

Ordinary Meeting of Council - 10 December 2024

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Pyrenees Digital Connectivity action plan

June 2024 V1

Live Document

Introduction

The Pyrenees digital connectivity action plan, an action plan for creating a thriving, successful community a great place to live and work. Connectivity planning is an opportunity to focus on the potential for strategic investment that will support economic development and community services elevation for the region.

The purpose of the plan is to record the specifics of the vision and strategic plan, so that together we can discuss how technology and connectivity can best contribute to our region's overall success. Topics such as digital inclusion, increasing digital ability, cyber security, and disaster and emergency planning will be important aspects of this discussion.

The aim is to collaborate with all stakeholders internally and externally to improve the digital connectivity. A plan that can communicate needs in terms of overall benefit and return on investment – for individuals, communities and businesses.

The plan can communicate needs in terms of overall benefit and return on investment – for individuals, communities and businesses.

Your Vision	
Overall vision for our region:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Happy ▪ Connected ▪ Healthy ▪ Sustainable ▪ Welcoming <p>Sustainable, welcoming places and natural environments that create inclusive, happy and healthy connected communities (Pyrenees Shire Council Plan 2021-2025)</p>
Expected population / demographic change (growth/decline, ageing mix, geographic spread, etc.)	<p>The Pyrenees Shire area sits across traditional ownership areas of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk Aboriginal peoples. Spanning between the regional centres of Ballarat and Ararat. We are a Shire of 29 communities, each with their own heritage, character and rural charm. Our towns and settlements are diverse and distinct, abundant with unique sense of place. Just over 50% of our population live within one of our 9 main towns or localities, with the remainder of the population living in rural locations. Our geographically dispersed population means that smaller townships and settlements are important hubs for community activities and social interaction.</p> <p>At the 2021 Census, The Pyrenees Shire has a total residential population of 7,671 persons. The Shire has an average age of 50 years. The single largest age cohort in Pyrenees (S) is "65-69 years" with 682 people representing 8.89 percent of the population.</p>

Connectivity and technology need 2024-28; Follow-up actions	
Current Connectivity (all carrier solutions and technologies available and/or used today):	Fixed wireless: NBN Towers in Pyrenees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Existing Tower in the LGA still to be Upgraded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snake valley – July 2024 Three new towers under build <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lexton, Waterloo and Navarre, Scheduled ready for service in 2025 Skipton (site located within Corangamite Shire) Refer to attached map for NBN Fixed availability across Pyrenees Shire.
	NBN Fibre Towns Beaufort & Avoca <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fibre to the Node Fibre to the Curb Fibre to the Premise Business Fibre Refer to attached map for NBN Fibre locations Beaufort & Avoca.
	Mobile: See attached maps for coverage of various providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optus: https://www.optus.com.au/living-network/coverage Vodafone: - Limited Pyrenees Shire Telstra 4G mobile coverage, and 4G coverage with network extension device. https://www.telstra.com.au/coverage-networks/our-coverage No 5G mobile coverage in the Pyrenees Shire
	Alternative networks (IoT / WiFi LoRaWAN): <i>Primarily used for low-power, wide-area network applications like smart agriculture, smart city infrastructure, environmental monitoring, and asset tracking</i>
	Refer to attached map for Telstra NB-IoT & LTE-M networks.
Connectivity upgrades required to meet regional development plans (include fixed technology interchange e.g., 5G Home to 4G Voice, Satellite to Fibre To The Premise):	Satellite: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See attached map for NBN technology availability across Pyrenees Shire. Starlink Low Earth Orbital (LEO) satellite. Now also available via Telstra
	Fixed: Identify growth areas and strategic developments. Planning - Ensure developments are consistently built with an eye to future needs. NBN – Antenna upgrade program to visit Pyrenees Shire. Removal of diamond shaped antennas replace with rectangle WNTD – NBN to advice to ETA

	<p>Mobile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ampitheatre - New coverage (new macro tower) Completed 1/4/24 <p>Below locations deliverable dates TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landsborough – Improved capacity (augmentation/capacity upgrade and new 5G) – Funding approved • Mount Callendar - Improved capacity (augmentation and new 5G) – Funding approved • Avoca Central (new 5G) – Scheduled for funding approval • Beaufort – Improved capacity (4 g capacity and new 5G) – Scheduled for funding approval
Redundancy planning: network and connectivity (critical sites and evacuation points)	<p>Satellite:</p> <p>Telstra + Starlink - options available now. Starlink - currently available NBN – Sky Muster satellite</p> <p>Unplanned impacts:</p> <p>Disaster Response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential technology for fire and flood monitoring & alarming • Assess gaps re NBN offering underSTAND at Halls etc (Are there other sites that would benefit from connectivity) • Strengthen Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters - Pyrenees Shire Council <p>The following facilities have these installed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphitheatre Recreation Reserve - 9 School Street, Amphitheatre • Avoca Recreation Reserve - 55 Faraday Street, Avoca • Barkly Hall - 1314 Redbank-Barkly Road, Barkly • Brewster Hall - 349 Kayleys Lane, Brewster • Carngham Recreation Reserve - 73 Chepstowe-Snake Valley Road, Snake Valley • Carranballac Hall - 6667 Glenelg Highway, Carranballac • Crowlands Hall - 49 Wright St, Crowlands • Evansford Community Centre - 17 School Road, Evansford • Goldfields Recreation Reserve - 39 Park Road, Beaufort • Lake Goldsmith Hall - 4 Cushing Road, Lake Goldsmith • Landsborough Recreation Reserve - 10 Forestry Road, Landsborough • Lexton Hall - 19 Lexton-Ararat Road, Lexton • Lexton Recreation Reserve - 1 Prince Street, Lexton • Moonambel Recreation Reserve - 6190 Stawell-Avoca Road, Moonambel • Natte Yallock Recreation Reserve - 26 Reserve Road, Natte Yallock

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raglan Hall - 4 Codrington St, Raglan • Redbank Hall - 57 Navarre Street, Redbank • Snake Valley Hall - 875 Linton-Carngham Road, Snake Valley • Trawalla Hall - 119 Rodgers Drive, Trawalla • Waubra Recreation Reserve - 2066 Sunraysia Highway, Waubra • All completed 8-19 November 2021 except for Barkly Hall 19/8/2022. <p>The Australian Government is providing funding for these services for a period of three years commencing on 29 December 2022 and ending on 28 December 2025. At the conclusion of the three years, the manager of the site will have the option of continuing with the service via a retail service provider or allowing the service to lapse. There is no requirement for sites to continue with the service after the three-year period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to assess what happens after the three years? do these sites what the service to continue? • If the community decide to continue with services, it will simply require the engagement of any of the retail service providers that sell NBN Services. • If so, who pays? Council, Committee of Management or DEECA. • If the community does not wish to continue with the service, it can be allowed to lapse. There is no obligation to continue with any of the services. <p>Telstra IoT Input:</p> <p>Telstra has partnered with Australia's leading Micro-Climate Monitoring Provider and is building networks across Australia in different regions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attentis Network Latrobe Valley Deployment • Telstra Micro-Climate Tech Webinar • Slide Overview of Technology
Mobile site acquisition and co-location opportunities:	<p>Identify potential sites for new mobile infrastructure.</p> <p>Co-location opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lexton Optus tower ○ Moonambel Telstra Tower <p>Are there opportunities with new industry in the Shire ie windfarms for co-funding.</p>

The Australian Digital Inclusion Index																																																			
Pyrenees Shire ADII Score (Australian Digital Inclusion Index)	<p>The Australian Digital Inclusion Index uses survey data to measure digital inclusion across three dimensions of Access, Affordability and Digital Ability. We explore how these dimensions vary across the country and across different social groups.</p> <p>A detailed measure of digital inclusion for Australia allows us to identify the critical barriers to inclusion. These may be related to accessing networks, the costs of devices or data, or skills and literacies. The Index can help shape initiatives to increase digital inclusion in Australia</p>																																																		
<table><tr><th colspan="5">ADII Score</th></tr><tr><th>National</th><th>State</th><th>Pyrenees</th><th>Northern Grampians</th><th>Central Goldfields</th></tr><tr><td>73.2</td><td>74</td><td>67.9</td><td>67.2</td><td>65.6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="5">Access Score</th></tr><tr><td>72</td><td>73</td><td>67.6</td><td>66.5</td><td>66.2</td></tr><tr><th colspan="5">Affordability Score</th></tr><tr><td>95</td><td>95</td><td>94.3</td><td>94</td><td>93.8</td></tr><tr><th colspan="5">Digital Ability Score</th></tr><tr><td>64.9</td><td>66</td><td>56.6</td><td>55.7</td><td>53.4</td></tr><tr><td colspan="5">Total Index scores have been classified into four groups: Highly excluded (45 or below), Excluded (above 45 and below 61), Included (61 and below 80) and Highly included (80 and above).</td></tr></table>		ADII Score					National	State	Pyrenees	Northern Grampians	Central Goldfields	73.2	74	67.9	67.2	65.6	Access Score					72	73	67.6	66.5	66.2	Affordability Score					95	95	94.3	94	93.8	Digital Ability Score					64.9	66	56.6	55.7	53.4	Total Index scores have been classified into four groups: Highly excluded (45 or below), Excluded (above 45 and below 61), Included (61 and below 80) and Highly included (80 and above).				
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Digital Inclusion uplift strategies:	<p>Ability (potential for additional DI programs):</p> <p>Ambition to lift ADII score to be equal to state average. Currently 67.9 in Pyrenees Shire, VIC 74, National 73.2</p> <p>Identify Key challenges in terms of digital ability/ literacy within communities and cohorts.</p> <p>Currently digital ability is 56.6 in Pyrenees Shire, VIC 66, National 64.9</p>																																																		

	<p>Explore possible activity to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage and upweight existing Shire program and opportunities. • And/ or utilise 'Train the Trainer' content developed by Telstra to provide digital literacy and cyber security training to shire residents through neighbourhood houses/ libraries. • Tour with the Telstra Pink Promotional Truck / NBN Co / Regional Tech Hub suggested locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council Cuppa in locations with connectivity challenges ○ Beaufort Agricultural Show ○ Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally ○ Landsborough Family Day ○ Town Markets, Avoca & Beaufort ○ Community fire ready program <p>Connectivity needs (i.e., "connect the unconnected", public connectivity, i.e., public WiFi):</p> <p>Identify Pyrenees Shire connectivity needs promote public free WiFi via Libraries</p> <p>NBNCo – School Student Broadband Initiative - The program is primarily intended as an affordability measure to help those with school-aged children who may be experiencing financial hardship. https://www.anglicarevic.org.au/student-internet/</p>
<p>Cyber security: current vulnerabilities, assessment and/or upgrades needed:</p>	<p>Solution/capability needs: Upskill the community and businesses via</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Webinars
<p>Potential for IoT and Innovative technology solutions to improve services, prosperity and liveability. Include ideas for 'smart' community apps to optimise LGA programs, increase safety, develop industries, encourage tourism, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water & Irrigation monitoring • Facial recognition of Lambs, stock monitoring, • Environmental monitoring • Flood level monitoring & alarming • Fire monitoring • Mobile data for people movement in key tourism asset areas Moonambel • Potential to connect with relevant industries in the Shire to create awareness of technology & connectivity options
<p>Program Solutions, upskilling opportunities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>IoT –AgVic</i> • Programs to create awareness of technology & connectivity options

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Actions programs follow-up, accountability and timeframe	Action	By Whom	By When
	Connectivity Roadshow – 21 & 22 May 2024 Participants – Telstra, NBNCo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crossroads Fire shed • Summerfield Winery, Moonambel • Lexton Hub • Internal Workshop • Briefing to Council 	Ray Davies & Melissa Dimond	Completed
	Survey Digital Connectivity closed 9 July 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 91 x Digital Responses - 10 x Hardcopy 	Ray Davies & Melissa Dimond	Completed
	Survey follow up with participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect users with current options & solutions available 	Melissa Dimond	Nov 2024

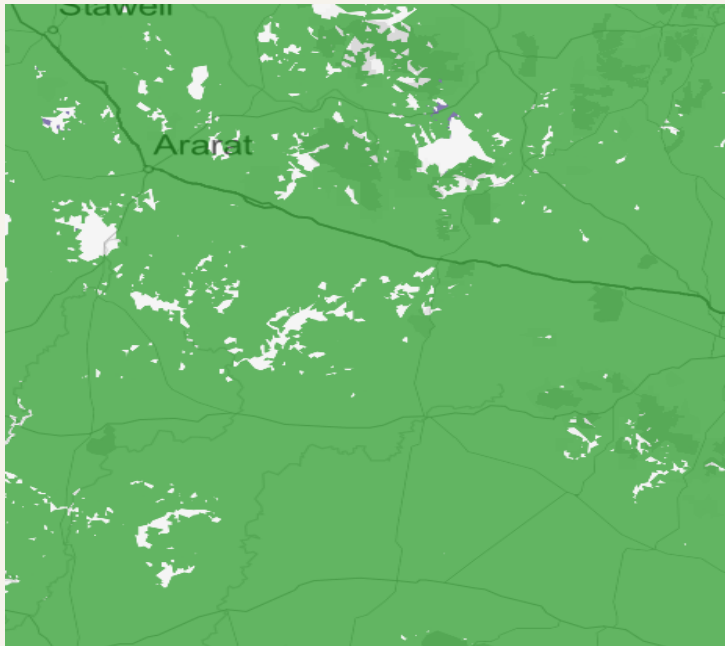
	<p>Increase Digital Literacy via developing communications & community engagement plan to improve connectivity literacy across the whole of Pyrenees Shire</p> <p>Leverage existing Shire town visits as an opportunity to improve connectivity literacy and educate on solutions to improve connectivity.</p> <p>Develop a schedule of town visits alongside existing programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council Cuppa - Pyrenees Libraries - Free Seniors Digital Literacy Program - Explore opportunity to include into additional Shire program via libraries / community house 	Eco Dev, Pyrenees Libraries	June 2025
	<p>Create awareness amongst Ag & Wine, Business and Community cohorts via a comms plan/ event schedule, workshops to educate around specific topics. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cybersecurity o On Farm IoT o 3G Closure o EFTPOS resilience o Mobile technology including Telstra TGO repeaters, Zedifi and other <p>Present and update the business chambers eg. B4B, Advance Avoca & PGW.</p>	Eco Dev	June 2025 - ongoing

Identify locations areas for future mobile investment using Telstra data (and possibly NBN as required) Continue to engage Telstra/Amplitel to facilitate and expediate planning/ build of new mobile towers as required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for shared use of current tower infrastructure - Investigate 	All, Council, Telstra, NBNCo, Optus, Vodafone	Ongoing
Telstra to investigate current mobile network capacity in the mobile network and explore additional capacity solutions likely to be required in the future. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moonambel increase capacity – <i>Investigated and Marcus has noted has plenty of head room capacity</i> - Beaufort small area out of range mobile data – Marcus to investigate solutions 	Marcus	
Access to connectivity for Pyrenees Shire staff to improve OH&S. Telstra to investigate options to improve connectivity for staff safety monitoring & alarming Look at options to fitting improved connectivity technology to Shire vehicles (T-GO)	Marcus	
Emergency Preparedness - Provide comms and attend community events to deliver information on options to stay connected for Emergency Preparedness.	EMT / Comms	Dec 2025
Improve capability of Shire's Emergency Management Team for these conversations via a workshop/briefing	Completed - Melissa Dimond, Emergency Management team, Telstra	Sept 2024

	<p>Understand current locations (halls etc) that received NBN STAND funding for connectivity solutions for Emergency Relief Centres etc</p> <p>Strengthen Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters - Pyrenees Shire Council</p> <p>Identify any gap's noting Telstra has also provided a TGO mobile solution at Lexton Rec Reserve</p>	All	
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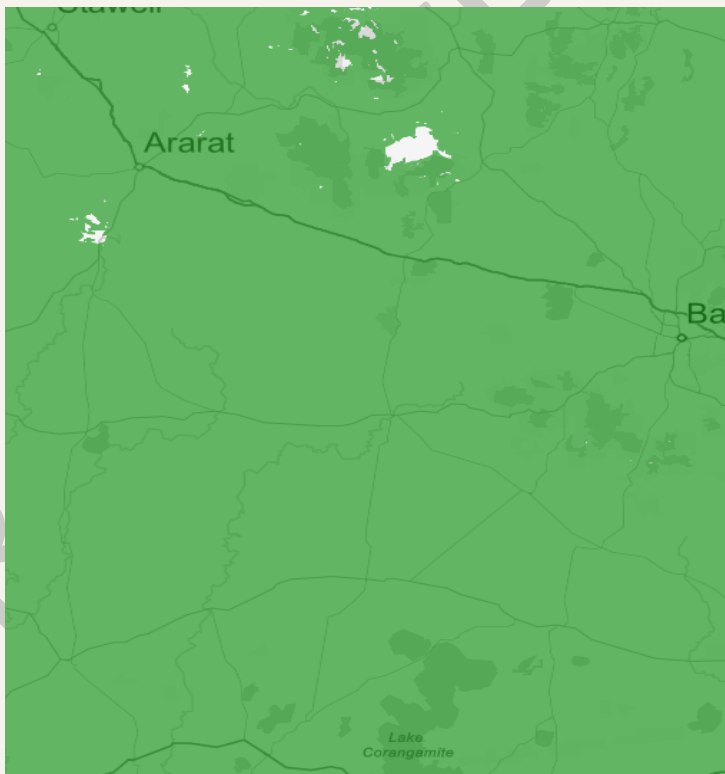
Appendix A – Mobile Infrastructure Maps

Telstra Handheld 4G coverage

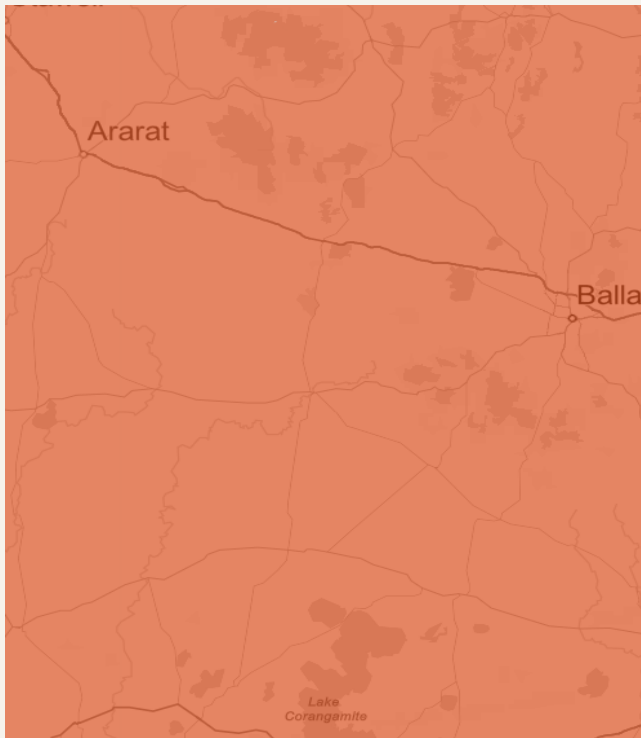


Appendix B – Mobile Infrastructure Maps

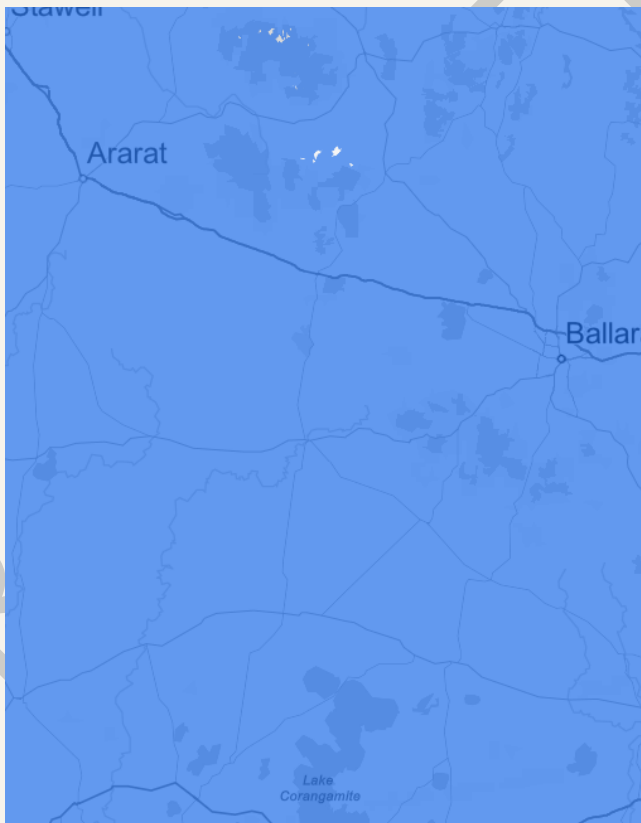
Telstra Assisted 4G mobile coverage (repeater/antenna)



