benefits and innovation
- The Beaufort community have been provided with various options to provide input to the plan over a three-month period which has informed the development of the Masterplan.

The project Control Group for this project has included representation by individuals from the following organisations:

- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- Beaufort Friends of the Pool
- Beaufort Apex Club
- Beaufort Croquet Club

- Beaufort Primary School and Secondary College
- DEECA
- Glenelg Hopkins CMA
- Council staff

A broad range of community engagement activities has been undertaken during the development of the Masterplan using co-design principals, i.e. the design of the Masterplan was informed by input from the community.

These activities included:

- A survey of the community between 24 August and 24 September 2023, which was made available on-line and via hard copy at council offices and the Beaufort Community Resource Centre.
- Community workshop held at the Beaufort Community Bank Complex on 5 September
- Site walk with Beaufort Walkability Group and a pop-up session at Beaufort skate park 6 September
- Street surveys at Beaufort IGA and individual businesses in the retail precinct 7 September
- Site walk with traditional custodians 18 September
- Meeting with Beaufort Rotary members 18 September
- Business for Beaufort presentation 3 October
- Visits by council officers to resident's whose properties are directly adjacent to the water course on 4 October
- Classroom activity and site walk with Beaufort Secondary College year 10 students on 11 October. A meeting was held with the two school principals later that day.
- Meeting with Beaufort Apex club on 12 October
- Public meeting on the evening of Wednesday 1 November where the draft Masterplan was presented to Beaufort residents for feedback
- Two council briefings
- The draft Masterplan was placed on public exhibit from 15/11 to 30/11 2023 to allow residents a final opportunity to provide feedback. During this time emails were issued to service clubs and community groups represented on the PCG to invite feedback on the plan.

During the public exhibit phase in November 2023 there were 536 page views with 305 unique visitors to the Council "Engage" portal and six residents who provided feedback on the plan whose contributions were taken into consideration at that time.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA have confirmed their support for the project and an interest in understanding any implications for changes to the function of the watercourse.

During the public exhibition phase of the Masterplan throughout November 2023, Council also received submissions from Beaufort Primary School and Secondary College, Glenelg Hopkins CMA and Council officers.

The consultation activities that have occurred throughout the project have been promoted by Council through:

- Paid newspaper advertisements and inclusion in Councils public notices
- Media releases

- Facebook posts
- Information on the Council website
- Direct contact by telephone and email to community groups, particularly those represented on the project control group where their facilities about the project area of interest
- Door to door visits to residents adjoining the Garibaldi Creek.

## ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Following development of the draft Masterplan which was given in principal approval by Council in late 2023, hydrological investigations have been undertaken this year to understand the implications of the project design on future flood events, noting that one of the projects aims was to mitigate future flooding.

A copy of the hydrologists full report can be found in the Appendices within the Masterplan and should be read in conjunction with this report. The Hydrologists modelled flooding of three different scenarios:

### Scenario 1 - Existing Garibaldi Creek alignment:

The existing alignment of the Creek based on Digital Elevation Modelling and culvert information was utilised to develop a 2D modelling scenario that shows the current extent of flooding across the Beaufort Townsite in the frequent rainfall event.

Scenario 2 – Modified Garibaldi Creek alignment and conveyance swale in central public open space based on the design parameters identified in the 1D analysis previously described in Section 3.1, of the hydrologists report, minor widening of the streamline within its existing flood plain and topographical changes within the central public open space area were included within the 2D modelling assessment. Widening of the Creek in the four proposed public open space areas aimed to improve localised flooding to the adjacent areas and to partially improve localised detention. Modifications to the topography within the central public open space intends to provide greater conveyance to the upstream flows that generally runoff west along Leichardt St rather than continuing flowing north as overland flow over the public open space.

Scenario 3 – Upgraded box culvert alignment along the central public open space at the former school oval. Based on the modelling results for Scenarios 1 and 2 it is noted that the existing culvert alignment underneath the public open space (i.e. single 2.4 m x 1 m and 118.7 m long box culvert) does not have sufficient capacity to manage flows in the frequent rainfall event. Therefore, to improve the conveyance capacity of the Garibaldi Creek and to alleviate flooding extent upstream of the public open space, Scenario 3 tests the increase in capacity (doubling) of the box culverts at the culvert crossing in Leichardt Street and beneath the public open space, in addition to a conveyance swale through the public open space. Proposed public open space upgrades are shown in **Plate 13 of the hydrologists report within the Masterplan**. This would be in the form of a 15m wide 500mm deep overflow channel with the same general alignment as the existing/retained culvert between Leichardt Street and Western Highway.

### Summary of hydrologists findings

Based on the results of Scenarios 1 and 2, it was noted that the culvert beneath the former school oval appears to be a key constraint. Therefore, a third Scenario (Scenario 3 – upgraded culvert and a swale) was tested to provide an indication of the likelihood that this approach could alleviate flooding upstream/downstream.

In summary, Scenario 2 does not affect the flood inundation upstream/downstream of the public open space, however the modification provides some additional detention capacity within the public open space, increasing the flood extent in the public open space. Scenario 3 was found to provide some measure of relief to flood inundation upstream of the public open space area. Further culvert increases could see

additional benefit, notwithstanding this, it is possible that this could also result in an increase in flood extents further downstream near Yam Holes Creek and should be examined further in partnership with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.

### **Capital Costs**

The Masterplan indicates an overall capital cost of approximately \$3M to be delivered as follows:

- Short term projects (1-3 years) \$460-470K
- Medium term projects (4-6 years) \$520-530K
- Long Term Projects (7-10 years) \$1.5M (this includes development of the section of land north of the railway line referred to in the plan as Zone 1, which will become the new town entry post highway bypass).
- Total for regeneration over ten years \$740K

Detailed costings have not yet been undertaken for scenario 3 (open channel between Leichardt and Neil Streets) which was suggested by hydrologists examining the potential for flood mitigation through this project. The plausibility of this element requires further investigation with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority to understand implications at Yam Hole Creek as mentioned in the hydrologists report.

Detailed breakdowns of capital costs are outlined on pages 30 – 31 of the Masterplan with the exception of the channel treatment suggested by the hydrologists.

The project is proposed to be delivered over an estimated timeframe of ten years as external funding sources (public and private) become available. Council may also consider allocating some of its existing budgets, for example from Beaufort Walkability towards this project, where matching funds for grants may be required to obtain grants.

The ten-year timeframe is also subject to developing agreements with other landholders such as the Department of Education, Victrack and Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, who each own parcels of land along the Garibaldi Creek. These organisations have been included in consultation process throughout development of the Masterplan.

### **Operation and Maintenance Costs**

To minimise ongoing operational costs the Linear Project has been designed to establish grasses and plants that require minimal maintenance. A majority of the Linear Project with the exception of the Beggs St precinct will be “renatured” with native grasses and trees from the local area. Most areas along the creek other than at Beggs St will not be lawn type environments but designed for seasonal slashing rather than regular mowing. There will also be wetland components which are referred to in Zone 4, the area nearest the lake and schools precinct that will predominantly consist of swales and wetlands rather than areas of grass.

Costs to maintain the entirety of the corridor are estimated at \$4,000- per year in addition to existing costs of maintaining the Beggs St playground area which also forms part of the Beaufort Linear Corridor.

## **Economic Assessment**

An economic assessment of this project has been undertaken using the Victorian Governments “Investment Framework for Economics of Water Sensitive Cities” or INFFEWS tool which includes calculation of a cost benefit ratio.

The economic assessment for Scenario 2 (without overland channel at the former school oval) shows a positive Cost Benefit Ratio of 1.24.

## **Summary and Recommendation**

The Beaufort Linear Masterplan has been developed through broad consultation of the Beaufort community and tested with extensive hydrological analysis.

The hydrologists report shows that the proposed introduction of swales and treatments to the watercourse proposed in the Masterplan will have a negligible positive impact if any to future flooding events.

It further suggests the construction of an open channel across public open space at the former school oval to alleviate flooding within the town, but that further investigations are required through the Catchment Management Authority to understand the potential for increased flooding downstream at Yam Holes Creek.

It is recommended therefore that a concept design be developed for the proposed channel, preliminary costings established, and investigations be initiated through the CMA to understand the effects this proposal may have on future floods at the junction of Yam Holes Creek.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

Enabling Principles

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

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

Broad consultation across the local community, traditional owners and various government agencies has occurred as outlined earlier in this report.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Masterplan Report A 3 Final revision October 2024 reduced [**10.1.3.1** - 51 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

The Masterplan and subsequent hydrological studies have been delivered within the project budget of \$110,000- with Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change contributing \$85,000- and Council a sum of \$25,000-.

The Capital cost of delivering the infrastructure identified in the masterplan is \$3-million which is anticipated to be spread over a ten year timeframe to allow external funding opportunities to be secured.



Some level of matching funds for grants may be required by Council which will be subject to further reports for Council's consideration at that time.

Annual operating costs for periodic slashing and mowing of the Linear Park is anticipated to cost Council an additional \$4,000- per annum.

The third scenario investigated by the hydrologists involving construction of an open channel across the former school oval will require development of concept plans to understand the likely costs. This option would provide some flood mitigation within the urban area along the Garibaldi Creek. However, this may have consequences further downstream at the junction of the Yam Hole Creek to the north of the railway line and the consultants advise further investigation by the CMA is required to understand this aspect in more detail.

## **CONCLUSION**

Co-design principals have been employed to the design of the Masterplan through input by the local community and key stakeholders throughout the project.

The Masterplan has subsequently undergone hydrological modelling which confirms the treatments to the stream identified in the Masterplan will not create a negative effect on flooding.

Further investigation is recommended however, for Scenario 3.

The cost of the project is estimated at around \$3M subject to completion of detailed designs and choice of construction materials for the paths being either concrete or gravel.

While concrete paths have higher construction costs, they are less prone to flood events and have a much longer life expectancy before remediation is required.

The Masterplan is to be used to guide investment as funds permit (including external sources) over an estimated timeframe of ten years.

The objectives of the Masterplan align with multiple priority outcomes of:

- The Victorian Governments Integrated Water Management Framework
- The Central Highlands Integrated Water Management groups Strategic Directions Statement
- Green Blue Infrastructure for Small Towns Guidelines
- Council Plan
- Beaufort Walkability Plan
- Councils Recreation Strategy.

## **Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council:

1. Endorses the Beaufort Linear Masterplan and
2. Actively seeks funding opportunities to deliver construction of the Beaufort Linear Park as external sources of funding become available over a proposed ten-year period.

**CARRIED**

## **10.2. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### **10.2.1. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE - NOVEMBER 2024**

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

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

**Report Author:** Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

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

**File No:** 66/02/02

#### **PURPOSE**

This report was prepared to give the Council a summary of activities within the Planning and Development department, for July – September 2024.

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

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

**PART A: PLANNING**

PLANNING PERMIT DATA	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE
Permit applications received	9	9	4	22
Permits Granted	10	6	5	21
Permits refused	0	1	0	1
Time extensions granted	2	2	0	4
Secondary consents approved	2	2	1	5
Estimated cost of works	\$1m	\$4M	-	\$5m

**Planning Enquiries July – September 2024**

The Planning team received 441 calls for the July to September Quarter. Of these calls 123 related to current planning permit applications and 318 calls related to pre-purchase or pre-application enquiries. It is noted that call numbers have increased from the previous quarter, specifically in relation to pre-purchase enquiries. The team is on track to respond to over 1000 calls for 2024, which is a great achievement with only two planning staff and part-time administration resources.

**Planning Team Resourcing**

The planning team is utilising URPS (External Planning Consultants) to help deliver statutory planning services with the assistance of the Regional Planning Hub. This service continues to the end of 2024.

The planning team is currently undertaking recruitment for both a planning services lead and planning assistant. Filling these two positions will result in a full team of planners which will help deliver the statutory service, strategic planning program and continuation of bushfire recovery efforts.

**Bushfire Recovery**

The work of the Bushfire Planning Support service continues with one planning permit issued, a number in process and the planning team working with several other property owners within the fire affected area for assistance with their rebuild.

The planning team and heritage advisor continue to work with the owners of Belmont at Main Lead which is on the State Heritage Register and the State Bushfire Emergency Recovery Team (heritage) to assist in clean up, maintenance and procurement of heritage grants for rebuild and repairs of heritage assets impacted by the fires.

The planning team received a grant from the Regional Planning Hub to help prepare a Municipal Bushfire Plan for the municipality. The plan is a key piece of work in determining and managing risk and will assist in

the implementation of the strategic work program and preparation of future settlement strategies / township planning. This important work has commenced, site assessments have been completed with a draft report to be issued shortly. The project will be completed by the end of 2024.

### **Creative Community Strategy**

The Creative Community Strategy discussion paper was released to the public in December 2023 and workshops were held in February 2024. A draft strategy has been finalised with involvement from both the planning and community development teams. It is anticipated that consultation on the DRAFT strategy will take place following the induction of the new Council early in 2025.

### **Brewster Wind Farm**

The Minister for Planning via the Department of Transport and Planning are currently considering an application for the Brewster Wind Farm. Council officers attended several consultation sessions held in October to hear the local community's concerns. A Council submission was made by the Chief Executive on advice from officers to the application. This submission will be discussed in a separate report.