Appendix C – Narrowband IOT Infrastructure Maps

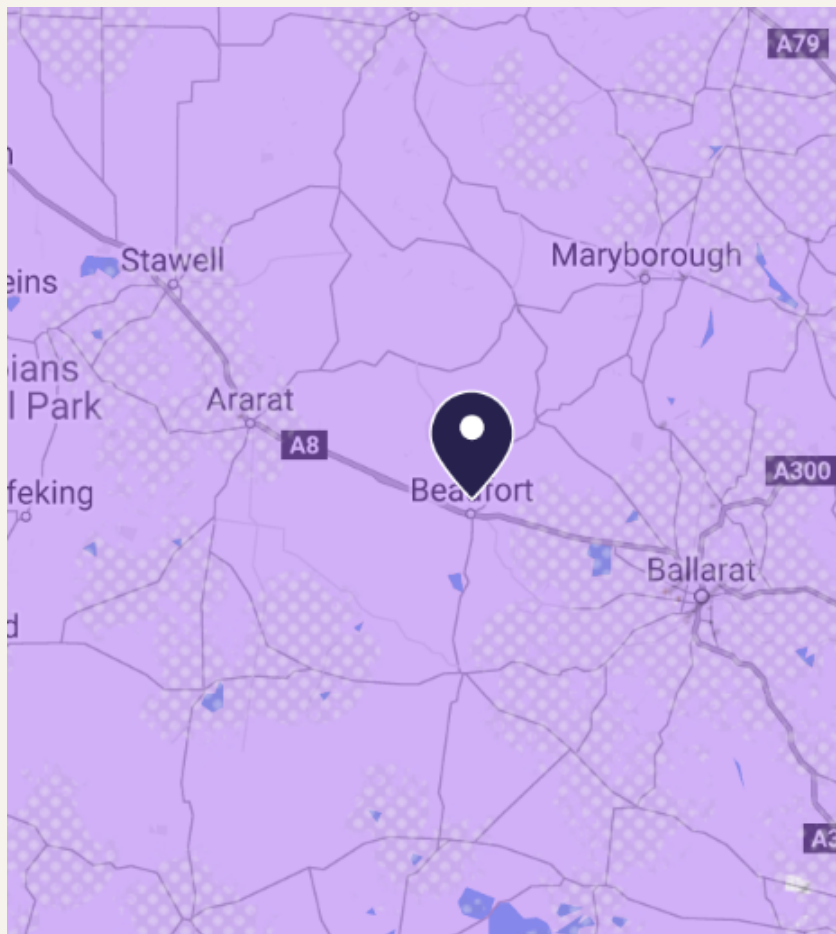


Appendix D – LTE-M IOT Infrastructure Maps



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Appendix E – NBN



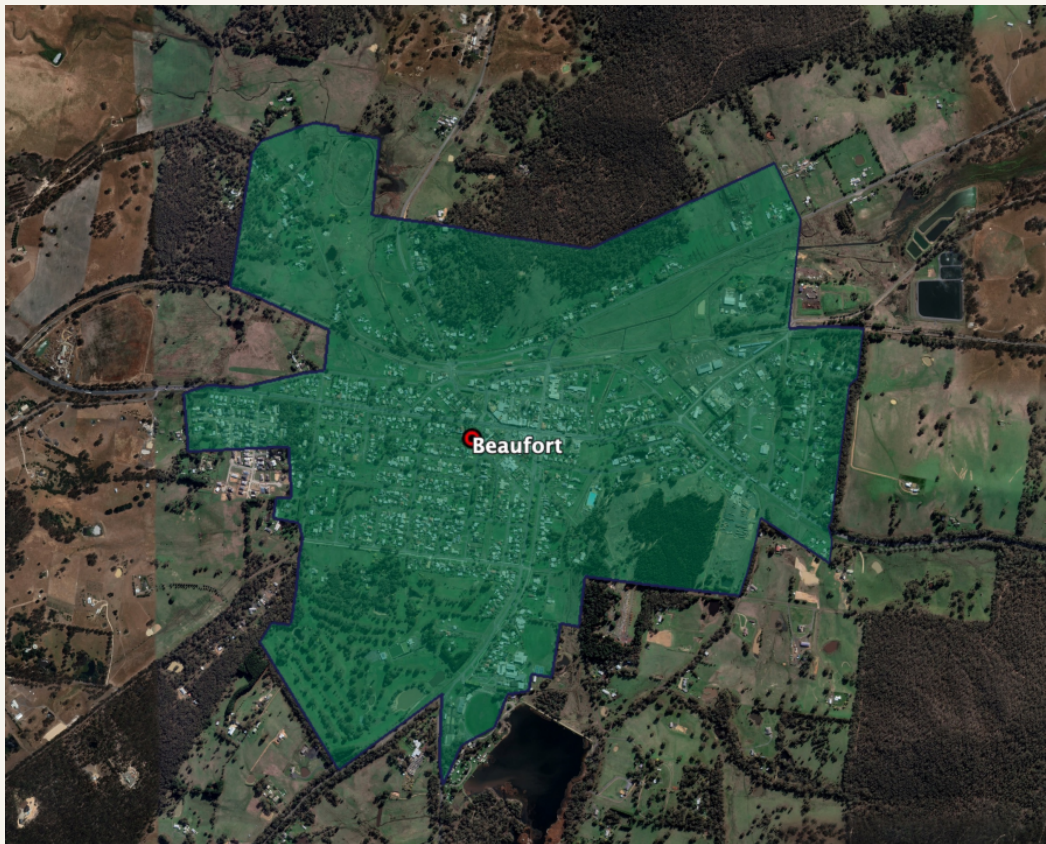
● Service available area ⓘ

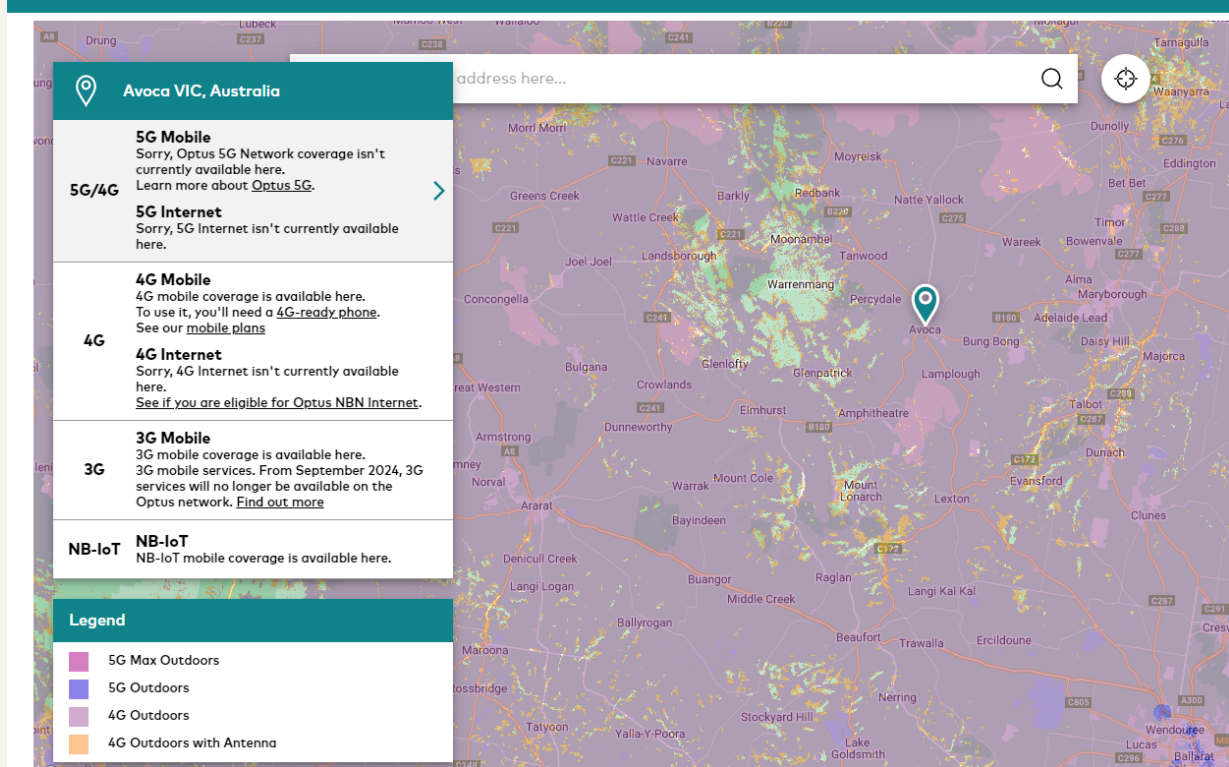
▨ Fixed line ⓘ

▣ Fixed wireless ⓘ

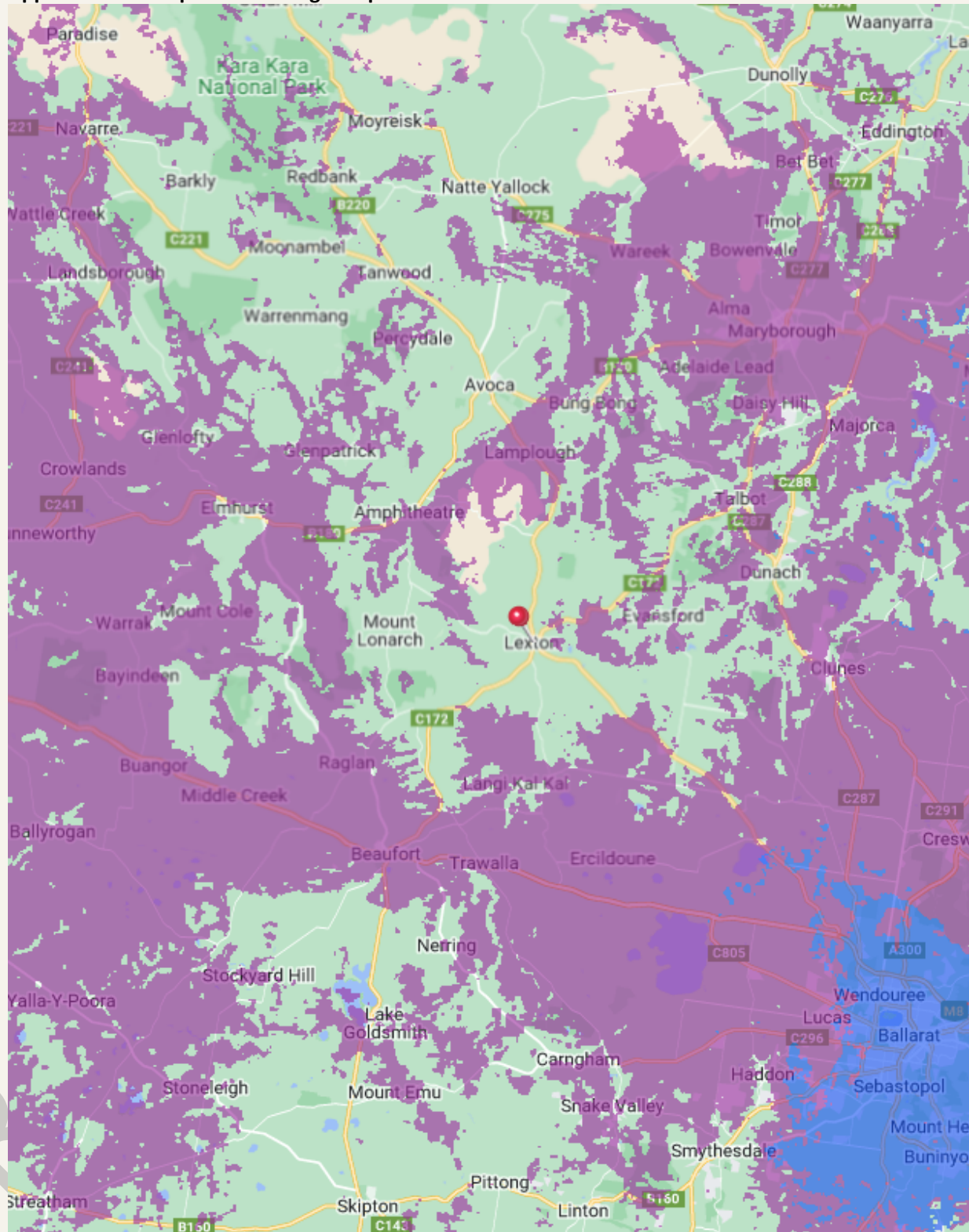
▢ Satellite ⓘ

Appendix F – NBN Fibre Zones



Appendix H – Optus Coverage Map

Appendix I – Vodafone Coverage Map



Confidential

PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL	
FILE No:.....	528050500
DOC No:.....	
20 OCT 2015	
ACTION:.....	
INFORMATION:.....	

PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL

AND

BEAUFORT GOLF CLUB INCORPORATED



036893

**Agreement for use
of Water from Beaufort Lake for
Beaufort Golf Course**

PYRENEES
— S H I R E —




Agreement for Use of Beaufort Lake Water

Parties:

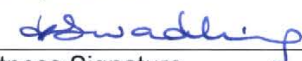
1. Pyrenees Shire Council of 5 Lawrence Street Beaufort ("PSC")
2. Beaufort Golf Club Incorporated named in the Reference Table ("BGC")

Executed as a Deed on the 17th day of October 2014

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF of
Pyrenees Shire Council by:

) 
) Signature
) ANDREW LEACH
) Name
) Director Assets - Development
) Position

in the presence of:


 Witness Signature
HELEN SWADLING
 Witness Name

EXECUTED BY **BEAUFORT GOLF CLUB INCORPORATED** in accordance)
 with Section 127 of the Corporations Act)
 2001:


 Signature

LESTER J. HARRIS
 Print name

125 LAKE ROAD
 Address BEAUFORT 3373

PRESIDENT.
 Office held


 Signature

JOHN ROXBURGH
 Print name

182 TOPPERS LANE
 Address BEAUFORT VIC 3373

TREASURER
 Office held

Agreement for Use of Irrigation Water

Recitals:

- A. PSC and the BGC have entered into this Agreement to set out the terms and conditions upon which the BGC will be authorised to use irrigation water, from the Plant described in the Reference Table, on the Land [controlled by PSC] described in the Reference Table.
- B. This Agreement sets out the key aims, objectives, limitations, requirements, potential risks, support, rights and obligations of the parties to ensure that the use of irrigation water is done in a long term sustainable and beneficial manner.

Operative Part:

1. INTERPRETATION

- 1.1. Unless it appears otherwise, these expressions have these meanings in this Agreement:-

<i>irrigation season</i>	means the season (usually from October to the following April) which PSC designates from year to year
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<i>irrigation water</i>	is the water used by the BGC to supply their irrigation system.
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- 1.2. Amendments of this Agreement must be in writing and signed by PSC and the BGC.
- 1.3. An obligation imposed by this Agreement on more than one person binds them jointly and each of them individually.
- 1.4. The use of one gender includes other genders.
- 1.5. Headings in this document are for convenience of reference only and do not affect its interpretation.

2. GRANT OF RIGHT TO USE IRRIGATION WATER

- 2.1. PSC grants to the BGC the right to use the Agreed Volume of irrigation water from the Beaufort Lake in accordance with the terms of this Agreement;
- 2.2. The BGC agrees to use the Agreed Volume of irrigation water from the Beaufort Lake in accordance with the terms of this Agreement;
- 2.3. The parties agree that the provision of Irrigation Water by PSC to the BGC is for the purposes of irrigating the Beaufort Golf Club and,
- 2.4. Ownership and risk in relation to the Irrigation Water will pass to the BGC at the Point of Supply.

3. TERM OF AGREEMENT

- 3.1. This Agreement starts on the Commencement Date and continues for the Term, unless terminated in accordance with Clause 13.
- 3.2. The parties shall meet 12 months prior to the expiration of the Term to discuss a possible extension of the Term for a further term and the terms upon which such extension might be granted. Neither party shall be obliged to grant or accept an extension of the term.

4. IRRIGATION WATER QUALITY

- 4.1. Subject to Clause 5 of this Agreement, PSC will supply from the Beaufort Lake irrigation water for pumping to the Beaufort Golf Club.
- 4.2. The BGC releases PSC from any claims, loss, damage or other expenses which result directly or indirectly from any water quality issue affecting the irrigation water used by the BGC, except to the extent that such claims, loss or damage or other expenses are due to the negligence of PSC.

5. SECURITY OF SUPPLY

- 5.1. The ability to supply irrigation water to the BGC from the Beaufort Lake will rely entirely on the surface water levels of the lake. No water will be drawn for BGC irrigation when the lake drops below the agreed level.
- 5.2. The agreed level will be established following the installation of incremented depth markers which will enable monitoring of lake surface water levels.
- 5.3. No disruption to supply will give rise to a claim by the BGC against PSC or result in a breach of this Agreement if such failure or omission arises from causes which are unavoidable or beyond the reasonable control of PSC.
- 5.4. The following causes are some examples of causes deemed to be beyond PSC's control:
 - power disruptions (and associated consequences);
 - pump failures;
 - valve failure;
 - pipeline failures;
 - reduced flow due to drought or water restrictions; and,
 - change in regulation.
- 5.5. Notwithstanding anything in this Clause 5, PSC may suspend supply immediately if it is necessary to:-
 - protect the environment;
 - protect the people's health and safety; or
 - ensure compliance with the law.
- 5.6. PSC undertakes to notify the BGC of any reasonable disruption to supply as soon as reasonably possible after becoming aware lake level dropping to the agreed cut off point

6. AGREED IRRIGATION VOLUME

- 6.1. The Agreed Irrigation Volume is to be 8 mega litres maximum or as Lake water levels allow.
- 6.2. It is agreed that the water be taken from the lake at a seasonal time where it will have the least impact on the lake levels. This period may change annually with the seasons, but will be finalised following discussions with PSC.

7. COSTS OF ENERGY AND WATER

- 7.1. BGC agrees to pay all supply and usage energy and other costs associated with the use of irrigation water from the Point of Supply.

8. MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION

- 8.1. The BGC shall be responsible for the following throughout the Term of this Agreement:
- installing, maintaining and repairing (at its own costs) all irrigation infrastructure including pump/s, flow meter (to be installed at the Point of Supply), sprinklers and pipelines from the Point of Supply;
 - the day to day operation of the irrigation infrastructure from the point of supply, including the immediate isolation of any faults to prevent any unintended environmental discharge; and,
- 8.2. The BGC must permit PSC (or its servants, agents or contractors) to enter the Land to:
- review the entire irrigation and use of irrigation water program under this Agreement;
- 8.3. BGC will work with the Goldfields Recreation Reserve representative or PSC staff relating to pump use and irrigation timing in the delivery of water from the lake to the BGC.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- 9.1. PSC and the BGC agree to establish and maintain an open and friendly relationship so that regular and informal discussions and site visits become common. PSC shall keep the BGC and its employees informed of trends and best practices in relation to the use of irrigation water.

10. CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES, NON ACHIEVEMENT OF AGREED VOLUME OR SUB-STANDARD MANAGEMENT

- 10.1. Should a change of circumstances or unforeseen difficulties arise resulting (or likely to result) in a trend towards non achievement of the Agreed Irrigation Volume or any other obligation, PSC and the BGC shall consult and work closely to identify and assess those problems or changes, and PSC will assist the BGC to work through those problems .

11. ANNUAL REVIEW

PSC and the BGC must meet on an annual basis (at a mutually agreeable time and location) as soon as possible after the end of the irrigation season, for the purpose of having a frank and open discussion in relation to the season's

irrigation, any other relevant issues and to formulate changes necessary for the following season.

12. TERMINATION

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Agreement, PSC may terminate this Agreement if:

12.1. for reasons beyond its control, irrigation water ceases to be available;

12.2. in PSC's opinion, irrigation is unsustainable; or

12.3. it is necessary to:

- protect the environment;
- protect people's health and safety; or,
- ensure compliance with the laws

and the BGC shall have no right to make any claim for any loss or damage whatsoever (including, without limitation, any consequential, indirect, special, punitive or incidental damages) in connection with a termination of this Agreement under this Clause.

13. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If the parties, having attempted by frank and open discussion, are unable to resolve any matter in dispute, that dispute shall be referred to arbitration to be conducted in accordance with any prevailing rules or method of arbitration determined by PSC from time to time.

14. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Any Special Conditions set out in the Reference Table, if inconsistent with any Clause of this Agreement, shall override the Clause to the extent of the inconsistency.

15. APPLICABLE LAW

This Agreement is to be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Victoria, and the parties submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of that State.

Reference Table

BGC:	Beaufort Golf Club Incorporated
Land:	The Beaufort Golf Club situated on a portion of Crown Allotment 6B, D, E, F & J of Section 30 in the Parish of Eurambeen made up of 16ha on the Beaufort Skipton Road which is the Beaufort Golf Club Incorporated.
Agreed Irrigation Volume:	The Agreed Irrigation Volume is the available irrigation water that is accessible from the Beaufort Lake in any year where rainfall levels allow.
Commencement Date:	Upon PSC approval and the availability of an agreed volume of water.
Term:	10 years with an option for a further term of 10 years option to be negotiated as per clause 3.2 of this agreement.
Point of Supply:	As indicated on the attached plan marked appendix A
Method of Delivery:	Delivery of irrigation water at low pressure to the Point of Supply.
Special Conditions:	The surface levels of the lake dictate the volume of irrigation water available for use.



Appendix A



25/11/2024

PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL
5-7 LAWRENCE ST
BEAUFORT 3373

Dear Licence-holder,

Mt Emu Creek Irrigation Schedule

Southern Rural Water (SRW) is responsible for managing the use of water from streams within the Mt Emu Creek in accordance with the Water Act 1989.

Under the Mt Emu Creek rules, the Mt Emu has a five-stage irrigation schedule. This schedule will commence from Stage 1 on October 1 each year, or when the daily flow drops to 10 Megalitres at the Ayrford Rd gauging station at Taroon.

Under the conditions of your licence, water must be taken in accordance with the irrigation schedule as determined by the Authority. The Irrigation Schedule is based on your licenced extraction (Daily Vol) rates. Restrictions are increased one stage at a time, based on flows at the nominated gauging station and in accordance with the rivers Local Management rules.

You must call the 1300 365 607 message bank each day prior to irrigating to confirm which stage of restrictions applies.

The restrictions are related to the Daily Volume (MLs) permissible to be taken under each stage of the irrigation schedule. This is stated on your Works Licence. The generic schedule is based on a 1.00 ML Daily Volume, and you will need to convert that based on your individual licence. The pumping hours are an indication only and do not form part of the conditions on your works licence.

A generic irrigation schedule is attached to assist you to manage your diversions under the restriction levels.

If you are uncertain of how to read your meter so as to establish your daily volume and extraction rates allowable, or wish to discuss the matter further, please contact your local Water Management Officer, Simon Williams on 0448 463 359 or 1300 139 510.

Please retain a copy of this letter and the accompanying schedule for your records, as you will need to use this information each year, in conjunction with your licence, to comply with your licence obligations.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Williams
Water Management Officer

Post Office Box 153

Maffra Victoria, 3860

✉ srw@srw.com.au

☎ 1300 139 510



090751

ABN: 70 801 473 421



PLEASE RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS

MT EMU CREEK IRRIGATION SCHEDULE

Stage	Daily Volume (ML's)	Hours (Approx)
1	1.00	24
2	0.75	18
3	0.50	12
4	0.25	06
5	IRRIGATION BANNED	

DETAILS

The Mt Emu Creek operates under a 5 stage Restriction Schedule.

Stage 1:

The Mt Emu Creek Irrigation schedule will be introduced on October 1st each year, or prior if the daily flow at the Ayrford Gauging station at Ayrford Rd Taroona drops to 10 Megalitres per day.

Stage 2-5:

Introduced when flows drop below 7 Megalitres per day at the Mt Emu Gauging Station.

Easing:

Restrictions eased when flows return to 9 Megalitres per day.


Volume:

Daily Volume (Megalitres) is the permissible daily volume allowable under each stage of the irrigation schedule.

Please Note: Pumping hours are a guide only and do not form part of your licence conditions on your works licence. It is incumbent upon you to know, and adhere to, the conditions of your licence.

IRRIGATORS MUST TELEPHONE 1300365607 TO CONFIRM SCHEDULE STAGE PRIOR TO ANY DIVERSION ON ANY GIVEN DAY

 Post Office Box 153
Maffra Victoria, 3860

 srw@srw.com.au
 1300 139 510

 www.srw.com.au
ABN: 70 801 473 421



Return undelivered mail to:
GPO Box 9898
in your capital city



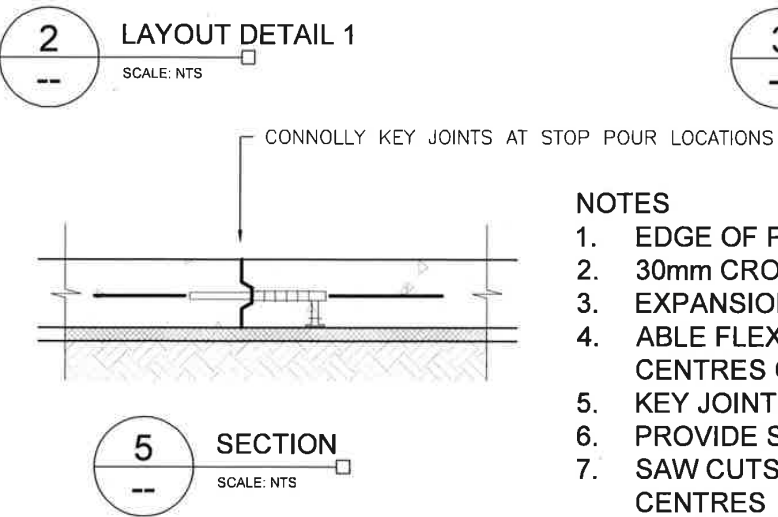
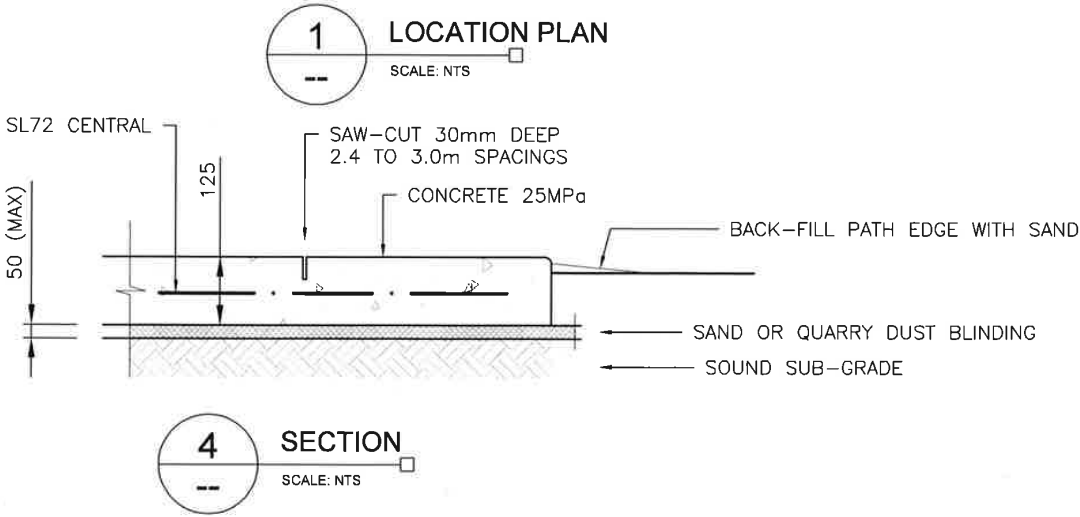
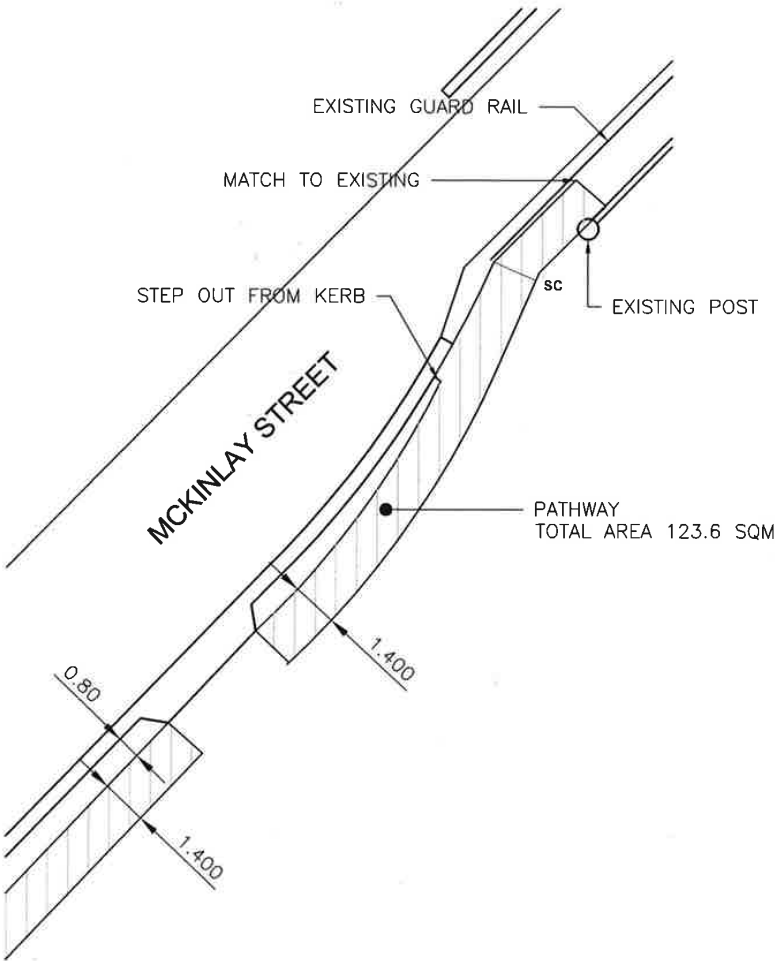
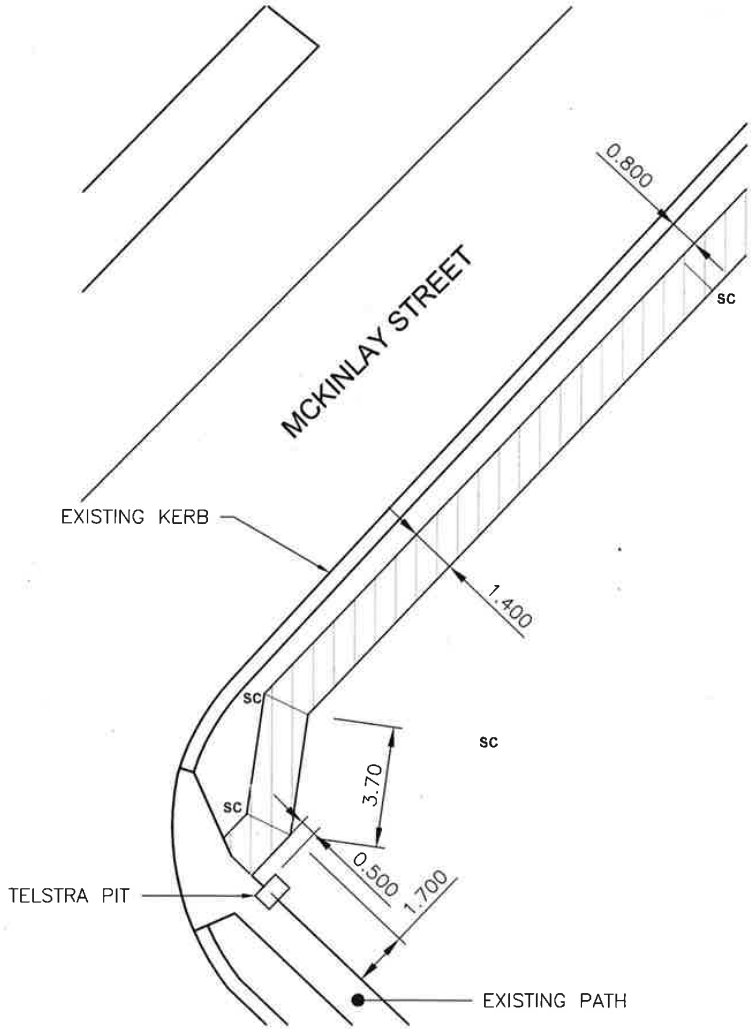
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PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL
5-7 LAWRENCE ST
BEAUFORT VIC 3373

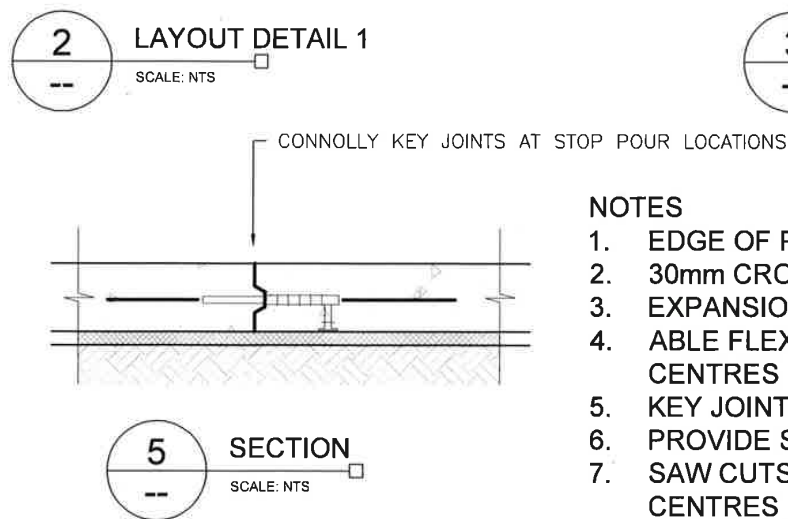
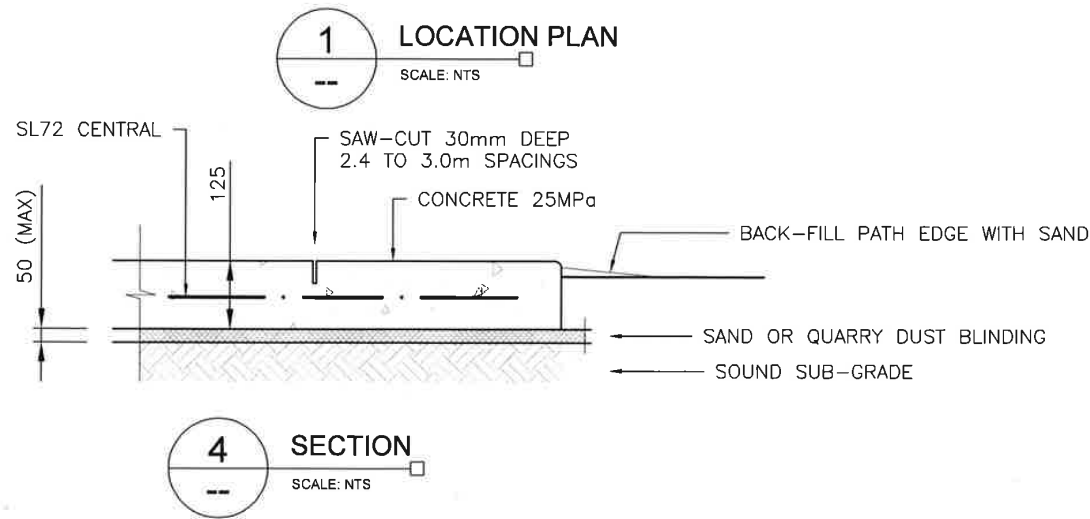
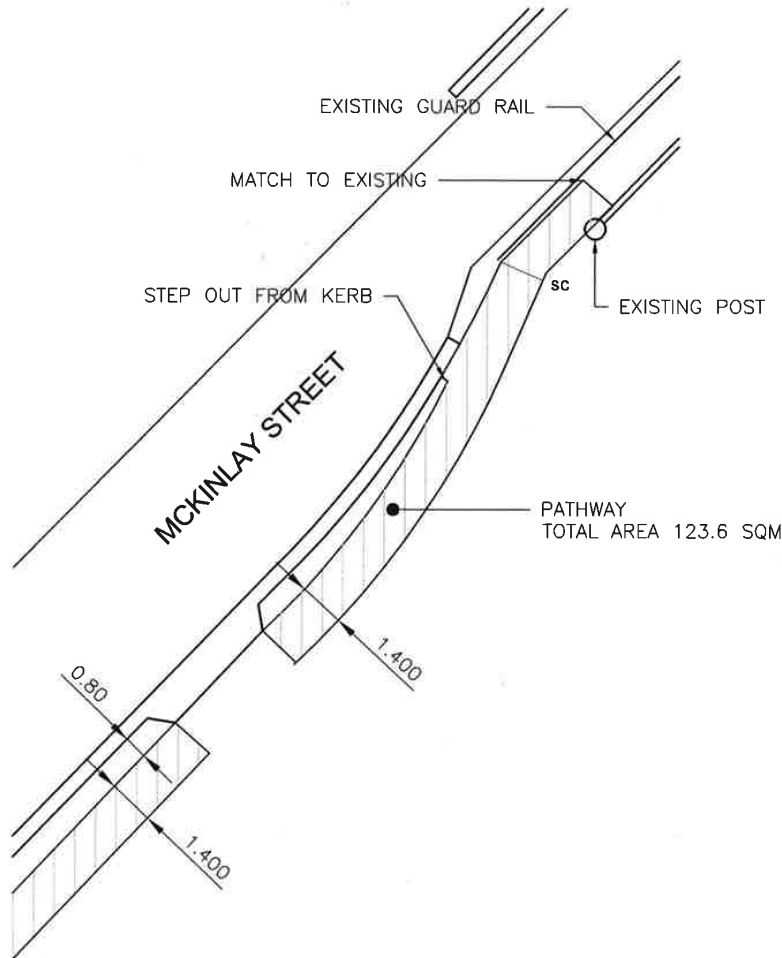
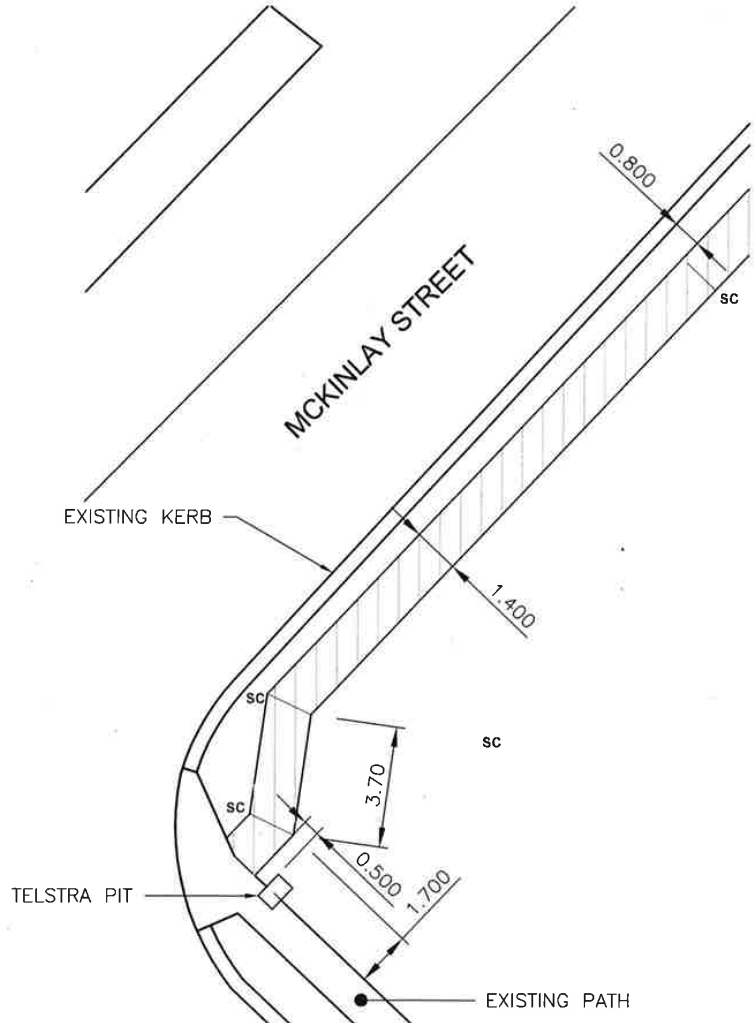


Project Number	Location/Project Description	Type	Suburb / Town	Proposed Treatment	Cost Estimate	Cumulative Total
1	Speed Limit Improvement Projects					
1A	King St, Beaufort - Town entrance speed change & speed infrastructure treatment	Speed Change, Signage, Gateway treatment & Repeater LATM	Beaufort	- Speed limit change as entering Beaufort on Kings St (60km/h zone to 50km/h). - Gateway treatment similar to DTP gateways with addition of 50 pavement marking. Kerb outstands for repeaters.	\$40,000	\$40,000
1B	Raglan - Town entrance speed changes & intersection improvements	Speed change, signage & intersection works.	Raglan	- Speed Change And installation of speed signs - Assume a 80km/h zone on the southern approach (Eurambeen Raglan Rd), 60km/h or 80km/hr zones on the north approach (Wilkinsons Rd) and eastern approach (Chute Raglan Rd). Attached zip similar to the above. - Potentially add to the Simpson St/Vaughan St/Wilkinson Rd intersection and the Chute Raglan Rd / Codrington St Intersection Y to T intersection improvements to this project.	\$75,000	\$115,000
1C	Waubra - Town entrance speed changes & intersection improvements	Speed Change & intersection	Waubra	Speed limit changes entering Waubra from the north (Waubra Talbot Rd) and south (Beaufort Waubra Rd). Change these to 60km/hr due to development. Slightly outside of the potential 60km/h zone but would like to have a concept of the Camerons Ln / Waubra Talbot Rd intersection	\$10,000	\$125,000
1D	Snake Valley - Speed changes	Speed Change & Signage	Snake Valley	Snake Valley Speed Changes – Linton Carngham Rd, Laurence Dr, Pittong Snake Valley Rd, Cochrane Dr	\$20,000	\$145,000
1E	Old Shirley Rd, Beaufort - Speed changes & infrastructure treatment	Speed change, signage, line marking and shoulder widening.	Beaufort	Speed limit changes as entering Beaufort on Old Shirley Rd. It's assumed that we can extend the 80km/h zone to the Western Hwy. Would also like to check and update the locations of the existing signage including the rail advisory signs and the curve advisory sign / curve advisor speed sign. May incorporate a minor length of curve seal widening on the south-west edge of the road.	\$30,000	\$175,000
1F	Amphitheatre Rd	Speed Change & Signage	Amphitheatre	Additional speed signs and linemarking on Amphitheatre Rd near the rail crossing within town.	\$5,000	\$180,000
1G	Trawalla Rd - Speed change	Speed Change & Signage	Trawalla	Trawalla Rd under the underpass with primary school. Update to 60km/hr.	\$5,000	\$185,000
1H	Evansford - Speed changes & intersection improvements	Speed change, signage & Y intersection works.	Evansford	Speed limit changes and the realignment of 4 Y-Intersections with Waubra-Talbot Rd including: 1.Clunes-Evansford Rd 2. School Rd 3.Lexton-Evansford Rd 4. Stud Farm Rd	\$290,000	\$475,000
2	Local Area Traffic Management Projects (LATM)					
2A	Burke St, Beaufort - Speed Improvements	Speed control LATM	Beaufort	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$325,000	\$800,000
2B	Homebush Rd, Avoca - Speed Improvements	Speed Change, Signage, Gateway treatment & Repeater LATM	Avoca	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$50,000	\$850,000
2C	South St, Beaufort - Speed Improvements	Speed control LATM	Beaufort	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$50,000	\$900,000

Project Number	Location/Project Description	Type	Suburb / Town	Proposed Treatment	Cost Estimate	Cumulative Total
2D	Gregory St, Beaufort - Speed Improvements	Speed control LATM	Beaufort	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$50,000	\$950,000
2E	Smythesdale Snake Valley Rd, Snake Valley	Speed control LATM	Snake Valley	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$100,000	\$1,050,000
2F	Duke St, Avoca	Speed control LATM	Avoca	Speed control infrasture to reduce speeding drivers.	\$125,000	\$1,175,000
2G	Willoby St/Livingstone St	Intersection improvements.	Beaufort	Kerb outstands to improve site distance.	\$125,000	\$1,300,000
3	Beaufort Urban/Pedestrian Improvements					
3A	Gregory St	Shared path	Beaufort	Concrete pathway (~275m)	\$85,000	\$1,385,000
3B	Western Hwy	Shared path	Beaufort	Concrete path with steel footbridge and RFC grid decking.	\$115,000	\$1,500,000
4	Mt Williams Rd Intersections					
4A	Mt William Rd / Eurambeen Streatham Rd	Intersection	Stoneleigh	Staggered T Intersection	\$200,000	\$1,700,000
4B	Mt William Rd / Cargham Streatham Rd	Intersection	Carranballac	Staggered T Intersection	\$300,000	\$2,000,000



- NOTES**
1. EDGE OF PATH 30mm ABOVE BACK OF KERB
 2. 30mm CROSS-FALL
 3. EXPANSION JOINTS AT 25m MAX SPACINGS
 4. ABLE FLEX WITH SLEEVED R10 BARS AT 400 CENTRES OR CONNOLLY EXPANSION JOINTS
 5. KEY JOINTS AT STOP POUR LOCATIONS
 6. PROVIDE SAW CUTS AT CHANGE IN DIRECTION
 7. SAW CUTS (OR TROWELLED JOINTS) AT 2.5m MAX CENTRES
 7. BROOM FINISH TO CONCRETE



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 7. BROOM FINISH TO CONCRETE

PLANNING PERMIT



Permit No: PA24040
Planning Scheme: Pyrenees Planning Scheme
Responsible Authority: Pyrenees Shire Council
Address of the Land: Lot 2 on Plan of Subdivision 310387T.
at Lot 2 325 Waubra-Talbot Road Waubra Vic 3352
The Permit Allows: Two Lot Subdivision

THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS APPLY TO THIS PERMIT:

Compliance with documents approved under this permit

1. At all times what the permit allows must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of any document approved under this permit to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Endorsed subdivision plans

2. Before the plan of subdivision is certified under the Subdivision Act 1988, plans must be approved and endorsed by the responsible authority. The plans must:
 - a) be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority
 - b) be drawn to scale with dimensions and submitted in electronic form
 - c) be generally in accordance with the plans forming part of the application.

Formal Plan of Subdivision

3. The formal plan of subdivision lodged for certification must be in accordance with the approved plan and must not be modified except to comply with statutory requirements or with the further written consent of the Responsible Authority.

Section 173 Agreement

4. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Responsible Authority, prior to Statement of Compliance being issued, the owner must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 to provide the following:
 - a) The owner of the newly created lot will notify and have any prospective purchasers of the property duly acknowledge, that they have been made aware of, and accept, that the property is located in the Farming Zone where neighbouring agricultural activity may give rise to amenity impacts.
5. Prior to Statement of Compliance being issued, an application must be made to the Register of Titles to register the Section 173 agreement on the title to the land under section 181 of the Act. The responsible authority will not release Statement of Compliance until the agreement has been registered at the titles office and a dealing number assigned confirming that the agreement has been registered.

Permit No:
PA24040

Date issued:

Signature for the Responsible Authority:

PLANNING PERMIT



The Responsible Authority may release the owner from these obligations and/or vary the requirements upon the written request of the owner. The Responsible Authority must be satisfied that the release and/or variation to the agreement will result in a better planning outcome or that the agreement is no longer required.

All costs associated with the preparation, signing, lodgement, registration, amending and ending of the Agreement must be borne by the owner, including all notification costs and legal fees.

Access

6. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance, vehicle access to Lot 1 must be upgraded or constructed in accordance with IDM standard drawings, plans and specifications set under an approved Road Excavation Permit (Vehicle Crossing Permit) to the satisfaction of the Pyrenees Shire Councils Engineering Department.
7. Prior to the issue of a Statement of Compliance any redundant vehicle crossings must be removed, and the nature strip reinstated to the satisfaction of the Pyrenees Shire Councils Engineering Department.

Central Highlands Water

8. Any plan lodged for certification will be referred to the Central Highlands Region Water Corporation pursuant to Section 8(1)(a) of the Subdivision Act.

Goulburn-Murray Water

9. Any Plan of Subdivision lodged for certification must be referred to Goulburn-Murray Rural Water Corporation pursuant to Section 8(1)(a) of the Subdivision Act.
10. Stormwater from the site must be discharged to a legal point as nominated by the Responsible Authority. All infrastructure and works to manage stormwater must be in accordance with the requirements of the Responsible Authority.
11. The existing on-site wastewater treatment and disposal systems for proposed new Lot 1 must be wholly contained within the boundaries of the new lot created by subdivision. 4. All construction and ongoing activities must be in accordance with EPA Publication 1834.1 Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide (September 2023).

Subdivisions that do not require referral

12. The owner of the land must enter into agreements with the relevant authorities for the provision of water supply, drainage, sewerage facilities, electricity, and gas (where it is proposed to be connected) services to each lot shown on the endorsed plan in accordance with the authority's requirements and relevant legislation at the time.
13. All existing and proposed easements and sites for existing or required utility services and roads on the land must be set aside in the plan of subdivision submitted for certification in favour of the relevant authority for which the easement or site is to be created.

Permit No:
PA24040

Date issued:

Signature for the Responsible Authority:

PLANNING PERMIT



14. The plan of subdivision submitted for certification under the Subdivision Act 1988 must be referred to the relevant authority in accordance with Section 8 of that Act.

Expiry – Subdivision

15. This permit as it relates to development (subdivision) will expire if one of the following circumstances applies:

- a) The plan of subdivision has not been certified under the Subdivision Act 1988 within 2 years of the issued date of this permit.
- b) A statement of compliance is not issued within 5 years of the date of certification.

In accordance with Section 69 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, an application may be submitted to the responsible authority for an extension of the periods referred to in this condition.

DRAFT

Permit No:
PA24040

Date issued:

Signature for the Responsible Authority:

PLANNING PERMIT



Pyrenees
Shire Council

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PERMIT

WHAT HAS BEEN DECIDED?

The Responsible Authority has issued a permit.

(Note: This is not a permit granted under Division 5 or 6 of Part 4 of the **Planning and Environment Act 1987**.)

WHEN DOES A PERMIT BEGIN?

A permit operates:

- from the date specified in the permit; or
- if no date is specified, from-
 - (i) the date of the decision of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, if the permit was issued at the direction of the Tribunal; or
 - (ii) the date on which it was issued, in any other case.

WHEN DOES A PERMIT EXPIRE?

1. A permit for the development of land expires if-

- the development or any stage of it does not start within the time specified in the permit; or
- the development requires the certification of a plan of subdivision or consolidation under the **Subdivision Act 1988** and the plan is not certified within two years of the issue of the permit, unless the permit contains a different provision; or
- the development or any stage is not completed within the time specified in the permit, or, if no time is specified, within two years after the issue of the permit or in the case of a subdivision or consolidation within 5 years of the certification of the plan of subdivision or consolidation under the Subdivision Act 1988

2. A permit for the use of land expires if-

- the use does not start within the time specified in the permit, or if no time is specified, within two years after the issue of the permit; or
- the use is discontinued for a period of two years

3. A permit for the development and use of land expires if-

- the development or any stage of it does not start within the time specified in the permit; or
- the development or any stage of it is not completed within the time specified in the permit, or, if no time is specified, within two years after the issue of the permit; or
- the use does not start within the time specified in the permit, or, if no time is specified, within two years after the completion of the development; or
- the use is discontinued for a period of two years.

4. If a permit for the use of land or the development and use of land or relating to any of the circumstances mentioned in section 6A(2) of the **Planning and Environment Act 1987**, or to any combination of use, development or any of those circumstances requires the certification of a plan under the **Subdivision Act 1988**, unless the permit contains a different provision-

- the use or development of any stage is to be taken to have started when the plan is certified; and
- the permit expires if the plan is not certified within two years of the issue of the permit.

5. The expiry of a permit does not affect the validity of anything done under that permit before the expiry.

WHAT ABOUT APPEALS?

- The person who applied for the permit may apply for a review of any condition in the permit unless it was granted at the direction of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, in which case no right of review exists.
- An application for review must be lodged within 60 days after the permit was issued, unless a notice of decision to grant a permit has been issued previously, in which case the application for review must be lodged within 60 days after the giving of that notice.
- An application for review is lodged with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.
- An application for review must be made on an Application for Review form which can be obtained from the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and be accompanied by the applicable fee.
- An application for review must state the grounds upon which it is based.
- An application for review must also be served on the Responsible Authority.
- Details about applications for review and the fees payable can be obtained from the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Permit No:
PA24040

Date issued:

Signature for the Responsible Authority:



PROCUREMENT POLICY

Date amended:	V 5.0 November 2024
Date of next review:	October 2028
Adopted by:	Council
Date adopted:	
Responsible officer:	Director Corporate & Community Services

1 INTRODUCTION

The role of Procurement is a key component of achieving strategic business objectives. Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires councils to adopt a procurement policy which specifies the principles, processes and procedures applicable to the purchase of goods, services and works by the council.

Pyrenees Shire Council employees must apply the highest levels of ethical behaviour in all areas of their work. This is particularly important in procurement which involves the expenditure of public money and is subject to more than usual public scrutiny.

Probity means integrity, uprightness and honesty. Maintaining probity in procurement involves more than simply avoiding corrupt or dishonest conduct. It means ethical behaviour that upholds public values and ensures impartiality, accountability and transparency.

Transparency and accountability in procurement gives suppliers confidence to participate in business with the Council; and builds and maintains trust with our community members. An ethical culture minimises the cost of managing risks and enhances confidence in public administration.

1.1 Purpose and scope

This policy seeks to:

- promote open and fair competition and the provision of value for money in all of Council's procurement and purchasing activities,
- provide guidance to officers allowing for consistency and control of ethical procurement activities,
- demonstrate accountability to ratepayers and our community,
- ensure that Council resources are used efficiently, effectively, and for the benefit of the municipal community, and
- increase the probability of obtaining the right outcome when purchasing goods and services.