### **Strategic Planning Program**

The 2023-24 strategic planning program includes:

- **Amendment C47Pyrn**, which proposes to incorporate the Snake Valley, Waubra, and Lexton framework plans into the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. ***Exhibition of the amendment is being prepared and will commence in November 2024.***
- Council has undertaken a **review of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme** to ensure it is contemporary and satisfies Councils legislative requirement under S12B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. ***This includes acknowledgement of the new strategic planning program which will be taken forward by the new council early in 2025.***
- **Flooding** - This amendment has also progressed with the planning team receiving funding from the Regional Flood Amendments Program and DEECA to progress the planning scheme amendment to incorporate several completed flood studies into the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. ***Work has commenced and it is intended that this project will progress the amendment to exhibition in 2025.***
- The Strategic Planning Team are also involved in EES technical reference and consultation groups relating to state renewables projects such as the ***Western Renewables Link, and several Wind Farms and continue to advocate for local communities.***

**PART B – BUILDING**

<b>BUILDING ACTIVITY</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>September</b>	<b>Financial YTD</b>
Private Building Permits	17	14	17	48
'Property Info Cert' issued	18	27	13	58
Building Notice/Order issued	3	4	4	11
Building Inspections	13	10	12	35

**Pool/Spa Compliance**

Several spas have been identified in the shire that were not registered and enforcement action under the Building Act was instigated. Compliance has been achieved in most cases, which is a positive outcome for both council and spa owner in ensuring safety requirements are met.

**Bushfire Recovery**

All properties impacted by the Bayindeen Fires have been demolished and building notices relating to site clean-up have been fully addressed.

**Avoca House Fires**

Two house fires occurred in Avoca in early September, one destroying a dwelling on High Street. The dwelling has now been demolished and the building emergency order cancelled. Council officers continue to liaise with the owner in seeking social and well-being support and assisting in rebuilding the dwelling.

**PART C – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>FY Total</b>
<b>Wastewater</b>				
Application to Install or Alter system	2	2	2	6
Permit to Install or Alter issued	4	2	3	9
Approval to Use issued	4	3	1	8
Wastewater inspections	7	4	3	14
Domestic Wastewater Management Plan inspections	0	0	0	0
Domestic Wastewater Service Agent reports	8	6	5	19
Wastewater related complaints	0	1	1	2

Fees Paid	\$1732.10	\$1596.40	\$1596.40	\$4924.90
<b>Public Health</b>				
New Premises or Transfers	0	4	0	0
Registration Renewals	0	0	0	0
Premises Closures	0	2	0	2
Routine and Follow Up Inspections	13	34	27	74
Complaints about Registered Premises	0	0	0	0
Food Recalls	8	5	4	17
Mobile/Temporary Food Applications	2	2	0	4
Mobile/Temporary Food Inspections	0	0	0	0
Mobile/Temporary Food Statements of Trade	6	17	23	46
Fees Paid	\$620.00	\$1122.00	\$357.00	\$2099.00

### **Routine Inspections**

The team has completed 69% of scheduled routine inspections for 2024. While bookings have been made for the remaining premises, the response has been limited; efforts will continue to ensure all inspections are completed by year-end.

### **Food Sampling**

Food sampling requirements for the shire have been achieved. 20 samples were collected and laboratory analysed.

### **Domestic Wastewater Management Plan**

The team initiated its DWMP program, with 35 letters sent to residents of Amphitheatre informing them of the purpose of our visits. Letters have also been sent to Lexton residents. The team aims to complete 110 visits by the end of the year.

### **Registered Premises**

The team is sending out and finalising renewals for all registered premises with routine inspections to be completed by the end of 2024.



**PART D – COMMUNITY SAFETY AND AMENITY****ACTIVITY - Animals**

	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	Total FYTD
<b>Cats Registered</b>	N/A	N/A	495	<b>495</b>
<b>Dogs registered</b>	N/A	N/A	2142	<b>2142</b>
<b>Cats impounded</b>	3	5	8	<b>16</b>
<b>Cats reclaimed</b>	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Cats Euthanised</b>	3	4	7	<b>14</b>
<b>Cats Adopted/Rehomed</b>	0	1	1	<b>2</b>
<b>Dogs impounded</b>	3	3	5	<b>11</b>
<b>Dogs Reclaimed</b>	3	3	3	<b>9</b>
<b>Dogs Euthanised</b>	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Dogs Adopted/Rehomed</b>	0	0	2	<b>2</b>
<b>Stock impounded</b>	0	1	0	<b>1</b>

**ACTIVITY - Infringements**

Infringement Type	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	Total FYTD
Domestic Animals Act	9	5	13	<b>27</b>
Local Laws	2	2	1	<b>5</b>
Road Safety Act	23	8	11	<b>42</b>
Environment Protection Act	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Impounding of Livestock Act	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
CFA Act	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Planning & Environment Act	0	6	1	<b>7</b>
Road Management Act	0	4	1	<b>5</b>
Other	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Infringements Issued</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>87</b>
Prosecutions	2	1	0	<b>3</b>

**Animal Registrations**

Officers have continued to follow up outstanding animal registrations.

**Menacing Dog**

A dog in Amphitheatre was declared 'menacing' under the Domestic Animals Act after it repeatedly escaped the property rushing at people and biting them in a minor way. The owner was also issued several infringements. A 'menacing declaration' means the dog must be muzzled and on lead when ever in a public area. The declaration stays with the dog throughout Victoria and attracts a much higher registration fee.

### **Footpath Trading**

Footpath Trading permits expired at the end of September 2024. Renewals were mailed to businesses in late August early September and the team continue to follow up with businesses where renewals are outstanding.

### **Fire Season**

The Fire Danger Period will be starting on the 18th of November 2024. The council's roadside slashing program started in the 1st week of November. The northern part of the Shire is practically complete. Contractors will then start working their way through the rest of the Shire soon.

In September the Community Safety and Amenity team sent pre fire season advisory letters to landowners who received fire prevention notices last year to remind them of the upcoming fire season and their responsibilities as landowners, to ensure that their properties are clear of any combustible materials that may pose a fire risk.

The Team will be inspecting properties within the municipality prior to and during the declaration of the fire danger period and it is anticipated that the inspections will commence in the next week in the northern parts of the shire. Property owners will be advised that inspections are taking place. Fire prevention notices will be issued to unmaintained properties where hazards are identified following the inspections.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

### **Priority 1 - People**

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

### **Priority 2 - Place**

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

### **Priority 3 - Environment**

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.

### **Priority 4 - Economy**

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

### **Enabling Principles**

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

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. Notes the information and endorses the activity contained in this report is report.

**CARRIED**

***Cr Tanya Kehoe declared of conflict of interest (indirect) in relation to item 10.2.2 - Planning Application PA24040 - 325 Waubra - Talbot Road, Waubra, 2 Lot Subdivision.***

***Cr Tanya Kehoe left the meeting at 6:36 pm.***

***Cr Tol nominated Cr Ferrari to take the Chair. Cr Ferrari took the Chair.***

**10.2.2. PLANNING PERMIT APPLICATION PA24040 - 325 WAUBRA-TALBOT ROAD, WAUBRA - 2 LOT SUBDIVISION**

**Presenter:** Rachel Blackwell - Manager Planning & Development Services

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

**Report Author:** Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

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

**File No:** PA24040

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to consider planning permit application PA24040 for land at Lot 2 PS310387T, 325 Waubra-Talbot Road, Waubra.

**BACKGROUND**

The application was lodged on 4 July 2024. The application proposes to subdivide the land into two lots.

The application was advertised and referred to in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. No objections were received.

The application has been assessed against the relevant provisions of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. It is recommended that the application be refused.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

**Subject site**

The subject site is part of a larger landholding comprising of 9 parcels/lots that form the address 325 Waubra-Talbot Road. The extent of the landholding is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1 – 325 Waubra-Talbot Road (subject parcel/lot in red)

The subject site has a total area of 50.55 hectares and is roughly square with the boundary on Waubra-Talbot Road being 672 metres in length. The site contains a vacant dwelling with a front setback of approximately 100 metres (refer Figure 2), associated outbuildings, and part of a dam with the remainder of the site used for cropping.

An unclassified watercourse run through the north-western corner of the property against the dam and can be viewed in Figure 4.

Access to the property is via an existing crossover to Waubra-Talbot Road. Electricity is connected or available to the site. There is no reticulated water or sewer available.

The planning report submitted in support of the application (*'Pyrenees Planning Scheme Planning Report for a Two Lot Subdivision'* iPlanning Services, June 2024) notes that some native vegetation is present north of the existing driveway. Native vegetation is also present around the dam and watercourse.



Figure 2 – Existing dwelling on the subject site (source Google Maps, accessed 14 October 2024)

### **Surrounding Area**

The subject site is located approximately 2.7 km north of Waubra township.

Waubra-Talbot Road is the eastern edge of the Shire with land across Waubra-Talbot Road within the City of Ballarat. Waubra-Talbot Road is a sub-arterial road managed by Council.

Land in all directions is used for agriculture with a mix of cropping and grazing. The subject site and surrounds are zoned Farming Zone with Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (refer Figure 4).





Figure 3 – site context

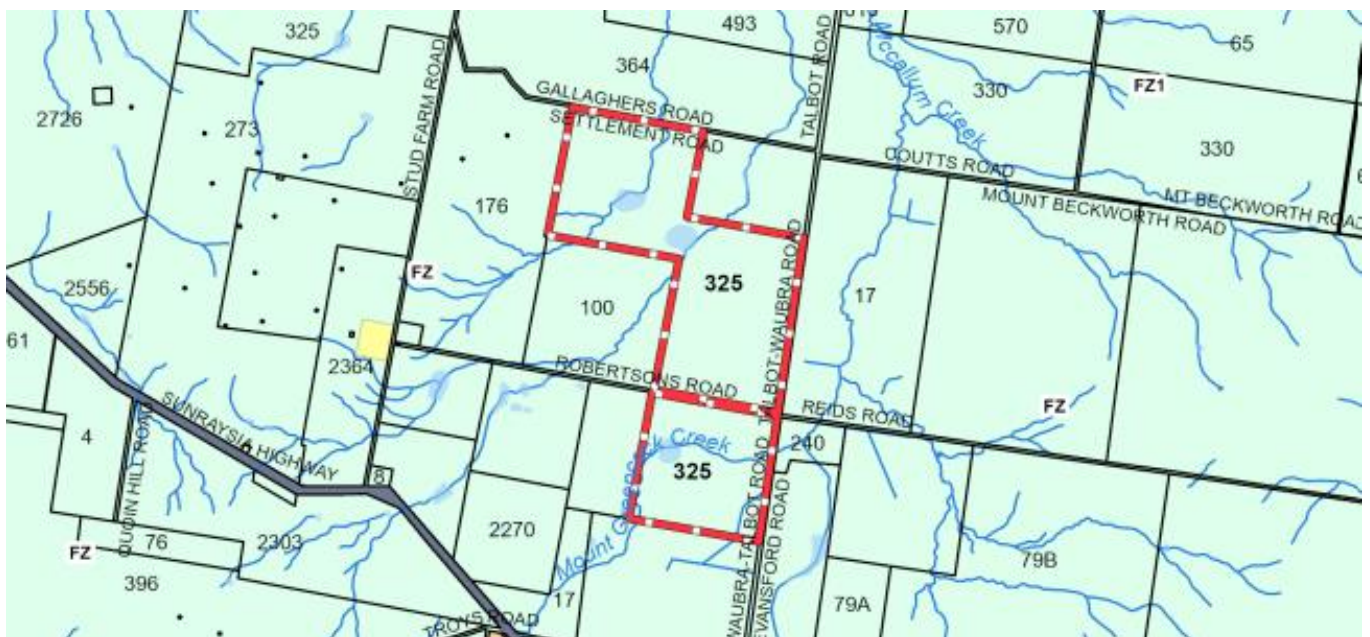


Figure 4 – zoning context

## The Proposal

The application seeks to subdivide the land into two lots comprising of:

- Lot 1 – 2.22 hectares. Lot 1 will contain the existing dwelling, outbuildings, and the existing crossover to Waubra-Talbot Road.
- Lot 2 – 48.33 hectares. Lot 2 will contain the balance of the farmland and the existing dam. No new access is proposed.

Both lots square in shape. The proposed subdivision is shown in Figure 5.

The planning report 'Pyrenees Planning Scheme Planning Report for a Two Lot Subdivision' iPlanning Services, June 2024 (**Attachment 1**) states that the Lot 2 will continue to be used for cropping as part of the larger landholding.

Lot 1, including the dwelling, *'has not been used for farming and is better suited to more intensive farming activity, but separate from the broad acre farming'* (page 5). It is understood from the applicant that the owner intends to sell Lot 1, including the existing dwelling, to allow new owners to restore/rebuild the dwelling and reside on the land. Council understands that the dwelling is currently uninhabited. No other information was provided about the use of the land in Lot 1, or why subdivision is required to achieve this.