This policy applies to all procurement and contracting activities at Council and is binding upon all staff. Staff engaged in any procurement activities must be able to demonstrate that they have complied with this policy. This policy heads the Procurement and Contract Management Framework.



All monetary values stated in this policy include GST except where specifically stated otherwise.

1.2 Financial delegations of authority

Council's relevant instrument of delegation determines the levels of delegation authority required for expenditure on each instance of procurement.

Purchase orders or contracts must be raised for each individual procurement, unless procured via purchasing card, and all subsequent variations.

Measures that intentionally seek to avoid the requirement of the procurement thresholds, e.g., contract splitting, purchase order splitting, or placing multiple orders / quotations with a single supplier, or engaging a single supplier under different guises, are considered to be a breach of this policy.

1.3 The Procurement Cycle

Procurement for high value and/or complex matters should follow the procurement lifecycle steps summarised below. More information on the procurement cycle is provided in the supporting *Guidelines: The Procurement Cycle* and applies to more formal / complex procurement activities.

- a. **Planning:** covering activities from the identification of the need for a procurement through to the development of tender documentation.
- b. **RFx preparation:** covering activities from the drafting of RFx documentation through to the RFx closing time.
- c. **Evaluation:** covering activities from the close of RFx through to the respondent shortlisting phase.
- d. **Negotiation and contract award:** covering activities from the shortlisting of respondents through to the awarding of a contract.
- e. **Contract and supplier management:** covering activities after the awarding of a contract through to the conclusion of the contract.
- f. **Performance review:** covering activities that should occur towards the conclusion of the contract delivery phase.



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2 PROCUREMENT METHODOLOGY AND THRESHOLDS

The procurement methodology to be used is dependent on the value threshold and/or risk of the purchase. The value threshold to determine the methodology is the total accumulated spend for the procurement, including any anticipated variations for the procurement activity.

Public Tender/EOI processes may be used for procurement where the value of goods, services or works is below the public threshold amount listed below. These may be situations where a public procurement process is preferred or prudent, managing risk considerations are paramount, or there is a desire for greater transparency of the procurement.

Best practice requires that, if doubt exists as to the likely value of an intended contract, then a public procurement process should be undertaken. This increases the prospect that the goods or services are purchased or obtained at a competitive rate and in a transparent manner.

All procurement processes are subject to the authorised purchaser having sufficient financial delegations in place.

\$0.01 to <\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One informal quote Can be paid by purchasing card Can be procured via purchase order and pay on invoice
\$2,000 to <\$50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek a minimum of two quotes Procure via purchase order through e-system Director exemption must be sought from requesting two quotes
\$50,000 to <\$100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek a minimum of three quotes Procure via purchase order through e-system Address associated risk issues including OHS Director exemption must be sought from requesting three quotes
\$100,000 to <\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek a minimum of three quotes and/or consider whether more competitive EOI or Tender process is required (optional) Obtain a minimum of three written quotations. Address associated risk issues including OHS CEO exemption must be sought from requesting three quotes
>\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an open Tender or EOI (Expression of Interest) process A select Tender or EOI process can be followed using an approved pre-qualified panel or register Address associated risk issues including OHS Director and CEO exemption approval must be sought from not conducting an open Tender process Approval for procurement / contract acceptance must be obtained through Council resolution unless formerly approved by Council decision

2.1 Assessing the value of a contract

The value of all contracts for the purpose of compliance with this policy includes:

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- costs for the full term of the contract, including any options for either party to extend the contract,
- applicable goods and services tax (GST),
- anticipated contingency allowances or variations, and
- all other known, anticipated and reasonably foreseeable costs.

In certain circumstances, where the contract price is nominal, it will be the market value of the goods, services or works which must be considered for the purpose of compliance with this policy.

Council should use budgeting processes, supported by the accounting system, to report by supplier identity in order to avoid commitments which would otherwise be aggregated to in excess of the public procurement threshold for any one supplier, with the objective of identifying the opportunity to aggregate spends before they are committed.

2.2 Collaborative procurement

Where practicable, Council will seek to collaborate with other councils, other levels of government and/or public agencies in order to take advantage of economies of scale, explore service design best practice, shared service opportunities and services, plus to drive innovation with suppliers. In particular, officers will consider opportunities with other councils within the Grampians / Central Highlands region where similar geographical and population interests may align.

Any opportunities for collaborative procurement must be considered in accordance with this policy.

Where a collaborative procurement opportunity is pursued, the following process applies:

- A pre-market approval submission should be submitted to each participating council prior to commitment to collaborate, seeking delegation of contract approval to CEOs,
- The lead council for the procurement project should be identified and a Heads of Agreement established that gives authority for the lead council to act as each council's agent in the collaborative process,
- Each of the participating councils will be able to enter into a contract with the preferred supplier identified through the collaborative procurement process, or may choose as a group to enter into a contract using 'opt in' contract provisions during the contract term, or with the lead council, and
- Each participating council must be involved in:
 - the initial decision to undertake the collaborative procurement,
 - preparation of, and agreement to, the specifications,
 - ensuring probity for the collaborative procurement process, and
 - the acceptance of tender(s) and awarding of contract(s).

Council may also collaborate with other councils, levels of government, or other bodies such as State Government Contracts (Fleet), MAV Procurement, or Procurement Australasia, to conduct procurement activities or utilise existing collaborative procurement arrangements established through a public tender process where it provides an advantageous, value-for-money outcome for Council.

Federal or State Government grant funded projects may be excluded from collaborative procurement.

Pursuant to section 109 of the LG Act, any Council report recommending the commencement of a procurement process should detail relevant information relating to opportunities for collaborative procurement if available, including:

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- the nature of any available opportunities and the other agencies with which they may be available, and
- why officers did, or did not, pursue the identified opportunities for collaboration in relation to the procurement process.

2.3 The use of procurement agents

Officers can use the services of a third-party agent (e.g., buying groups, buying companies, purchasing schemes). The use of agents should aim to gain value for money through economies of scale and ensuring that resources are used efficiently and effectively with transparency and accountability, and in a way that ensures officers are satisfied as to the integrity of the procurement process.

If an agent is used in procurement, control must be retained of the exercise and performance of Council's statutory powers and duties. A third-party agent procurement process should be in accordance with this policy and associated procurement processes, and with any other requirement that Council must meet, and the following actions should be taken to ensure compliance:

- Make an initial decision to purchase goods, services or works, including where applicable reviewing and settling on contract specifications, conditions of contract and other contract documentation before a public procurement process is conducted.
- Ensure that probity is in place for the procurement, including obtaining and reviewing the relevant procurement-related policies, processes and procedures of the agent.
- Make and document the decision to appoint an agent.
- Make a decision to either accept one of the submissions or reject all submissions, including reviewing all the submissions received, where applicable, and evaluating and selecting one of the suppliers or a panel of suppliers subject to obtaining value for money and not simply a panel of convenient suppliers, and
- Exercise discretion in accepting one of the submissions and not merely rely on the work undertaken by an agent.

3 EXEMPTIONS TO THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Procurement in the following circumstances may be exempt from competitive tender, quotation or EOI processes:

A contract made because of genuine emergency or hardship	Where the Council has resolved that the contract or agreement may be entered into because of an emergency (e.g., via delegation to provide immediate response to a natural disaster or declared emergency).
A contract made with, or a purchase from a contract made by another government entity, government-owned entity or other approved third party	This general exemption allows for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engagements with another government entity or government owned / authorised entity – e.g., Federal, State or Local Government, and/or • engagements reliant on contracts and arrangements established by another government entity, local authority, or local government group purchasing scheme – e.g., Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), National Procurement Network members, or Procurement Australia.
Extension of contracts while the Council is at market	Allows the Council to extend an existing contract where the procurement process to replace the contract has commenced, and

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	<p>where the tender process or negotiations will take or are taking longer than expected.</p> <p>This exemption may be used when the establishment of an interim short-term arrangement with an alternative supplier is considered not to be in the public interest, as it may be cost prohibitive and/or present a risk in the delivery of critical public services to the municipality.</p>
Market monopoly or sole supplier	<p>Any procurement where a supplier has a market monopoly, or has sole ownership or rights over a service, asset or goods, and its use, or is mandatory for use by Council; may be exempt from normal procurement thresholds and be procured via direct negotiation. This specifically applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilities such as Powercor that is mandated to work on its own assets. • Transport and transport assets e.g., V-Line or VicTrack. • Propriety software and related maintenance e.g., Microsoft. • Maintenance that is propriety to an asset and can only be performed by a sole supplier.
Professional services unsuitable for tendering	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legal services • insurance
Where annual tendering is externally conducted on behalf of councils as a body ¹	<p>Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance
Novated contracts	Where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with the Act and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to the new party.
Information technology resellers and software developers	Allows Council to renew software licenses and provision of specialise maintenance and support, or upgrade existing systems, where there is only one supplier of the software who holds the intellectual property rights to the software.
Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Groups	Situations where a Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Group, constituted under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i> has already conducted a public tender for and on behalf of its member councils.
Statutory compulsory monopoly insurance schemes	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motor vehicle compulsory third party • WorkCover insurance
Operating leases	Where a lessor leases an asset (generally a vehicle or plant / equipment) to the Council and assumes the residual value risk of the vehicle.

¹ Where insurance cover is procured through an insurance broker, a Council is entering into two separate contracts: (a) the contract with the insurance broker with the value represented by the brokerage fee, and (b) the contract with the insurance underwriter with the value represented by the insurance premium and associated statutory charges. As both of these contracts would be considered contracts for services, both may be subject to this policy but each may attract a different procurement approach (MAV Procurement Guidelines for Local Government 2024)

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Other specific Council exemptions	As defined elsewhere in this policy or the list provided at Appendix A .
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3.1 Insufficient number of quotations

Situations may arise where insufficient quotations are received to satisfy the threshold requirements detailed in section 5.5. This may occur where there are few suppliers for the goods, services or works being sought, or the work is highly specialised. In this circumstance, the details of the contracted supplier(s) must be recorded along with appropriate comment and approval.

3.2 Sole or select sourcing

Supply of goods, services or works can be sought from one supplier (sole-sourcing) or a restricted group of suppliers (select-sourcing) where it is consistent with this policy and:

- it is in the public interest,
- there is only one or a limited number of available suppliers in the market or able to submit quotations, or
- Council is party to a joint arrangement where Council jointly owns the intellectual property with a third-party provider.

It is important to note that the only transparent means of demonstrating that multiple suppliers do not exist is to test the market. If that action demonstrates that there is only one supplier then a council may enter into a contract with that supplier, with appropriate approvals and mindful of the obligation to obtain value for money.

3.3 Leases and Licences (including software)

The following section provides guidance to staff on procurement for leasing and licensing arrangements.

- Software licences:** are contracts for services. By making available a product to a council, the owner of the software licence is providing a service, including potentially extending to troubleshooting problems on behalf of licensee, providing software updates and otherwise assisting the licensee to utilise the software.

The fact that a software licence may amount to a limited grant of rights does not change the fact that its provision will amount to a service and this policy applies to these acquisitions.

Where Council establishes electronic systems and is subsequently (after the initial contract period) renewing software licences or upgrading systems, the following considerations should be made and documented when making a decision on future procurement:

- Is the software / supplier a monopoly and the only supplier available to provide the service, or are there other suppliers who could be asked to quote / tender?
 - Can the service renewal procurement be done within the requirements of this policy or are appropriate exemption approvals required?
 - Is the system or service still the most effective and best-fit for the organisation?
- Property leases or licenses:** are not viewed as the purchase of a service, as the rent or licence fee being paid to the council is in return for the right to possess or use and management subject property. It is therefore not subject to this policy.

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- c. **Loans:** are considered to be contracts of loan and not contractors for goods, services or the carrying out of works. Council has a specific borrowings policy, and these are therefore not subject to this policy.

However, consideration should be given to both the value for money and transparency requirements when raising loan funds. Placing a public notice is one means of achieving these requirements and significant savings may be achieved by promoting competition between lenders.

- d. **Purchase of land contracts:** are not considered to be contracts for goods, services or carrying out of works and are not included within this policy. Such decisions would always be subject to Council resolution.
- e. **Contracts for sale of goods by council:** are not contracts for the purchase of goods or services or for the carrying out of works by the Council and are not subject to the provisions of this policy.

4 PROCUREMENT PRINCIPLES

For optimal outcomes, these fundamental best practice principles to be applied to every procurement, irrespective of value and complexity:

- Value for money
- Open and fair competition
- Accountability
- Risk management
- Probity and transparency
- Sustainability
- Local economic benefits

a. **Value for money**

The Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) defines value for money as '*the optimum combination of quality, quantity, risk, timeliness and cost on a whole-of-contract and whole-of-asset-life basis*'².

The benefits of the purchase must be weighed against the costs necessary for the optimum result for the Council and local community. It is not required to accept the lowest tender. Instead, it is required to consider issues of quality, cost, service accessibility and other factors relevant to Council and objectives of the Act.

Value for money is often mistaken for meaning the lowest price, however in terms of the contracting process value for money requires us to balance quality and price with as much transparency as is reasonably achievable. In this context price should consider the whole life cost of the provision so far as is practicable. Evaluation of value for money should consider both cost and non-cost factors including:

- Advancing the Council's priorities
- Ensuring fit-for-purpose
- Quality
- Service and support
- Whole of life cost and transaction costs associated with acquiring, using, holding, maintaining and disposing of goods, services or works

² VAGO Public Sector Procurement: Turning Principles into Practice, October 2007

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- Support for the strategic direction of the Council, including environmental sustainability, local and social procurement, opportunities for aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and the circular economy
- Mandatory compliance obligations
- Tenderer capacity and capability to supply

Achieving Value for Money must be the basis of all procurement decisions within the Council.

b. Open and fair competition

All prospective suppliers must be treated (and seen to be treated) fairly in an open and transparent manner with the same access to information about the procurement to enable them to provide prices / submissions on the same basis. Officers must adequately test the market in a consistent manner without any bias, or perception of bias, so that potential suppliers and the public have confidence in the outcome.

c. Accountability

Accountability in procurement means being able to explain and provide evidence on the process followed.

Officers are responsible for the actions and decisions they take in relation to procurement and for the resulting outcomes. Officers are answerable for such activities through the established lines of accountability, ultimately to the CEO.

The test of accountability is that an independent third party must be able to clearly see that a process has been followed and that the process is fair and reasonable. Recordkeeping is paramount as every step of the process must be properly documented. There must be a sufficient audit trail to account for all procurement actions and decisions.

Processes are in place to ensure accountability regardless of the method of procurement, including:

- Processes to allow officers to identify and declare conflicts-of-interest.
- Codes of Conduct (Councillors and Council staff),
- Policies and procedures on fraud & corruption control, receipt of gifts & hospitality, and use of purchasing cards,
- A sound regime of internal controls including Instruments of Delegation,
- Effective internal audit functions, and
- Systems for providing feedback and managing grievances on all matters, including procurement.

d. Risk management

Strategies for managing risks associated with all procurement processes must follow Council's adopted risk management framework, in a way that allows for all risks to be identified, documented, evaluated and managed in a way that protects and enhances Council's capacity to manage the risks to its supply chain and the provision of essential goods, services and works.

- **Supply by contract:** the provision of goods, services and works by contract should use relevant Australian Standards for general contract provisions and conditions. Risk should minimise risk vulnerability through:
 - use of standardised contracts and contract clauses
 - obtaining security deposits of bank guarantees where appropriate

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- obtaining subject matter expert guidance in specification development
- use or reference to relevant Australian Standards or equivalent
- Effectively managing contracts including monitoring and enforcing performance and safety

- **Use of corporate purchase cards:** use of corporate purchasing cards is an effective way to acquire goods and services where it is not economical or practicable to issue purchase orders. Documented processes control the use of cards by:

- Identifying officers authorised to use cards, consistent with financial delegations
- Documenting expense thresholds for card use
- Not allow ATM or other cash withdrawals
- Identifying restrictions on use and on personal gain
- Ensuring that purchasing cards are used solely by or with the approval of assigned cardholders
- Implementing use agreements between Council and authorised cardholders
- Require appropriate and segregated purchasing and approval processes
- Enabling audit trails for card purchases
- Articulating consequences for misuse or fraudulent use of cards

e. **Probity and transparency**

In all commercial dealings, the highest standards of honesty must be observed. All Council procurement processes must be conducted in a fair, honest and open manner, in the public interest and with the highest levels of integrity.

In procurement matters, all Council staff must:

- Complete and lodge a conflict-of-interest declaration prior to engaging in tender or quotation evaluation processes.
- Disclose in any conflict-of-interest declaration any general or material conflict of interest where it could be perceived that an interest might unduly influence them.
- Be excluded from exercising delegated powers, functions or duties if they have a conflict-of-interest.
- Must declare to their director any items or services delivered to Council that were not part of the requirements of a contract and which could be construed as gifts or new assets to Council. Such items must be referenced on supplier invoices.

In procurement matters, all Councillors must:

- Avoid conflicts between public duties as a Councillor and their personal interests and obligations.
- Not improperly direct or influence an officer in the exercise of any power or performance of any duty or function.

f. **Sustainability**

The use of sustainable procurement practices helps to meet the needs for goods, services and works more widely by maximising long-term net benefits for communities, including future generations.

Council demonstrates sustainable procurement by:

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- Being accountable for its impact on society, the economy and the environment, including the impacts of the supply chain,
- Examining anticipated organisational, project and/or community needs,
- Continually improving sustainability specifications, practices and outcomes, and
- Planning and undertaking sustainability evaluations as part of contracting activities.

Council aims to strategically use procurement to drive sustainability outcomes. Depending on the nature of the procurement, officers should explore opportunities to engage suppliers who will help achieve Council's sustainability priorities and outcomes.

The following considerations were determined in line with these priorities:

Economic sustainability:	Supporting economic development priorities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing purchasing from local businesses located within the Pyrenees shire • increasing the use of local suppliers as contractors or sub-contractors • increasing generation of local employment • increasing support for local production and manufacturing • fostering innovation and emerging sectors • building relationships and capacity of start-ups and small business
Social sustainability:	Elevate the social value of doing business, in particular strengthen and building economic growth of local business and those in Aboriginal communities, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognising the value brought by Aboriginal businesses through new procurement relationships and opportunities • increasing procurement from Pyrenees shire-based and Aboriginal businesses, particularly those registered with Traditional Owners of lands that make up the Pyrenees shire • increasing the use of local and Aboriginal businesses as sub-contractors • increasing employment of local Aboriginal people by Council and suppliers when appropriate, building capacity and skills
Environmental sustainability:	<p>Increase implementation of environmentally sustainable business practice.</p> <p>Reduce pollution include carbon emissions from Council's supply chain by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging suppliers to reduce and offset greenhouse gas emissions and reduce pollution • reducing the impact of works, goods and services on the public (health and wellbeing, air quality, generation and disposal of hazardous materials or waste) • improving energy efficiency and encouraging renewable energy • improving water management and reducing water consumption • avoiding the use of fossil fuels in the delivery of products or services where practicable <p>Stimulate the transition to a circular economy, reducing / eliminating waste, minimising the use of resources, water and energy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimising the use of resources throughout the supply chain • selecting products / services that have a minimal effect on the depletion of natural resources or that regenerate natural resources

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing waste to landfill through the supply chain and increase the use of materials that contain reclaimed resources
	Maintain biodiversity and climate adaptation, by protecting and enhancing the natural environment and green spaces of our municipality.

To increase local sustainability:

Where Council can show value for money, capability and competency, and sufficient competition, Council may mandate only suppliers within the Pyrenees Shire may participate in a particular procurement environment.

Procurement evaluation processes may apply an evaluation weighting of up to 10% for tenders, RFQs or EOIs to support the development of employment and business within the municipality. When applying this 10% weighting Council will:

- Where appropriate:
 - identify if the procurement can be targeted to or adapted to encourage local business,
 - identify any barriers and limitations of the local supply market and consider opportunities to reduce,
 - include a statement this weighting is to encourage responses to identify the development of local business and will be evaluated as such, and
 - develop key performance indicators to measure responses.
- Include within RFQ, EOI and tender documentation a supplier question to identify potential local benefits.

If the application for local business benefits will result in an outcome that is unreasonable, will not deliver value for money, or is deemed not to be to the advantage of Council, then Council may elect to remove this weighting from the tender or quote documents.

5 ETHICAL STANDARDS

The following principles of responsible financial management will be applied to all procurement activities and:

- The availability of existing funds within an approved budget, or source of funds (e.g., grants), must be established prior to the commencement of any procurement action.
- Expenditure authorisation must always be within specific levels of financial delegation.
- Council funds must be used effectively in procurement activities with effort made to contain costs without compromising any of the procurement principles set out in this policy.

Council has no tolerance for fraudulent or corrupt behaviour and maintains appropriate policies and processes to prevent, identify and control improper conduct, fraud and corruption.

Those involved in procurement will:

- avoid conflicts between their public duties and their personal interests and obligations,
- treat potential and existing suppliers with equality and fairness,
- not seek or receive personal gain,

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- maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confident information such as contract prices and other sensitive information,
- deal with suppliers in an honest and impartial manner that does not allow conflicts of interest,
- provide all suppliers and tenderers with the same information and equal opportunity, and
- be able to account for decisions and provide feedback on them.

All tender processes shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of this policy and any associated procedures, relevant legislation, relevant Australian Standards, and the Act.

5.1 Conflicts of interest

Conflict-of-interest declarations must be provided before approval to participate in procurement tender evaluation processes is granted, in accordance with Council's Conflict of Interest Procedure.

Where an officer is providing advice as part of a procurement process, any conflicts of interest must also be declared. Officers are considered to be providing advice to the Council when they:

- Sign a report,
- Prepare part of a report (even when someone else's name appears as author of the report),
- Provide information for inclusion in a report, and
- Present verbal advice to a meeting of Council or a procurement evaluation panel.

5.2 Acceptance of gifts and benefits

No Councillor or member of council staff must seek or accept any immediate or future reward or benefit (gift) in return for the performance of any duty or work for Council, or where it could be reasonably perceived as influencing them or their position or undermining their integrity or the integrity of the process in some way.

Any gift or benefit offered must be managed in accordance with Council's policies and procedures. Councillors and officers, particularly staff involved in procurement or contract management:

- must not knowingly visit a current supplier's premises without invitation when acting in their official capacity, and
- must not knowing engage a Council supplier for private benefit unless that engagement is on proper commercial terms.

6 INTERNAL CONTROLS

All persons engaged in procurement processes must follow established internal controls to ensure:

- for transactions above \$100,000, more than one person should be involved in and responsible for the authorisation and management of each transaction from end to end (segregation of duties) – this can be achieved through documented collaboration between officers or different officers being responsible for administration, evaluation and approvals.
- transparency in the procurement process,
- a clearly documented audit trail for procurement functions,
- appropriate authorisations obtained and documented,
- systems in place for appropriate monitoring and performance measurement, and
- processes in place for escalation of procurement matters where needed to the executive leadership team, the Audit & Risk Committee and/or the Council.

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Different staff should be assigned responsibility for different elements of related activities, as practicable with regard to low staffing levels. Where practicable it is recommended to have different officers assigned to:

- drafting and approving tender specifications
- raising and approving purchase orders
- receipting goods
- approving related invoices
- reviewing and reconciling financial records
- performing inventory

For approval of purchase orders and receipt of goods and services, the following process is in place:

- Accounts payable check that the invoice matches the original purchase order,
- Any variations to the purchase order are checked with the authorising officer, and
- The authorisation of the invoice by the authorising officer is evidence that the goods or services have been received and payment is approved

6.1 Accumulated spend – monitoring and control

Accumulated spend with the same supplier will be monitored by the executive leadership team annually to identify where accumulated small projects may rise above authorised procurement thresholds and without appropriate approvals. Where outside of appropriate authorisations, documented determination of appropriate rectification action will be undertaken.

6.2 Internal Audit

The use of internal audit reviews is the key means of providing assurance of adequate controls and mitigating the risks in procurement processes.

Council has also established an Audit & Risk Committee that oversees corporate governance, including financial and performance reporting, risk management, internal and external audit, and internal control.

Council's internal audit provider may be used as a probity auditor for key procurement activities.

7 PRE-QUALIFIED SUPPLIER PANELS

One valid outcome of a procurement process is the appointment of a panel of suppliers to promote security of supply. Typical examples include the appointment of a range of trade services to undertake maintenance works.

These panels will contain:

- An agreed procurement methodology when using suppliers from the panel,
- Qualification criteria to assess suppliers on registration and selection,
- Supplier registration process and framework.

Panel registration methodology will generally be by public tender or EOI process and in accordance with the relevant procedure.

7.1 Accessing external panel contracts

Under an existing externally approved tendering agent or Victorian Government Contract, e.g., Procurement Australasia, Municipal Association of Victoria, or Victorian State contracts, all of which have been market tested, staff should:

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- Prepare a project brief and obtain a minimum of two quotes from suitable panel members or arrangement.
- Evaluate quotes.
- Following the process required by the agent or contract.

8 EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI)

Council may determine to seek an EOI where:

- There are likely to be many tenderers.
- Tendering will be costly because the procurement is complex, and Council does not wish to impose the costs of preparing full tenders on all tenders. In this circumstance, an EOI may be the first stage in determining a short list of selected tenderers.
- There is uncertainty as to the willingness and/or interest of vendors to offer the required procurement.
- Council requires advice from the market regarding how best to address a particular need.

An EOI process must be publicly advertised and may follow a similar process to tenders, using the e-system.

Once the evaluation to the OI is completed, a select tender can then be conducted from preferred respondents if required.

9 TENDERS

Tender processes should be planned as part of project development and budgetary processes. Detailed processes are provided in Council's **Procedure for Procurement via Tender**.

All public tenders invited by Council will be published and managed electronically via Council's e-Tendering Portal (currently TenderLink) and may be advertised in the media. Information regarding current tenders and awarded tenders will be published on Council's website.

Late tenders will not be accepted (unless authorised by the relevant director or Chief Executive Officer).

9.1 Tender evaluation

A tender evaluation panel will be established to evaluate each tender submission against the tender's selection criteria. Tender evaluation panels can include external personnel in order to ensure the best outcome for a procurement activity and must comprise of at least 3 (three) persons. Tender evaluation panel meetings should include a member of the governance or finance teams as observers to ensure appropriate governance oversight is maintained.

A detailed Tender Evaluation Plan will be developed, approved by the project sponsor/manager and strictly adhered to by the tender evaluation panel. The Tender Evaluation Plan will include the establishment of detailed evaluation criteria and the application of a pre-approved and robust weighted scoring system. The Tender Evaluation Plan must be completed and approved by the Project Sponsor prior to the tender or quotation being issued.

When evaluating a tender, value for money is the primary evaluation objective taking into account both cost and non-cost factors (not necessarily the lowest cost). This should include:

- A cost weighting for evaluation of between 60% to 100%. Should a requirement for the weighting be lowered below 60%, director approval must be obtained.
- Ensuring the produce and service is fit for purpose.

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- Quality assurance.
- Appropriate service and support.
- Consideration of 'whole of life' cost.

The following evaluation criteria categories may be included to determine whether a proposed contract provides value for money:

- Mandatory compliance criteria – e.g., licensing, OHS requirements
- Tendered price
- Capacity of the tenderer to provide the goods / services / works
- Capability of the tenderer to provide the goods / services / works
- Demonstration of sustainability
- Local content
- Financial sustainability of the tenderer

9.2 Probity plan

A formal probity plan should be developed, and a probity advisor appointed in the following circumstances:

- Where the proposed total contract sum exceeds \$1 million over the life of the contract, or for a less value set by Council from time-to-time, or
- Where a proposed contract is considered by Council or the CEO to be particularly complex, of a high risk or controversial nature, and requiring a high level of public confidence.

A probity plan should cover the following matters:

- identification of the contract,
- objectives of the probity processes,
- statement on the proposed application of probity principles,
- roles and responsibilities of each participant in the evaluation process and probity auditing,
- specification of what probity auditing will occur,
- probity tasks, documents and timelines,
- measures for ensuring confidentiality and security,
- communication protocol with respondents (to ensure that no one submission obtains an unfair advantage over others), and
- record keeping requirements.

9.3 Probity advisor / auditor

A probity advisor may be appointed to any tender evaluation panel and may be appointed to oversee the evaluation process.

Where a probity plan is considered appropriate, this may include the appointment of a probity advisory or auditor to provide advice on issues which may arise, together with advice on strategies to overcome potential problems.

Where a probity advisor or auditor is appointed, this should occur before the specifications and documentation are completed. A probity advisor or auditor must be independent and have the necessary skills and experience. The probity advisory or auditor should take no part in the decision-making process of the evaluation panel, but the probity advisor may assist the panel on probity matters.

9.4 Probity report

A probity auditor's report of an audit should incorporate the following:

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- definition of the scope of the audit,
- statement that the probity auditor has been able to fulfil their project brief in order to express an opinion on the RFx process,
- brief description of the probity framework (e.g., plans, policies, guidelines) against which the review has been conducted,
- statement about whether or not the audit was conducted according to the probity framework,
- list of any qualifications or limitations on the probity auditor's opinion on the process, and
- findings in the form of an expression of opinion about whether – in all material respects and based on the probity framework – the process was undertaken according to the legislation and council policy.

9.5 Shortlisting and negotiation

A shortlisting process can be conducted, based on any criterion or criteria but only in pursuit of the most advantageous outcome for Council and community.

Shortlisted tenderers may be invited to submit a best and final offer in relation to all or certain aspects of their respective tenders.

Once one or more preferred tenderers are selected, negotiations can be conducted in order to obtain the optimal solution and commercial arrangements within the original scope and intent of the tender. Probity requirements apply to all negotiations.

10 CONTRACTS

Procurement activity valued at \$300,000 or above must result in a formal contract. For procurement activity valued between \$50,000 and \$300,000 it is recommended to result in a formal contract, particularly where the procurement relates to the carrying out of works.

10.1 Length of contracts

Council does not specify a time limit applicable to the length of a contract subject to public procurement thresholds. Optimum length of contract should be based on value for money, efficiency and effectiveness. The optimum length of a contract in order to secure value for money can vary considerably depending on a range of factors, including:

- the extent of supply side competition – council may approach the market more regularly if pricing is competitive, or the market landscape is likely to change and vice versa,
- a contract term sufficient to make the cost of the procurement process worthwhile and maximise competition,
- the cost of equipment which the supplier or council must amortise over the term of the contract in order to submit an economic price, and
- the potential for changes to systems, processes and supply chains to impact on service delivery and costs.

10.2 Contracts aggregation

Where significant amounts are spent in aggregate on one supplier, or for one service, over time; consideration should be given as to whether it may be possible to achieve greater savings by leveraging this aggregate spend, rather than treating each discrete arrangement as a separate procurement exercise.

10.3 Contract management

Good contract management ensures goods, services and works are delivered to the required standards of quality and quantity as intended by the contract through:

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- Monitoring processes to ensure responsibilities and obligations of all parties under the contract are met,
- Early recognition of issues and performance problems, and the identification of solutions,
- Adhering to risk, project and contract management frameworks and relevant OHS and sustainability requirements.

Council contracts must include contract management requirements commensurate with the complexity of the matter. Contracts should be proactively managed by the assigned contract manager to ensure that the Council and its community receives value for money.

Contracts awarded that are strategically critical and/or of relative high value must have additional senior (project sponsor / project control group) oversight to ensure appropriate management.

All contracts should be managed in accordance with the Council's Contract Management procedures.

10.4 Evaluating contract performance

In order to continually improve outcomes, Council will evaluate and seek to improve on all aspects of procurement and contract management, in accordance with the Contract Management Procedure.

10.5 Contract variations

Where contract variation options are allowed for in the initial contract, contract variations can be approved by the project manager.

Contract variations not included within initial contracts must be assessed to determine whether they are properly characterised as variations, or whether they are in effect a new contract. This will depend upon factors such as:

- the monetary value of the proposed variation – i.e., the value of the variation and its impact on the total contract value in the context of the monetary thresholds within this policy, and
- the subject matter of the proposed variation and whether it is consistent with the scope of the original contract or agreement.

Contract variations must be approved by the project sponsor/director and in accordance with the monetary thresholds above (regarding the resulting total contract spend). Budget must be available for the variation.

For contracts over \$300,000, where the accumulated variation value will exceed 20% of the initial awarded contract value, approval must be sought from the Chief Executive Officer to proceed with the variation in consultation with the Council. The CEO must also ensure that budget is approved for all variations. A formal Council resolution may be required for approval.

10.6 Contract extensions

For contracts over \$300,000 that have approved extension options, delegation approval is required to exercise the extension for the value of the option.

10.7 Dispute resolution

Where relevant, all contracts will incorporate dispute management and alternative dispute resolution provisions to minimise chance of disputes escalating to legal action.

11 SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Officers will ensure the security and confidentiality of all information including intellectual property and proprietary information of the respondents as well as the integrity of the procurement process. The test of

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security is that tender/EOI documentation must not be disseminated beyond members of the evaluation panel.

Appropriate security and confidentiality measures commence with the preparation of the tender/EOI documentation. The documentation should remain confidential until released to the marketplace in order to maintain fair competition.

From that point forward in the procurement process discussions and documentation must remain secure and confidential, particularly through the council agenda preparation phase, at least until a decision on a tender/EOI is made public, including:

- Minutes of all meetings
- Briefing attendance forms
- Evaluation panel appointments and acceptances
- Conflict of interest declarations
- Confidentiality deeds or declarations
- Evaluation criteria weightings
- Submissions, including attachments and any supplementary information
- Evaluation panel discussions and assessments, including all scoring
- Questions to respondents and the answers
- Referee questions and answers
- Respondent shortlists
- Preferred respondent negotiations
- Evaluation report (until released under council resolution or policy)

Where these documents are held in electronic form, appropriate electronic security access must be in place. Each member of an evaluation panel should complete a deed of confidentiality.

11.1 Endorsements

Officers must not publicly endorse any products or services without the permission of the relevant director or the CEO.

12 SAFETY IN PROCUREMENT

Safety considerations and hazard minimisation must be considered in all procurement processes undertaken within Council. Safety in procurement should be undertaken in accordance with relevant policies and processes and may include:

- Identification of hazards prior to purchase – e.g., dangerous goods, hazardous substances, or goods / services that may expose individuals to harm,
- Where relevant, ensuring supply of Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) with goods,
- Conducting risk assessments where appropriate,
- Ensuring supply of compliant plant risk assessment data and other documentation demonstrating that plant or equipment is safe in its design,
- Undertaking of commissioning / operational trials to confirm safe operation of plant and equipment,
- Ensuring provision of evidence that testing of plant, building, structures or substances has been appropriately conducted to identify and minimise risk, and
- Ensuring that designers of buildings or facilities incorporate 'safety in design' principles to maximise pre-inclusion of safety requirements and minimise need for more expensive post-implementation fixes.

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It is the responsibility of the person undertaking the procurement process, working with contractors, to ensure that any identified risks are effectively mitigated before accepting delivery or installation.

13 BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

A breach of this policy may occur when:

- A contract valued above Council's RFX threshold is entered into willingly without first conducting a formal, competitive RFX process as required under this policy.
- A public, competitive RFX process is undertaken but the contract subsequently entered into is materially different³ from the specifications.
- An existing contract valued above the Council's RFX threshold is extended without provision in the contract and without first undertaking a further RFX process unless within this policy's provisions around continuing the requirement whilst conducting a RFX process.
- A contract valued above the Council's RFX threshold is entered into without first going through a public RFX process or without complying with any exemptions as described under the policy.

It is unlikely that a failure to follow this procurement policy will affect contracts that are entered into, however, breaches of the policy will result in public reporting and may result in disciplinary action being taken against an officer willingly undertaking the breach.

Council is obliged to report a non-compliance with this policy and must report the following in the Annual Report:

- A list of contracts entered into above the contract value (threshold) at which the Council must undertake a public RFX process under the policy, and
- A list of contracts entered into above the contract value (threshold) at which the council must undertake a public RFX process under its policy – but for which the council did not undertake a public RFX process and also did not meet the stated conditions to enable the purchase of goods or services without undertaking a public RFX process.

13.1 Complaints and reporting suspicious activities

Officers, members of the public and suppliers are strongly encouraged to report known or suspected incidences of improper conduct to the Director Corporate & Community Services or Council's Chief Executive Officer.

Suspected improper conduct, offers of bribes, commissions or any other irregular approaches from suppliers, prospective suppliers or other individuals will be investigated and reported in accordance with Council's processes around public interest disclosures and fraud protection.

The CEO must notify IBAC (Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission) of any matter the suspect on reasonable grounds to involve corrupt conduct occurring or having occurred in accordance with mandatory reporting requirements.

³ One test of whether a contract is 'materially different' is to compare the final position with what was originally provided for and make a judgement in both quantitative and qualitative terms as to whether these positions are essentially the same. As a rule of thumb, if the result of the comparison is greater than a 20% difference in price it is indicative of a material difference. A material difference is, however, capable of arising even with the price differential is 20% or less.

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13.2 Reporting of non-compliance

Council is obliged to report a non-compliance with this policy. Regulation 10(C)(ii) of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires Council to report the following within its annual reports:

- a list of contracts entered into above the contract value at which the Council must undertake a public procurement process under the policy, and
- a list of contracts entered into above the contract value at which the Council must undertake a public procurement process under the policy – but for which the Council did not undertake a public procurement process and did not meet the conditions for them to purchase goods or services without undertaking a public procurement process.

14 REFERENCE AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

14.1 External

This policy was developed utilised resources gained from the MAV Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2024.

- Local Government Act 2020
- Trade Practices Act, Goods Act and the Environmental Protection Act

14.2 Council

This policy must be read and implemented in accordance with the following plans, policies and strategies:

- Fraud and Corruption Control framework
- Project management framework
- Project Risk Management Guidelines
- Risk Management Framework
- Financial Management Policy
- Pyrenees Shire 2031 – Community Vision 2021-2031
- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Codes of Conduct
- Acceptance of Gifts Policy
- Procedure – Conflicts of Interest

The following documents support the Procurement Policy and form the wider Procurement and Contract Management Framework:

- Procedure – Procurement via tender
- Procedure – Procurement via purchase order
- Procedure – Use of Corporate Purchasing Cards
- Procedure – Pre-Approved Supplier Panels
- Guidelines – The Procurement Cycle
- Guidelines – Collaboration in Procurement
- Guidelines – Probity in Procurement
- Contract management framework

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15 VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Issue date	Description of change
1.0		Initial release – document creation
2.0	March 2018	Annual Review
3.0	July 2019	Annual review Incorporated safety in procurement and recommendations from the VAGO Audit Report “ <i>Fraud and Corruption Control – Local Government</i> ” June 2019.
4.0	September 2021	Major review Aligned with changes in Local Government Act 2020, changes in thresholds for tender.
4.1	April 2022	Minor review
5.0	September 2024	Major review Checked against MAV <i>Best Practice Procurement Guidelines for Local Government 2024</i> New sections inserted / changes made: 1.2 Overview of the Procurement Cycle and reference to new Guidelines 4.1 Major review of principles, but no fundamental change in content 4.1f Consideration on potential increase in local benefit criteria weighting 5.0 No change to procurement thresholds 5.3 Change in aggregate spend control monitoring from 1 year to 3 years 5.4 Strengthened contract variations 5.5 Explanation of insurance application 5.9 New section on use of procurement agents 5.10 New section on leases and licenses 6.0 Strengthened parts within the Ethics and Probity section. 8.6 New section on contracts aggregation benefits and length of contracts 9.0 New section on breaches 12.0 Updated definitions / glossary

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16 DEFINITIONS / GLOSSARY

Act	Local Government Act 2020	
Goods, services and works	Goods: movable personal property, especially merchandise used in trade or commerce and requiring carriage from one place to another. The work 'goods' is very general and of quite indefinite import.	
	Services: the act of helping or doing work for another ... work done in this way ... assistance or benefit given to some ... the provision of what is necessary for the installation and maintenance of a machine / operation.	
	Works / Carrying out of works: the operations of building or repair (e.g., roadworks).	
Circular economy	An approach to the delivery of goods, services and works that ensures no waste is created through their use of materials and products. The products and materials used in these goods, services and works are either recovered for reUse or have been designed to be fully recyclable when no longer required.	
Collaborative procurement	Procurement activities that engage two or more councils, government entities or statutory bodies.	
Commercial in Confidence	Information that, if released, may prejudice the business dealings of a party e.g., prices, discounts, rebates, profits, methodologies, and process information. It is information provided for a specific purpose that is not to be used for any other purpose than set out in the initial document.	
Competitive neutrality	A policy which aims to ensure that, where a government business is competing with the private sector, adjustments are made to remove any net advantage (or disadvantage) the government business has because it is owned by government.	
Conflict of interest	In Victorian local government the law provides that where a council officer holding a delegation or advising council or a delegated committee has a conflict of interest, they must disclose this in writing if it is a general or material interest as specified in the legislation.	
	General conflict of interest	Means that an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner contrary to their public duty.
	Material conflict of interest	Means an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. A benefit or loss may direct or indirect, and pecuniary or non-pecuniary. Affected persons include the members of council staff and their family members.
Conditions of contract	The contractual terms that define the obligations and rights of the parties involved in the contract and form the basis of the contract awarded to the successful respondent.	

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Confidentiality agreement	A written legal document that is proof and record of the obligations agreed to between the parties, to protect the commercial interests of all parties. Often used interchangeable with the deed of confidentiality.
Contract	An agreement between two or more authorised persons on behalf of their organisations to perform or not perform a specific act(s) enforceable in law. A contract may be verbal or written or inferred by conduct. Where the term 'contract' or 'agreement' is used it can mean any documented agreement to enter into a contract for procurement.
Contract documents	Documents construed together as a instrument of contract. They may include terms and conditions, specifications, drawings, RFx responses, delivery schedules and payment schedules.
Contract Management	The process that ensures both parties to a contract that fully meets their respective obligations as efficiently and effectively as possible, in order to deliver the business and operational objectives required from the contract and in particular, to provide value for money.
Contract manager	The person nominated by the Council to manage the day-to-day matters of the contract. See also superintendent.
Contractor	Respondent (person, firm etc) whose submission has been accepted by the Council with or without modification.
Contract variation	An addition or alteration to the goods and/or or services under a contract that is within the general scope of the original contract. A contract variation can be documented between the parties with a letter or a deed of variation.
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Corporate Social Responsibility is about taking positive action to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the local community and the environment on which it impacts.
Council staff / Officers	Includes full-time and part-time council employees, and temporary employees, contractors and consultants while engaged by the Council.
Deed of confidentiality	See confidentiality agreement.
Delegate	A person authorised by the Council or CEO to make general or specified decisions constrained only by the instrument of delegation. Specifically, delegates commit and incur expenditure and are responsible for actions arising from their use of such power.
Delegation	A power handed down by the Council or CEO in an Instrument to enable a delegate to act on the Council's behalf.
Due diligence	The process of reviewing and analysing in detail the capacity of a responding organisation to meet future contract performance requirements. This may include a detailed assessment of the organisation's financial stability, legal risks, technical capacity and infrastructure.
e-Procurement	Refers to the use of electronic methods at any stage of the procurement process from identification of a requirement through to contract management and possibly procured asset management.

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	Electronic tendering is the undertaking of the RFx process stage by electronic methods.
Expression of Interest (EOI)	<p>A response to an open approach to the market requesting submissions from respondents interested in participating in procurement.</p> <p>It is used to identify potential suppliers interested in, and capable of, delivering the required goods or services. Potential suppliers are asked to provide information on their capability to do the work.</p> <p>It is usually the first stage of a multi-stage RFx process.</p>
Evaluation criteria	The criteria used to evaluate the compliance and/or relative ranking of RFx submissions. All evaluation criteria must be clearly stated in the RFx documentation.
General conditions of contract	Contractual terms which define the obligations and rights of the parties involved in the contract and form the basis of the contract awarded to the successful respondent.
Late tender	An RFx submission received after the specified closing time and date.
Negotiation	The bargaining process between two or more parties. Each party has its own viewpoints and objectives but seeks to reach an overall satisfactory arrangement.
Probity	In the context of an RFx process probity is a defensible process which is able to withstanding internal and external scrutiny – one which achieves both accountability and transparency, providing respondents with fair and equitable treatment.
Probity advisor	A supplier with extensive experience and skills in procurement who may develop probity plans and other key documents and provide advice and training to officers on probity principles and guidelines.
Probity auditor	A supplier who provides the CEO with an independent and appropriate sign-off on probity requirements generally at the end of the RFx process.
Probity plan	A document that sets out the steps to be taken and the processes to be implemented to ensure an RFx is conducted fairly and ethically.
Preferred respondent	Respondent who at the conclusion of the evaluation period has been selected to enter contract negotiations for the contract with the principal.
Principles	<p>The fundamental norms, rules, or values that represent what is desirable and of value to a Council and its community.</p> <p>Principles are more basic than policy, process or procedures, and should govern all three.</p>
Procedures	<p>Ways in which procurement tasks are accomplished. It can be a sequence of steps that include preparation, conduct and completion of a task.</p> <p>A procedure describes how a process is to be achieved.</p>
Processes	<p>Activities that use resources to transform inputs into outputs.</p> <p>A process describes what is to be done.</p>
Procurement	Procurement is the whole process of acquisition of external goods, services and works. This process spans the whole life cycle from initial concept through to the end of the useful life of an asset (including disposal) or to the end of a service contract.

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	It also includes the organisational and governance frameworks that underpin the procurement function.
Purchase order	A form of contract, which is an official document used to authorise and record the purchase of goods or services by a buyer. It is the primer reference confirming the contractual situation between the buyer and supplier.
Request for expressions of interest (EOI)	An invitation for persons to submit an EOI for the provision of the goods, services or works generally set out in the overview of requirements contained in the document. This invitation is not an offer or a contract. It identifies potential suppliers interested in, and capable of, delivering the required goods or services. Potential suppliers are asked to provide information on their capability to do the work. It is usually the first stage of a multi-stage RFx process. See also 'expression of interest'.
Request for information (RFI)	Formal request for information to gain a more detailed understanding of the supplier market and the range of solutions and technologies that may be available. It may be used to develop documentation for a future RFx process.
Request for quotation (RFQ)	A written process of inviting submissions to supply goods and/or services involving simple documentation, a limited number of potential suppliers and generally of relatively lower values.
Request for Tender (RFT)	A request for submissions against a set of clearly defined and specified requirements. Respondents are advised of all requirements involved, including the RFT conditions and proposed contract conditions.
Respondent	The party offering to enter into a legally binding contract with another party.
RFx	A collective term for procurement processes. These processes may include RFQ, RFT, RFP, EOI and RFI processes.
RFx conditions	Rules governing the content and provision of submissions and the conduct of the RFx process.
Small to medium enterprises (SMEs)	Firms with less than 200 full-time equivalent employees (ABS).
Social Procurement	Social procurement uses procurement processes and purchasing power to generate positive social outcomes in addition to the delivery of efficient goods, services and works.
Specification	The statement which clearly and accurately describes the essential requirements for goods, services or works. It may also include the procedures by which it will be determined that the requirements have been met and performance required under a contract.
Submission	An offer by one party to enter into a legally binding contract with another party, often used interchangeably with quote, tender, response and offer.
Superintendent	The person appointed to the position nominated as the superintendent in a contract for the purpose of overseeing the Council's interests.

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Superintendent's representative	The person appointed by a contract superintendent to act on their behalf.
Sustainability	Activities that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
Sustainable procurement	<p>A process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.</p> <p>Sustainable procurement includes environmental, social, local and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business procurement.</p>
Tender briefing	A forum held where a council representative(s) briefs prospective respondents regarding an RFx process and responds to questions raised.
Thresholds	A value above which a procurement, unless exempt, is subject to the mandatory procurement procedures.
Value for money	<p>Value for money in procurement is about selecting the supply of goods, services and works considering both cost and non-cost factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contribution to the advancement of the Council's priorities, • non-cost factors such as fit-for-purpose, quality, service and support, and • cost-related factors including whole-of-life costs and transaction costs associated with acquiring, using, holding, maintaining and disposing of the goods, services, or works.

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17 APPENDIX A – PURCHASE ORDER EXEMPTIONS

Procurement of the following items do not require purchase orders:

- Accommodation or travel
- Audit & Risk Committee allowances and fees
- Community Hall Hire
- Contributions (e.g., grants, sponsorships, committee of management reimbursements)
- Councillor allowances and reimbursements
- Daily purchases for staff amenities
- E-tags
- Emergency after-hours repairs / maintenance – up to 3 days after emergency first occurred
- Equipment inspections (e.g., Essential Services, First Aid Kits)
- Fuel accounts
- Government / statutory charges (e.g., EPA Levy, licences, police checks)
- Medical expenses
- Memberships / subscriptions
- Postage
- Rental (property)
- Photocopier volume charges
- Reactionary maintenance – e.g., fire hydrants
- Reimbursements (employees and others)
- Utilities – electricity, telephone, gas, water, street lighting etc.
- Vehicle registration
- Cleaning services (linen for caravan parks)
- Repairs, servicing and maintenance of vehicles / plant

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RECOVERY PLANS

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2022 FLOODS BAYINDEEN ROCKY ROAD BUSHFIRE 2024

Summary of Review
December 2024

BACKGROUND TO THE RECOVERY PLANS

The Pyrenees Flood Recovery Plan was developed in February 2023 and formally adopted by Council on Tuesday 21 February 2023.

The Recovery Plan for the Bayindeen Rocky Road Bushfire was developed in April 2024 and formally adopted by Council on Tuesday 16 April 2024.

The aim of these plans is to return the community to a normal state of functioning. It is not known how long this will take so the plans are living documents which will be reviewed and amended on an as-needs basis until the aims and objectives have been satisfactorily met.