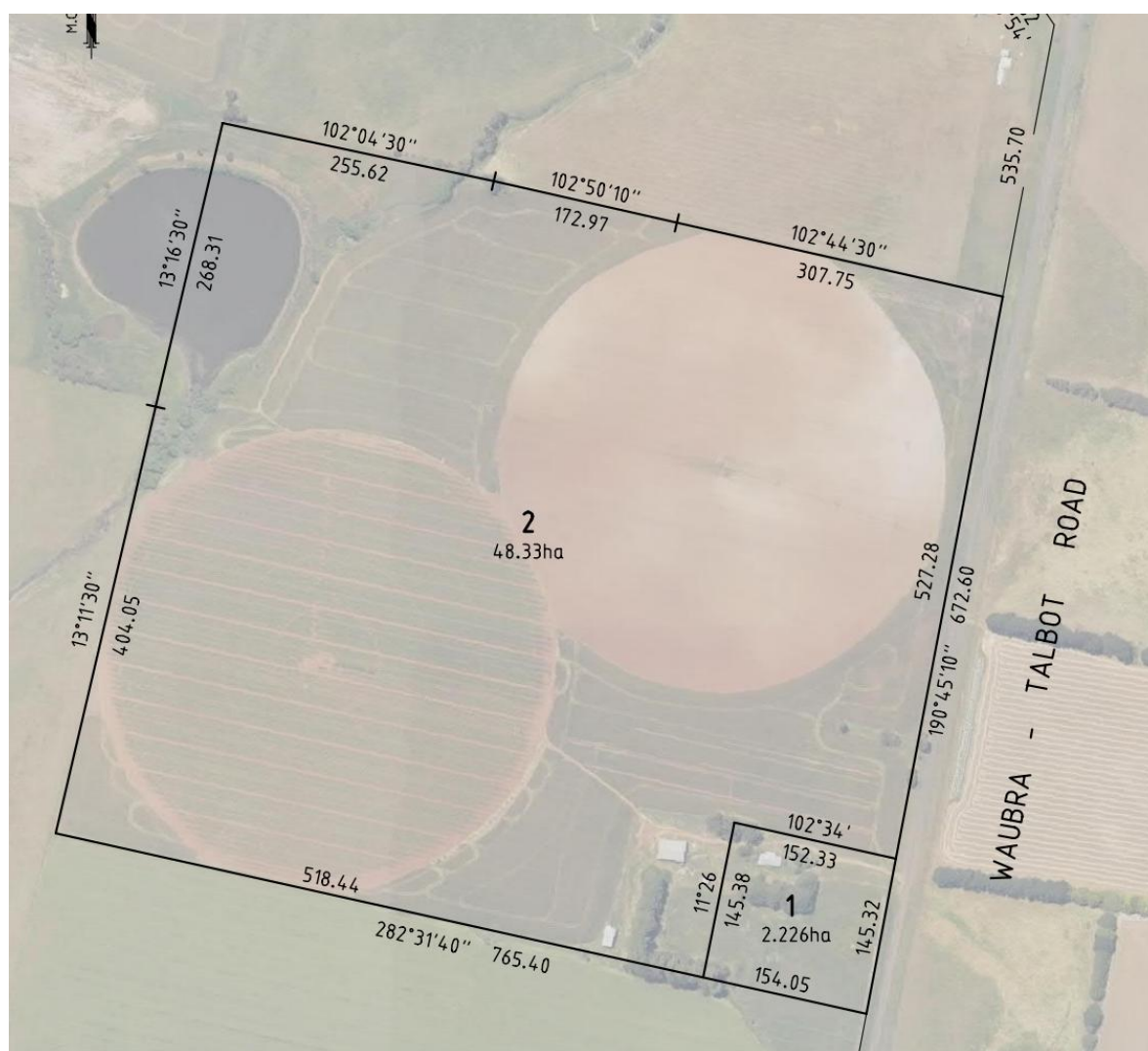


Figure 5 – proposed subdivision

The application was supported by the following documentation:

- 'Pyrenees Planning Scheme Planning Report for a Two Lot Subdivision' iPlanning Services, June 2024 (**Attachment 1**)
- 'Land Management Plan' iPlanning Services, June 2024 (**Attachment 2**)
- Plan of Subdivision (**Attachment 3**)

### Response to Notice of Application

The application was required to be advertised pursuant to Section 52 of *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The following forms of advertising were undertaken:

- Notices sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land (including those opposite in the City of Ballarat).
- Notice placed on the site.

No objections or submissions were received.

Notice was provided to AusNet who are planning to construct the Western Renewables electricity Transmission line from Bulgana to Sydenham. The proposed route for the Western Renewables Link shown in Figure 5 is 400 metres north of the subject site. Ausnet had no objection to the application.



Figure 5 – Western Renewables Link (blue) (Source <https://www.westernrenewableslink.com.au/> accessed 14 October 2024)

### Policy and Legislative Context



## ***Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework***

The following clauses are considered relevant to this permit application:

### Clause 02 Municipal Planning Strategy

#### Clause 02.02 Vision

Clause 02.03-1 Settlement:

- *seeks to facilitate compatible relationship between residential and non-residential uses, including the maintenance of appropriate environmental buffers*
- *encourage consolidation of larger land holding to minimise rural land fragmentation.*
- *identifies that there is likely to be continued demand for rural-residential lots in Waubra due to its links to Ballarat.*

Clause 02.03 -3 Natural resource management:

- *identifies historic patterns of subdivision where extensive farmland is comprised of small lots that does not reflect current patterns of settlement and land use,*
- *identifies that fragmented landownership and demand for dwelling construction is not consistent with responsible land management,*
- *seeks to limit further fragmentation of rural land and consolidate small lots.*

### Clause 11 Settlement

### Clause 13 Environmental risks and amenity

Clause 13.07-1S Land Use Compatibility

- *seeks to protect amenity and ensure that use and development is compatible with adjoining uses and avoid location uses in areas that may be affected to off-site impacts*

### Clause 14 Natural resource management

Clause 14.01-1S Agriculture – Protection of agricultural land

- *seeks to avoid the permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the State's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors and to prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas.*

Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture in the Pyrenees Shire

- *aims to limit small-lot rural excisions and focuses on restricting inappropriate subdivisions.*

### Clause 16 Housing

Clause 16.01-3S Residential Development – Rural residential development

- *seeks to manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development and discourages the development of small lots in rural zones for residential use.*

## **Zoning**

The subject land is in the Farming Zone (FZ).

A permit is required to subdivide land in the Farming Zone.

Each lot must be at least 40 hectares. However, a permit may be granted to create smaller lot if the following applies:

- The subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling. The subdivision must be a two-lot subdivision.

The Farming Zone includes these provisions that allow the Responsible Authority to consider an application for subdivision, including where the outcome is a dwelling excision. The decision to grant a permit, or not, requires consideration of the relevant policies of the Municipal Planning Strategy, Planning Policy Framework and the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone.

### ***Overlays***

The subject land is affected by the Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1). The purpose of ESO1 is to identify areas in Special Water Supply Catchments and other related area and ensure land in these areas is used in a manner that protects water quality and quantity.

A permit is required to subdivide land. The purpose and decision guidelines for ESO1 are considered in the assessment of this application.

### ***Clause 65 Decision Guidelines***

Council must decide whether the proposal will provide an acceptable outcome in terms of the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone and overlay, and the direction outlined in the MPS and PPF which contains strong policy which seeks to protect agricultural land.

### ***Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006***

Under section 46 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, a mandatory cultural heritage management plan is required for a proposed activity if the regulations require the preparation of the plan for that activity.

If required, an approved cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) must be submitted to Council before deciding on a planning permit application.

The *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* stipulate that unless an activity is specified as being an exempt activity, a cultural heritage management plan is required if:

- a) all or part of the activity area for the activity is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity; and
- b) all or part of the activity is a high impact activity.

The subject land (activity area) is not in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and the subdivision of land into two lots is not specified as a high impact activity in the regulations. Therefore, a mandatory CHMP is not required for the proposed subdivision.

### **Assessment**

The assessment of the permit application will consider how the proposal responds to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone, Environmental Significance Overlay – Schedule 1 and the strategic and policy direction outlined within Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

The Pyrenees Planning Scheme discourages the creation of small rural residential lots in productive agricultural areas which have the potential to impact on the continuation of agriculture. The application raises key issues for Council to consider, including the need to protect agricultural land, and avoid fragmentation of agricultural land through subdivision or land use conflict.

### **Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework**

The objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) recognise the importance of agriculture and the need to protect productive land from inappropriate subdivision. Inappropriate subdivision can fragment agricultural land and create isolated small rural residential lots which can be incompatible with adjoining farming operations and growth, and lead to land use conflict.

These objectives are further supported through the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and local planning policy. The agricultural sector is identified as important industry in the Shire, employing approximately one third of the Shire's workforce.

A key issue for the Council is the need to manage the subdivision of land to reduce potential impacts on productive agricultural land and uses. The proposed subdivision seeks to subdivide a dwelling onto a small lot, separating it from the balance farmland and thus creating a rural-residential lot of 2.22 hectares in a productive agricultural area.

The planning report submitted with the application does not extensively discuss or demonstrate the need for the subdivision and creation of a smaller lot for the dwelling. However, it is understood from the applicant that the owner intends to sell Lot 1, allowing a new owner to restore the dwelling and reside on the property.

It is therefore considered that the proposed subdivision fails to provide an appropriate response to local planning policy for the following reasons:

- The subdivision creates a balance lot (Lot 2) greater than 40 hectares where the use of land for a dwelling will be as of right, increasing the potential for future dwellings within productive agricultural land.
- The smaller size of Lot 1 makes it unsuitable to be used for agriculture and represents a rural-residential outcome. This lot is proposed to be sold, or will be able to be sold, removing any relationship from agriculture or supporting agriculture.
- Lot 1 will be surrounded by farming operations on all sides which creates the potential for land-use conflict and could limit the expansion of those activities.
- Creating Lot 1 permanently fragments the pattern of subdivision in this area which is characterised by larger landholdings which comprise highly productive agricultural land.

Overall, the application does not provide an appropriate response to the strategic directions and policy objectives of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme which seek to prioritise the protection of productive agricultural land from incompatible land uses. Progressive decisions to allow inappropriate subdivision of farmland have the potential to lead to long-term negative cumulative outcomes, restricting the continuation and growth of one of the most important industries in the Shire.



## **Farming Zone**

The purpose of the Farming Zone is to provide land for agricultural uses, retain productive agricultural land and ensure that non-agricultural uses such as dwellings do not adversely affect farming activities.

The application must be considered against the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone. The following comments are made with regards to the decision guidelines:

- The application does not adequately justify how the proposed subdivision will enhance the agricultural productivity of the subject land by creating an isolated rural-residential lot with an elevated risk of land use conflict and incompatibility between land uses.
- The proposal will result in a change of land use, permanently removing the dwelling from any association with agricultural production and allowing the land to be sold for rural-residential use.
- Future residents, unrelated to the agricultural land adjoining, are likely to be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land, by way of noise, smell, and the impact of ongoing farming operations.
- Rural-residential lots must be located in areas which do not have the potential to restrict the continuation of agriculture and are compatible with the current and future use of surrounding land.
- The proposed subdivision creates a balance lot of 48.33 hectares, where the use of the land for a dwelling would be as-of-right and has the potential to increase the number of dwellings in the area.
- The land is productive and valuable farming land. Orderly planning directs that isolated rural-residential lots and potential land use conflict should be avoided to preserve the Shire's agricultural base.

There are circumstances where Council may approve, or recommend approval, of an application for dwelling excision. Council has in the past approved a limited number of dwelling excision applications. Some features of these approved applications include:

- where areas are dominated by smaller lots and currently display rural-residential character
- where land is not productive for agriculture
- where the physical context limits the exposure of the excised dwelling from surrounding agricultural use
- where there is a genuine and real benefit to the operation of the agricultural enterprise, beyond profit from the sale of the excised land.

These features are not present in this application.

Subdivision applications for dwelling excisions throughout Victoria are frequently reviewed by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Authority (VCAT). VCAT frequently refuses these applications citing similar reasons discussed against the Decision Guidelines above. VCAT also grants permits for dwelling excisions. The common reason for approved applications is where the Member/s find that the specific subdivision and context allows the dwelling excision to occur consistent with the relevant policy outcomes.

## **Environmental Significant Overlay – Schedule 1 (ESO1)**

The purpose of ESO1 is to manage areas within water supply catchments and the environs of town supply water bores in a responsible manner to protect water quality and quantity.

The application has been considered against the Decision Guidelines of ESO1. The application is responsive to the matters raised by the Decision Guidelines. As the application is for subdivision there is no use,

buildings or works which would impact on the water quality in ground water or overland flows. The existing dwelling has previously been occupied and has a septic system that demonstrates wastewater can be treated on-site, subject to being assessed and replaced/upgraded.

The application was referred to the responsible water authority, Central Highlands Water and Goulburn-Murray Water, in accordance with Clause 66 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme. No objections were received from the water authorities.

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

Priority 2 - Place

2c. Promote responsible development.

Priority 4 - Economy

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

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Planning Report [**10.2.2.1** - 21 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Land Management Plan [**10.2.2.2** - 10 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Plan of Subdivision [**10.2.2.3** - 1 page]

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

The council's assessment of the application and management of the planning permit process has been partially met by the fees paid pursuant to the Planning and Environment Act 1987. There are no significant risks associated with the refusal of a planning permit for this proposal.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

Having caused notice of Planning Application PA24040 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, decides to **Refuse to Grant a Permit** under the provisions of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Lot 2 PS310387T, 325 Waubra-Talbot Road, Waubra, for a two lot subdivision based on the following grounds:

1. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Municipal Planning Strategy Clause 02.03-3 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme which seeks to support agriculture by protecting agricultural land from fragmentation.
2. The subdivision is contrary to Planning Policy Framework Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land and Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture in Pyrenees Shire of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme that discourages isolated small lots for the use of dwellings and limit dwelling excisions.
3. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme as it has the potential to lead to land use conflict between the rural-residential land use and the ongoing agricultural use of the balance farmland.

**AN ALTERNATIVE MOTION WAS PUT FORWARD**

**Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council:

Having caused notice of Planning Application PA24040 to be given under Section 52 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, decides to Grant a Permit in respect of the land known and described as Lot 2 PS310387T, 325 Waubra-Talbot Road, Waubra, for a two lot subdivision subject to conditions to be determined.

**CARRIED**

***Cr Tanya Kehoe returned to the room at 6:44pm.***

***Cr Tanya Kehoe resumed the Chair.***

### 10.2.3. BREWSTER WIND FARM SUBMISSION

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

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

**Report Author:** Rachel Blackwell – Manager Planning and Development Services

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

**File No:** PSA2400007

#### PURPOSE

This report is for Councilors to consider endorsement of the officer submission, prepared during the council caretaker period, to the Minister for Planning in relation to Planning Permit Application PA2403106 for the Brewster Wind Energy Facility.

#### BACKGROUND

This application is for the use and development of land for a wind energy facility and utility installation, removal of native vegetation, alteration of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 and land in a Public Acquisition Overlay, and the display of business identification signage for land at 7 Pin Oak Court, Trawalla, 54 Kayleys Lane, Brewster and 295 Trawalla Road, Brewster, also known as the Brewster Wind Farm.

The consideration of a wind farm at Brewster has been ongoing for several years. In 2022 the Council received notification of a planning permit application for a wind energy facility at Brewster (PA2101150).

On 28 February 2022 the Council made a submission to the previous permit application for the Brewster Wind Farm (PA2101150), raising a number of areas of concern for the community and Council.

Council resolved at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 15 February 2022 That Council:

1. Prepares a submission on the Planning Permit Application for the Brewster Wind Energy Facility that seeks to represent community concerns and mitigate any impacts to council-controlled assets; and
2. Writes to the Minister of Planning requesting a one-month extension to the statutory period for submissions to this project as it was considered that the community had not had sufficient time to consider the application.

The submission of the 28 February 2022 raised concerns in relation noise, the lack of community engagement, visual impacts to the Significant Landscapes of Southwest Victoria, traffic movements, including impacts upon highway traffic, restricting future land use, deficiencies and inaccuracies in technical reports and lack of community benefit associated with the project. A copy of this submission is provided as

#### **Attachment 1.**

Since 2022 both Council and the local community have been advised by both the Department of Transport and Planning and the proponent, REF Developments Pty Ltd that more work was being undertaken to address concerns raised by both Council and the local community including the review and preparation of a detailed brolog assessment.

In August 2024, the Council received notification that planning permit application PA2101150 had been withdrawn by the proponent.

The council understands that the applicant sought to withdraw and resubmit the planning permit application at the encouragement and direction of Department of Transport and Planning (the Department). The intent was to allow the application to be considered under Clause 53.22 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme that was amended through planning scheme amendment VC261, gazetted on 4 April 2024.

The changes to Clause 53.22 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme introduced through VC261 included expanding the Development Facilitation Program and exempting applications from review rights of Section 82(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Notification of the current planning permit application PA2403106 was provided to Council on 20 August 2024. The notification period of the planning permit application commenced with local notification on 27 September 2024. The proponent undertook several consultation sessions with the local community, two of which were attended by Council officers and Councils Chief Executive Officer in October 2024 during the notification period.

At the time of preparing this report, the application documentation is available for viewing on the Department of Transport and Planning website here: [PA2403106](#)

The Chief Executive Officer, under advice from planning officers, prepared and made a submission to the current application during the council election period. There has been no opportunity to date for the former or newly elected council to either endorse or amend its formal position in relation to the application.

## ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Council Planning officer's submission of 25 October 2024 is provided as **Attachment 2/3**. This submission includes a letter to the Minister for Planning, The Honorable Sonia Kilkeny and a document containing detailed comments in relation to the proposal.

The context of the submission was prepared based on how the proposal for a wind energy facility at this location responds to the relevant policy provisions and decision guidance of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

In summary, the submission does not support the granting of a planning permit for a wind energy facility at this location for the reasons outlined below and further expanded upon in the submission.

1. The application will impact Brolga (*Grus rubicunda*), listed as Endangered in Victoria, and is inconsistent with the Objective of Clause 12.01-S of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme to protect and enhance Victoria's biodiversity.
2. Incomplete information provided by the applicant regarding noise management and groundwater, limiting the ability for the application to demonstrate consistency with relevant policy at Clause 13.05 and 14.02 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme.

3. The application process fails to address the Departmental Guidelines as required under Clause 52.32-5 of the Pyrenees Planning Scheme regarding community consultation. This has eroded trust between the community and applicant, and leaves in doubt the ability of the applicant to deliver and manage the project in the manner described in the accompanying reports.
4. Lack of consideration of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* including the principles of planning in Victoria, net community benefit, and fair and orderly planning outcomes.

This report seeks that Councilors consider endorsement of the officer submission including the detailed concerns raised in relation to the use and development of the land for a wind energy facility at Brewster.

Should Council decide to take a different position to that expressed in the submission, the Chief Executive Officer would make this position known in writing to the Minister for Planning and seek to have the submission withdrawn or revised.

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

#### Priority 1 - People

- 1d. Promote health, wellbeing, engagement, and connection.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

#### Priority 2 - Place

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

#### Priority 3 - Environment

- 3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- 3b. Foster a climate change resilient community.
- 3c. Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values.

#### Enabling Principles

- a. Motivate and inspire community involvement
- b. Provide transparency and accountability
- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 Brewster wind farm submission 2022 [**10.2.3.1** - 5 pages]
2. Attachment 2 Pyrenees Shire Council Brewster Wind Farm Submission 2024 [**10.2.3.2** - 3 pages]
3. Attachment 3 Brewster Wind Farm Attachments to the 2024 Submission [**10.2.3.3** - 4 pages]

### **Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council:

1. Endorses the submission to the Minister for Planning in relation to Planning Permit Application PA2403106 in relation to the use and development of the land for a wind energy facility at Brewster, also known as the Brewster Wind Farm.

**CARRIED**

#### 10.2.4. MOLONEY ROAD CONDITION REPORT

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

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

**Report Author:** Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

**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 road and bridges condition surveys.

#### BACKGROUND

In September 2010 Moloney Asset Management Systems (MAMS) were engaged to undertake regular independent condition surveys of Council's roads and bridges network. Subsequently, Council receives updated reports on Council's roads and bridge condition every 3-4 years and has most recently received a draft road condition report completed in September 2024.

The full road network of the Pyrenees Shire was broken down into 2,673 individual segments, each segment was measured and condition rated for the sub assets that were present within each segment.

The attached MAMS report outlines the eight key condition indicators that are applied to all road assets where applicable and used to measure condition movement between surveys. The key condition indicators are used in providing the external benchmarking against other councils and include:

1. Weighted Average Asset Condition (WAAC) = represents the condition of the whole asset in one single figure on a 0-10 scale\*.
2. Percentage of Urgent Failures = expressed as a percentage of the total asset group this relates to isolated failures requiring immediate repair.
3. Percentage of Other Failures = expressed as a percentage of the total asset group this relates to isolated failures that do not require urgent attention
4. Average Roughness = relates to longitudinal shape of pavement assets based on a 0-10 scale\*.
5. Average Profile = relates to cross sectional pavement shape and the efficient shedding of water on a 0-10 scale\*.
6. Extent of Poor Condition Assets above a given Condition = expressed as a percentage and reported at condition levels 5 to 8 representing the extent of the asset base that would require rehabilitation within a 1 - 10 year period.
7. Recent Internal Benchmarking
8. Recent External Benchmarking

*\*1-10 scale, with 0 being perfect and 10 being un-drivable.*

A report was presented to Council in September 2024 addressing the assessment of bridges and found that overall the 158 bridges within the Shire were assessed to be in "Good" to "Fair" condition. Further, the report found there was an improvement of overall condition by 15.1% since 2018. However, in order to maintain bridges at a similar level, ongoing funding in the order of \$450,000 per year on average needs to be allocated to bridge renewal.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The most recent road condition survey was undertaken in September 2024 and the road assets within the Shire were found to be in "Very Good to Excellent" overall condition. The report found that there was



improvement since the 2021 survey for sealed and unsealed road pavement assets and although the reports states a slight decline in the condition of sealed surfaces, the overall condition remains in Excellent condition with extremely low levels of poor condition assets.

Key condition indicators (KCI's) have been developed to accurately benchmark asset condition change since the previous survey and the same KCI's have been used against all 72 councils assessed by Moloney Asset Management Systems.

The below table demonstrates the improvement of sealed pavement asset conditions across all of the KCI's since the last survey conducted in 2021, with a strong improvement in the extent of poor condition assets and a reduction in the extent of isolated pavement failures. The graph indicates that the targeted major maintenance program and renewal programs of Council's ageing assets have led to the overall positive survey results.

Key Cond. Indic. No.	Sealed Pavement Condition Indicator	Figures from Last Survey in Dec-21	Figures from Current Survey in Sep-24	Change between Surveys New Minus Old	% Change Between Surveys	Better or Worse Since last Survey
1	Weighted Average Asset Condition	3.63	3.60	0.03	0.33%	Better
2	% of Urgent Failures	0.02	0.01	0.01	26.1%	Better
3	% of Other Failures	0.53	0.46	0.08	14.3%	Better
4	Average Pavement Roughness	3.22	3.21	0.00	0.1%	Better
5	Average Pavement Profile	2.41	2.40	0.01	0.6%	Better
6	% of Asset Base above Condition 6	11.52	11.00	0.52	4.5%	Better
7	% of Asset Base above Condition 7	1.71	1.20	0.51	30.0%	Better
8	% of Asset Base above Condition 8	0.01	0.00	0.01	100.0%	Better
Renewal Demand Being Met For:		% of Annual Liability expenditure Planned in Future years		% of Annual Liability expenditure Since the time of the last survey		
Sealed Rd Pavement Asset Group		41%		55%		

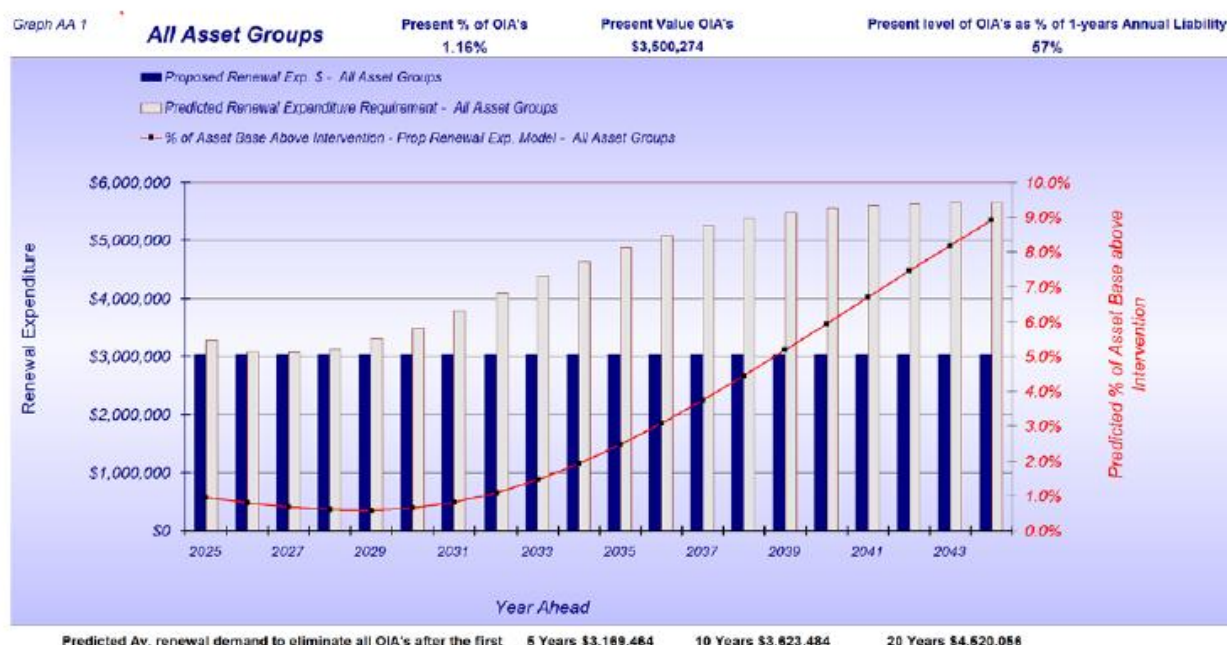
It is recommended that renewal sealed pavement funding be set at a flat \$1,130,000 pa next 5 - 10 years and that it be further subject to any annual CPI increases as appropriate.

Although overall the sealed surface assets were found to be in “Excellent” condition, the table below demonstrates the small decline in the condition of Council’s sealed surface sub-assets since 2021. Retreatment intervention levels are currently set at what is the industry standard and the MAMS recommendation is for renewal expenditure to be set at \$1,050,000 pa\* for the next 10 years to deliver the desired condition outcome.