The plans provide a summary of the review of recovery activities for both the Oct/Nov 2022 floods and 2024 fire undertaken by Council during the period October 2022 to end of August 2024. Actions in both plans may be similar and overlap each other.

A copy of the Flood Recovery Plan is available for viewing on the Council's website: <https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/Emergencies/Flood-Recovery>

A copy of the Bayindeen Rocky Road Bushfire Recovery Plan is available on Council's website: <https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/Emergencies/Bayindeen-fire-recovery-information>

KEY OUTCOMES AND CELEBRATIONS TO 30 November 2024

- Disaster Relief Australia helping residents with clean-up.
- BlazeAid and Landmate helping with fencing.
- Forming a network with community service groups such as Rotary, Apex to coordinate direct assistance for residents.
- Successful advocacy to have local health services (Ballarat Community Health and Grampians Health) to provide psychosocial support.
- Partnering with Pyrenees Community House to support community events.
- Drop-in sessions held in Raglan, Amphitheatre and Beaufort after the fires. Drop-in session held in Avoca and Natte Yallock after the floods.
- \$3million (41%) of repair works have been completed to restore almost \$7+million worth of flood damage to Council's infrastructure.
- Partnering with Windermere Services to provide outreach and follow up of referrals for further assistance.
- Submission and presentation made to the Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee into the 2022 Flood Event Inquiry.
- Betterment funding has been announced to assist Council to build some infrastructure back better, so it is more resilient to flooding.
- Successful advocacy to extend the closing date of flood related grants.
- Successful advocacy for additional resources to support the flood recovery process including the employment of a Flood Recovery team.
- Free rubbish disposal service for affected residents.
- Support community groups/committees to apply for funding to help restore and rebuild flood affected community infrastructure.
- Development and distribution of a recovery newsletter.
- Establishment and staffing of Recovery Centres and providing outreach programs and services to outlying residents.
- Prompt establishment of internal Recovery Committee to enable an integrated and coordinated approach to the recovery process.



Photos (L to R): Saving of a joey, CFA trucks lined up in Beaufort, Disaster Relief Australia cleaning-up, Women in Business event

Photos courtesy of Pyrenees Advocate, Disaster Relief Australia and Preface Films

KEY CONSIDERATIONS MOVING FORWARD

- ⇒ Consecutive, concurrent and compounding emergency events in the Pyrenees.
- ⇒ Future events and adaptation to climate change.
- ⇒ Drought conditions emerging.
- ⇒ Returning agriculture to production.
- ⇒ Business viability.
- ⇒ Income support for primary producers and business owners, or other assistance while businesses recover.
- ⇒ Ongoing support for community groups and organisations.
- ⇒ Burnout of volunteers in the restoration process and ways to increase volunteerism.
- ⇒ Development of more complex mental health issues as time goes by.
- ⇒ Increased risk of family breakdown due to pressures involved in the rebuilding process.
- ⇒ Uncertainty created by government policy and the feeling of lack of control over determining one's own future.
- ⇒ Loss of population if people move away from the area and the resulting flow on affects to the viability of the shire, particularly small rural communities, should this occur.
- ⇒ Creation of economic opportunities, jobs and agricultural diversity.
- ⇒ Attracting tourism dollars to the area.
- ⇒ Maintaining the viability and sustainability of towns and small communities into the future.
- ⇒ Monitoring resource requirements over time and advocating for additional resources if needed.
- ⇒ Resident's limited understanding or complacency regarding the flood/fire risk in the Pyrenees.



Photos (L to R): community meeting, Mayor Cr Vance with the Governor General. The Hon. David Hurley and Mrs Linda Hurley, volunteer thankyou, BlazeAid volunteers.

Some photos courtesy of BlazeAid

FLOOD RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

KEY RECOVERY AREA 1 – RECOVERY COORDINATION AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
1	Implement organisational structure for 'Normal' and 'Recovery' function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divide the Council structure into 'Normal Business' and 'Recovery Team' 	January 2023				Organisational structure is complete and in place. The structure is available in the Flood Recovery Plan.
2	Activate and support the Pyrenees Flood Recovery Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Flood Recovery Team Identify location for the Team Promote and support services available through the Team Monitor ongoing needs 	January 2023				The Flood Recovery Team was established in January 2023 to oversee the longer-term. The Team has been promoted widely through word of mouth, local media, noticeboard, Council's website and through the Flood Recovery Newsletter. Needs of the Team are monitored on an ongoing basis.
3	Resource a recovery team from existing and new staff, agencies and consultants and back fill 'normal business' structures as required. Seek government support for additional resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ a Flood Recovery Coordinator to lead the recovery Employ a Community Recovery Officer Employ a Flood Recovery Admin Support Officer Contract a consultant to coordinate the reinstatement of infrastructure 	December 2022				A Community Recovery Officer, Flood Recovery Coordinator, Admin Officer and Infrastructure Officer have been employed.
4	Activate and support the Municipal Flood Recovery Coordination Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Municipal Emergency Management Plan for committee structure. Invite potential members to meetings. Review Terms of Reference. Identify and discuss resource and recovery issues. Provide feedback to Council and Government agencies. 	February 2023				Council established an internal Flood Recovery Committee soon after the first flood event in October with Council staff and other recovery organisations such as Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) and Windermere Services. This Committee has now transitioned to recovery and resilience working group. Contact with identified community representatives is continuing to plan and deliver recovery and resilience initiatives that best suits each community.
5	Develop a Pyrenees Shire Flood Recovery Plan focusing on the areas of coordination, social,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document incident background and recovery activities to date. 	February 2023				Council's Flood Recovery Plan was adopted by Council Tuesday 21 February 2023. It is a living document which can be amended to suit the needs to the

Pyrenees Shire Council Recovery Plans

Summary of Review December 2024

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
	built, economy, agriculture and natural environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide status reports every six months to inform the community and Council. • Incorporate feedback from sub-committees into the action plan, if required. 					community. This plan is specific to the Oct/Nov 2022 flood events and doesn't replace Council's Flood Plan.
6	Identify and prioritise areas in Pyrenees Shire requiring assistance through obtaining and collating data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Council's GIS system to map impacted areas. • Use Crisisworks to collate the needs of the community for recovery coordination. • Seek data from service providers to assist in identifying recovery needs of the community. 	November 2022 and ongoing				Crisisworks (database) is used to manage the needs of individual community members through manual data capture. The Recovery Team is working with Windermere Services to case manage support for residents using the Crisisworks system. Council's GIS system is used to map asset and infrastructure repairs. A diagram of the extent of damage is available in the Flood Recovery Plan.
7	Provide empathetic and relevant recovery information to the Pyrenees community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a communications strategy. • Collate contact information for accessing services. • Develop a Pyrenees Flood Recovery Newsletter and circulate widely on an as needs basis. • Develop a Flood Recovery page on Council's website. • Attend community meetings to provide updates. • Report to Council. 	November 2022 and ongoing				Communication has been ongoing since the start of the flood events with regular updates provided to the community on information such as access to support and road closures. Regular updates are included in the weekly noticeboard which appears in the Pyrenees Advocate. A recovery newsletter has been developed which includes contact information for accessing support services, events, news stories etc., and is distributed quarterly by email and in hard copy (resource centres, stores). A flood recovery page has been developed on Council's website and is updated regularly.
8	Establish funding sources for various stages for flood/storm recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding arrangements available for community and Council. • Seek interim payments for asset repair covered under Council's insurance policy. 	Ongoing				Funding has been secured through various government departments for immediate and ongoing flood recovery needs such as staff, infrastructure repairs, and recovery/resilience initiatives. Some community facilities are covered under Council's insurance policy and work has been completed on Avoca Recreation Reserve, Avoca Men's Shed and Beaufort Scout/Guide Hall. There are some works to complete on the Amphitheatre Recreation Reserve building. An

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No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
							alternative location for the Beaufort Men's Shed is being worked through.
9	Develop financial structure based on recovery / response and funding sources	Create new program for the events, with a list of cost centres for specific projects and funding sources	November 2022				The flood event has been registered with the State Government and cost centres established for funding sources. This will be monitored for the length of the recovery process.
10	Implement physiological support service for staff involved and/or affected by the emergency.	Implement support services for teams and individuals.	November 2022 and ongoing				Council's Employee Assistance Program is available to support staff. Check in with staff involved and/or affected by the emergency occurs on a regular basis. David Younger, a clinical psychologist and natural disaster consultant, has held sessions for Council staff.
11	Carry out debriefs allowing staff to reflect, celebrate and inform future events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate engaging a consultant to facilitate the debrief process. Invite all staff to provide input into the debrief, should they choose to. Ensure all staff have access to debrief documents. 	June 2025				Some debriefs have been held with staff involved in the relief and recovery. Further debriefs will be held once recovery has officially closed allowing staff to reflect on the events and plan for future events.
12	Implement an internal communication process with staff (needs to be regular and detailed to address staff morale, customer service and consistent messaging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulating the flood/storm recovery newsletter Report to Council on a quarterly basis. 	October 2022 and ongoing				Council's Recovery Newsletter is distributed to the community on a quarterly basis. This newsletter now includes fire recovery. Flood status reports are presented to Council on a quarterly basis.

KEY RECOVERY AREA 2 – PEOPLE / SOCIAL / COMMUNITY WELLBEING

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
13	Ensure community flood recovery is community-led with support from Council and agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with affected communities to identify their medium and long term needs. Identify and engage with existing community groups. Work with existing community groups to build Resilience to Emergency events. Improve communication by ensuring timely, accurate and localised information sharing Identify emerging social issues for incorporating into medium and long term recovery plans. Establish a process for reporting on insights from community activities, meetings or events. Continually review and assess planned recovery activities and adjust as required. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				<p>Discussions continue with community groups, Council staff, neighbouring Councils and other organisations working in the recovery/resilience space to plan and deliver recovery/resilience initiatives.</p> <p>An internal recovery/resilience working group is meeting regularly to discuss and plan recovery actions.</p> <p>The first Recovery/Resilience Network meeting was held in October 2024 with the next one in December. This network consists of recovery agencies and community members and the aim is to focus on longer-term recovery and resilience initiatives.</p>
14	Material Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure residents have access to material needs such as food, clothing, furniture 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				There haven't been any request for material items for quite some time and should residents need any items they are referred to the food bank or salvation army.
15	Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop innovative approaches to supporting mental health across the municipality. Provide counselling services to residents as required. Provide a case support service to households/individuals. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Partners in Wellbeing are providing mental health support and are available at the Beaufort Recovery Centre on Wednesdays. Referrals to organisations like Headspace can be arranged through the Recovery Team.
16	Clean-up Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively promote clean-up services available to flood affected residents. 	Life of the recovery				There haven't been any requests for flood clean-up services for quite some time. Going forward, if

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No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate groups wishing to assist with local clean-up. 	plan and ongoing				residents require assistance, they can still make contact with the Recovery Team. Skip bins were provided for residents and community groups for clean-up and house repairs. A service group network has been established to help residents with jobs such as clean-up and gardening.
17	Donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Recovery Officer to match donators with specific people in need in consultation with agencies and service organisations. Consider organisations such as GIVIT to coordinate donations. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				There haven't been any requests for donations related to the floods for quite some time. Going forward, if residents require assistance, they can still make contact with the Recovery Team
18	Outreach/Social Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an outreach program to meet the needs of residents. Create an environment where people feel comfortable asking for help. Encourage kitchen table visits by counsellors and case support workers. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Outreach services by Council's Community Recovery Officer continues on an as needs basis. The Emergency Recovery Hotline staff have also been conducting outreach for those flood affected.
19	Referrals for Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify agencies / organisations who provide support and compile contact details in a fact sheet. Engage with those impacted to determine the need and offer referral to services. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Referrals for further assistance to other agencies are being managed by Council's Recovery Team and the Recovery Hotline staff.
20	Housing/Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor housing needs Refer for building inspections 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				DFFH is the lead agency for housing and is available to provide ongoing support. All housing needs for the floods have been complete.
21	Facilitate community-led activities, events, programs and projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with affected communities to identify their medium and long term aspirations and issues. Identify community-based, activities, events and projects 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				<p>Council staff are engaging with community representatives and organisations to support community-led activities and events.</p> <p>Council's Community Development Team are also working on embedding longer term resilience</p>

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No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place a program of community events and programs. Seek funding opportunities for medium to longer term activities and events. 					<p>initiatives as business as usual.</p> <p>Council, with funding through the Commonwealth and State Governments, launched the Community Resilient Grant Program to support community-led initiatives. Applications have closed and 13 applications were successful totalling \$24,358.</p>

KEY RECOVERY AREA 3: INFRASTRUCTURE / BUILT ENVIRONMENT

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update									
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started										
23	Determine the tasks required to reinstate the infrastructure assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish an internal Council infrastructure working group to repair Council owned infrastructure.Invite members of the community or other agencies on an as needs basis.The working group to coordinate works in conjunction with Council’s capital works program.	February 2023				A working group has been developed to coordinate repair to Council owned infrastructure. The group meet to discuss and plan flood recovery works. All tasks have been identified.									
24	Restore roads and bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct road/bridge/culvert inspections and develop a priority matrix.Undertake emergency repairs.Establish an action plan for road and bridge rehabilitation.Advocate for funding to rehabilitate road network and reconstruct damaged bridges.Provide up to date information to the community.Provide feedback to the Flood Recovery Committee.	June 2025				<p>Repairs are set to re-commence on the flood damaged infrastructure. Claims for emergency and immediate are being assessed under Commonwealth Government’s Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and planning is underway for completing the remaining work. Tenders for packages of work are starting to be advertised. Below is some data about the flood related claims.</p> <table><tr><td>Flood</td><td>No. of Claims</td><td>Cost</td></tr><tr><td>Relief/Recovery, Emergency & Immediate Reconstruction</td><td>20</td><td>\$4,172,622</td></tr><tr><td>Certified Estimates</td><td>19</td><td>\$7,802,274</td></tr></table>	Flood	No. of Claims	Cost	Relief/Recovery, Emergency & Immediate Reconstruction	20	\$4,172,622	Certified Estimates	19	\$7,802,274
Flood	No. of Claims	Cost														
Relief/Recovery, Emergency & Immediate Reconstruction	20	\$4,172,622														
Certified Estimates	19	\$7,802,274														
25	Restore community infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assess damage to community infrastructure such as public halls, toilets, playgrounds and reserves and recommend works required.Identify responsible authority for repairs and provide support to re-establish the facilities.	December 2023				The process to restore community infrastructure has been complete.									
26	Restore fencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Quantify fencing losses and identify opportunities for help to restore fences.	Ongoing				There haven’t been any requests for flood damaged fencing for quite some time. Going forward, if residents require assistance, they can still make contact with the Recovery Team and LandMate will be able to assist.									

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KEY RECOVERY AREA 4: ECONOMIC / BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
27	Provide small business support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit local businesses to ensure support is provided. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Council's Economic Development & Tourism staff visited local businesses after the floods to provide support such as applying for recovery grants. The State Government provided funding under the Small Business Immediate Flood Relief Program and quite a number of businesses and sporting groups received funding.
28	Attract visitors to the municipality to stimulate the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a marketing campaign to bring visitors to the municipality. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				<p>Tourism promotional videos have been produced in partnership with Business for Beaufort to attract visitors to the region. Pyrenees is part of newly formed Tourism MidWest Victoria, and work has begun to promote visitors to the region via engagement in the new Destination Management Plan and local action plans.</p> <p>Council is promoting the Pyrenees through three seasonal tourism campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play in the Pyrenees throughout summer and autumn Road to Red during winter Unplug and unwind during spring
29	Implement appropriate education/skill training programs which assist business owners to make critical decisions and develop ongoing sustainability plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue programs which provide assistance to businesses. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				<p>The Eco Dev team continue to work with industry groups B4B, Advance Avoca and Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers in their efforts to work collaboratively with others and promote their towns to visitors and potential new residents. Small Business Victoria, Agriculture Victoria and other agencies are identified by ED&T to deliver workshops, training programs and other support to get businesses back on track.</p> <p>The ED&T team facilitates collection of economic data to understand the extent of the impacts on local businesses and use this to lobby relevant organisations and higher levels of government for support.</p> <p>Use the ED&T monthly Industry newsletter, council</p>

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No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
							media channels and direct contact to inform businesses of any grants or other support that is available to them.
30	Ensure that major events continue to be held in the Pyrenees municipality and are well supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community groups to get events back up and running. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Ongoing work with major event organisers includes upgrades proposed at the Lake Goldsmith Steam Rally site (new wastewater system and a proposed resource centre), general support with marketing, grant information, and general advice to events organisations continues.

KEY RECOVERY AREA 5: AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
31	Financial and mental health support is provided for primary producers to recover from the floods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals are made to health services. Coordinate financial counselling services for primary producers. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Council's Community Recovery Officer and the Economic Development Team continue to reach out to primary producers to provide support. Referrals to the Rural Financial Counselling Service is managed by Council and the Recovery Hotline Team.
32	Implement appropriate education/skill training programs which assist farmers to make critical decisions and develop ongoing sustainability plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities under the Resilient Farmer Project. Pursue programs which provide assistance to farming individuals, couples or families 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Both the National Centre for Farmer Health and Agriculture Victoria offer a range of programs to help primary producers with not only the recovery process but with help running a farming business. Information on both organisations is regularly promoted in the Recovery Newsletter and on Council's website.
33	Delivery of appropriate fodder for flood affected farmers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor fodder needs. A process is put into place for the coordination of fodder donations and delivery, if required. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Referrals for fodder are through Need for Feed and Hay Runners. There haven't been any further requests for fodder following the floods however with ongoing dry spells in the north of the municipality, there are requests for stock feed.

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KEY RECOVERY AREA 6: NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

No.	Action	Tasks	Timeframe	Progress			Status Update
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
34	Enable rehabilitation of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate options for programs and funding to meet land rehabilitation needs in the future such as re-vegetation projects and rehabilitation of waterways. 	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Catchment Management Authorities (CMAs) that manage land and water resources in the Pyrenees Shire have been working on repairing riparian fencing, debris removal, erosion control and damage to riverbanks following the floods. Funding is available through CMAs for this type of work on private property.
35	Minimise risk of mosquito borne diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce environments conducive to mosquito breeding Implement control strategies where appropriate. 	Ongoing				Advice was provided to residents to prevent mosquitos breeding by the Environmental Health Officer, has reverted to business as usual. Information is available from Council's EHO.
36	Ensure residents have access to free disposal of flood affected waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate a flood waste disposal service which meets the needs of the community. 	October 2022 and ongoing				There haven't been any requests for disposal of flood affected waste for quite some time. Going forward, if residents require assistance, they can still make contact with the Recovery Team.
37	Reduce environmental and public health risks associated with flood affected septic tank systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice to residents to minimise risks and to reinstate septic tanks. Inspect septic tanks at flood affected community facilities and make recommendations for reinstatement. Inspect flood affected domestic septic tank units, where required. 	October 2022 and ongoing				Proactive information and advice to affected residents was provided by Council's Environmental Health Officers (EHOs). This has reverted to Council's business as usual. Information is available from Council's EHO.

FIRE RECOVERY ACTION PLAN - SUMMARY

General and administration							
Goal: To maximise ability of Council to lead recovery activities.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Recovery Committee	Council Disaster Recovery Committee.	Recovery Team	Feb 24				The Flood Recovery Team is now identified as the Disaster Recovery Team which works on recovery for both the floods and fire.
	Finalise Recovery Action Plan.	MEMO	Apr 24				Plan completed and was adopted at the April 2024 Council meeting
	Implement recovery reporting regime	MEMO / Admin	May 24				Reporting to Council and ELT is being done each quarter
	Consult on whether a community-led recovery committee is required / desired.	Recovery Team	Jun 25				A Recovery/Resilience Network has been established and meeting quarterly. This network focusses on longer-term recovery and includes recovery agencies and community members
Financial management	DRFA - Claims management advance request	MEMO	Mar 24				A request was granted for \$1M. A further request was submitted.
	DRFA - Maximise Claims	Recovery Team	Jun 25				The Recovery Team have submitted claims for fire related expenses. Claims are starting to be assessed for emergency works. There will be a certified estimate claim to be submitted for repairing guardrail.
	Identify other funding available	Recovery Team	Jun 25				No top-up funding announced as yet
Evaluation	Incident Debrief - Conduct an incident debrief as soon as possible to identify strengths and weaknesses with the incident response, relief, and preparation for recovery processes.	CMT	Mar 24				Debriefs were conducted in March 2024 with staff. There was an all agency debriefs held in May 2024.
	Recovery Evaluation	Recovery Team	Jun 25				Recovery actions are evaluated on an ongoing basis

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Communication and Information							
Goal: To ensure that impacted individuals continue to feel supported and heard.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Community information	Provide empathetic, relevant, and timely information to impacted community members and staff.	Comms	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Communications were sent out at the onset of the fire event advising community and staff of support available. There is a fire recovery page set up on Council's website. The existing flood recovery newsletter continues to be distributed and now includes fire recovery information. Communications are distributed through social media, via Crisisworks, posted and via email.
Staff communication	Establish ongoing meetings with CMT/ Recovery staff and ELT. Disseminate activities to broader organisation to widen involvement.	ELT / Comms	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				A recovery updated was email to all staff at the end of May. Another update will be sent out to staff before the end of the year.
Community awareness & education	Provide regular information bulletins (social media, email, hard copy) to the community and staff on assistance available and activities being undertaken to enable people to recover well.	Comms / Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				There is a fire recovery page set up on Council's website. The existing flood recovery newsletter continues to be distributed and now includes fire recovery information. Communications are distributed through social media, via Crisisworks, posted and via email.

Social Environment							
Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Completed	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Personal support to individuals	Develop a full list of impacted individuals from post impact assessment reports, Crisisworks data, and emergency payment data.	SIA Team	Apr 24				Secondary Impact Assessments were undertaken, and data captured in Crisisworks for the Recovery Team to provide the support required.

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Social Environment Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Completed	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
(residents and property owners)	Develop a comprehensive list of recovery support services available for individuals.	Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				A list of support services is available on Council's website and in the recovery newsletter. It is updated on an as needs basis.
	Ensure affected residents have access to resources to assist with the recovery process. Arrange for referrals to connect into available services where not already provided.	Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Council's Community Recovery Officer is providing outreach services to affected residents along with other Council staff, Ballarat Community Health, Partners in Wellbeing, and any other recovery support agencies. GIVIT has been engaged to link residents needs with donors. The Recovery Centre is open on Wednesdays at the Beaufort Resource Centre and Library. Other recovery agencies are available on these days.
	Develop a referral concierge service for impacted individuals who have not yet made contact but need support later on.	Recovery Team	Apr 24				Council's Recovery Team provide referral services when individuals need the service.
Personal support to individuals (staff)	Develop a full list of impacted staff from post impact assessment reports, Crisisworks data, and emergency payment data.	Admin	Apr 24				A list of impacted staff has been produced.
	Provide similar support and access to services as detailed for residents above.	Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Council staff who have been impacted are provided the same level of recovery support.
	Facilitate follow-up psychological support for impacted staff / Councillors.	People & Culture Dept	Life of the recovery				David Younger, a clinical psychologist spoke to staff about the impacts of disasters in March 2024 and again in August. Council also has the Employee Assistance Program available

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Social Environment Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Completed	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
			plan and ongoing				for staff. Organisations such as Partners in Wellbeing and community health services are available for support.
Social connections	Facilitate community led recovery through supporting activities, events, information, and access to resources to build connections.	Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				A number of community-led events have been held such as Women in Business and Chat to a Mate. More activities and events will be held when they are identified on community need.
	Facilitate separate functions and connections with impacted staff. Maintain contact and follow-up.	Recovery Team	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				Support for staff is ongoing.
Mental health	Organise long term case management with partner organisations to aid in mental health of residents, particularly those most vulnerable and who have been impacted by other recent natural disasters.	PSC / ERV	Jun 24				Case management partnerships with various organisations such as Partners in Wellbeing, Ballarat Community Health and Grampians Community Health, have been established.
	Organise long term case management with partner organisations to aid in mental health of primary producers that have experienced multiple natural disaster impacts over a relatively short time frame.	EcoDev / ERV	Jun 24				Case management partnerships with various organisations such as National Centre for Farmer Health, Partners in Wellbeing, Ballarat Community Health and Grampians Community Health, have been established.
	Ensure appropriate programs are in place to support the mental health and wellbeing of council staff, agencies and partners – those impacted as well as those having worked through the event.	People & Culture Dept	Life of the recovery plan and ongoing				David Younger, a clinical psychologist spoke to staff about the impacts of disasters in March 2024 and August 2024. Council also has the Employee Assistance Program available for staff. Organisations such as Partners in Wellbeing and community health services are available for support.
Promote information sharing	Support engagement and community participation in recovery activities.	Recovery Team					A Disaster Recovery/Resilience Network has been established. The network consists of recovery agencies and community members and the focus is to ensure the community recovers well.