*\*Subject to CPI increases*

Key Cond. Indic. No.	Sealed Surface Condition Indicator	Figures from Last Survey in Dec-21	Figures from Current Survey in Sep-24	Change between Surveys New Minus Old	% Change Between Surveys	Better or Worse Since last Survey
1	Weighted Average Asset Condition	3.251	3.356	-0.105	-1.5%	Worse
2	% of Asset Base above Condition 5	31.076	33.437	-2.362	-7.6%	Worse
3	% of Asset Base above Condition 6	6.056	5.346	0.710	11.7%	Better
4	% of Asset Base above Condition 7	0.312	0.373	-0.061	-19.4%	Worse
5	% of Asset Base above Condition 8	0.026	0.051	-0.024	-93.5%	Worse
Renewal Demand Being Met For:		% of Annual Liability expenditure Planned in Future years		% of Annual Liability expenditure Since the time of the last survey		
Sealed Surface Asset Group		70%		94%		

Subject to standard CPI increases, the report considers the current planned future renewal funding level of \$3,100,000 pa for the road assets to be very close to an appropriate level for the next 5 – 10 years.



Council plan / legislative compliance

Priority 4 - Economy

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

## Enabling Principles

- c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Road Report 2024 Draft 1 [10.2.4.1 - 58 pages]

## FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

In each budget, Council allocates funds that allow Moloney Asset Management Systems to undertake 3 yearly condition assessments and to apportion payments over a three-year period.

To maintain current road condition levels, Council will need to allocate at least \$3.1M pa. for road renewal and ensure that this is a separate figure from routine road maintenance expenditure.

## CONCLUSION

MAMS undertake road condition surveys and financial forecasting for 72 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 assets.

## Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Megan Phelan

That Council:

1. Endorses the findings of the Moloney Asset Management Systems Roads 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

### 10.2.5. CO2 EMISSIONS MONITORING

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

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

**Report Author:** Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

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

**File No:** 30/18/06

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the CO2 emissions data relating to publicly managed assets.

#### BACKGROUND

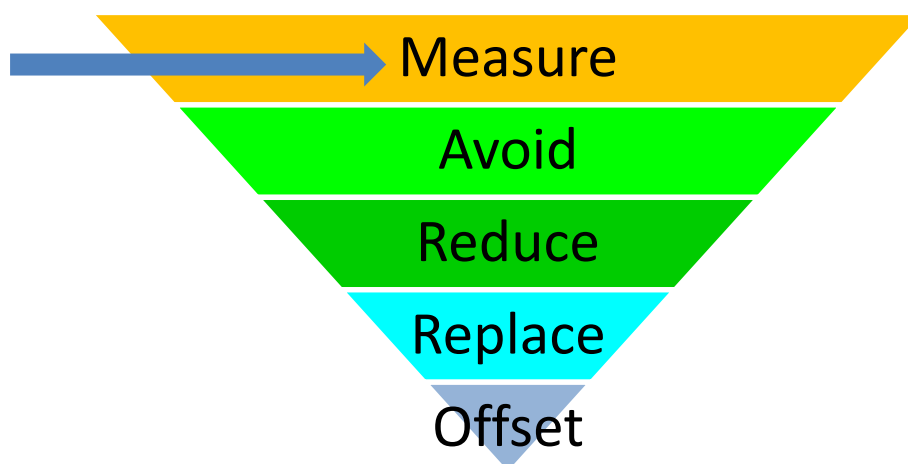
A 2018 report commissioned by Council showed that most of Council's CO2 emissions are associated with fleet, plant and stationary energy consumption from Council's buildings. In 2021 Council adopted the Climate Change Response and Mitigation Action Plan and together with Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA) a significant number of sustainability projects were undertaken to reduce Council's CO2 emissions, including solar panel installations, LED street light implementation, signing up to 100% GreenPower (electricity sourced from renewable energy) and auditing and retrofitting of 8 Council buildings.

The conversion to 100% GreenPower automatically reduced Council's CO2 emissions by approximately 25%.

In 2022 Council implemented CO2 monitoring software Trellis. Generated through Council's financial systems, the web-based platform is used to collect, interpret and act on data produced by transactions, providing an accurate corporate carbon footprint and a measured baseline to commence Council's journey to reducing carbon emissions.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The implemented Trellis software is the first step in Council's journey to net zero emissions and is designed to provide an accurate measure of the existing carbon footprint, measuring each site and asset class within Council control. With each step along the journey this will require Council to follow the industry adopted methodology as demonstrated in the diagram below. With the implementation of the Trellis software, Council are currently in the "Measure" stage of this journey.

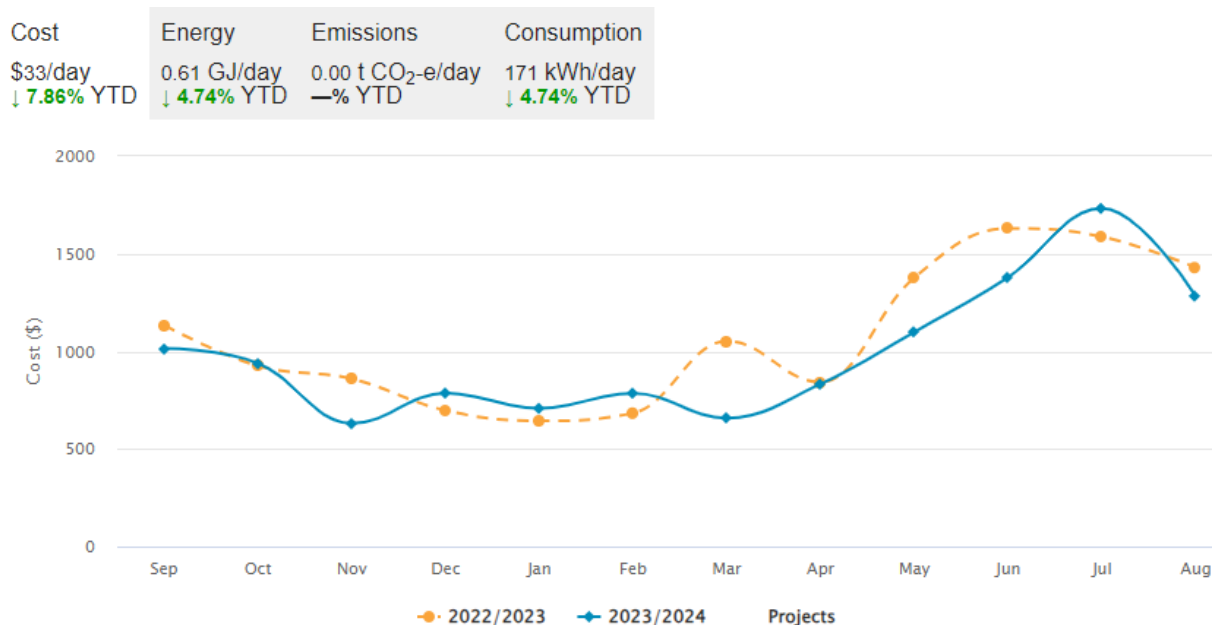


The software provides graphs for all sites, a few of which are provided in this report to demonstrate the information that is being collected. The data captured will also highlight any anomalies to be identified.

Spikes in certain areas will assist Council Officers to conduct investigations and identify areas requiring repair or upgrade.

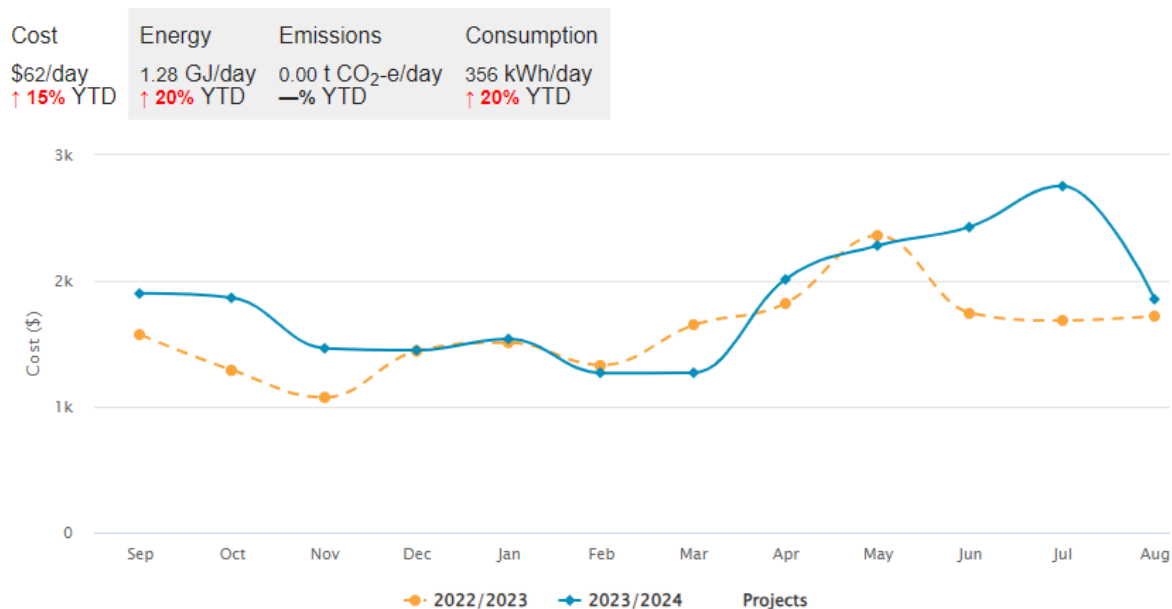
### Lawrence Street Office

The current electricity use comparison for the Beaufort Shire office for the year shows what times of year Council is using more electricity, which may relate to the higher generation of energy from solar during the sunnier parts of the year and may also relate to the fact that heating of the office requires more energy. Based on the floorspace and the number of people that work in the Lawrence Street office the cost is reasonably low and has seen a small reduction from the previous year (\$33 per day).



## Beaufort lake Caravan Park

The data presented for the energy consumption and Co2 emissions for the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park highlights some areas for improvement to reduce costs and Co2 emissions such as better insulated cabins creating less reliance on heating and cooling mechanisms and improved lighting.



## Cost/Consumption Comparison

Lawrence Street Office		
Year	Total Cost	Total Consumption
2022/23	\$12,992.00	64,661 kw
2023/24	\$11,848.00	60,461 kw
Beaufort Lake Caravan Park		
Year	Total Cost	Total Consumption
2022/23	\$19,535.00	107,313 kw
2023/24	\$22,087.00	126,041 kw

Initiatives such as the lights upgrade, improvements to insulation and heating and cooling systems upgrades have all contributed to lower energy use. The 100% Greenpower initiative and therefore use of electricity sourced from renewable energy allows Council's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to remain at zero (0).

Council officers will continue to measure and track emissions data and provide updated comparisons to Council on a regular basis.

During the 2023/24 financial year, the emissions avoided by Council as a result of using electricity sourced from renewable energy was 443 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

The next step in the data capturing of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is to transfer actual costs in other areas into equivalent carbon emissions. This will enable tracking and a possible reduction in costs in these areas of emissions categories as well as providing a total emissions figure for the organization.

The emissions categories include:

- Transport Fuel
- Accommodation
- Cleaning and chemicals
- Construction materials and services
- ICT services and equipment
- Machinery and vehicles
- Office equipment and supplies
- Postage, courier and freight
- Products such as clothing and first aid supplies
- Roads and landscape
- Waste

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

Priority 3 - Environment

3a. Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

The community engagement that contributed to developing the council plan put a strong emphasis on environmental protection and action on climate change resilience.

Council has shown through the various CO2 reduction programs that it is committed to climate action. Council continues to support the community regarding the impacts of climate change by promoting actions that are replicable.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Climate change presents a significant economic threat to the community with increases in energy costs and the impact from extreme weather events on communities and Council assets. By measuring the emissions and cost of operation, Council can better identify ways of reducing emissions and therefore costs, as well as preparing for potential mandatory emissions reporting.

### **CONCLUSION**

The implementation of the Trellis software is a big step on the pathway to Co2 emissions reduction. The accurate measuring of data allows Council to assess the current costs and emissions of the organisation's operations.

**Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. Notes this report.
2. Commits to further reports being presented as data is collected and detailed comparisons can be made.

**CARRIED**



**10.2.6. PETITION - MCKINLAY STREET BRIDGE, LANDSBOROUGH (BRIDGE 107)**

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

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

**Report Author:** Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

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

**File No:** 3860

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of a petition received on 04 November 2024 seeking repairs on the McKinlay Street Bridge (Bridge 107) in Landsborough.

**BACKGROUND**

On November 4, 2024, Officers received a letter from Caroline Rafferty, Landsborough resident and President of the Landsborough Primary School Council. The letter, representing several members of the Landsborough Primary School staff and parents, seeks urgent repairs on the McKinlay Street Bridge in Landsborough.

The petition contained six (6) signatures and stated:

*“Pyrenees Shire – Can you please fix the bridge in McKinlay Street, Landsborough.”*

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Before making any decision in respect of the matter, Council should have regard to the Pyrenees Shire Council Governance Rules 2022, Section 4.8.3 which states that:

a) Unless Council determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion may be made on any petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application until the next Council meeting after that at which it has been presented (except where it meets sub-Rule 4.9(b)) except for:

- I. That the petition be received, and
- II. That the petition be referred to the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director for consideration and response, or
- III. That the petition be referred to the Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director for a report to a future Council meeting.

It is normal practice then for Council to seek a report to be prepared by the relevant officer for a subsequent meeting addressing the merits of the issues contained in the petition.

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 4 - Economy

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

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

The McKinlay Street Bridge update published in the Landsborough & District News on Friday 15 November is attached and states that new guard railing work has been scheduled for repair and that temporary measures are currently in place.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Petition letter [10.2.6.1 - 2 pages]
2. Landsborough Noticeboard November 2024 [10.2.6.2 - 3 pages]

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications will be addressed within any future report for decision.

**Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Rebecca Wardlaw**

That Council:

1. Receives the petition;
2. Requests a report to be presented to a future meeting of Council on the matter contained in the petition.

**CARRIED**

### 10.3. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### 10.3.1. CHRISTMAS CLOSURE PERIOD

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

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

**Report Author:** Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

**File No:** 16/20/06

#### PURPOSE

This report requests the Council's endorsement of the proposed closure of the Pyrenees Shire Council offices and other arrangements during the 2024 Christmas / New Year holiday period.

#### BACKGROUND

It has been the practice of Pyrenees Shire Council to close during the Christmas / New Year holiday period. The holiday period closure enables staff to take a break with little impact on service delivery and at the same time provides the opportunity for staff to reduce outstanding annual leave and rostered day off balances.

There is limited demand placed for municipal services over this period and the closure is generally accepted by the community.

Where mutually convenient, staff will also be encouraged to take additional annual leave around the positioning of the official office closures at that time.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The following closures or service amendments are planned -

##### End of year staff break-up function

Each year the Pyrenees Shire Council holds an end-of-year break-up function to thank all staff for their contribution to the organisation over the past 12 months. In 2024, it is proposed that the event be held at Cavehill Creek on Friday 20 December.

To facilitate this celebration, all areas will close early on that date – around 12.00 noon.

##### Council offices, Lawrence Street, Beaufort

It is proposed that the Beaufort Council offices will be closed from 3.00pm on Tuesday, 24 December 2024 and will re-open on Thursday, 2 January 2025.

The closure period comprises 3 workdays and 3 public holidays. Public holidays are assigned to Wednesday and Thursday, 25 and 26 December 2024, and Wednesday, 1 January 2025.

It is proposed that the three working days outside of the public holidays (Friday 27 December 2024, Monday 30 and Tuesday 31 January 2025) will be taken by staff as leave, unless other arrangements have been made.

##### Municipal Depots

Full services at the Council depots will close at 12.00 noon Friday 20 December 2024, with most outdoor staff taking RDOs on Monday and Tuesday, 23 and 24 December. A skeleton staff will be maintained over the holiday period for all working days to ensure that essential services are maintained.

**Resource / Information Centres**

It is proposed that the centres will operate as follows over the holiday period:

Friday	20 December 2024	10am-12.00pm
Monday	23 December 2024	Normal weekday hours – 10am-5pm
Tuesday	24 December 2024 (Christmas Eve)	10am-3pm
Wednesday	25 December 2024 (Christmas Day)	Closed
Thursday	26 December 2024 (Boxing Day)	Closed
Friday	27 December 2024	Normal weekday hours – 10am-5pm
Saturday	28 December 2024	Weekend hours – 10am-1pm
Sunday	29 December 2024	Weekend hours – 10am-1pm
Monday	30 December 2024	Normal weekday hours – 10am-5pm
Tuesday	31 December 2024 (New Year's Eve)	10am-3pm
Wednesday	1 January 2025 (New Years Day)	Closed
Thursday	2 January 2025	Normal weekday hours – 10am-5pm
Friday	3 January 2025	Normal weekday hours – 10am-5pm

**Emergency management capability**

Staff involved in emergency management will undertake their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the municipal emergency management procedures. The Council will have a roster for emergency response over the holiday period closure.

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 1 - People

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

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

**CONCLUSION**

It is standard practice and well accepted by our community that the Pyrenees Shire Council offices close during the Christmas / New holiday period as detailed in the above report. Essential service delivery and appropriate resourcing for emergency response will be maintained during this period.

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council endorses the closure of the Pyrenees Shire Council offices and other arrangements during the 2024/25 Christmas / New Year holiday period as detailed in this report.

**CARRIED**

### 10.3.2. NP47: PROPOSAL TO NAME UNNAMED ROAD BETWEEN RUTHERFORD STREET AND BARNETT STREET AVOCA

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

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

**Report Author:** Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance

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

**File No:** 58/02/08

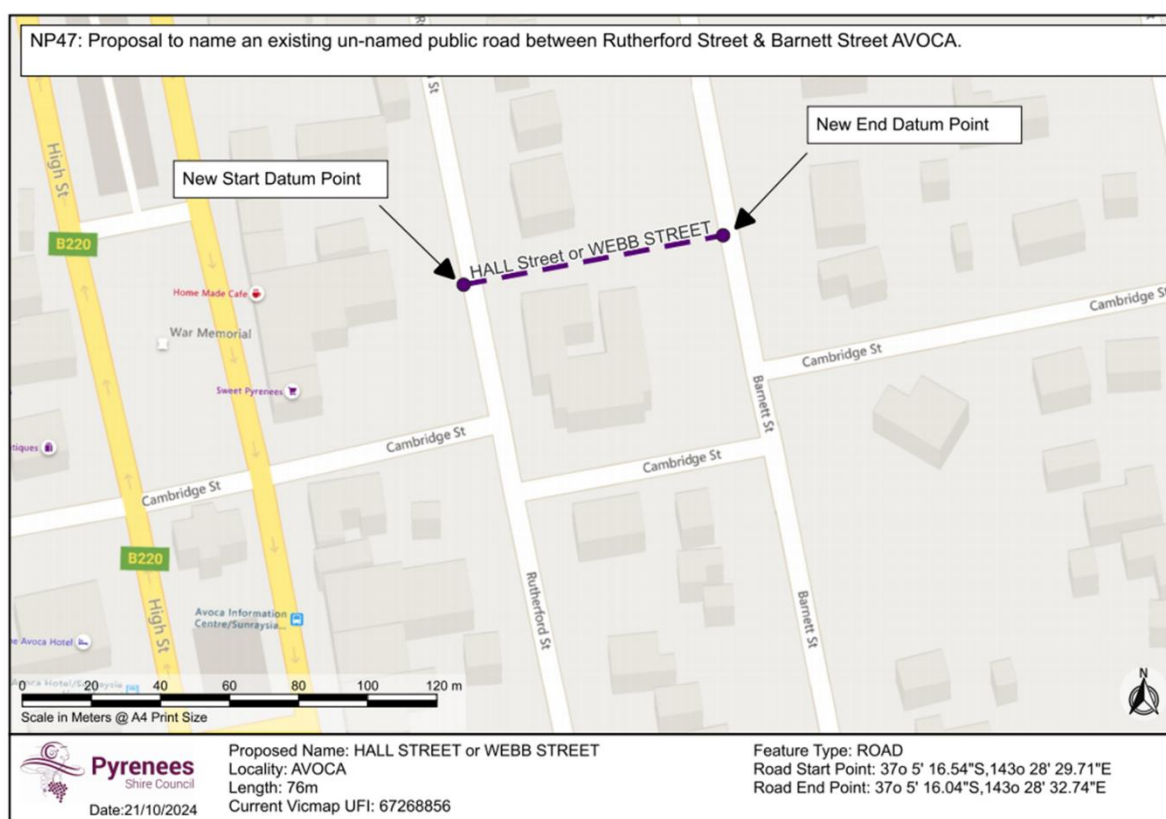
#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to give notice of its intent to name an unnamed road between Rutherford and Barnett Streets, Avoca.

#### BACKGROUND

Road names can recognise and reflect culture, heritage and landscape. Additionally, unique road names are required for the Municipal Public Road Register as each road needs a unique name to clearly identify which road requires maintenance or improvement, to reduce the risk of Council or contractors working on the wrong road and to provide a high standard of customer service by being able to clearly identify which road customers have concerns with

The road designated in dotted purple is the section of road being proposed to be named.



## ISSUE / DISCUSSION

In accordance with Pyrenees Shire Council Policy “Principles on Road Naming”, Clause 4.1(a), it is proposed to name the unnamed road between Rutherford Street and Barnett Street as Hall Street OR Webb Street.

This sealed road is adjacent to the Avoca Town Hall and encompasses several car parking spaces on the North side of the road. There are no residential properties that are primarily accessed via this road; however, the road does offer alternative entrance to the Avoca Town Hall. Given the proximity to the Gunga Hub, contact was initiated with the Traditional Owner Group seeking consideration of the use of traditional language for the road, however no response has been received at the time of this report.

To commence the naming of this road the following road names are suggested:

### ***Option 1: Hall Street***

The name, Hall Street, emphasises Principal C of the *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022* “linking the name to place”. As the proposed name suggests, the use of Hall Street is due to the proximity to the Avoca Town Hall and that the parking on that street is likely to be used by patrons to the Town Hall. The Road Type “Street” refers to “a public roadway in a town, city or urban area; especially a paved thoroughfare with footpaths and buildings along one or both sides”.

The name Hall Street has been checked for duplication in the VicNames database and there were no duplicates found within the required 15 km radius.

### ***Option 2: Webb Street***

The name, Webb Street, commemorates Emma Webb who was the wife of Avoca Mail creator John Paten. The Avoca Mail was the earliest newspaper printed in the region, running from 1863 through to 1984. Emma married John in 1865 and together they had ten children. Emma raised the children in the family home *Watford Villa*, which is approximately 250 metres from the proposed Webb Street location. The Road Type “Street” refers to “a public roadway in a town, city or urban area; especially a paved thoroughfare with footpaths and buildings along one or both sides”.

The name Hall Street has been checked for duplication in the VicNames database and there were no duplicates found within the required 15 km radius.

The use of a female commemorative name is in accordance with the Victorian Government’s Gender Equality Strategy which legislates that 70% of new commemorative names be that of women (also as per Principal G *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022*).

Once Council has made a naming selection, the following steps will occur:

1. The proposed name is audited to ensure compliance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria-2022 (via checklist).
2. Public advertising of the naming proposal inviting feedback on the naming proposal (and calling for descendants if commemorative naming is chosen), minimum 30 days response time. Including, but not limited to:
  - a. Advertisement in Pyrenees Advocate, Maryborough District Advertiser, Council Website.

3. Letters are sent to property owners most likely to be impacted by the naming proposal i.e. property directly adjacent to the road seeking feedback – support of or objection to the proposed name.
4. Responses are collated into an assessment report.
5. If there are no objections to the proposal, officers will seek Council approval to formally adopt the road name as per the proposal.
  - a. If objections are received, the naming authority (Council) must consider the validity of the objection(s) and if deemed necessary, adjust/abandon the current proposal.
6. Proposal documentation will be lodged with Geographic Names Victoria (GNV) – at which point the registrar (GNV) considers the proposal.
7. Registrar endorses the proposal: name is gazetted and registered.
8. Council erects signage to illustrate road name.

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

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Enabling Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY: PRINCIPLES ON ROAD NAMING

GEOGRAPHIC PLACE NAMES ACT 1998

ROAD MANAGEMENT ACT 2004

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA AS/NZS 4819:2011 RURAL AND URBAN ADDRESSING

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

Community consultation will take place in the form of:

- Advertisement of the naming proposal in Pyrenees Advocate, Maryborough District Advertiser, Council Website.
- Letters are to be sent to property owners most likely to be impacted by the naming proposal i.e. property directly adjacent to the road seeking feedback – support of or objection to the proposed name.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Costs for the naming of the road are able to be accommodated within the limits of Council's operating budget.

The naming of new roads and accurate addressing is important to ensure that residents are able to be located by emergency services and to receive mail. To mitigate the risk of errors, Council needs to comply with the 'Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities, 2016,' and the Australian Standards for Signing and Rural and Urban Addressing.

### **CONCLUSION**

A current unnamed road has been included within Council's Road Register and requires a formal name for public safety and identification purposes. The proposed name is either Hall Street or Webb Street.



## **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Resolves either Hall Street or Webb Street as the name for the unnamed road discussed in this report.
2. Commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to the name made by Council
3. Give public notice of the proposed naming of Hall Street and asks for public submissions in accordance with the Local Government Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy 2020.
4. Writes to affected landowners advising of the road naming proposal and the invitation for public submissions.

## **AN ALTERNATIVE MOTION WAS PUT FORWARD**

**Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. Resolves Webb Street as the name for the unnamed road discussed in this report.
2. Commences the naming process to name this unnamed road to the name made by Council
3. Give public notice of the proposed naming of Webb Street and asks for public submissions in accordance with the Local Government Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy 2020.
4. Writes to affected landowners advising of the road naming proposal and the invitation for public submissions.

**CARRIED**

**10.3.3. NP48: PROPOSAL TO NAME UNNAMED ROAD OFF RACECOURSE ROAD BEAUFORT****Presenter:** Kathy Bramwell - Director Corporate and Community Services**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.**Report Author:** Emily Beaton – Property Revenue Administration Officer**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.**File No:** 58/02/08**PURPOSE**

This report seeks the Council's approval to commence the process to name a currently unnamed road located off Racecourse Road, Beaufort.