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Social Environment Goal: To empower and support communities to restore and rebuild community functioning and resilience, and to support affected individuals to manage the personal, psychosocial, and financial impacts of the bushfire events and enhance their wellbeing whilst recovering.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Completed	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
	Facilitate story telling opportunities for impacted individuals (Community).	Recovery Team					Events and gatherings provide an opportunity for impacted communities to tell their stories. This will be raised at the next Disaster Recovery/Resilience Network meeting.
	Facilitate story telling opportunities for impacted staff and families.	Recovery Team					This is planned for the future.
	Schedule and promote regular community recovery update mechanisms.	Comms	Ongoing				Communications were sent out at the onset of the fire event advising community and staff of support available. There is a fire recovery page set up on Council's website. The existing flood recovery newsletter continues to be distributed and now includes fire recovery information. It is distributed quarterly.
	Improve communication by ensuring timely, accurate, and localised information sharing.	Recovery Team / Comms					Communications are distributed through social media, via Crisisworks, posted and via email. Other options for communication are being explored to ensure everyone is captured.
Emerging issues	Identify emerging social issues for incorporating into medium- and long-term recovery planning. Identify through engagement with affected communities.	All					Emerging issues are being captured as they arise. Work with ERV, Council's Community Development Team and any other relevant departments and organisations is continuing. Emerging social issues are discussed at the Disaster Recovery/Resilience Network meeting.
	Establish for reporting on insights from community activities, meetings, or events.	All					
	Continually review and assess planned recovery activities and adjust as required.	All					

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Built Environment – Infrastructure							
Goal: To repair and restore local infrastructure and other assets across the municipality that have been impacted by the bushfires – to reduce risks to safety and to build the resilience of our infrastructure.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progressing			Status
				Completed	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Insurable assets	Using the post impact assessment data, determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance entitlements on assets. Gain quotations for reinstatement of each asset. Identify contractors who would be able to undertake the work. 	Assets and Governance Departments	Apr				There were no Council insurable assets affected by fire.
Recovery Plan – Council assets	Prepare and implement an action plan which sets out the works required to reinstate Council or critical infrastructure lost or damaged. The action plan should list all agreed recovery tasks, who will be responsible for implementation, a proposed timeline and the resources required.	Asset Department	Apr 24				The fire in 2024 resulted in damage to infrastructure such as guardrail, guideposts, and signage. Repair work is identified, and claims are being submitted for cost reimbursement. Some infrastructure has been both flood and fire affected.
Residential / Private Infrastructure	Planning and Building – relating to rebuilding activities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building inspections Planning and Building permit and associated activities 	Planning & Development Department	Ongoing				A Bushfire Recovery Planning Program has been established to provide residents with information and advice on planning requirements for rebuilding.

Natural Environment / Roadside Vegetation Management							
Goal: To reduce risks to safety whilst balancing with conservation needs.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Hazardous Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete assessment of all trees along road reserves impacted by fire. Develop a project plan to manage dangerous trees. 	Asset Development Department	May 24				Arborist assessments are complete. Methodology development complete. Works are currently on hold.

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Natural Environment / Roadside Vegetation Management							
Goal: To reduce risks to safety whilst balancing with conservation needs.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of contractors to remove hazardous trees. Development of methodology and program for hazardous tree removal in conjunction with agencies and stakeholders. 						
Future impacts' management	Engage DEECA to develop a plan to manage regrowth.	Recovery Team					Monthly meetings are held with DEECA to manage regrowth.
	Identify, plan for, and manage future susceptibility to landslip and erosion; and ash in waterways.						Assessments are undertaken when issues are identified.
	Identify whether claims for future associated impacts, not directly attributable to the fire, are DRFA claimable.	Corporate & Community Services	Apr 24				Council is working with the Department of Transport and Planning about future claims.
Fragility of impacted habitats and biodiversity being further damaged by clean-up efforts	<p>Collaboratively develop and establish a rehabilitation program of roadsides (within funding constraints) with stakeholders, including Landcare.</p> <p>Monitor the immediate impacts and consequential impacts of clean up.</p>	Asset Development Department					Discussions have commenced with community and other stakeholders. A draft has been developed.
Additional impact from further storm, wind or significant rainfall activity	Continued assessment of trees and landscape particularly where impacts to the public, infrastructure and other assets may occur.	Asset Development Department					As needed
State Parks Recovery Plan	Monitor and participate where appropriate in the development and implementation of the plan to	Parks Vic / DEECA					Discussions have commenced with DEECA/PV and monthly meetings have been scheduled. A draft has been developed.

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Natural Environment / Roadside Vegetation Management							
Goal: To reduce risks to safety whilst balancing with conservation needs.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
	restore the natural and built assets within the State Forests lead by Parks Victoria and DEECA.						

Economic / Agricultural Environment – Primary Producers, Business and Tourism							
Goal: To support business continuity and rebuilding, and grow longer-term economic and community resilience.							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
Assessment	Assess the impact on businesses with AgVic and work with them to identify the exact extent of impact and their needs to restore full operations.	EcoDev & Tourism	Mar/Apr 24				Agriculture Victoria undertook an initial assessment of fire impacts on property.
Fencing	Communicate BlazeAid presence and availability for fencing support.	EcoDev & Tourism	Ongoing				Both BlazeAid and LandMate teams have been engaged to repair fencing following the fires with support from Disaster Relief Australia.
Fodder loss and replacement	Livestock primary producers will need to source alternative supplies at their cost.	External					The VFF coordinated feed for stock soon after the fires. VFF has finished up now but feed can be sourced from Need for Feed or Hay Runners. VFF ceased operations at the end of May and enquiries are being directed to Need for Feed and Aussie Hay Runners.
Economic Recovery Plan	Prepare an action plan to list all agreed recovery activities, who will be responsible for coordination, a proposed timetable, and what resources are required.	EcoDev & Tourism					Tourism recovery plan drafted. A submission by Tourism Midwest to the Victorian Government for support has been unsuccessful following recent budget cuts. AgVic are running a series of events including farm planning workshops, animal health and nutrition workshops.
Implementing the Plan	Secure the required resources to fund the various recovery tasks and implement in order of priority.	EcoDev & Tourism					Funding is required to support a recovery officer role to implement recovery initiatives.

Pyrenees Shire Council Recovery Plans

Summary of Review December 2024

Economic / Agricultural Environment – Primary Producers, Business and Tourism							
<i>Goal: To support business continuity and rebuilding, and grow longer-term economic and community resilience.</i>							
Theme	Strategies / Actions	Who	When	Progress			Status
				Complete	Started/ Ongoing	Not yet Started	
	Report regularly to the Bushfire Recovery Committee.						
Business support	Coordinate with relevant agencies to support business recovery.	EcoDev & Tourism					<p>The Eco Dev team continue to work with industry groups B4B, Advance Avoca and Pyrenees Grapegrowers and Winemakers in their efforts to work collaboratively with others and promote their towns to visitors and potential new residents. Small Business Victoria, Agriculture Victoria and other agencies are identified by ED&T to deliver workshops, training programs and other support to get businesses back on track.</p> <p>The ED&T team facilitates collection of economic data to understand the extent of the impacts on local businesses and use this to lobby relevant organisations and higher levels of government for support.</p> <p>Use the ED&T monthly Industry newsletter, council media channels and direct contact to inform businesses of any grants or other support that is available to them.</p>



Minutes

M014

Audit & Risk Committee Meeting

Wednesday 27 November 2024

3:00 pm
Council Chambers
Beaufort Council Offices
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort





MINUTES - Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 27 November 2024 - M014

Members: **Mr Rod Poxon (Chair)**
 Mr Brian Keane
 Mr Kelvin Tori
 Cr Tanya Kehoe
 Cr Rebecca Wardlaw

Officers: **Mr Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer**
 Mr Douglas Gowans – Director Assets and Development Services
 Ms Kathy Bramwell – Director Corporate and Community Services
 Mr Glenn Kallio – Manager Finance
 Mr Dean Miller – Manager Governance and Performance
 Ms Emma Poyser – Executive Assistant to the Directors

Guests: **Mr Brad Ead – AFS & Associates**

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**1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The Chair 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.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

3. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**Attachments:**

1. 2024.09.24 - M 013 - MINUTES - Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 24 September 2024 [4.1.1 - 31 pages]

Brian Keane / Kelvin Tori

That the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 24 September 2024, as tabled, be accepted as accurate and complete.

CARRIED

5. ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

MEETING DATE	ACTION	STATUS	
M008 May 2023	Review Instruments of Delegation and Governance Manuals for Community Asset Committees.	A working group led by Dean Miller (Manager Governance and Performance) has been established to review the Instruments of Delegation.	In progress Delayed
M009 September 2023	Consider inclusion of business continuity/disaster recovery in internal audit program.	Our plans need to be updated as part of a project between Dean Miller (Manager Governance & Performance) and Scott Wright (Manager Information Management), which ideally will be completed prior to the audit program	In progress Delayed



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		finalisation – will look at inclusion in 2025.	
M012 June 2024	Insurance renewal – segregate non-Council owned or managed assets from other Council owned assets and provide detail of the associated premium.	Associated premium accounts for around \$60,000 pa. Post-election (early 2025), Council direction will be sought on managing this cost.	In progress
M013 September 2024	Bendigo Bank confirmation request.		Complete

COMMENTS:

- Update provided on the progress of the Instruments of Delegation.
 - Preliminary work has commenced.
 - Large piece of work.
 - Anticipated completion, early 2025. Prior to the first Audit & Risk Committee Meeting.
- Confirmations from the Bendigo Bank are mostly complete, happy to mark as 'Complete'.
- Discussion around any existing policies that relate to Council banking and investments and the uniqueness of smaller regional Councils.
- An upcoming proposal to Council addresses both the use of local bank facilities and the possible investment opportunities utilising various banking institutions.

Column to be added to the Actions table to understand who is accountable for all actions.

(ACTION - EP)

Update on the banking and investment proposal to Council to be provided to the Audit & Risk Committee post this presentation. **(ACTION - GK)**



6. REPORTS

6.1. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Author: Kathy Bramwell, Director Corporate and Community Services

The tenure for independent committee member Mr Brian Keane ends at the end of November 2024. As this will be the last meeting for Mr Keane, the Council would like to extend its sincere thanks for his service on the Committee.

A recruitment process to appoint a successor was conducted in October and November and the successful candidate will be announced to the Committee at the meeting. They will commence as an independent member of the Committee at the first meeting in March 2025.

Attachments:

Nil

COMMENTS:

- Currently in the process of evaluating the applications received to date.

Brian Keane / Kelvin Tori

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes the update provided.
--

CARRIED



6.2. CEO REPORT

Author: Jim Nolan, Chief Executive Officer

Below are several matters for information / consideration by the A&RC.

Council elections

Elections in the Pyrenees were conducted by the VEC and concluded with the formal declaration of results on 8 November as follows:

Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mt Emu Ward
Cr Rebecca Wardlaw – Avoca Ward
Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward
Cr Megan Phelan – De Cameron Ward
Cr Simon Tol – Ercildoune Ward

At a Statutory Meeting of Council held in Lexton on 12 November, all Councillors took the Affirmation or Oath of Office and agreed to abide by the Model Code of Conduct.

The new Council elected Cr Tanya Kehoe as Mayor for the 2024/2025 term. Council resolved not to elect a Deputy Mayor.

The first Ordinary Council Meeting was held on 19 November. Among the first decisions of the new Council was the appointment of Cr Kehoe and Cr Wardlaw to the Audit and Risk Committee.

A mandatory Councillor training session with Mark Hayes of Maddocks lawyers was held for Councillors on 20 November. This new requirement was one of the provisions introduced in the Local Government Amendment (Governance and Integrity) Act 2024 which came into operation on 26 October 2024.

The Election (caretaker) Period placed limitations on council communications, marketing, community engagement, provision of information and on decisions. It's fair to say there was a degree of frustration during this period including for the following reasons:

- When council's reputation was under scrutiny, Council was unable to respond as this was seen as potentially influencing voting. This had a detrimental impact on Council's reputation and on staff moral.
- Several events and engagement activities were limited resulting in low attendance and visitation impacting on business and communities.
- A decision requiring the direction of Council was needed in response to a major windfarm development proposal advertised and closed during caretaker period. The CEO made a submission to the proposal objecting to the development on



environmental grounds which has subsequently endorsed by the newly elected Council.

- Several grant programs closed during the period, and applications were contingent on demonstrating Council endorsement. Nevertheless, a number of applications were made under delegation during this period.

Council Plan

With the election of a new Council which has seen three new councillors, and two councillors returned, it is likely there will be some new direction and vision ultimately expressed in the next Council Plan which is required to be in place by 31 October 2025. We will however work towards having this prepared and in place by June 2025 and aligned with the 2025/26 budget and Financial Plan.

The Local Government Act requires this to be prepared following a deliberative community engagement process which will be a focus of the first half of 2025.

The new Councillors have foreshadowed the need for change and this will require consideration of current service levels and policy within council's financial and other limitations.

Natural disasters

In respect of recovery activity relating to the 2022 flood, we're continuing to work within the DRFA guidelines and advocating for some flexibility in the provision of evidence to support claims. DoTP has increased its resourcing to process claims and there has been some improved progress in PSC claims being approved, however we are still not in a position to recommence the bulk of this next phase of flood repair works. Advocacy on this matter by PSC and the sector is ongoing.

In respect of the hazardous tree removal on fire affected roads, the new Council has been briefed on the matter and we are working towards a settlement between the parties. The VCAT Compulsory Conference that was scheduled for 26 November has been adjourned to 12 December to enable time for settlement prior to that time.

Housing

Following the Victorian government's housing statement and incentive grant programs, Council has been successful in securing \$3.4M towards the development of stage 1 of our Burke Street Beaufort land under the Worker Accommodation Fund. The project includes the construction of 10 homes and a co-contribution by Council of \$900,000.

A business case was prepared and submitted as part of the application. The homes are required to be made available for worker accommodation for key employers for a period of four years post construction, and then Council has discretion to utilise these or to sell the homes and retain the proceeds. A Project Control Group will be established for the project to ensure the benefits of the project are realised and the financial and other risks are managed.



It is intended that a housing strategy will be considered by the new council early in its term having regard to the above undertaking.

Jim Nolan
CEO

Attachments:

Nil

COMMENTS:Council Elections

- Councillor representation on the Audit & Risk Committee, welcome to both the Mayor Cr Tanya Kehoe and Cr Rebecca Wardlaw.
- Induction of the newly elected Councillors is currently underway.
- Both the Statutory Meeting and the first Council Meeting are complete.
- Councillors mandatory induction is partially complete.

Natural Disasters

- By December 2023, \$3m of flood recovery works were completed and claims were submitted for ongoing work.
- Since this time there has been a requirement to submit advance claim estimates, these have been submitted to the value of up to \$8m.
- The summary table to be presented to the Committee later in this meeting.
- Remaining works are to be completed by July 2026.
- All submitted claims have been assessed as eligible.
- Next stages include obtaining quotes from the list of approved contractors.
- Consideration of the impact on the community with some of these projects having a significant impact.
- The full recovery plan work funds are dependant on Commonwealth sign off.

Housing

- The Burke Street development of worker accommodation housing is for employer utilisation only for the first 5 years with the use at Council discretion after this time, options for use are for rental income to service the loans or general revenue to be used for future development opportunities, all to be determined by Council.

3.29pm - Kathy Bramwell left the meeting.

Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives the CEO's report.
--

CARRIED



6.3. COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Author: Kathy Bramwell, Director Corporate and Community Services

Fraud:

There have been no identified instances of fraud since the last meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee.

Public Interest Disclosures:

Council has not received a public interest disclosure since the last meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee.

Non-compliances:

Council has detected no compliance breaches since the last meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee.

CEO Credit Card expenditure:

In the reporting period, purchases were made by the Chief Executive Officer as follows:

- September 2024 - Nil expenditure
- October 2024 - \$145.02 (fuel and postage)

Attachments:

Nil

COMMENTS:

CEO Credit Card Expenditure

- Regardless of amount spent, it is a requirement of the auditors for this to be tabled at this meeting.

Brian Keane / Kelvin Tori

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes the information provided in the Compliance Update.
--

CARRIED



6.4. GOVERNANCE RISK & COMPLIANCE REPORT

Author: Dean Miller, Manager Governance and Performance

1. PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

There have been no known data breaches for the financial year to date.

2. SERVICE REVIEWS

Council continues to respond to changes in waste management as the State Government continues to refine the circular economy requirements. Of particular note for Pyrenees is how Food Organics and Green Organics are going to be collected and whether this requires a universal approach or be restricted to smaller township properties.

Council's current contracts for transfer stations and roadside collection are due for completion in mid- 2026. The planned service review needs to align with the contract review period and therefore it should be undertaken during the 2025/26 financial year.

The State Government's Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard is yet to be released in final form and will determine the level of service that local government authorities need to provide.

3. COMPLIANCE

Nothing of note to report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management Committee

A Risk Management Committee meeting was held on Thursday 19th September 2024. Important topics discussed at this meeting were:

- Embedding Risk Management in everyday business activities;
- Draft Psychosocial Safety Management Framework; and
- Draft Procurement Policy review.
-

The following procedures reviewed:

- *First Aid in the Workplace* – recommended for implementation by consensus.
- *Council Approved Suppliers* – deferred implementation pending further review.

Future Focus – 2025

Continuing on from 2024, monitoring and mitigating Councils risks is paramount now and into the near future as part of our risk management practices. As indicated in the Risk Registers, Councils highest risks for which the consequences are considered to be the most catastrophic are currently listed as:

Strategic Risk Register – Risk Level High

1. Financial Sustainability – changes to external funding models, cost shedding/transfer by state/federal government, variations in economic activity and growth are just some of the factors putting Council at risk financially;



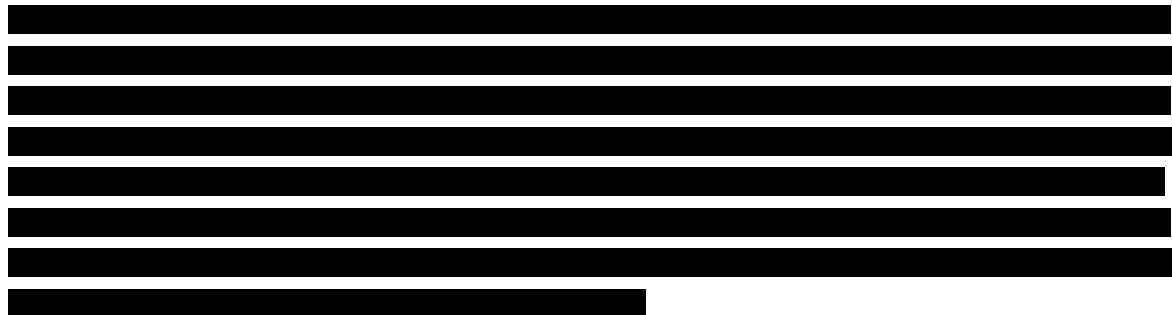
2. Increased number of major disaster events and/or weather extremes – these events can majorly impact continuation of services, budgets, community health and reputation if not managed carefully; and
3. Technological advances more rapidly than Council is able to adapt to – the threat from cyber-attacks which could result in loss of confidential information, disabled systems and disrupted services has increased exponentially since the pandemic.

Operational Risk Register – Risk Level High

1. Incidents that threaten the health, safety and wellbeing of staff;
 - Council fails to respond appropriately and/or provide suitable assistance to employees exposed to short or long term psychologically harmful events or environments;
 - Assault of a Council employee by a member of the public whilst conducting operations; and
 - Inappropriate response to an emergency situation at a Council facility.
2. Incident occurs that threatens the health, safety and/or welfare of the public.

Inappropriate/ineffective response to an external emergency/situation or natural disaster by Council.

There are controls in place for all of our risks, and monitoring them for effectiveness is an ongoing process as conditions change and our risk environment evolves.

5. INSURANCE

Council has lodged two new insurance claims for the first quarter of 2024-25. One was the result of member of the public's tractor falling off a trailer and crashing into the Beeripmo Centre. The other was caused by a third party side-swiping the Mayor's car.

6. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Council's Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee will meet for the final time in 2024 on the 12th December. A new Terms of Reference for the committee was approved by the Executive Leadership Team and circulated to all members of the Committee.



Injuries/Claims

In the September quarter, there were 6 reports of minor injuries to employees, of which three became Workcover claims. Lost time has been minimised, with the three claimants remaining at work on modified duties whilst they recover and receive medical treatment.

One psychosocial claim was submitted to Workcover during the quarter, however the claim was rejected by Council's agent.

Training

No further training is scheduled for 2024.

Looking to 2025 – Current Topical Issues in Workplace Health and Safety

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Our immediate focus will be to proactively:

- Protect employees from bullying, harassment and discrimination;
- Ensure staff and management have the right training and support to increase their capacity, capability, and awareness of potential risks;
- Be open to talking about mental health in the workplace at all levels;
- Continue to offer and encourage a healthy work/life balance;
- Make sure our employees know where to go for help;
- Look after ourselves - get help when we need it as well;
- Assess risks and collect data (we can only put controls in place once we know the severity of the risks);
- Keep driving mental health and wellbeing initiatives, and
- Continue improving mental health literacy in the organisation.

7. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The *State Emergency Management Plan* has been amended to transfer relief and recovery responsibilities from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV). This will see Council's Municipal Recovery Manager work directly with officers from ERV in relation to all relief and recovery activities. Financial assistance responsibilities remain with DFFH.



The State is also considering transferring responsibility for the management of the Vulnerable Person's Register (VPR) from DFFH to local government. If implemented, this will place further strain on Council's resources. The VPR is essentially a database containing the details of people who require agency assistance during an emergency, particularly when evacuations or relocations are requested in a given area. The register is shared with councils and key agencies. Now that Council no longer provides home and community care services, there are real concerns as to whether we have the capability and knowledge that is required to maintain the VPR. The next Pyrenees Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee will meet on the 28th November to discuss this and other local matters.

A new emergency management online induction training module will be rolled out to all staff to provide a basic introduction to emergency management and the various roles and responsibilities of councils during and after an emergency.

8. COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT

This is the first report that provides comparative information about the number and type of complaints received by Council. Rather than focus on just the total number of complaints as we have done in the past, comparative data over time may allow management to analyse patterns that could indicate systemic shortcomings in Council's systems.

In 2023-24, 42 complaints were received, of which only 13 (31%) were deemed justified. Of the 13 justified complaints, 31% related to animal control. Of the 24 that were not justified, 5 related to animal control and 5 related to amenity issues. The main reason for the large percentage of unjustified complaints appears to be a lack of knowledge of local government processes. There is also a small number of individuals who have historically been disgruntled with Council especially people who have been issued with animal-related infringement notices.

In the first quarter of 2024-25, 16 complaints were received, which is slightly higher on an annualised basis than for last year. Half of the complaints were justified and half were not.

Total Complaints

Type	2023-24 YEAR		2024-25 QTR 1	
	No.	%	No.	%
Justified	13	31.0%	8	50.0%
Not justified	24	57.1%	8	50.0%
Can't say	5	11.9%	-	-
Total	42		16	

Justified Complaints

Type	2023-24 YEAR		2024-25 QTR 1	
Amenity & Environment	-	-	1	12.5%
Animals	4	30.7%	-	-
Caravan Parks	1	7.7%	-	-
Community Bus	2	15.4%	2	25.0%
Personal Behaviour	1	7.7%	-	-
Public Facilities	-	-	1	12.5%
Rates*	2	15.4%	1	12.0%
Roads and Bridges	1	7.7%	2	25.0%
Swimming Pools	1	7.7%	-	-
Other	1	7.7%	1	12.0%
Total	13		8	

*Note: one of the rates complaints in 2023-24 comprised at least 9 individuals as a result of the wrong Rates Reminder Notice being sent to hundreds of ratepayers. The outcome was a written apology sent to all ratepayers involved, and an improvement in processes to avoid a repeat in the future.

Attachments:

Nil

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

COMMENTS:

Complaints Management

- After analysis of the data, a lack of understanding of Council processes attribute to many of these. There is opportunity to inform the community on local laws and other departments of Council via local newsletters, direct correspondence, fire hazard reminders, website and Communications team recommendations to inform the community.
- A learning for Council's continuous improvement.
- Some explanation provided of a 'Justified' complaint and further complaint examples shared to clarify complaint definitions.

Insurance

- [REDACTED]

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- Workcover claims are higher than usual although not all claims were accepted and the report to be presented at the next Audit & Risk Committee meeting will address this.
- Again, learning's for Council are the critical element of these incidents.

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- The GBAC (Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils) collaboration has raised the increase in Workcover claims is of a big concern at the moment, the rate of increases in Workcover costs is on average of 44%. Pyrenees Shire Council's increase was below average at 25%.
- There is currently work being done to create a psychosocial framework to improvement management and prevention.
- Psychological safety in the workplace is a big topic across all employers nationwide and was the main topic for the recent All Staff Day in 2024.

Service Reviews

- One element is the State Government policy change, which is being viewed as a guideline.
- This service review is further information around expectations of universal service to be implemented for food & green waste.
- Draft is currently out for comment with final feedback not yet seen.
- Any increase in rates would have impacts on the community with the calculated increase of 13%, this could become a large increase for some community members.
- Current advocacy by FinPro on the impact on individual councils.
- service standards risk of introducing additional costs to rate payers with no FOGO processing facility at this stage.
- risk of change to rubbish collection to fortnight rather than weekly which is not generally well received by the community.
- There is a timeframe for the Minister to make call on this with expected implementation from 25/26 FY.
- Budget preparation alternatives are required for inclusion or not of this change.
- Further information to be provided as this time approaches.

Council's Complaints Handling Policy to be shared after the meeting **(ACTION - DM)**

Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee note the report.

CARRIED



6.5. SEPTEMBER 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

Author: Glenn Kallio, Manager Finance

This report provides Committee Members with information relating to Council's financial position as at 30 September 2024.

Council's financial position – September 2024

This financial report provides the financial position of Council for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024,

The financial issues to date are:

1. Council is predicted to record an improved operating result due to additional income that will be recorded as discussed in the next two points.
- 2.
3. Additional income recorded in the forecasts due to programs being carried over from the 2023/24 year.
- 4.
5. Additional funds have been allocated to the Roads to Recovery program which had not been budgeted for due to an increase in Council's four-year allocation.
- 6.
7. 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.
- 8.
9. Cashflow and working capital remain strong year to date.
- 10.
11. Capital works program is currently ahead of schedule.

Attachments:

1. Finance Report Sept 2024 [6.5.1 - 20 pages]

(Glenn Kallio) Further addition to the report;

If the Shire experienced another emergency event there would be significant long term impacts on programmed works as Council are currently carrying costs due to the recent emergency events and the unaddressed claims to date. Concern over the inability to chase up outstanding rates.

COMMENTS:

- Cashflow delays and potential emergency events impacting on budgets.
- Some recent movement on claims assessment.
- The delays in claim assessment and the financial impacts effect our people, the community and the organisational culture.
- Advocacy to State around the impacts or potential impacts of any future emergency events is a sound recommendation.



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Brian Keane / {SECONDER}

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes the information provided in this report.

CARRIED



6.6. INTERNAL AUDIT

Author: Brad Ead / Kate Scarce – Internal Auditor, AFS & Associates

The Council's Internal Audit Provider will lead a discussion on internal audit and related matters of interest including:

- Internal Audit program progress update
- Recent reports and publications of interest to councils

Attachments:

1. Status Update 27.11.24 [6.6.1 - 6 pages]
2. Industry Update 27.11.24 [6.6.2 - 4 pages]

COMMENTS:

- Working capital in a disaster environment comments are viable.
- Cyber security remains the number one risk with the emerging risk of climate change and climate impacts, severe weather events etc.
- The final emerging risk is AI (Artificial Intelligence), watch this space.
- State Government approved Copilot (software) use and are not accepting ChatGPT due to privacy concerns and the learning ability of this software.
- Discussion around reviewing how AI is being used and setting policies around this.

Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes the information provided.

CARRIED



6.7. PROCUREMENT POLICY

Author: Kathy Bramwell, Director Corporate and Community Services

A major review has been conducted of the Council's Procurement Policy, with improvements based on the *MAV Best Practice Procurement Guidelines for Local Government 2024*. Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to review the policy at least once during each 4-year term of the Council. The policy was last reviewed in April 2022.

A draft of the policy was provided to members of the Audit & Risk Committee at its September 2024 meeting, for discussion and feedback.

The final draft version of the Procurement Policy has been completed and is provided to committee members for final feedback. It is intended to take this policy to the Council for formal adoption in December 2024.

Details of key changes made were provided to the Committee in September. Subsequent feedback led to a reduction in duplication within the policy and additional planned support documents to be developed. Although the Committee supported an increase in local content weighting, management feedback indicated that this could lead to issues where local content was not easily quantified or verified and it was decided not to change the existing weighting from 10%.

The documents that are being reviewed or developed to support the Procurement Policy and the wider Procurement and Contract Management Framework include:

- Procurement via Tender Procedure [in place and under review]
- Procurement via Purchase Order Procedure [in place and under review]
- Use of Corporate Purchasing Cards Procedure [in place]
- Pre-approved Supplier Panels Procedure [in place and under review]
- Guidelines – The Procurement Cycle [under development]
- Guidelines – Collaboration in Procurement [under development]
- Guidelines – Probity in Procurement [under development]
- Contract Management Procedure [under development]

Development of these is well progressed.

Attachments:

1. V5 0 Procurement Policy 2024 DRAFT [6.7.1 - 30 pages]

COMMENTS:

- Very thorough Policy that has covered all expectations.

Brian Keane / Kelvin Tori

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Note the final revision of the Procurement Policy 2024,



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- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Provide further feedback if warranted, and3. Recommend to the Council that the Procurement Policy 2024 be adopted. |
|--|

CARRIED



6.8. EMERGENCY RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

Author: Jane Bowker, Recovery Coordinator

Since the last report presented to the September meeting, more residents / landowners have sought help. This was to be expected as residents are tired, and the up-and-coming fire season is causing some anxiety.

Council's Recovery Team continues to provide support to residents, farmers and businesses for both the Oct/Nov 2022 floods and the 2024 fire. This support is provided in partnership with other recovery agencies such as Emergency Recovery Victoria, Ballarat Community Health, Red Cross, and local service groups. Support for wellbeing, insurance matters, legal matters, rebuilding, fencing, financial, fodder etc., has been provided.

Preparation for the 2024/25 fire season is well underway with household preparedness sessions being held. Council also received funding under the Safer Together Program which focuses on community bushfire resilience. This project is about to commence and will be conducted throughout 2025/2026.

Following on from the last report, the removal of hazardous roadside trees following the February 2024 fire is still an area of focus for officers and community/resident concern. The legal challenge through VCAT, instigated by a couple of residents, is continues and it has been necessary for Council to engage legal support, and negotiations are underway in an attempt to reach an agreement on the remaining works.

Progress on Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) claim assessment for recovery activities by the State Government is progressing well now. Council staff are working closely with the assessors to maximise Council's reimbursement for emergency-related expenses.

- Flood - 39 claims submitted to the value of \$11,974,896
- Fire – 7 claims submitted to the value of \$2,381,259

Council has received just over \$4m in advances for \$12m worth of flood-related expenses, \$1m for \$2.9m worth of 2024 fire-related expenses, and \$100K for expenses related to the 2023 storm event. Expenses include infrastructure repairs, hazardous tree removal, recovery staff, recovery activities, and repairs claimable under insurance, through several funding streams.

Financial reporting for recovery activities are complex due to the many funding streams involved. For example, some costs ineligible for reimbursement through the DRFA scheme, can be claimed under the State Government Council Support Fund; and some expenses can be covered by the Community Recovery Officer funding and the Recovery Hub funding. Council must contribute the first \$35,000 of reimbursements under the DRFA scheme, but can claim this back from Local Government Victoria.

In relation to DRFA, not all claim elements will be approved for payment and Council is expected to share some of the costs. At this stage we do not know what the final approved amount will be until the State has completed the assessments related to these emergencies. There will likely be ineligible activities such as costs associated with legal advice for the hazardous tree works.



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Council will be submitting a request for a further funding advancement against the certified estimate packages. Currently, there are 20 works packages, totaling \$8.6m worth of work to do, under the certified estimate packages for both the flood and fire.

Below is a snapshot (as at 30/09/2024) of the entire funding summary.

	ACTUAL INCOME	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL OUT-OF- POCKET	TOTAL ESTIMATE	CLAIMS APPROVED	CLAIMS INELIGIBLE	AWAITING ASSESSMENT	NOT YET CLAIMED
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Flood October 2022	4,043,421	5,608,100	(1,564,679)	12,298,262	1,184,500	525,389	10,366,883	221,490
Bayindeen Fire 2024	1,000,000	1,881,252	(881,252)	2,989,452	67,102	12,334	2,055,917	854,099
Storm 2023	100,000	30,029	69,971	30,029				
TOTAL	5,143,421	7,519,381	(2,375,960)	15,317,743	1,251,602	537,723	12,422,800	1,075,589

Notes:

- There will not be DRFA claims against the storm 2023 as this funding is through the Council Support Fund and not the DRFA.
- The Council Support Fund has not been announced for the 2024 fire. We are eagerly waiting for an announcement.
- There are costs that Council will have to absorb, such as DRFA claim contribution, insurance excess, smaller infrastructure repairs, and small repair work on community buildings to work in with insurance. A cost update for this can be provided at the next meeting.
- Some of the 'Actual Out-of-Pocket' costs and 'Claims Ineligible' can be claimed under other funding sources. An update for this can also be provided at the next meeting.

Attachments:

Nil

COMMENTS:

- Financial risk is mitigated to some extent due to staged works.
- There is a team of 4 people who do the bulk of the emergency recovery work, which is funded via various funding streams.
- There are additional resources internally completing work which is not funded. Only one of the funded personnel are seconded from the existing staff pool, all others are resourced externally. There are business as usual impacts due to backfill.
- Optimistic point of view, delivery capacity is positive with contractors ready to engage as soon as the funding is available and all are existing contractors which is beneficial to streamlining and meeting procurement requirements.
- There is risk of the unapproved spent amount not being approved.
- Some explanation provided on the table and definition of each of the columns.

Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee accept this report.

CARRIED



6.9. POST-2024 ELECTION GOVERNANCE SCHEDULE

Author: Kathy Bramwell, Director Corporate and Community Services

After each local government general election, provisions within the Local Government Act 2020 place obligations upon councils to conduct certain activities or policy reviews.

The attached governance calendar provides information to the Audit & Risk Committee on the requirements to be met within the next 12 months in this regard.

Attachments:

1. 2024 25 Post Election Compliance and Policy Review Deadlines [6.9.1 - 2 pages]

Correction required on page.2 - reference to 2024 should be 2025, **(ACTION - KB)**

Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes the information provided in this report and attachment.

CARRIED



6.10. 2025 AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

Author: Kathy Bramwell, Director Corporate and Community Services

2024 Work Plan

The final progress update on the 2024 Audit & Risk Committee Work Plan is attached.

2025 Meeting Schedule

Following discussion on the problematic gap between meetings in November and May in prior years, 2024 saw a change in meeting scheduling to four times a year, instead of the previous three.

In previous years, meetings were scheduled for 1.5 hours each time. It has proven difficult to conclude business satisfactorily within the time allowed, so it is recommended that the meetings' duration be extended to 2 hours.

It is recommended that this schedule format be continued in 2025. Subject to approval by the Committee, the following meeting dates are proposed for 2025:

- M015 – Tuesday 25 March 2025 – 3.00 to 5.00 pm
- M016 – Tuesday 24 June 2025 – 3.00 to 5.00 pm
- M017 – Tuesday 30 September 2025 – 3.00 to 5.00 pm
- M014 – Wednesday 26 November 2025 – 3.00 to 5.00 pm

The meeting in November 2025 has been scheduled for a Wednesday to allow for a Council planning day scheduled on the Tuesday.

The Committee is also invited to determine the meeting format – i.e., in person/hybrid or virtual.

2025 Work Plan

Assuming the continuation of a 4-meeting annual model is approved by the Committee, a draft annual work plan for 2024 has been prepared for committee consideration and approval.

Attachments:

1. ARC Workplan 2024 Final Update Nov2024 [6.10.1 - 3 pages]
2. ARC Workplan 2025 Draft [6.10.2 - 2 pages]

COMMENTS:

- Four (4) meetings per year model continuation, agreed.

Correction required to the Workplan where the Budget refers to 24/25 FY should be 25/26.

(ACTION - KB)

Additional item - Charter Review to be added to the March 2025 meeting. **(ACTION - KB)**



Kelvin Tori / Brian Keane

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Notes the final progress update against the 2024 Audit & Risk Committee Work Plan.
2. Considers and accepts the draft Committee meeting schedule for 2024.
3. Considers and approves the draft annual work plan for 2025.

CARRIED



7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Succession planning to be included in the meetings to maintain the current quality of leadership.

(ACTION - KB/JN)

Thank you and appreciation to Brian Keane for his contribution to the committee.

8. OPPORTUNITY FOR CLOSED DISCUSSION

Author: Rod Poxon - Chairperson

The Chairperson asks all members of the Audit & Risk Committee if they would like to discuss any matter in closed session with internal or external auditors.

The Chairperson asks internal and external audit representatives present if they would like to discuss any matter in closed session with Audit & Risk Committee members.

Committee members did not wish to discuss any matter in a closed session with the internal or external auditors.

Brian Keane / Kelvin Tori

That the invitation is declined.

CARRIED



MINUTES - Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 27 November 2024 - M014

9. CLOSE OF MEETING

Next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee will be held at 3.00pm on Tuesday 25 March 2025.

Audit & Risk Committee Meeting - 27 November 2024 - M014 closed at 5.00pm.

Reviewed and signed by the Chairperson:

Mr Rod Poxon, Chairperson

Date:



2025 Meeting Schedule

MO15	Tuesday	25 March 2025	3.00 to 5.00 pm	Council Chambers
MO16	Tuesday	24 June 2025	3.00 to 5.00 pm	Council Chambers
MO17	Tuesday	30 September 2025	3.00 to 5.00 pm	Council Chambers
MO18	Wednesday	26 November 2025	3.00 to 5.00 pm	Council Chambers

2025 Workplan

Audit & Risk Committee Workplan		Meeting / Timing		Responsibility	Status / Compliance
1.	Annual Chairperson election	1	Mar	Committee	
2.	Welcome – New Independent Committee Member	1	Mar	Committee	
3.	Review proposed 2025/26 budget, rates / revenue plan and long-term financial plan and provide feedback	Between meetings		Committee	
4.	Review of ARC Charter	1	Mar	Committee / Council	
5.	Annual Committee performance review by Council	2	Jun	Council	
6.	Annual performance self-assessment	2	Jun	Committee	
7.	Biannual report to Council by Chairperson	1	Mar	Committee Chair	
		3	Sept	Committee Chair	
8.	Receive VAGO Audit Strategy Memorandum and Interim Management Letter	2	Jun	External Auditor / Committee	
9.	Receive final 2025/26 budget and associated plans	2	Jun	Committee	
10.	Prior to 30 June, receive reports as below: Council finance teams should prepare and present a paper to their Audit & Risk Committee prior to 30 June each year that outlines the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements of the council's accounting policy with respect to property, infrastructure assets, plant and equipment. Approach to assessing the fair value of each class of property, infrastructure assets, plant and equipment, including the engagement of an expert valuer and key milestones. Likely outcomes for the respective reporting cycle (expected movements in fair value and resultant impact on the financial report). 	2	Jun	Committee	
11.	Audit & Risk Committees should, prior to balance date, review the finance team's accounting paper. After balance date and at the time of reviewing the draft financial report:	3	Sep	Committee	



Audit & Risk Committee Workplan		Meeting / Timing		Responsibility	Status / Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether there have been any changes to circumstances that would indicate that key assumptions behind the finance team's initial advice and key judgements no longer hold true. Assess the reasonableness of the valuation and fair value assessment outcomes. Update their annual work plan to include the above tasks. 				
12.	Audit & Risk Committees should, after balance date and at the time of reviewing the draft financial report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine whether there have been any changes to circumstances that would indicate that key assumptions behind the finance team's initial advice and key judgements no longer hold true. Assess the reasonableness of the valuation and fair value assessment outcomes. Update their annual work plan to include the above tasks. 	3	Sep	Committee	
13.	Receive draft EOFY financial and performance reports and nominate signatories for final reporting	3	Sep	Committee	
14.	Financial monitoring – receive financial / budget reports	Each mtg		Committee	
15.	Performance monitoring – receive internal audit reports and review internal audit plan	Each mtg		Committee	
16.	Performance monitoring – outstanding audit recommendations	2	Jun	Internal Auditor / Committee	
17.	Compliance monitoring -				
	a. Quality framework monitoring report	2	Jun	Committee	
	b. Business continuity framework review	2	Jun	Committee	
	c. Fraud & corruption annual compliance status report	3	Sep	Committee	
18.	Risk monitoring – opportunity to provide feedback on strategic risks and risk appetite	1	Mar	Committee	
	Risk monitoring – operational risk registers	3	Sep	Committee	
19.	Appoint Councillors to committee membership	4	Nov	Council	
20.	Receive Annual Report including final EOFY financial and performance statements	4	Nov	Committee	
21.	Review annual work plan	Each mtg		Committee	
22.	Adopt annual work plan and meeting schedule for forthcoming year	4	Nov	Committee	
23.	Consider discussion of confidential issues in-camera with internal / external auditors	Each mtg		Committee	
24.	Presentations by Council senior officers	Each mtg		Administration	

Local Government

Reports and publications of interest



Please find below our update of recent reports and publications of interest to your industry. The information contained within this document is current as at the time of development. We also provide regular updates on the latest as it happens. Stay updated and subscribe to AFS insights: <https://www.afsbendigo.com.au/insights/>

Article date	Source	Name	Coverage	Relevant links
25/10/2025	Commonwealth Government	Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response inquiry	A report from the Prime Minister on the independent inquiry into Australia's response to the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted nine guiding recommendations that align to nine pillars of a successful pandemic response. The report identified 19 immediate actions for the next 12-18 months and a further 7 medium term actions prior to the next national health emergency	https://www.pmc.gov.au/resources/covid-19-response-inquiry-report
24/10/2024	Jobs and Skills Australian Government	Jobs and Skills Australia data on shortage of Planners	New data from Jobs and Skills Australia confirmed Australia's national shortage of planners. The Occupation Shortage List (OSL) provides a point-in-time assessment of the shortage status of occupations in the Australian labour market.	https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/occupation-shortages-analysis/occupation-shortage-list
24/10/2024	Municipal Association Vic (MAV)	State Government Housing announcements	Municipal Association Vic on behalf of all 79 local councils has tabled a submission to the Victorian State Government on Housing taskforce.	https://www.mav.asn.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/41638/MAV_Housing_Taskforce_Submission_to_a_Plan_for_Victoria_2024-compressed.pdf
21/10/2024	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC)	OVIC and PROV issue joint statement on minimising the privacy impacts of an incident	<p>The Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner and Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) have issued a joint statement regarding how Victorian public sector organisations can minimise the privacy impacts of an incident.</p> <p>This joint statement has been produced in response to an increasing number of organisations failing to take the necessary measures to protect the personal information they hold.</p> <p>Incidents are inevitable, but organisations can minimise the privacy impacts of a data breach by being prepared.</p>	https://ovic.vic.gov.au/newsitem/ovic-and-prov-issue-joint-statement-on-minimising-the-privacy-impacts-of-an-incident/

Local Government

Reports and publications of interest

Article date	Source	Name	Coverage	Relevant links
17/10/2024	Podcast: Corrs High Vis	Episode 59 – The risks and challenges of climate change for major infrastructure assets.	In the latest episode of Corrs High Vis podcast, Trevor Thomas, Harrison Frith and Amy Catanzariti delve into the many the risks and challenges that climate change presents to major infrastructure assets.	https://www.mondaq.com/australia/climate-change/1532396/corrs-high-vis-episode-59-the-risks-and-challenges-of-climate-change-for-major-infrastructure-assets?email_access
16/10/2024	The Institute of Internal Auditors	Cyber Security Is everyone's business	As part of Cyber Security Awareness Month, it's important to highlight how internal audit strengthens digital defences. With cybercrime on the rise, proactive discussions around personal and organisational security are essential. Internal auditors play a crucial role in identifying vulnerabilities and ensuring strong controls. By adopting simple security measures, everyone can help safeguard the organisation's digital assets.	https://iia.org.au/news/cyber-security-is-everyones-business?at_context=75#:~:text=Cybersecurity%20is%20everyone%27s%20responsibility%2C%20and,secure%20our%20organisation%27s%20digital%20environment.
16/10/2024	Inside Local Government	Shared services trial to boost rural building surveyor ranks	Rural Councils Victoria welcomes the announcement on Monday 14 October to fund a trial to bring more municipal building surveyors to rural Victoria. Rural communities are in desperate need of more housing and this trial will assist in addressing the housing challenges faced by these rural communities.	https://insidelocalgovernment.com.au/shared-services-trial-to-boost-rural-building-surveyors/v

Local Government

Reports and publications of interest

Article date	Source	Name	Coverage	Relevant links
9/10/2024	Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner	New Changes to Victoria's Freedom of Information and Privacy Laws	<p>Changes to the FOI Act summary:</p> <p>Agency obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 14(1)(a) now extends to documents made publicly available free of charge, as well as for a fee or other charge. This means that a person cannot request access under the FOI Act, to documents made freely available, for example, on an agency's website. In deciding whether an exemption applies, an agency is only required to consult with third parties where it is "reasonably practicable". This change affects all exemption provisions that require third party consultation; sections 29(2), 29A(1D), 31(5) and (6), 31A(2), 33(2C)(b) and (3), 34(3) and 35(1B)(b). Section 7(1)((a)(viii) is repealed. This means that agencies are no longer required to publish information about reading rooms and libraries in their Part II Statements. 	https://ovic.vic.gov.au/newsitem/new-changes-to-victorias-freedom-of-information-and-privacy-laws/
9/10/2024	Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC)	IBAC Operation Leo special report	<p>This report sets out the findings of the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission's investigation Operation Leo, which examined allegations of bribery and misconduct by councillors at Moonee Valley City Council (MVCC).</p> <p>The investigation explored whether some MVCC councillors used their positions as elected officials to seek or obtain preferential outcomes for the Essendon Royals Soccer Club (ERSC). Operation Leo also examined whether MVCC councillors sought to obtain financial benefits or other inducements in return for favourable votes. IBAC found that some MVCC councillors used their positions to inappropriately influence MVCC decisions in favour of third parties and at the expense of other local sporting groups and the wider municipality.</p>	https://www.ibac.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-10/IBAC%20Operation%20Leo%20special%20report%20-%20October%202024.PDF
26/09/2024	Government News	Vic's FOI system resistant to scrutiny, says new report	A new report by Victoria's Integrity and Oversight Committee calls for radical reform of the state's outdated Freedom of Information (FOI) laws, highlighting that Victoria has fallen behind in transparency compared to other jurisdictions. The committee recommends a complete overhaul of the FOI system to promote maximum disclosure, simplify access to information, and ensure that formal requests are a last resort, while also urging political leadership and better resources to support these changes.	https://www.governmentnews.com.au/vics-foi-system-resistant-to-scrutiny-says-report

Local Government

Reports and publications of interest

Article date	Source	Name	Coverage	Relevant links
22/09/2024	Mondaq	Who is liable for stormwater assets in Victoria?	Mondaq reports that Victorian legislation does not currently impose a positive duty on councils to maintain stormwater assets. While the Victorian Government has sought to address this issue through various proposals, including a draft legislative instrument to impose obligations on councils, there still remains a regulatory gap in stormwater asset management.	https://www.mondaq.com/australia/constitutional-administrative-law/1520930/who-is-liable-for-stormwater-assets-in-victoria
19/09/2024	Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission Sector Profile	Environment and resource management - A snapshot of corruption and misconduct risks for Victoria's environment and resource management sector.	Victoria's natural environment and resource management sector is primarily overseen by government entities, with potential corrupt conduct falling under the jurisdiction of Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC). The sector encompasses various public bodies, including the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), regulatory authorities like the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), and numerous committees managing land and resources, highlighting a complex framework with inherent risks of favouritism, conflicts of interest, and regulatory compromise.	https://www.ibac.vic.gov.au/environment-and-resource-management
16/09/2024	Government News	Security Hacks on the rise, says report	Australia's privacy chief warns that the country's cybersecurity measures are insufficient, with a significant rise in data breaches. The report highlights that malicious attacks account for the majority of breaches, particularly in the health sector, and emphasises the need for stronger security measures and accountability for organisations to better protect personal information.	https://www.governmentnews.com.au/security-hacks-on-the-rise-says-report/
12/09/2024	Parliament of Victoria	Rate cap a big concern for councils	Rate capping has become a significant issue for Victorian councils as parliamentary inquiry shifts focus to Melbourne's outer suburbs. Council leaders are calling for a review of the Fair Go Rates system, citing factors such as local industry transitions, cost shifting from higher levels of government, and challenges in staffing as critical to their fiscal health.	https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/news/economy/traralgonlceic

2025 Council Meeting Calendar

January - All January Meetings Optional			
14th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
February			
4th	Strategic / Presentations Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
11th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
March			
11th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
April			
1st	Strategic / Presentations Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
8th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
May			
13th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
20th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
June			
3rd	Strategic / Presentations Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
10th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
17th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
17th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort

July			
8th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
15th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
August			
5th	Strategic / Presentations Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
12th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
19th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
19th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
September			
9th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
16th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
October			
7th	Strategic / Presentations Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
14th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
21st	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
November			
11th	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
11th	Special & Statutory Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Lexton
18th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
18th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort
December			
2nd	Briefing	4.00pm - 7.00pm	Beaufort
9th	Briefing	4.00pm - 6.00pm	Beaufort
9th	Council Meeting	6.00pm - 8.00pm	Beaufort

Strategic / Presentations Briefing: For presentations from external parties and strategic discussion.