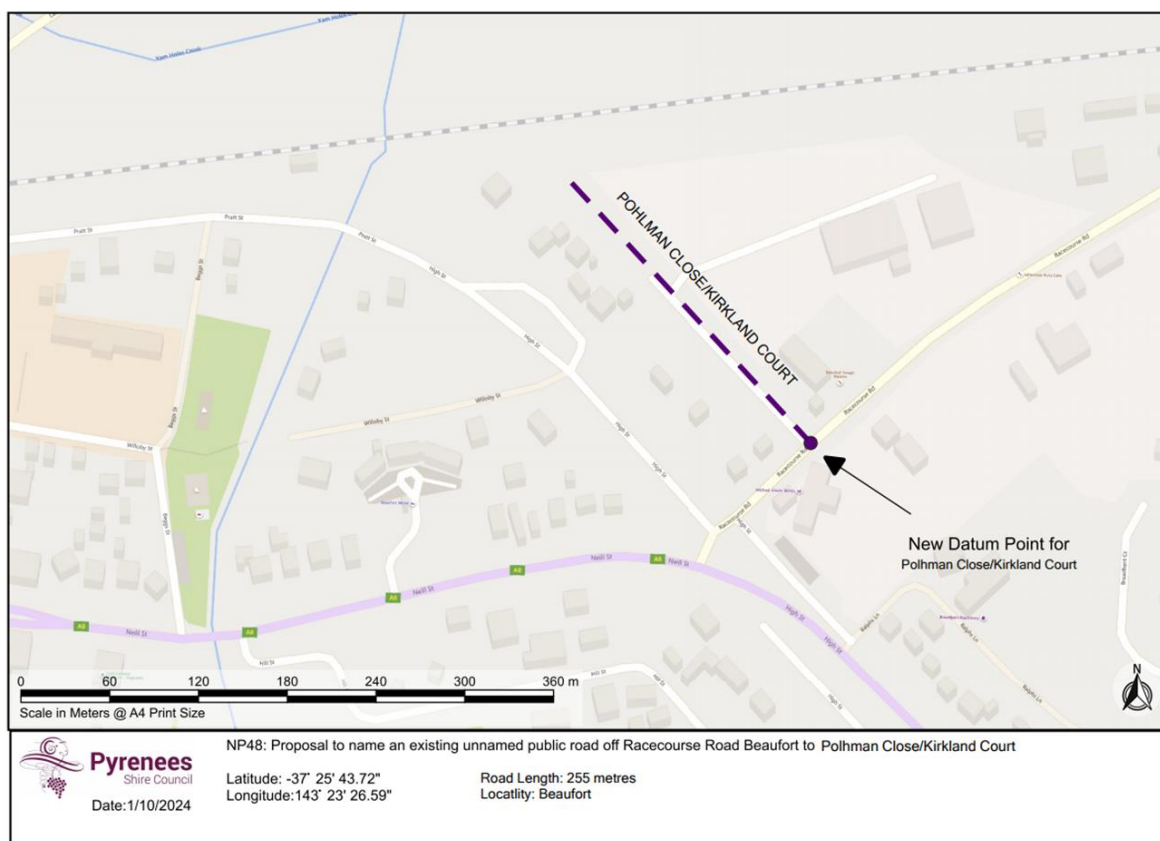
**BACKGROUND**

Road names can recognise and reflect culture, heritage and landscape. Appropriate naming is essential to identify locations and specific properties for managing emergencies and delivering goods and services; therefore, it is important that unnamed roads are rectified accordingly.

All road naming activities at the Pyrenees Shire Council are conducted in accordance with Victorian guidelines on road and place naming.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

In accordance with Pyrenees Shire Council Policy 'Principles on Road Naming', Clause 4.1(a), it is proposed to name the unnamed road off Racecourse Road, as shown on the map below, as either Pohlman Close or Kirkland Court.



This partially sealed road runs along the rear of several properties on High Street and acts as a secondary access point for another property which fronts Racecourse Road.

To commence the naming of this road, research was conducted by officers which resulted in the following road names being suggested. Another name 'Hancock' which is in the vicinity of the unnamed road as shown on the Parish Plans was also considered, however was considered a duplicate name of nearby 'Havelock Street' due to the similarity in sound and the potential to cause confusion for emergency services and, therefore, did not comply with multiple road naming Principles.

#### **Option 1 – Pohlman Close**

The name 'Pohlman Close' honours a notable figure in Ripon's history, Judge Robert Williams Pohlman (1811-1977), meeting Principle 1 of the naming principles in the *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022*.

In addition to his legal and political resume, Judge Pohlman was the founding chairman of the Denomination Board of Education from 1848 and in 1855 the Judge was elected as the Member for Ripon, Grenville and Polwarth in the Legislative Council. Local County of Ripon Parish Plans reflect the prior existence of 'Pohlman Street' within the vicinity of this unnamed road. The road type 'Close' means a short, enclosed roadway and the name is unique in the 30-kilometre radius of the road's location.

#### **Option 2 – Kirkland Court**

The name 'Kirkland Court' commemorates Katharine Kirkland (1808-1892) who was an early settler to the local region (Trawalla, near Beaufort). An author of *'Life in the Bush'*, Katharine was one of the few women settlers in Victoria, arriving from Scotland in 1839. The road type 'Court' refers to a short, enclosed roadway and the name is unique in the required 30-kilometre radius of the road's location.

The use of a female commemorative name is in accordance with the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Strategy which legislates that 70% of new commemorative names be that of women (also as per Principle G in the *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022*).

The Council's approval to commence the public consultation part of the road naming process is now sought.

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

Priority 1 - People

- 1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.
- 1e. Improve social outcomes.

Enabling Principles

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

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

Subject to approval by the Council, residents within the vicinity of the unnamed roads will be consulted on the road naming proposal, seeking feedback on preferences and public submissions in accordance with Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

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

Costs for the naming of the road can be accommodated within the limits of Council's operating budget.

The naming of new roads and accurate addressing is important to ensure that residents are able to be located by emergency services and to receive mail. To mitigate the risk of errors, Council must comply with the 'Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016' and the Australian Standards for Signing and Rural and Urban Addressing.

### **CONCLUSION**

An unnamed road exists within Beaufort increasing risk to the safety of any residents that may reside along that road. Officers have conducted research and put forward two proposed names for Council and Community consideration. Council's approval to commence the public consultation part of the road naming process is now being sought.

### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Approves the suggested names put forward by officers for consideration in naming a currently unnamed road in Beaufort – Option 1: Pohlman Close and Option 2: Kirkland Court.
2. Directs officers to conduct public consultation on the matter: giving public notice of the proposed naming of the currently unnamed road and seeking feedback and public submissions in accordance with the Local Government Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy 2020.
3. Directs officers to write to affected landowners advising of the road naming proposal and the invitation for public submissions, and to seek feedback on name preferences.
4. Requires officers to provide a further report to the Council when public consultation is complete with a final naming recommendation for approval.

### **AN ALTERNATIVE MOTION WAS PUT FORWARD**

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. Resolves Kirkland Court as the name for the currently unnamed road in Beaufort.
2. Directs officers to conduct public consultation on the matter: giving public notice of the proposed naming of the currently unnamed road and seeking feedback and public submissions in accordance with the Local Government Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy 2020.
3. Directs officers to write to affected landowners advising of the road naming proposal and the invitation for public submissions.
4. Requires officers to provide a further report to the Council when public consultation is complete with a final naming recommendation for approval.

**CARRIED**

**10.3.4. COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES**

**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:** 18/02/04

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is for Council to determine Councillor representation on committees.

**BACKGROUND**

Each year the Council determines the Councillor representation on committees. Below is a list of Committees showing Councillor representation as adopted by Council at its 2023 Statutory Meeting.

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>EXTERNAL - FORMAL</b>			
<b>Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)</b>	CEO	CEO	Cr Clark / Cr Vance
<b>Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)</b>		N/A	Any Councillors
<b>Central Highlands Councils Victoria (CHCV)</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Rural Councils Victoria Executive Committee</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Vance
<b>Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Central Highlands LLEN</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Clark
<b>Timber Towns Victoria</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Vance
<b>National Timber Councils Association</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Vance
<b>Central Highlands Regional Partnership</b>	CEO	CEO	N/A
<b>Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Ferrari (Ward Councillor Beaufort)
<b>Sunraysia Highway Action Committee</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Eason (Ward Councillor Avoca)
<b>Committee for Ballarat</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)</b>	CEO	Director A&DS	Cr Clark
<b>Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	N/A
<b>Grampians Women's Health – CoRE Governance Group</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	N/A
<b>Rail Freight Alliance</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Eason
<b>Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership (GPPCP)</b>	C&CS	CEO / Manager CWP	N/A
<b>Ballarat Rail Action Committee</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Clark
<b>EXTERNAL – REPRESENTATIVE ONLY</b>			
<b>Pyrenees Community Safety Advisory Group</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	Mayor
<b>Library Advisory Council</b>	C&CS	Manager CX	N/A
<b>Business for Beaufort</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Ferrari
<b>Advance Avoca</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Eason
<b>Beaufort Secondary College Committee</b>		N/A	Cr Ferrari
<b>Youth Foundations Victoria Beaufort Initiative</b>	C&CS	N/A	Cr Kehoe
<b>Langi Kal Kal Community Advisory Group</b>	CEO	CEO	Cr Clark

<b>INTERNAL</b>			
<b>Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	Cr Eason / Cr Ferrari
<b>Services &amp; Assets Management Steering Group</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Vance
<b>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)</b>	C&CS	MEMO	Cr Kehoe
<b>CEO Review</b>	CEO	CEO	All Councillors plus an independent professional advisor
<b>COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT</b>			
<b>Beaufort Community Bank Complex</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	Beaufort Ward Councillor
<b>Brewster Hall</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	Ercildoune Ward Councillor
<b>Landsborough Community Precinct</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	De Cameron Ward Councillor
<b>Snake Valley Hall</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	Mount Emu Ward Councillor
<b>Waubra Recreation Reserve</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	Ercildoune Ward Councillor
<b>Lexton Community Hub</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	De Cameron Ward Councillor

### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Council is requested to determine the allocation of Councillors to the various committees that Pyrenees Shire Council is associated with for the 2024/25 year.

Changes to the list of committees from the previous year include:

- The Pyrenees Community Safety Advisory Group has not met during the former financial year and can be considered to be disbanded.
- In 2024, the Council resolved to no longer subscribe as members to the Rail Freight Alliance and this has been removed from the list.

A list of recommended representatives is included in the Officer Recommendation. Vacant positions previously filled by former Councillors will need representation to be determined by the current Council – these vacant positions are highlighted in yellow.

### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- Provide transparency and accountability
- Use resources efficiently and effectively

### ATTACHMENTS

Nil

### FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial or risk implications associated with this report.

### CONCLUSION

Annually, the Council reviews its representation to the range of committees it participates in. This report provides an update on this representation and provides any recommendations for change.

**Cr Megan Phelan / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council appoints the following Councillors as representatives on committees as listed below for the 2024/25 year:

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>EXTERNAL - FORMAL</b>			
<b>Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA)</b>		N/A	Any Councillors
<b>Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC)</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Rural Councils Victoria (RCV)</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Central Highlands LLEN</b>	CEO	N/A	TBA
<b>Timber Towns Victoria</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
<b>National Timber Councils Association</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
<b>Central Highlands Regional Partnership</b>	CEO	CEO	N/A
<b>Western Highway Action Committee (WHAC)</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Ferrari
<b>Sunraysia Highway Action Committee</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	Cr Tol
<b>Committee for Ballarat</b>	CEO	CEO	Mayor
<b>Central Victoria Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)</b>	CEO	Director A&DS	TBA
<b>Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	Cr Wardlaw
<b>Grampians Women's Health – CoRE Governance Group</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	N/A
<b>Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership (GPPCP)</b>	C&CS	CEO / Manager CWP	N/A
<b>EXTERNAL – REPRESENTATIVE ONLY</b>			
<b>Library Advisory Council</b>	C&CS	Manager CWP	N/A
<b>Business for Beaufort</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Ferrari
<b>Advance Avoca</b>	CEO	N/A	Cr Wardlaw
<b>Beaufort Secondary College Committee</b>		N/A	Cr Kehoe
<b>Langi Kal Kal Community Advisory Group</b>	CEO	CEO	Cr Tol

Committee	Dept	Staff Member	Councillor
<b>INTERNAL</b>			
<b>Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b>	C&CS	Director C&CS	Mayor Cr Wardlaw
<b>Services &amp; Assets Management Steering Group</b>	A&DS	Director A&DS	TBA
<b>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)</b>	C&CS	MEMO	Cr Ferrari
<b>CEO Review</b>	CEO	CEO	All Councillors plus an independent professional advisor
<b>COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT</b>			
<b>Beaufort Community Bank Complex</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Ferrari
<b>Brewster Hall (not active)</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	
<b>Landsborough Community Precinct</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Phelan
<b>Snake Valley Hall</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Kehoe
<b>Waubra Recreation Reserve</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol
<b>Lexton Community Hub</b>	C&CS	Manager CW&P	Cr Tol

**CARRIED**



**10.3.5. Q1 2024/25 FINANCIAL REPORT**

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

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

**Report Author:** Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance

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

**File No:** 32/08/18

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the financial performance for the first quarter of the financial year - 1 July to 30 September 2024.

**BACKGROUND**

The provision of regular reports of Council's financial performance ensures that Council's financial management and associated processes are accountable, transparent, and responsible.

The attached financial report for the period 1 July to 30 September 2024 is a component of ensuring the accountability of the Council's operations. In line with good governance, it forms part of the public accountability process and reporting and includes the following Financial Statements.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Cash Flow Statement; and
- Statement of Capital Works
- Capital Works Program

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The following are the key points of interest within the attached report:

1. At the 2024/25 year end, Council is predicted to record an improved operating result due to additional income discussed below:
  - a. Additional income recorded in the forecasts is due to programs being carried over from the 2023/24 financial year,
  - b. Additional funds have been allocated to the Roads-to-Recovery program which was not budgeted for due to an increase in Council's four-year allocation, and
  - c. Receipt of the Federal Financial Assistance Grants in the current financial year.
2. Rate collection is on target year-to-date, however there needs to be a significant improvement in the collection rate to overcome the significant debt increase recorded in 2023/24.
3. Cashflow and working capital remain strong year-to-date.
4. The Capital Works program is currently ahead of schedule.

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Enabling Principles

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

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

This report provides a financial update against the 2024/25 budget to the community via formal Council reporting, as required in s97 of the Local Government Act 2020.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Finance Report Template - Council - Sept 2024 [**10.3.5.1** - 20 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

All financial implications are within this report and the attachment.

## **CONCLUSION**

In accordance with s97 of the Local Government Act 2020, this report provides an update of Council's financial performance against the 2024/25 budget as of 30 September 2024 (Q1). At this time of the year, annual forecasts are predicting an improved financial result compared to the previous financial year.

## **Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council receives and notes the financial performance report for the first quarter of the 2024/25 financial year and the projected forecasts for the year.

## **CARRIED**

### 10.3.7. COUNCIL POLICIES

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

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

**Report Author:** Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

**File No:** 16/24/12

#### PURPOSE

To seek Council adoption of two new policies – Council Confidentiality Policy and Councillor Social Media Policy.

#### BACKGROUND

Council officers develop and maintain a range of policies and procedures to support Councillors and council staff in maintaining compliance and good governance, some of which are of import significant enough to require formal Council adoption, and some of which relate primarily to the Council members.

The past few years have seen a range of governance improvements in local government, being driven by the State and investigation outcomes. In preparation for post-election 2024, two model policies were prepared by the VLGA (Victorian Local Governance Association) to aid councils in the development of:

- a. A Council Confidentiality Policy, and
- b. A Councillor Social Media Policy.

These model policies have been transcribed onto Pyrenees Shire Council format and are provided in this report for Council consideration and adoption.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION – COUNCILLOR SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

In the Local Government Victoria (LGV) publication “*Guidance on the Model Councillor Code of Conduct October 2024*”, the guidance is provided that “to avoid breaching the Model Code of Conduct, Councillors should act consistently with any social media or communications policies or protocols that their own Council has developed to guide the responsible use of social media by Councillors.”

The attached policy is based upon a model policy provided by the Victorian Local Governance Association and is intended to provide guidance to Councillors in the use of social media to ensure they breach not only the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, but also a range of other legislative and risks that apply.

The policy does not introduce restrictions that do not already exist, instead seeking to clarify existing provisions applicable to social media activity, drawn from:

- Local Government Act 2020
- Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2022
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Other relevant law

Not all Councillors are active on social media and may have no desire to be. The policy makes it clear that there is no presumption that Councillors will maintain a social media presence. For those Councillors who do maintain a presence, the policy spells out the expectations that arise.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION – COUNCIL CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Every council is required to adopt a Council confidentiality policy under the Local Government (Governance and Integrity Regulations). The policy must include “procedures regarding access and non-disclosure of Council documents that must be managed securely as a matter of good governance.”

This requirement provides an opportunity for councils to introduce document security obligations that do not currently exist and enables councils to bring several existing provisions relating to document confidentiality and privacy together into one place.

The attached policy is based upon a model policy provided by the Victorian Local Governance Association and describes four classes of documents:

- Documents containing confidential information (based on the existing section 125 of the Local Government Act 2020).
- Internal documents (a new class of document defined in the policy).
- Documents containing personal information (based on the existing provisions in the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014).
- Documents containing health information (based on the existing provisions in the Health Records Act 2001).

The policy explains why Councillors may need to be provided with sensitive / confidential information and why it needs to be kept securely in some circumstances. The treatment of information used in the deliberative process should be weighted in favour of transparency, but there are circumstances where confidentiality is necessary.

The policy is designed to introduce the minimum restrictions required to comply with the legislative obligation, and to favour the free disclosure of information wherever possible – as is consistent with public transparency principles in the Local Government Act 2020.

**COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

As these policies relate solely to Councillor conduct matters and were based upon model documents provided by the VLGA, it was considered unnecessary to conduct public or community engagement before submitting for Council endorsement.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. DRAFT Councillor Social Media Policy 2024 [10.3.7.1 - 8 pages]
2. DRAFT Council Confidentiality Policy 2024 [10.3.7.2 - 6 pages]

**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Updated regulations require Councils to adopt a Council confidentiality policy and the policy for which Council adoption is requested ensures compliance in this regard.

The draft Councillor social media policy presented to Council for adoption does not seek to restrict freedom of expression or prevent Councillors from publicly sharing their views. Rather, the attached policy provides clarity to Councillors on high level behavioural expectations of Councillor social media use, requiring them to act in good faith on social media and to uphold their obligation to ensure that behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council.

## **CONCLUSION**

Two policies have been developed using models provided by the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) to support Councillors in their roles and to ensure compliance with Local Government regulations and the Model Code of Conduct. These policies – *Councillor Social Media Policy* and *Council Confidentiality Policy* – are provided to the Council for its consideration and recommended for adoption.

### **Cr Rebecca Wardlaw / Cr Megan Phelan**

That Council:

1. Adopts the draft Council Confidentiality Policy, and
2. Adopts the draft Councillor Social Media Policy.

**CARRIED**

### 10.3.8. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

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

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

**Report Author:** Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services

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

**File No:** 32/04/04

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting M012 held on 24 September 2024.

#### BACKGROUND

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

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

A copy of the Draft Minutes from the Meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 24 September 2024 is attached for Council information.

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

- The CEO provided an overview of topical issues faced by the Council.
- 2023/24 Financial Reports and External Audits for the end of the financial year, including provision of the Audit Closing Report and Final Audit Management Letter.
- Adoption of the 2023/24 financial statements and performance statement – the committee recommended to Council that the financial and performance statements be signed by Councillors Eason and Ferrari.
- Council asset valuations recommending that Council infrastructure assets not be indexed for the 2023/24 financial year as it was considered the movements were less than 10% and therefore not significant.
- Governance and performance report highlighting key topics of governance, compliance and risk management matters.
- Internal Audit report on the recent internal audit reviews conducted on Purchasing Cards and Human Resources.
- A report providing a progress update on the current review of the procurement policy and associated framework.
- Provision of the pdf version of the Pyrenees Shire Council Annual Report, as provided during the election period.

#### Bi-Annual Report by the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee Chair's report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the year was provided by Mr Rod Poxon as Chair in late September 2024. This was circulated outside of normal meeting schedules and is attached for Council information.

#### Tabled documents

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

- Internal Audit Review Report 2024-02 Purchasing Cards
- Internal Audit Review Report 2024-03 Human Resources

- Industry update on reports and publications of interest to councils.

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

Enabling Principles

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

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Report by ARC Chair\_-\_ Sept 24 [**10.3.8.1** - 5 pages]
2. 2024-02 Purchasing Cards FINAL [**10.3.8.2** - 27 pages]
3. 2024-03 Human Resources FINAL [**10.3.8.3** - 21 pages]
4. 10.3.8.4 - Draft M 013 Minutes - AR Com Mtg 24.09.24 [**10.3.8.4** - 31 pages]

### **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **CONCLUSION**

A meeting of the Council's Audit & Risk Committee was held on 24 September 2024. This report provides an overview of discussions at that meeting.

### **Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Simon Tol**

That Council:

1. notes the information contained in this report and its attachments, and
2. receives the biannual report provided by the ARC Chair for September 2024.

**CARRIED**



## 11. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS

### Cr Damian Ferrari

Little to report at this Council, obviously with being in the caretaker mode due to the elections.

What I would like to do is to congratulate Tanya on being the Mayor and I look forward to supporting her throughout the year so well done and congratulations. I would also like to welcome the three new Councillors and congratulate them on their respective elections and I also look forward to working with them and supporting them along the way. I think we have got some exciting times ahead.

### Cr Simon Tol

Not much to report after a week into it, I would just like to thank the returning councillors for being so welcoming and the executive staff and the council staff who have just been so supportive in that first week.

I have been to one function this last week and it was a drag bingo at the Springs Hotel it was an interesting night but there is a group of ladies over there, young ladies in the community that are endeavouring to raise quarter of \$1million to build a new playground for the recreation hub. They are going really well and it's just great to see the younger generation coming through with some endeavour and drive to that and improve our community and help.

It has been an exciting week and just looking forward to the next journey and where it takes us.

### Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

I would like to agree with councillor and what he just said, thank you to staff and the CEO and everyone for being so welcoming and forgiving all of our silly questions and we have had so many questions but it's been a really great learning curve.

I had the pleasure of attending the Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11th at the War Memorial in Avoca. This ceremony was well attended and I was tasked with laying the Pyrenees Shire wreath. The Primary School was present and they as a whole sang the National Anthem. Also that week Natte Yallock celebrated 150 years of their Primary School which was extremely successful with approximately 300 people in attendance. I did not get the opportunity to attend in person but I was very pleased to hear all about its success and how well organised it was congratulations to all those involved.

Also last week I attended the Advance Avoca networking meeting and the launch of the new interactive website on the 13th of November and for those who haven't seen it, it is worth having a look at. It is all about business, tourism and what's on in Avoca so well worth having a look.

### Cr Megan Phelan

I would also like to echo councillor Tol and Cr Wardlaw's comments, it has been fantastic to receive the support that we have from fellow councillors, particularly those who were here in the last term, the CEO and council staff. We are on a very big learning curve but we've received great support from everybody so thank you. It is very promising to see how everyone's working together after a very short time so I think we will see lots of positive change for the Shire.

It has been very quiet on the events front given as Cr Tol said, we have been in caretaker mode but I did also attend the Remembrance Day service in Landsborough and was able to lay a wreath there. It was a small service but are really touching one and with three ex-servicemen present at the event and where able to talk a lot about the memorial that they had there and the mural in Landsborough.

Cr Tanya Kehoe

It has been a busy week but an incredibly exciting week and a very positive feeling one. I'd like to echo Cr Ferrari, it is an honour to be sitting its being again all the left I cancel Ferrari saying it's normal to be sitting as mayor but very keen to welcome three new councillors who have already shown such initiative and love to want to take on these positions and represent your communities and it is a delight to be working with Cr Ferrari again in this term coming ahead.

We had our Statutory Meeting, and it was a beautiful turn out from the community and a really lovely night so again it started well with that support and we thank everyone for coming out to that meeting.

On Friday I was very honoured to open the Beaufort Show Art Show, and my gosh every year that I see the artwork it is outstanding but even more so than ever, it was incredible. It was an incredibly touching evening because a very well loved and an incredibly community minded resident was remembered Rod Reid, was remembered with beautiful plaque and the art shed will now be very affectionately, continued to be known, but very formally to be known as Rod's Shed so that was an incredibly beautiful part of the evening.

That led onto an incredibly amazing show that occurred on Sunday and it's amazing the amount of people that work so hard to put on an incredibly inclusive and engaging community event. The setting up, the various aspects of running shearing shows, woodchopping, horse shows, them in themselves are huge events to be able to run but to run it all together so that the community get to engage in that will be part of that and just celebrate the incredible talent that we have in the area and district and welcome other visitors. Even the collegiality of groups assisting and Rotary groups coming up from other areas to help, it's an incredible testament to who we are as people that want to celebrate who we are as a community and engage with each other, so it was just an incredibly fun day.

Another fantastic event that I was able to attend on Saturday was the launch of the Snake Valley Royal Hotel history book that an amazing local lady Joan Wilson wrote in support of the Snake Valley Historical Society. It is an incredibly good document, it just shows the effort that goes into to preserve the incredible history that we have, we've had two instances tonight that we're recognising amazing people that are part of the history, well this recognises again many people that have economically contributed to the hotel business in Snake Valley and for me it was a great honour, my great great grandmother was one of the licensees there for some time and there were some fun stories in that but an incredible attribute to the Snake Valley Historical Society, as all our historical societies continue to do that.

It has already been a busy week but again I am so excited for this term ahead, excited for the community members that support us and engage us and need us to work with them. We can't say any louder that we are here for you, and I am very excited. I would also like to thank the gallery, it's exciting to have a gallery for our first official meeting as this new council and we thank you for tonight.

## 12. 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 Damian Ferrari / Cr Megan Phelan**

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 - Rates Waiver – Snake Valley Golf Club
- 15.2 - Legal Matter

**CARRIED**

*The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council stopped at 7:35pm to consider confidential items.*

*The live stream re-commenced at 8:09pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below:*

- *Councillors discussed a Rates Waiver for Snake Valley Golf Club and a legal matter.*

## 13. CLOSE OF MEETING

**Cr Simon Tol / Cr Megan Phelan**

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 19 November 2024 closed at 8.10pm.

**CARRIED**

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

2024 Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe