



**Pyrenees**  
Shire Council

# Minutes

## Ordinary Meeting of Council

6:00 pm Tuesday 10 September 2024

Council Chambers

Beaufort Council Offices,  
5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort

*Wadawurrung Country*

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. WELCOME .....	3
2. STREAMING PREAMBLE .....	3
3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY .....	3
4. APOLOGIES.....	3
5. NOTICE OF DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST BY COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS .....	3
6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.....	3
7. BUSINESS ARISING .....	4
8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.....	4
9. ITEMS FOR NOTING .....	7
9.1. Corporate and Community Services.....	7
9.1.1. Customer Contact - August 2024.....	7
10. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS.....	17
10.1. Councillor Activity Reports - August 2024.....	17
11. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS.....	19
11.1. Assembly of Councillors - August 2024 .....	19
12. ITEMS FOR DECISION .....	21
12.1. Asset and Development Services .....	21
12.1.1. Crown Land Reserve Waubra (water reserve).....	21
12.1.2. Moloney Road and Bridge Condition Assessments .....	25
12.1.3. Neighbourhood Safer Places 2024.....	27
12.1.4. Capital Works Report (2020 to 2025) .....	29
12.2. Corporate and Community Services.....	34
12.2.1. Recovery Update.....	34
12.3. Chief Executive Office.....	38
12.3.1. Special Meeting of Council - September 2024.....	38
12.3.2. Library Services .....	40
12.3.3. Tiny Towns Fund .....	44
13. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS .....	46
14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS .....	52
14.0.1. Close Meeting to the Public.....	52
15. CLOSE OF MEETING .....	52



## 1. WELCOME

Welcome to this meeting of the Pyrenees Shire Council. Councillors will today deliberate and decide on a range of matters relevant to the work of Council in its communities for the welfare of the people of the Pyrenees Shire.

Mayor Cr Robert Vance welcomed all to the meeting.

## PRESENT

**Mayor:** Cr Robert Vance

**Councillors:** Tanya Kehoe, David Clark, Ron Eason, Damian Ferrari

**Chief Executive Officer:** Jim Nolan

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

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

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

**Communications Officer:** Rebecca Stewart

## 2. STREAMING PREAMBLE

Mayor Cr Robert Vance read the livestream preamble.

## 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

## 4. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

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

Cr David Clark declared a conflict of interest (direct) in relation to item 12.1.1 - Public Water Reserve.

## 6. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

**Cr Damian Ferrari / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That the Minutes of the:

- Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 August 2024; and
- Closed Meeting of Council held 20 August 2024,

as previously circulated to Councillors, be confirmed.

**CARRIED**

## 7. BUSINESS ARISING

There was no business arising from the previous meeting held 20 August 2024.

## 8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr Trevor Davey of Waterloo

*Question one:*

With the exception of executives and salary sacrifice agreements do the vehicles of council get used on weekends by staff or overnight or take home or anything like that?

*Response:*

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

Council in attracting and retaining staff at a senior officer level have a number of arrangements in place that are negotiated at the time of recruitment and we have a small number of senior officers that have entitlements to private use of a council vehicle for which they salary sacrifice an amount of their remuneration. As private use they have entitlements for use within certain parameters of our light vehicle policy which sets out those arrangements. In addition to that we have works supervision staff that have access to vehicles to attend emergency activities so in the event of storm and floods and what not, if there are requirements to respond then that work can happen on weekends and there are arrangements in place for appropriate use of those vehicles for that purpose.

Ms Rose La Vie of Evansford

*Question one:*

I would like to ask, are towns in the shire grouped into clusters within wards?

*Response:*

Mr Jim Nolan thanked Ms La Vie for the question and provided the following response:

The answer to your question is generally not. Generally, towns are treated on an individual basis but by and large, council considers them in the context of the overall benefits of the shire when it does its planning, but doesn't necessarily look at them in clusters as such.

There may be occasions where it's convenient and efficient to do some activities in a cluster, not necessarily based on ward, and in the case of Snake Valley, Lexton and Waubra, council made a decision a little while ago to undertake framework plans. This is a planning exercise, where we developed those framework plans for those three small towns, because they had like characteristics; those plans were prepared at the same time and they were submitted as part of our planning scheme amendment concurrently. So that's an example where those towns were clustered for that purpose because they had like characteristics and it was efficient to do so, but not all of those towns are actually within the same ward. I can't think of other examples where we might have done that but generally, they're not necessarily grouped under a ward basis.

*Question two:*

Today I nominated as a candidate for the De Cameron ward committing to meeting with a different town each month, this to listen to their needs, concerns and interests, to further co-facilitate their strengths, goals, visions and emergency plans. Then to utilise these to develop clear step-by-step reflective action processes and in looking at your small towns roles, which is wonderful that you are going to be submitting because of the election process, I am wondering with me as a facilitator, who actually had a plan for the

Evansford Community Centre a couple of decades ago, how that will impact me as a candidate, if you are putting in for funds, for instance could you draw on that Evansford Community Centre Arts grant and plan that we had, if I am a candidate, not in that ward but in another etc. and also my employment as a facilitator if I am not elected later, how does all that work?

*Response:*

Mr Jim Nolan thanked Ms La Vie for the question and provided the following response:

There's a number of elements to the question. Essentially members of the community that nominate to be a candidate for election are required to satisfy a number of requirements to be eligible to nominate. Should the candidate become elected and become a councillor, then matter of interests and conflicts of interest is a matter that needs to be managed in the situations that you've outlined or others. It's expected that candidates that become councillors are active in the community in some way or another and that's why they put their hand up to nominate to be councillors and as such, it's not unusual for councillors to have interests and those interests, however, need to be declared. There's a process for declaring interests and it's appropriate to declare those interests for the sake of transparency for the community and also to ensure that councillors remove themselves from any decision making and discussion on those issues for which they have a conflict of interest.

That's part of the process, it's not insurmountable, but it needs to be managed. Those interests where you've had some involvement in activities in the past where it is the subject of a council decision need to be managed.

In respect of your comments around community plans, most of our townships have some form of community plan, whether it be a framework plan or a community plan that has been developed over the years and these plans are used to support grant applications, in many cases it's necessary for us to be able to demonstrate community engagement and community buy in when we apply for grants and so those community plans, regardless of who they have been prepared by, actually are often used in that regard, whether it be by council or by the communities themselves. It doesn't necessarily exempt a person from participating as a councillor if they've had some involvement in council activities in the past, but it's a matter of managing those conflicts of interest where they occur.

Ms Kathy Bramwell also provided the following response:

Following on from the CEO's very good response to that, I just wanted to make it clear that even though councillors are elected in one specific ward, your elected for the benefit of the entire shire, not just for one ward.

Mr George Kirsanovs of Beaufort

*Question one:*

I've just cracked 40 years residency in the shire so this is a special time and it also coincides with Mr Mayor, Mr Robert Vance, it is an opportunity for me to say thank you for the very much for all that you have done for a number of organisations I have been involved with.

Community grants, from time to time the council makes available community grants. Where does the money for that come from? For example, is it coming out of the rate payer's collection of funds or does it come from some grant source or is it a combination of both?

*Response:*

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

It's always good for ratepayers to know where their money actually goes and in the case of community grants and you're right, council, approximately twice per year, invites submissions from the community, from community organisations to apply for these community grants and there's a range of community grants from community capital grants for events, for youth activities and a range of other appropriate things that happen in the community.

There's approximately \$90,000 allocated in councils' budget towards these community grants and they're distributed as you've seen in the past, through a process where people apply. Council considers those applications on their merits and then allocates that funding. So essentially that funding comes out of council's budget. When council prepares the budget, there are a range of sources of revenue that council has; approximately \$10 million of councils revenue comes from rates and that goes into councils pool of revenue. Council also receives, from the federal government, approximately \$7 million in federal assistance grants. These federal assistance grants are in the form of a general grant and a component specifically for roads. So, in respect of the general grant, those funds can go into councils general revenue and can be used and distributed for whatever purpose council deems appropriate.

When it comes to the expenditure side of the council budget, those funds that are used for community grants come out of council's general revenue base. Essentially, they are effectively either rate payer funds or funds from the general federal assistance grants component, but we don't distinguish one or the other essentially. It is money that council has at its discretion, that it chooses to allocate for community grants because that's an appropriate thing to do.

There are occasionally exceptions to the rule where there is a special provision made by council and at a recent council meeting, council made a decision to support using its established process, the distribution of community funds for fire affected individuals, and those funds actually came from the Stockyard Hill Windfarm. The windfarm actually committed \$50,000 towards supporting affected bushfire community and council assisted in the distribution of that by using a process where we invited applications from affected land owners and people that were impacted by the fire and those funds have been distributed so that didn't come from ratepayers and it didn't come from councils general revenue, it was a corporate donation that was distributed using a council process.

*Question two:*

Just a follow up, is there some sort of regulatory requirement regarding that mixture of rate payers' money put into a bucket which also has grant money coming in as well and it gets mixed up. Is there a regulatory requirement by act of parliament or regulation that controls the way in which councils allocate their funds.

*Response:*

Mr Jim Nolan provided the following response:

There is no regulatory requirement that I am aware of, that council has to use any external funds to match its rate payer funds, it is at councils' discretion. In terms of the criteria that council uses to evaluate applications from the community, there is a weighting that provides an advantage to a community organisation that would put some of its own funds as a contribution to secure some council community grants, which makes sense that the community has raised some of its own funds, it might be more positively viewed by council in distributing those but there is no regulatory requirement from my understanding.

## 9. ITEMS FOR NOTING

### 9.1. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### 9.1.1. CUSTOMER CONTACT - AUGUST 2024

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

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

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

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

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

#### **PURPOSE**

This report provides updates on contacts made by our community through a range of media, including the Customer Action Request System and emails, for August 2024. This report's purpose is to demonstrate ongoing efforts to improve responsiveness to customers and the community over time.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Our community contact officers through a range of means, including but not limited to:

- Customer Action Request System (CARS)
- Emails – directly to officers or via the central pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au email address
- Via telephone or face-to-face with Council's switchboard or front counters
- Complaints
- Requests for information via Freedom of Information (FOI) processes
- Social media

The Council has operated an electronic Customer Action Request System (CARS) for many years enabling residents to lodge service requests. Requests can be lodged in person, via telephone, via Council's website or by using a smart phone "Snap Send Solve" application. Requests input via the "Snap Send Solve" application must be input manually by customer service officers into the CAR (Customer Action Requests) system as this currently does not accept automatic uploads.

Service requests are received for operational issues regarding maintenance, road maintenance, pools, local laws, building maintenance and compliance matters. Complaints are received and managed separately to action requests and monthly checks are made of customer action requests to identify requests that should be managed as complaints.

Requests logged through the customer action requests system form a minority of the contacts received by Council officers monthly, however, remain an important method of identifying where problems exist that need to be addressed.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER CONTACT**

The following provides data on community contacts with employees, other than that recorded through the customer requests system, providing a more comprehensive view of our customer experience.

Customer contact media	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024
Legitimate emails received by the organisation*	18,871	30,221#	24,738	23,720	24,977	22,664	24,531	24,748
Emails rejected (cyber protection)	9,669 34%	36,630 55%	26,452 52%	6,516 22%	7,505 23%	6,476 22%	9,662 28%	6,473 21%
Inbound malware detected	-	-	4	4	2	2	6	3
Emails sent by organisation (external)	6,485	11,007#	8,825	9,220	10,212	8,843	9,455	9,002
External complaints received	3	6	7	5	3	2	3	9
FOI Requests	0	1	2	2	3	3	2	3
Requests for infringement reviews	15	0	6	2	3	3	11	7
Website page views	16,047	20,521	17,342	18,311	15,324	14,074	16,310	14,174
Website users	6,015	8,081	6,314	7,325	5,452	5,373	5,565	4,884
Website contact us page views	410	600	540	462	420	361	473	368
Website customer enquiry form	56	50	57	52	54	40	71	44
Telephone Calls Received by PSC (total)	-	-	2,276	2,249	2,264	2,043	2,195	1,806
Calls answered by Switchboard / Customer Service	-	-	1,997 88% of total	1,988 88% of total	1,959 87% of total	1,785 87% of total	1,898 87% of total	1,557 86% of total

\* Statistics amended to only include those emails not rejected as spam or viruses.

# Email traffic impacted by fire response (increase).



## Facebook snapshot

### Performance

Daily Cumulative ⓘ

#### Reach ⓘ

14K ↓ 58.9%

#### Content interactions ⓘ

382 ↓ 11.6%

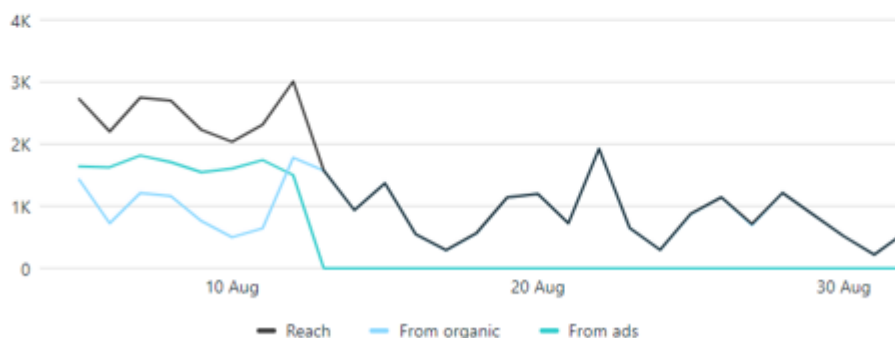
#### Followers ⓘ

Lifetime

3.7K

#### Link clicks ⓘ

189 ↓ 6%



#### Reach breakdown

##### Total

13,968 ↓ 58.9%

##### From organic

9,556 ↓ 71.1%

##### From ads

5,953 ↑ 100.9%

### Comments:

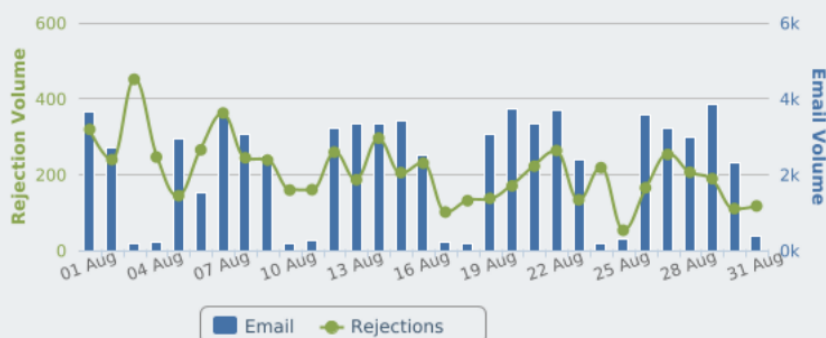
- Top website pages viewed: recruitment/employment, waste management (transfer stations, bin collection days, and collection dates), Avoca market, and Council election.
- Customer enquiries received via the website focused on roads, waste / recycling, and rates.
- Complaints related to local laws matters, portable dwellings, rates, disability access, community bus discontinuation, and road signs.
- Infringement appeals mostly related to parking fines, with 2 regarding illegal crossovers.
- FOI requests related to many documents relating to windfarms, rates statistics and transcripts of online meeting 'chats'.

### Cyber security assurance:

To provide assurance for ongoing cyber protections, the following graph shows total emails received against those rejected by automatic protection services.

#### Email Volume vs Rejected Mail

Total Email Count: 71300 Total Rejection Count: 6471



- 41% of inbound emails rejected were for IP addresses found to be in remote block lists known to be sources of spam or malware infection.

- 261 (6% of all rejections) messages were rejected as spam.
- 3 cases of inbound Malware were detected during the month.
- Zero emails were detected during the month that were attempts to impersonate someone – e.g., attempting to look like emails from another member of staff.

Other means of identifying potential spam or malware includes spam signature detection, virus signature detection, anti-spoofing lockouts, invalid recipient address, and where the sender failed to retry after initial rejection.

The system also holds emails where they may be suspected, but not confirmed spam. These are notified to the email recipient for checking and approval. 216 emails were held for this purpose during the month.

### Library Daily and Weekly Feedback – Smiley Touch

The frontline counters have commenced a trial using a technology – Smiley Touch – that measures customers' satisfaction as they interact with our staff. It is early days but this will allow a growth in the ability to receive, and respond to, immediate feedback. The system allows customers to input feedback on their experience at the front counters and for us to respond quickly to issues raised.

The following provides statistics for August 2024. In August, the feedback stand was based in the Beaufort Council offices.

30 responses were received, of which 79% were recorded as happy experiences. This is an interesting change from feedback received in the previous month, which was recorded in the Beaufort resource centre and where a higher level of visitors recorded feedback with a 98% happiness rate. This reflects the different type of interaction between the two centres, with mostly council business, enquiries or issues being the purpose of visits to the council offices, rather than the leisure purposes of visits to the resource centre.



The facility also allows for written feedback to be provided and during August three positive responses were received giving thanks for the service provided by the staff. No negative feedback was recorded.

### ISSUE / DISCUSSION - CUSTOMER ACTION REQUESTS

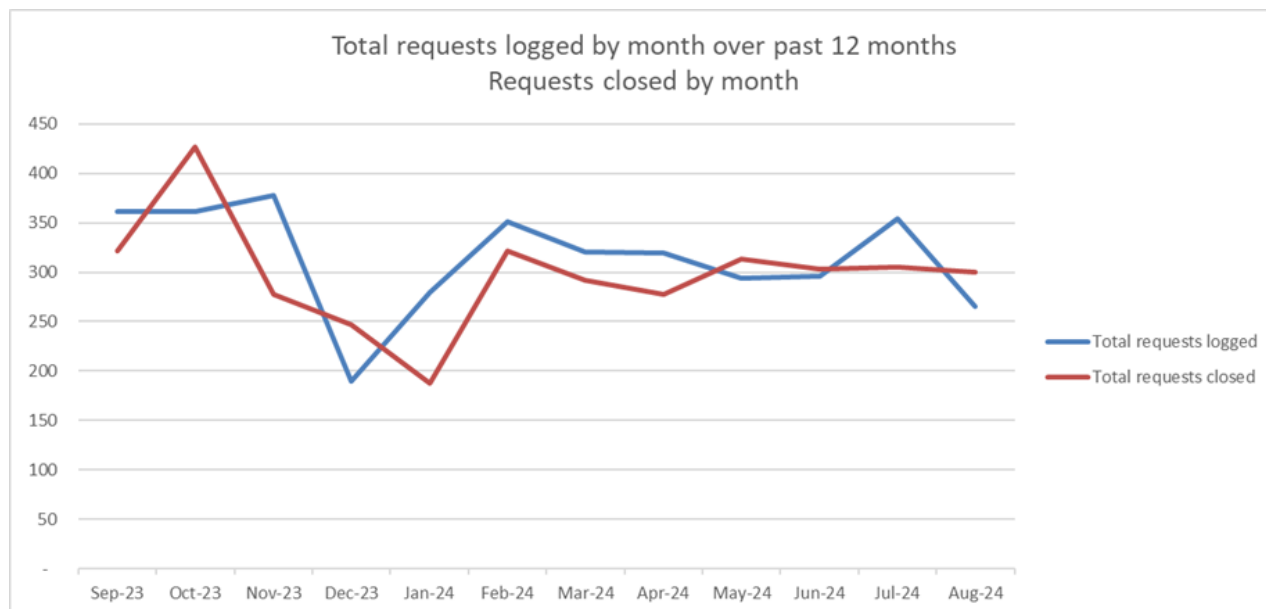
#### 1. Logged and closed requests

265 CARs (Customer Action Requests) were logged during the month, 92 less than the previous month. Of these, 56 related to telephone messages.

300 requests were closed during the month.

The following charts detail the numbers of requests received over the last 12 months and the number of requests closed each month.

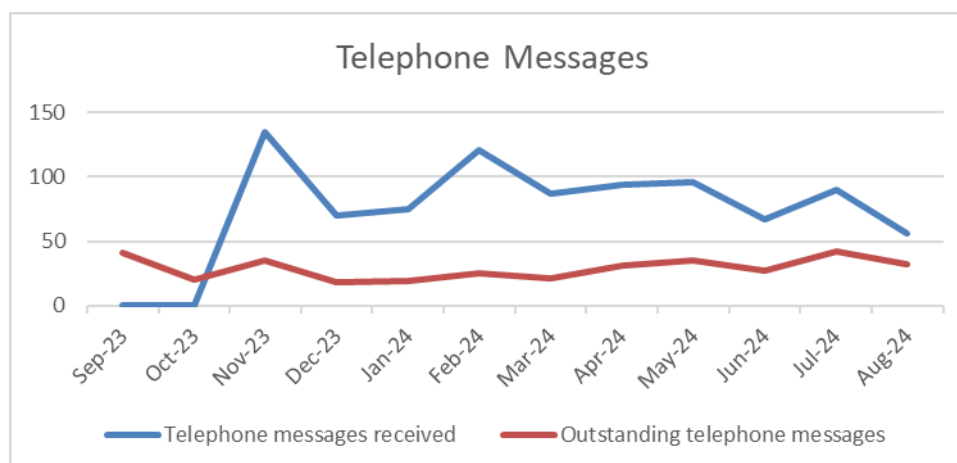
Year	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	% Change
Total requests logged	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	319	294	296	354	265	-25%
Total requests closed	321	427	278	247	188	321	292	278	313	303	305	300	-1%



## 2. Telephone requests

56 telephone calls were transferred into requests during the month, with 32 requests remaining outstanding at the end of the month. The following charts detail the trend in telephone calls received and remaining outstanding at the end of each month.

	Telephone messages logged over past 12 months											
	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Telephone messages received			135	70	75	121	87	94	96	67	90	56
Outstanding telephone messages	41	20	35	18	19	25	21	31	35	27	42	32



### 3. **Open Customer Action Requests**

The number of open requests is reported showing all that remain open, not just those assigned for action. Some requests that have had initial contact with the customer but are unable to be resolved quickly for some reason, are categorised as 'on-hold' and some may be referred to budget (e.g., long term drainage issues).

At the end of the reporting month, there was a total of 293 active or open requests, of which 139 were assigned for action. These include:

- 139 which are open and assigned for action
- 17 which are on hold awaiting resolution or action scheduling.
- 5 remain referred to budget
- 132 remain in progress, scheduled or being managed – meaning that they are longer term case managed issues

**Open requests** – the balance of this report will focus on the open requests, but statistics relating to requests marked as on-hold or referred-to-budget have been included in the table.

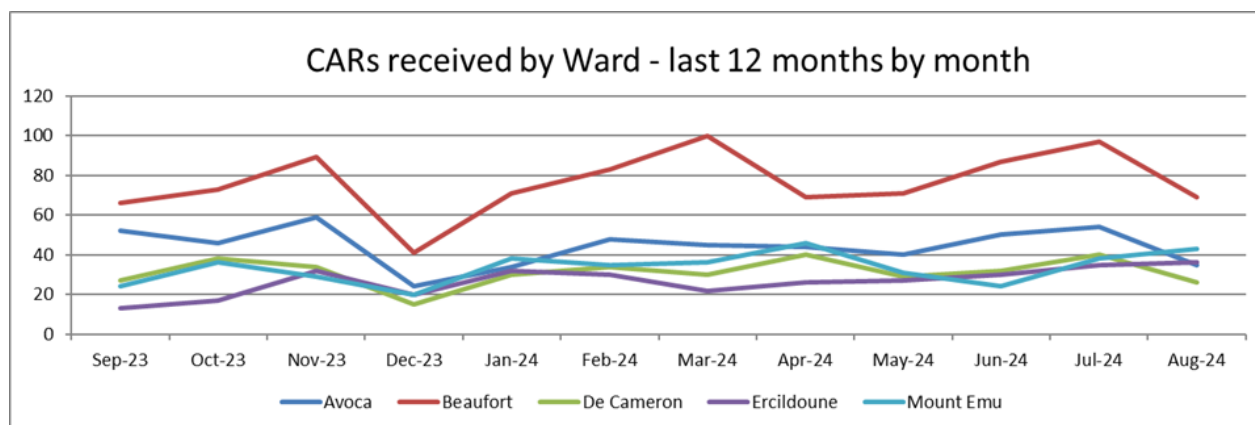
Of the non-telephone call requests received during the month, the following represents those received and still open at the of the last month by Ward:

Request status	Avoca Ward	Beaufort Ward	DeCameron Ward	Ercildoune Ward	Mt Emu Ward
<b>Number of requests received (previous month)</b>	35(54)	69(97)	26(40)	36(35)	43(38)
<b>Requests received and closed in the same month (%)</b>	28(80%)	46(67%)	15(58%)	24(67%)	28(65%)
<b>Requests received remaining open and assigned for action</b>	4	18	8	7	11
<b>Requests received that are on hold or in progress</b>	3	5	3	5	4
<b>Requests received referred to budget</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total open (assigned) requests as at the end of the month</b>	14(27)	45(43)	12(12)	15(15)	25(26)

The following charts show the numbers of requests received by Ward per month for the past 12 months.

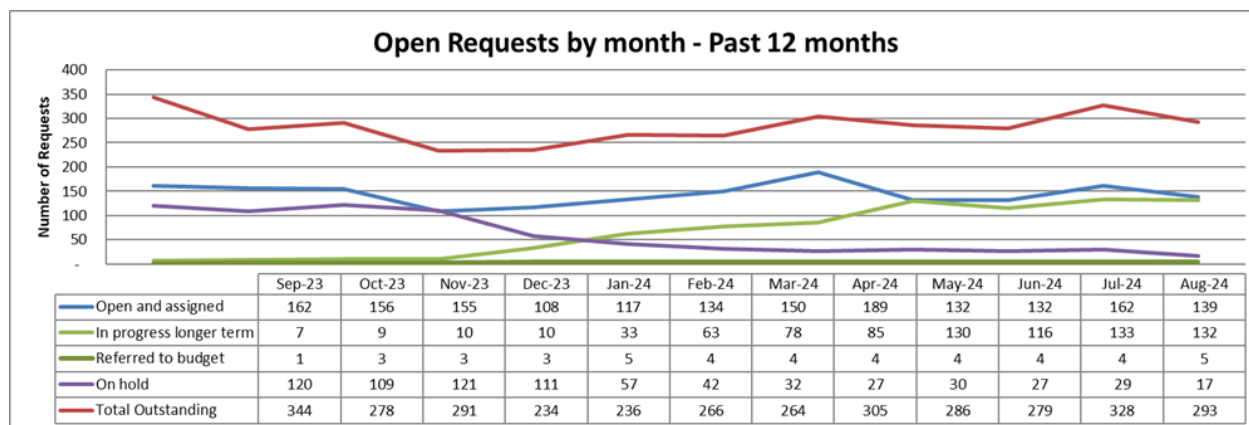
CARS by Ward received by month Rolling - Past 12 months												
Ward	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Avoca	52	46	59	24	34	48	45	44	40	50	54	35
Beaufort	66	73	89	41	71	83	100	69	71	87	97	69
De Cameron	27	38	34	15	30	34	30	40	29	32	40	26
Ercildoune	13	17	32	20	32	30	22	26	27	30	35	36
Mount Emu	24	36	29	20	38	35	36	46	31	24	38	43
Total by month	182	210	243	120	205	230	233	225	198	223	264	209





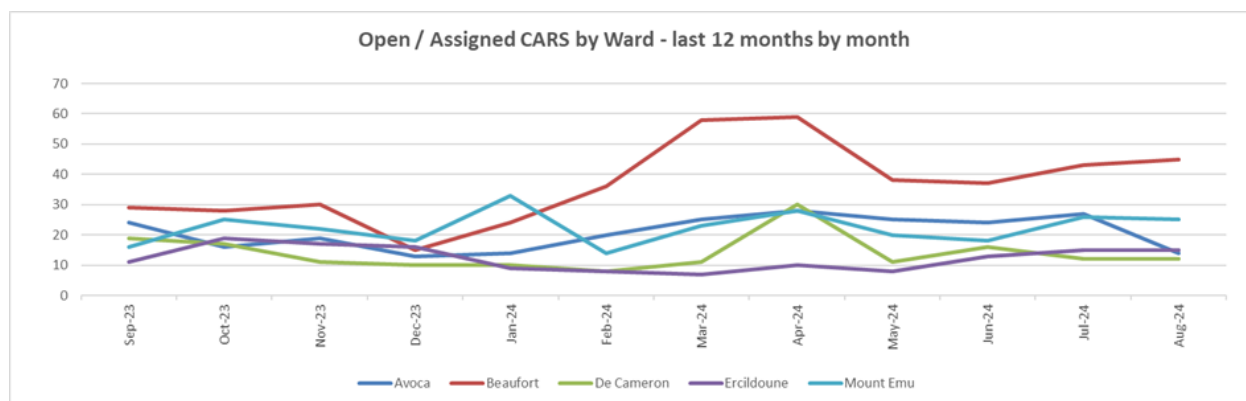
The following charts show the statistics for requests that remained open each month for the past 12 months. These charts now include requests put on hold or referred to budget.

Open requests by age													
Year	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	% Change
2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2022	27	29	20	13	7	7	7	7	2	2	2	2	0%
2023	135	127	135	95	43	24	22	17	13	13	11	7	-36%
2024					67	103	121	165	117	117	149	130	-13%
Open and assigned	162	156	155	108	117	134	150	189	132	132	162	139	-14%
Outstanding but on hold	120	109	121	111	57	42	32	27	30	27	29	17	-41%
In Progress / Scheduled	7	10	12	12	57	86	78	85	120	116	133	132	-1%
Referred to budget	1	3	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	25%
Total Closed	321	427	278	247	278	321	292	278	313	303	305	300	-2%
Total requests logged	361	361	378	190	280	351	320	319	294	296	354	265	-25%
Total outstanding requests	344	278	291	234	236	266	264	305	286	279	328	293	-11%

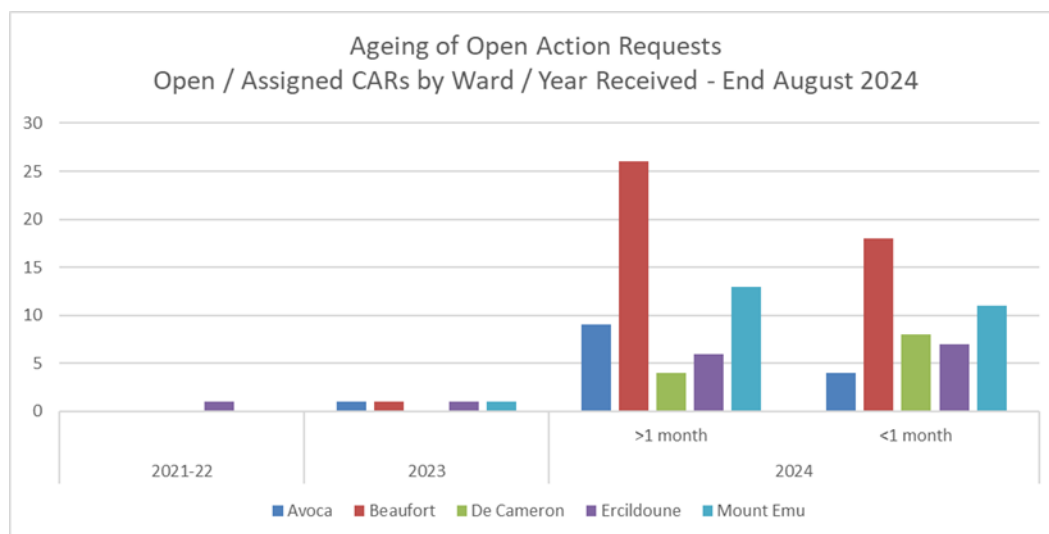


The following charts show the ageing of open assigned requests by Ward as at the end of the month, excluding those referred-to-budget or on-hold.

Open Assigned Requests by Ward - Past 12 months												
Ward	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Avoca	24	16	19	13	14	20	25	28	25	24	27	14
Beaufort	29	28	30	15	24	36	58	59	38	37	43	45
De Cameron	19	17	11	10	10	8	11	30	11	16	12	12
Ercildoune	11	19	17	16	9	8	7	10	8	13	15	15
Mount Emu	16	25	22	18	33	14	23	28	20	18	26	25
Total by month	99	105	99	72	90	86	124	155	102	108	123	111



Ageing CARS by Ward - Open/Assigned					
Ward	2021-22	2023	2024		Total
			>1 month	<1 month	
Avoca	0	1	9	4	14
Beaufort	0	1	26	18	45
De Cameron	0	0	4	8	12
Ercildoune	1	1	6	7	15
Mount Emu	0	1	13	11	25
Total by month	1	4	58	48	111



Outstanding requests from 2021-22 and 2023 are summarised below:

- 2023 – Avoca Ward: Request for appropriate long vehicle parking signs to be installed at the Avoca Railway Station. Re-opened April 2024 with signs being ordered.
- 2023 – Beaufort Ward: Improvement requests for the junction of Martins Lane / Back Raglan Road. Re-opened late 2023 and awaiting an engineering assessment.
- 2022 – Ercildoune Ward: Request for repair to Government Road, Amphitheatre. Originally thought to be flood damage but assessed in early 2024 to be normal maintenance works. Awaiting scheduling.
- 2023 – Mount Emu Ward: Request for assistance with removal and mulching of damaged branches in Pittong-Snake Valley Road. Assistance provision delayed because of February 2024 bushfire works. Resident kept informed and works should be scheduled soon.

The following table provides greater detail of the areas / type where outstanding requests remain, showing the functional areas and numbers of requests still outstanding as at the end of the last month. This data includes those referred-to-budget or on-hold.

	Jul-24	Aug-24	Change
Roads & Rd Maint.	97	87	-10
Streetlights	1	1	0
Drainage	16	15	-1
Footpaths / Kerb&Channel	10	12	2
Park & Reserves	10	13	3
Roadside Veg	58	53	-5
Environmental Health	1	0	-1
Planning	15	10	-5
Bld maint	9	11	2
Local Laws	12	14	2
Cats	6	8	2
Dogs	15	14	-1
Livestock	2	5	3
Parking	2	2	0
Fire Hazard	2	2	0
Bld Compliance	1	0	-1
Waste Management	0	0	0
Local Government Act	0	0	0
Rates	2	2	0
Natural Disasters	23	8	-15
Pools	0	0	0
Council cleaning	0	0	0
Litter	0	0	0
Design & Assets	4	4	0
GIS	0	0	0
Community	0	0	0
Rural Addressing	0	0	0
Road Naming	0	0	0
Telephone messages	42	32	-10
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>-35</b>

### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Enabling Principles

- Motivate and inspire community involvement
- Provide transparency and accountability
- Use resources efficiently and effectively

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This report did not require any community engagement or consultation, other than that provided via this report.

### ATTACHMENTS

Nil

### FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS

All risks are discussed in the body of the report.

## **CONCLUSION**

The customer action request system remains an integral part of Council's reactive identification of issues that need attention. This report provides an update on customer action requests as at the end of August 2024. Reporting continues to be expanded to include other media of customer contact received by officers. Compliments received through the library Smiley Touch facility started to be reported last month.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr David Clark**

That Council notes this report.
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**CARRIED**



**10. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS****10.1. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS - AUGUST 2024**

<b>Cr Damian Ferrari – Beaufort Ward</b>		
13/08/24	Council Briefing	Lexton
13/08/24	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Lexton
20/08/24	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Meeting	Beaufort

<b>Cr David Clark – Ercildoune Ward</b>		
08/08/24	HLLN CoM Meeting	Virtual
13/08/24	Council Briefing	Lexton
13/08/24	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Lexton
13/08/24	Waubra Hub AGM	Waubra
15/08/24	CVGA Board Meeting	Virtual
16/08/24	RCV Meeting	Virtual
20/08/24	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Meeting	Beaufort
23/08/24	MAV State Council	Melbourne
30/08/24	CVGA Conference	Melbourne

<b>Cr Robert Vance – De Cameron Ward</b>		
01/08/24	Local Government Mayoral Advisory Panel	Melbourne
01-02/08/24	Rural Council's Victoria (RCV) Forum	Seymour
07-9/08/24	Timber Towns Victoria (TTV) Forum	Warragul
09/08/24	TTV AGM	Warragul
13/08/24	Council Briefing	Lexton
13/08/24	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Lexton
14/08/24	Libraries Community Engagement Session	Beaufort
16/08/24	RCV Committee Meeting	Virtual
18/08/24	Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service	Ararat
20/08/24	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Meeting	Beaufort
21/08/24	GBAC Committee Meeting	Ballarat
22/08/24	LG Mayors, CEOs & MAV Delegates Networking	Melbourne
23/08/24	MAV State Council Meeting	Melbourne
30/08/24	Citizenship Ceremony	Beaufort

<b>Cr Ron Eason – Avoca Ward</b>		
02/08/24	Avoca Community Food Pantry AGM	Avoca
12/08/24	Libraries Community Engagement Session	Avoca
13/08/24	Council Briefing	Lexton
13/08/24	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Lexton
15/08/24	Libraries Community Engagement Session	Avoca
20/08/24	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Meeting	Beaufort
27/08/24	Sunraysia Highway Improvement Committee Meeting	Birchip
30/08/24	Citizenship Ceremony	Beaufort

<b>Cr Tanya Kehoe – Mount Emu Ward</b>		
13/08/24	Council Briefing	Lexton
13/08/24	Councillor Cuppa & Chat	Lexton
14/08/24	Libraries Community Engagement Session	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Briefing	Beaufort
20/08/24	Council Meeting	Beaufort

**Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari**

That Council notes this report.

**CARRIED**



MEETING INFORMATION			
Meeting Name	Councillor Briefing Session		
Meeting Date	20 August 2024 commenced at 2.30pm and closed at 5.30pm		
Meeting Location	Council Chamber, Beaufort		
Items Discussed	1. Planning Matters 2. Local Government Performance Reporting 2023/2024 3. CEO Update		
ATTENDEES			
Councillors	Mayor Cr Robert Vance Cr Damian Ferrari Cr Tanya Kehoe Cr David Clark Cr Ron Eason		
Apologies	Nil.		
Staff	Jim Nolan (Chief Executive Officer) Douglas Gowans (Director Assets and Development Services) Kathy Bramwell (Director Corporate and Community Services) Rachel Blackwell (Manager Planning & Development Services) Virginia McLeod (Senior Planner)		
Visitors	Nil.		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES			
Item No:	Councillor making disclosure	Particulars of disclosure	Councillor left meeting
Nil.			

**Cr David Clark / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That Council notes this report.
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**CARRIED**



## 12. ITEMS FOR DECISION

### 12.1. ASSET AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Cr David Clark declared a conflict of interest (direct) in this item and left the meeting at 6:20 pm.*

#### 12.1.1. CROWN LAND RESERVE WAUBRA (WATER RESERVE)

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

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

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

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

**File No:** 22/17/14

#### **PURPOSE**

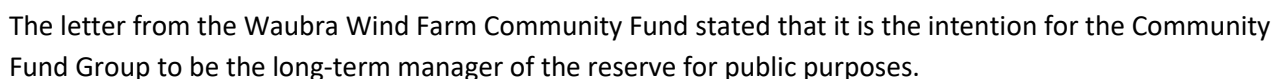
The purpose of this report is to seek council support for undertaking further investigations into management options for the Crown Land Water Reserve accessed via Dunns Lane, Waubra.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Council received a letter from the Waubra Wind Farm Community Fund Inc seeking support of Council to obtain management responsibility for both the water reserve and the associated access.

The community group sought to be able to commence work on a project to restore the original town water reserve in Waubra into a park / recreation area, as well as to provide emergency water facilities at the site for firefighting purposes. The group envisage this will be a multi-year project which will create a significant recreational asset over time for the Waubra community.

The water reserve is a crown land reserve currently managed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). The reserve is lot C13 on the associated map and the roads/access are also identified.



Council officers raised the need to undertake vegetation assessments prior to any road access work or site cleanup. Council's Environment and Sustainability Officer met Mr Davidson onsite following some initial access work that had been undertaken. The site is generally overgrown with invasive introduced species but does have some small areas of potentially native vegetation. Dunns Rd has now been constructed to a basic level to provide direct access to the crown land water reserve. The construction of the track may still require to be constructed to a higher standard if it is to be required to be included on Council's Road Register.

The Waubra Water Reserve is presently DEECA's direct responsibility. Approval to use the reserve for the purposes intended by the community will need to be arranged with DEECA. This may take the form of an association, or other entity becoming committee of management of the reserve through DEECA.

22 of 52

the riverfront reserve in Avoca where Council decided not to take on these pieces of public land due to the ongoing liability and maintenance requirements.

Public works on Crown Land within Waubra is also subject to the requirements of the Dja Dja Warrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation Land Use Activity Agreement (LUAA). The intended use and access to the site would require application and approval from the corporation which may include the requirement for the preparation of a cultural heritage management plan prior to commencing work.

In order for Council to make an informed decision regarding future management of the water reserve, a number of steps and considerations are listed below.

- Assess Waubra township plan alignment in respect to this submission in relation to increasing access to public land, public amenity improvement, open space enhancement and historic site preservation.
- Understanding if there is a need for additional static water supply tanks for firefighting purposes within proximity to Waubra.
- Understanding DEECA's current responsibility for weed control and current and planned land management actions for the reserve.
- LUAA investigations and permissions.
- Capital and operational cost considerations for site development and maintenance, noting the initial Community Fund commitment.
- Safety considerations and liabilities regarding wells on the site.
- Traffic management requirements.

While the risks to Council are not considered major, it is nevertheless appropriate for Council to be in a position to make an informed decision.

Once the above matters are given further consideration, Council may choose to seek to take on the management of reserve as a DEECA appointed Committee of Management, with the view to delegating responsibility for the maintenance to a local community committee or body. If circumstances change in years to come, Council may seek to relinquish the management responsibilities, and hand the reserve back to DEECA.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

This proposal has come directly from Waubra community representatives. Council received a formal request from the Waubra Wind Farm Community Fund Inc and from direct discussions at the Council community cuppa that was held at the Waubra Recreation Reserve in July 2024.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Council would need to consider the merits and liabilities of taking management responsibility of the Waubra Water Reserve. The management responsibility could be assisted by the Council enacting a crown land asset committee to manage both community and council interests. Further investigation is recommended to more fully identify what risks/liabilities this proposal entails.

## CONCLUSION

The Waubra Water Reserve has the potential to provide greater opportunities for open space, public amenity, firefighting infrastructure and historic interest. Council needs to consider whether taking on management responsibilities is the best way forward to enable the community proposal.

### Cr Ron Eason / Cr Tanya Kehoe

That Council:

1. Writes to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to seek direct action by DEECA to remove invasive weeds from the Waubra water reserve.
2. Gives in-principal support to work with the community to progress the restoration of the reserve as outlined in this report, and
3. Undertakes further investigation into relevant aspects associated with the possible transfer of the management of the Waubra Water Reserve to Council and report the outcomes to a future meeting of Council.

**CARRIED**

***Cr David Clark returned to the meeting at 6:26 pm.***



### 12.1.2. MOLONEY ROAD AND BRIDGE CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

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

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

**Author:** Tim Day, Manager Assets

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

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

#### PURPOSE

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

#### BACKGROUND

Moloney Asset Management Systems were engaged in September 2010 to undertake condition surveys of Council's roads and bridges network. Council has now completed five surveys which allow accurate degradation graphs to be produced for the asset classes involved in the surveys. The Road Survey includes sealed surfaces, sealed pavements and unsealed pavements, and a separate condition survey is undertaken for bridges.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

This report only addresses the assessment of bridges. The Moloney road assessment will be reported at a later date. The condition survey does not include major culverts as these are being assessed in-house.

The 2024 bridges condition survey was undertaken on all 158 bridges in the municipality.

The 158 bridge assets were found to be in "Good" to "Fair" overall condition with an improvement of overall condition by 15.1% since 2018. There are only 2 structures assessed as condition 8 – Bridge 7 on Back Cemetery Road and the jetty at the Beaufort Lake Caravan Park. These structures are identified in Council's Ten Year Asset Plan 2023 - 2032 for replacement in 2025.

The overall condition of all bridges has improved as a result of the large structure bridge replacements that have occurred during the last five years. In comparison to 26 other Councils, Pyrenees' has a low weighted average asset condition score for bridges, is ranked poorly for urgent works but is above average for the percentage of bridges in condition 6 and 7. While ranked poorly for the percentage of bridges in condition 8 or above, this will be resolved as the 2 condition 8 bridges are replaced.

The report recommends renewal funding over the next 5 years of \$416,000 per annum. It also recommends maintenance funding be lifted by \$40,000 for the next 2 to 5 years to address urgent works. Urgent works include deck sealing, concrete spall repairs and guard rail replacement or upgrade. These works largely relate to U-beam bridges that are now 50 to 70 years old.

The report recommends load limits ranging from 20 to 30 tonnes be imposed on 13 bridges. This recommendation is qualified by identifying that no calculations were undertaken in forming this recommendation and that further investigations be undertaken.

The replacement value of Council's bridges is calculated to be \$70M with current written down value to be \$42.6M (i.e. 60%). This indicates that, on average, bridge assets are above long-term asset consumption trends. This current written down value will trend towards 50% of current replacement cost. Annual depreciation is calculated at \$545,057 which gives an average effective life across the asset class of 128 years. Moloney predicts expected lives of up to 195 years. This value can be considered to be optimistic given the number of U-beam bridges as a proportion of this asset class that require replacement due to

structural cracking and concrete spalling occurring in the age range of 50 to 70 years. These bridges do not meet current standards for static and dynamic loadings associated with contemporary higher mass vehicles used in the transport industry. Council has replaced a number of these types of bridges during the last decade.

Council's 10 Year Asset Plan has programmed bridge replacement based on Moloney's asset condition assessment and will replace or upgrade the majority of structures assessed as condition 6.5 or above by the end of the 2026-27 financial year.

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

Priority 4 - Economy

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

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

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft 1 of Bridge Report 2024 [12.1.2.1 - 40 pages]

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

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

The strong improvement in bridge assets since 2018 has been on the back of relatively high levels of external funding. If Council continues to fund bridge renewal at current levels, in combination with Roads to Recovery funding and external grants, the overall standard of bridge assets will continue to improve.

#### **CONCLUSION**

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

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

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

That Council:

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

**CARRIED**

### 12.1.3. NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES 2024

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

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

**Report Author:** Dennis Nikoltsis – Community Safety and Amenity Officer

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

**File No:** 28/08/10

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to note the outcome of the Neighbourhood Safer Places assessments for the coming fire season.

#### BACKGROUND

Under section 50J of the Country Fire Authority Act (1958), a municipal council must conduct a review of each designated NSP in its municipal district to determine if it is still suitable to be designated as a Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP).

In conducting the annual review, Council must ask the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to assess each NSP in accordance with the CFA Assessment Guidelines.

A NSP is a space that:

1. is a place of last resort for individuals to access and shelter in during a fire event affecting their neighbourhood - without the need to take a high risk journey beyond their neighbourhood;
2. eliminates direct exposure to flames from a fire front and management of radiant heat to survivable levels; and
3. should only be accessed when personal bushfire survival plans (for individual properties) cannot be implemented or have failed.

An NSP does not guarantee the survival of those who assemble there.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council currently has nine (9) designated NSPs which are in the following locations:

1. Lexton – Toll Bar Park
2. Waubra – Recreation Reserve
3. Beaufort – Wotherspoon Park
4. Snake Valley – St Brigid's Church Reserve
5. Avoca – Medium Strip, High Street (between Russell & Cambridge Streets)
6. Moonambel – Recreation Reserve
7. Natte Yallock – Recreation Reserve
8. Redbank – Recreation Reserve
9. Landsborough – Recreation Reserve
10. Barkly – Barkly Public Hall

All locations were assessed by the CFA and deemed to be compliant with the CFA Assessment Guidelines.

#### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Enabling Principles

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Council has an annual budget for the maintenance of the designated NSPs.

## **CONCLUSION**

Neighbourhood Safer Places provide a place of last resort in a bushfire emergency. They should be carefully considered in their designation as they can be misinterpreted as being an alternative to leaving early in a fire emergency.

## **Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Ron Eason**

That Council

1. Notes this report.
2. Publishes the list of approved NSPs on Council's website.

**CARRIED**

**12.1.4. CAPITAL WORKS REPORT (2020 TO 2025)****Presenter:** Douglas Gowans - Director Asset and Development Services**Declaration of Interest:** As presenter of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.**Report Author:** Daniel Potter – Manager Engineering**Declaration of Interest:** As author of this report, I have no disclosable interest in this item.**File No:** 06/04/02**PURPOSE**

This report outlines the completed capital works projects over the last 4 years between 2020 and 2024. This report also includes the proposed 24/25 capital works program.

**BACKGROUND**

The capital works that are included within this report are road construction/reconstruction, road reseals, road gravel resheets, bridges, culverts, floodways, drainage, footpath, kerb, buildings, recreation and other projects. This excludes the flood repair works and fire recovery repair works.

The following table includes a summary of the value of capital work completed for each financial year for the past 4 years and includes the proposed 2024-2025 capital work value. The typical capital works budget for Pyrenees Shire Council is between \$6 million and \$7 million per year with additional grant funding in some financial years.

Financial Year	Value	Remarks
2020-2021	\$10.4 mill	Higher spend due to the Lexton Hub funding (\$2mill)
2021-2022	\$7.5 mill	Higher spend due to the Lexton Hub funding (\$1.5mill) & Bridges funding (\$0.5mill)
2022-2023	\$8.0 mill	Higher spend due to the Bridges funding (\$1.6mill)
2023-2024	\$6.5 mill	
2024-2025 (proposed)	\$6.5 mill	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$38.9 mill</b>	

**Table 1:** Financial Year Capital Works**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The attachments to this report provide the individual project detail and distribution of projects across the shire.

The distribution across the shire is influenced by several factors including:

- larger one-off infrastructure works like the Lexton hub project,
- bridges located more in the southern part of the shire,
- poorer road pavement subgrades (ground below roads) affecting the condition of the roads in the southern part of the shire, and
- an unequal length of roads within each ward.

To provide the best outcome to the community, capital works projects are continually assessed against community need, asset management principles, strategic value, and cost benefit before being added to the capital works program.

### 2024/2025 Capital Works Program:

The 2024/2025 proposed capital works program has had some changes due to additional external funding including increases to the Federally funded 'Roads to Recovery program' (RTR), the new State funded 'Safer Local Roads and Streets Program' (SLRSP), flood works funding/betterment and other external funding sources.

The anticipated capital works projects are listed below:

- a) Road Construction/Reconstruction: (\$2.057mill RTR & \$60k Council)
- Linton Carngham Rd (Ch.6,620m to Ch.8,130m) - \$750k (Renewal) - (RTR)
  - Willoby St, Beaufort (Livingstone St to carpark driveway) – Full width reconstruction and potentially including a section of kerb - \$150k (Renewal) - (RTR)
  - Livingstone St, Beaufort (Warburton St to South St) - 7.3m width with kerb's both sides - \$80k (RTR) (Total \$180k with LRCIP) (Upgrade/New)
  - Camerons Ln, Waubra (Ch. 720m to Ch.1,440m) – 4.0m seal & 1.5m Shoulders – \$132k (RTR) (Renewal)
  - Racecourse Rd, Beaufort (Rail crossing approaches) – In conjunction with the Vline's rail crossing upgrades, road widening to allow a truck and a car to cross simultaneously - \$125k (RTR) - (Renewal/Upgrade)
  - Stockyard Hill Rd / Beaufort Carranballac Rd Intersection - \$145k - (Renewal/Upgrade)
  - Eurambeen Raglan Rd (Ch.1,160m to Ch.2,620m) - Reconstruction/Upgrade - \$675k (RTR)

Potential projects still under consideration:

- Hopes Ln (north of Smythesdale Snake Valley Rd) – In conjunction with potential flood repair funding
- Langi Kal Kal Rd – Road renewal including the widening of the remaining section of the Langi Kal Kal Rd near the rail crossing.

b) Reseals: (\$722k Council)

- Eurambeen Streatham Rd, Lake Wongan - Ch. 30940-31170m
- Carngham Streatham Rd, Chepstowe - Ch. 33960-35670m
- Carngham Streatham Rd, Chepstowe - Ch. 36910-37920m
- Fords Rd, Avoca - Ch. 0-1145m
- Linton Carngham Rd, Carngham - Ch. 0-545m
- Skene St, Lexton - Ch. 0-1154m
- Landsborough Elmhurst Rd, Landsborough - Ch. 4280-8315m
- Landsborough Elmhurst Rd, Landsborough - Ch. 13250-14420m
- Troys Rd, Waubra - Ch. 1390-4000m
- Waubra Talbot Rd, Evansford - Ch. 7915-9910m
- Creek St, Avoca - Ch. 62-235m
- Landsborough Barkley Rd, Avoca - Ch. 0-3000m
- Glenlofty Warrenmang Rd, Tanwood - Ch. 2015-2720m
- Mills La, Natte Yallock - Ch. 1330-1560m
- Landsborough Stawell Rd, Landsborough - Ch. 1315-2670m
- Lexton Ararat Rd, Amphitheatre - Ch. 1325-2180m
- Amphitheatre Rd Pt 2, Raglan - Ch. 15325-17010m
- Chute Raglan Rd, Raglan - Ch. 1770-1850m
- Astbury St, Avoca - Ch. 0-811m
- Goldsmith St, Lexton - Ch. 0-240m
- Number One Ck Rd, Avoca - Ch. 0-1260m

- Avoca Bealiba Rd, Natte Yallock - Ch. 6530-7745m
- North St, Avoca - Ch. 328-585m
- Templeton St, Avoca - Ch. 0-447m

c) Resheets: (\$627k Council)

- Mine Rd
- Mills Rd
- Yalong Rd
- Chute – Waterloo Rd
- Glenbrae School Rd
- Mountain Hut Rd
- Hopes Rd
- Harrison Back Rd
- Lead Ln
- Slaughterhouse Rd
- Davies Crt
- Marias Lane
- Back Raglan Rd
- Trawalla Rd
- Beaufort Carranballac Rd
- Old Geelong Rd
- Old Shirley Rd

d) Bridges, Culverts & Floodways: (\$420k Council & \$300k RTR, other external)

- B58 – Eurambeen Streatham Rd – \$150k (RTR) – Bridge to major culvert. (Renewal)
- B60 - Eurambeen Streatham Rd - \$150k (RTR) – Bridge to major culvert. (Renewal)
- B192 - Beaufort Caravan Park No. 1 Footbridge Reconstruction - \$50k (Council) - (Renewal)
- MC342 - Beaufort-Carngham Rd – Major Culvert Reconstruction - \$56k (Council) - (Renewal)
- B185 – Amphitheatre Rd – Bridge Reconstruction - \$150k (Council/External) - (Renewal)
- B139 – Raglan-Elmhurst Rd – Bridge Approaches - \$60k (Council) - (Renewal)
- Bridge Load Limit Signs – \$30k (Council) - (Renewal/New)
- Remaining \$74k – Major Bridge Repairs. (Council) - (Renewal). Works include concrete repairs (Spalling, Expansion joint replacement), painting (Steel bridges, Kerbs/handrails), Erosion Protection (Beaching, Underpinning abutments, etc), and shoulder sealing, signs & vegetation removal, etc.
- B80 - High St Footbridge Reconstruction - \$30k – SLRSP Funding (Renewal)

Carryover projects:

- B22 – Lake Goldsmith Rd – Guard Rail Renewal - LRCIP
- B107 – Mckinlay St - Guard Rail Renewal - LRCIP

Potential projects still under consideration:

- Bridge 7 – Back Cemetery Rd - \$400k - (Deck Renewal)
- Small unsealed bridges:
  - B112 – Mooramong Rd - \$45k
  - B78 – Haddon Preston Hill Rd - \$30k
  - B79 - Haddon Preston Hill Rd - \$40k
  - B124 – North South Rd - \$20k
  - B125 – North South Rd - \$20k
  - B126 - North South Rd - \$30k
  - B131 – Pittong Snake Valley Rd - \$30k



- B132 – Pittong Snake Valley Rd - \$30k
- B44 – Dawson Rd - \$55k
- e) Drainage: (\$156k Council)
  - Correa Park drainage north to the railway corridor
  - Gregory St easement
  - General side entry pit renewal
- f) Footpath: (\$30k Council)  
General renewal to be confirmed after yearly condition inspections.
- g) Kerb & Channel: (\$27k Council)  
General renewal to be confirmed after yearly condition inspections.
- h) Building: (\$190k Council)
  - Lawerance St – Office facade
  - Lawerance St – Office front toilet reno
  - Beaufort Apex/Croquet Building
  - Landsborough Information center Building
  - Beaufort weigh bridge building
- i) Recreation: (\$87k Council)
  - Projects yet to be determined but may include playgrounds.
- j) Other:
  - SLRSP - \$2mill – Projects are to be delivered over an 18-month period Jan 2025 to Jun 2026.
  - Transfer Stations (\$51k Council)
  - Waterways; Dams & Bores (\$15k Council)

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

Priority 4 - Economy

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

Enabling Principles

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

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

There was an opportunity for the public to comment on the 2024/25 budget which was placed on exhibition in May 2024. Council also assesses where customer action requests show a correlation between the number of requests and road conditions.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Pyrenees A 3 Portrait 5 Year Capital Works Project (2024) [12.1.4.1 - 1 page]

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

Projects can encounter unforeseen problems that impact on budgets and timeframes to deliver them. Council officers continue to monitor major projects to ensure expenditure and delivery is managed.

## **CONCLUSION**

The total value of \$38.9 million on capital works over the past 5 years is a significant proportion of Council's budget. It provides the public and community with assets that are maintained to provide an ongoing service level or an improved level of service where funding is available.

### **Cr Ron Eason / Cr David Clark**

That Council

1. acknowledges the program of major capital works delivered over the past four years and
2. endorses the delivery of the capital works program for 2024-25 financial year and beyond as outlined in this report.

**CARRIED**

## **12.2. CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **12.2.1. RECOVERY UPDATE**

**Jane Bowker – Flood Recovery Coordinator**

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

**File No:** 28/14/50

#### **PURPOSE**

This report is an update to the Council and community on recovery activities arising from the October / November 2022 flood events and the February 2024 fire event. This report relates to activities between October 2022 and August 2024.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Council approved the Pyrenees Flood Recovery Plan at its meeting on 21 February 2023. The recovery plan for the Bayindeen Rock Road bushfire was also approved by Council at its meeting on 16 April 2024 and this is the first update related to recovery activities in the Bushfire Recovery Plan.

Both recovery plans provide a full summary (current at the time of the plan being written) of its respective event and are designed to evolve over time as information changes. With the community at its core, the plans include actions to coordinate recovery and resilience initiatives to ensure individuals, communities and businesses recover well. The plans provide an implementation framework and reporting mechanism, and oversight of the completing of the actions in the plans is the responsibility of the Recovery Team with support from other Council staff and recovery agencies.

Going forward quarterly updates will now be provided on both events at the same time. It is noted that the key recovery environments (social, built, economic, natural and coordination/administration) and many actions are the same in both plans.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Recovery continues with a strong focus on supporting community recovery and building resilience. It is important recovery is community-led and incorporate the needs and desires of the broad and diverse communities. Supporting community recovery also includes the rehabilitation of the infrastructure including roads, culverts, floodways and now guardrail, guideposts and signage to make the public asset safe for users.

The attached Recovery Plans Summary of Review details the status of recovery actions. A majority of the actions in the plans are ongoing (orange) and will be for quite some time. Some of the key outcomes since the last report are:

- Ballarat Community Health and Grampians Community Health now have staff engaged in the Community Resilience and Recovery Program. Council's Recovery Team are working closely with BCH/GCH staff to coordinate recovery activities.
- The BCH Team are visiting residents with Council's Community Recovery Officer to provide outreach support.
- Regular meetings with DEECA have commenced to coordinate recovery efforts on private and public land.
- Health and wellbeing sessions with David Younger (disaster expert and clinical psychologist) were held in August for Council staff.
- The Heart Project (Healing with Art) has commenced with 30 people attending the first workshop. This program has been organised by some local artists and is about providing some artistic relief for all those affected in anyway by the recent bushfires.

- Other recovery/resilience initiatives have been scheduled include pop-up health clinics in Raglan and Amphitheatre, Working Dog & Farmer Health Check Workshop (Stocksense) and ArtTrax High Tea.
- The Stockyard Hill Wind Farm Fire Recovery Grants for residents to replace damaged water infrastructure, workshop tools & equipment and fencing have been very successful with \$50,000 allocated to the grants.
- The first community session was held on 4 September as part of the investigation into flood mitigation options at the Avoca Recreation Reserve.
- Council's Bushfire Recovery Planning Program has been established to help local landowners through the planning process to rebuild after the fire.

Other notable matters include:

- Planning is underway to establish a community recovery network to coordinate community-led recovery.
- Council staff have submitted packages of work to the State Government for approval to finish the repairs to flood damaged infrastructure. On the ground works have stopped since December 2023 until approval is given. Council is working closely with the State Government to progress the approvals so work can recommence.
- Assessments of fire damaged infrastructure such as guardrail, guideposts and signage are complete. Repair works have been packaged up and submitted to the State Government for approval. Once approved, on the ground works will be completed.
- Council is working with community and contractors on the hazardous tree removal.
- The State Government is continuing to work closely with Council to assess DRFA (Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements) claims. Claims are currently being assessed for both the flood and fire event.
- Council officers recently met with Local Government Victoria (LGV) and Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV). This was an opportunity to discuss and advocate on a range of matters relating to funding for the flood and fire events and other recovery matters.

## **COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**

Priority 1 - People

1a. Prepare for emergencies and ensure community safety.

Priority 2 - Place

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

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION OUTCOMES**

Residents, farmers, sporting/recreation groups, community organisations and business owners continue to be contacted by recovery support organisations such as Council, Ballarat & Grampians Health Service, Partners in Wellbeing, Recovery Hotline Team, and AgVic as part of providing ongoing support. Support is ongoing for anyone affected by the floods and/or fire, in any way, when they are ready.

There has been continued engagement with government agencies and organisations in planning and coordinating the response, relief, recovery, and resilience efforts. Consultation and engagement will continue for however long it takes to ensure the community is fully supported in their recovery.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 10.09.2024 - PSC Recovery Plans Status Report [**12.2.1.1** - 23 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

There has been a significant risk to public safety caused by the consecutive, concurrent and compounding emergency events in the Pyrenees over the last 12 years (floods 2011, 2016, 2022, fires in 2019 and 2024,

COVID 2020-2023). There has been widespread damage to public and private assets, the environment and substantial personal hardship caused to individuals, community organisations and businesses.

Council faces significant financial risk if the recovery effort is not managed well and requires ongoing support from the Commonwealth and State Governments. Council is submitting claims through the DRFA process for cost recovery however Council will not be reimbursed for the full cost spent. Council staff continue to advocate to state and federal government for ongoing funding to support community recovery activities, infrastructure repairs and recovery staff.

The following table sets out the summary of Council expenditure as at June 30 2024 for the October 2022 flood event and the February 2024 fire event and lists initial funding provided in advance.

<b>Pyrenees Shire Council Recovery Costs</b>			
<b>As at 30 June 2024</b>			
<b>Cost to Council</b>			
Flood Event	\$1,410,334	\$3,427,611	<b>\$4,837,945</b>
Fire Event	\$0	\$2,073,737	<b>\$2,073,737</b>
Reimbursements	-\$1,297,783	-\$3,356,089	<b>-\$4,653,873</b>
<b>Cost To Council</b>	<b>\$112,551</b>	<b>\$2,145,258</b>	<b>\$2,257,809</b>

Though Council has received funding up front, the level of expenditure Council has incurred results in Council having to cashflow \$2.258 million as at June 30 2024, this being a significant level of funds for a municipality of this size. Whilst Council has submitting claims for funding, until such time as those claims exceed the level of funds initially provided to Council there will be no further improvement in the cashflow position.

To date the claims submitted is tabled below:

<b>Pyrenees Shire Council Claims</b>			
<b>As at 30 June 2024</b>			
<b>Cost to Council</b>			
	<b>Submitted</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>% Approved</b>
Flood Claims Approved	\$541,355	316,270	<b>58%</b>
Flood claims Submitted not yet Approved	\$3,364,507	-	
	<b>\$3,905,862</b>	<b>\$316,270</b>	

To date \$3.9 million of claims have been submitted with \$0.3 million being approved. Of those claims approved, only 58% of the initial claim submitted was successful. It is expected that a greater percentage of future claims will be successful, as some of Councils expenditures when the events initially occurred cannot be claimed under the guidelines.

Should all the current claims be successful Council will still not have reached the level of the initial funding provided by government, hence the financial strain on Council will not improve.

## CONCLUSION

Progress has been made in key recovery areas as detailed in the summary report. Council officers are active with recovery and resilience-building initiatives. Whilst there has been the fire and Council staff have been busy providing support to those that have been affected, work continues to support those affected by the Oct/Nov 2022 floods.

Council officers would like to thank all the community members, businesses, and organisations that have helped with the recovery efforts so far. Recovery is a big task and takes time, and efforts have been appreciated.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Ron Eason**

That Council

1. notes the progress made against required recovery actions in the Flood Recovery Plan and Bushfire Recovery Plan; and
2. continues to advocate to government in respect of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements, and for further funding to provide long-term support for individuals, communities and businesses to recover well and build resilience.

**CARRIED**

### 12.3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

#### 12.3.1. SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL - SEPTEMBER 2024

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

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

**Report Author:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 16/17/02

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to schedule a Special Meeting of Council during the 2024 Election Period (Caretaker Period) to receive the 2024 Annual Report and adopt the 2023/24 Financial and Performance Statement.

#### BACKGROUND

Council's Annual Report is ordinarily presented to Council to be received at its October meeting of Council. As 2024 is a General Election year, the Annual Report is required to be presented no later than the day before election day.

The 2023/24 Financial and Performance Statement is required to be adopted by 30 September 2024.

#### ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The 2024 Election Period commences at 12 noon on Tuesday 17 September 2024 to 6pm Saturday 26 October 2024.

Section 100 of the **Local Government Act 2020** states that:

- 1) *For the purposes of section 18(1)(d), the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the annual report at a Council meeting open to the public.*
- 2) *The Council meeting must be held—*
  - (a) *in the year of a general election, on a day not later than the day before election day; and*
  - (b) *in any other year, within 4 months of the end of the financial year.*

Item 6.3 (b) of Council's Election Period Policy 2024 states that:

- b) *A Council meeting will be held during the election period of 2024 to enable the Mayor to present the Pyrenees Shire Council Annual Report 2024. This must be held prior to 25 October 2024.*

Therefore, it is proposed that a Special Meeting of Council be held virtually on Tuesday 24 September 2024 to receive the 2024 Annual Report and adopt the 2023/24 Financial and Performance Statement.

#### COUNCIL PLAN / LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE

Priority 1 - People

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

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

#### ATTACHMENTS

Nil



**FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Nil.

**CONCLUSION**

Due to the 2024 General Election, a Special Meeting of Council is proposed on Tuesday 24 September 2024 to receive the 2024 Annual Report.

**Cr Tanya Kehoe / Cr Damian Ferrari**

That Council holds a Special Meeting of Council virtually at 6.00pm on Tuesday 24 September 2024 to receive the 2024 Annual Report and to adopt the 2023/24 Financial and Performance Statements.

**CARRIED**

### 12.3.2. LIBRARY SERVICES

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

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

**Report Author:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 42/02/02

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on library services and community engagement activities in respect of library services for council consideration.

#### BACKGROUND

In June 2024, a report was presented to Council providing the findings and recommendations from the review conducted on the Frontline Services business unit in 2023.

At this meeting, Council resolved:

*That Council:*

*2. Approves in Principle Recommendation 1 within the Report: that council officers, in consultation with staff and community, investigate and design an operating model for the resource centres that incorporates the 'Open Library' concept as described within the report.*

Following this report, there were media reports of misinformation about what Council had resolved leading to fear and concern in the community about whether Council had a plan to reduce staff and library services. Despite attempts to clarify that Council did not have such a plan, the fears and concerns remained.

In August 2024, a petition was submitted through Councillor Damian Ferrari and presented to the meeting requesting the following:

*We the undersigned (being residents, ratepayers, employed persons within the boundaries of the Shire, visitors and other regular users of the libraries within Shire's resources centres), respectfully petition Pyrenees Shire Councillors to adequately fund shire's library services (within the Beaufort and Avoca Resource and Information Centres) and to ensure that there are no reductions from present levels of:*

- *Funding;*
- *Serviced hours (operational hours when staff are present and actively on duty, as opposed to unserviced hours, when assistance from staff would not be available);*
- *Staffing levels; and,*
- *Purchasing of materials.*

The petition contained 947 signatures.

At the meeting, Council resolved:

*That Council:*

- 1. Receives the petition*
- 2. Requests a report to be presented to the September 2024 meeting of Council on the matter contained in the petition.*

Since then, Cr Ferrari has advised that further signatures on the petition have been received by him which he would look to table.

### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

During August 2024, community engagement was undertaken on Library Services in accordance with the Council resolution, including on the “open libraries” concept.

In-person engagement sessions were held and feedback via Councils engagement hub was also available. General feedback and a Libraries Survey was open from Monday 12 August to Friday 30 August 2024.

In-person engagement sessions were held as follows:

- Monday 12 August at 5.30pm at the Avoca Rural Transaction Centre (behind the library).
- Wednesday 14 August at 3pm at the Beaufort Community (Senior Citizens) Centre.
- Wednesday 14 August at 5.30pm at the Beaufort Community (Senior Citizens) Centre.
- Thursday 15 August at 10am at the Avoca Rural Transaction Centre (behind the library).
- Thursday 15 August at 3pm in the Lexton Community Hub.
- Friday 16 August at 10am at the Beaufort Community (Senior Citizens) Centre

The engagement sessions and request for feedback was advertised in Council’s Public Notices published in the Pyrenees Advocate and Maryborough Advertiser from Friday 2 August 2024, published on Council’s website and on Council’s Facebook page.

Hardcopies of the survey were made available at the Beaufort Resource Centre, Avoca Information Centre and Beaufort Council Office. Copies of the survey were also provided to parent's groups and local schools via our Community Wellbeing team.

There were 55 people in total attend the in-person sessions and 126 responses to the survey.

Survey responses closed on 30 August and the responses to the survey questions are attached to this report.

Below is a summary of the feedback:

- 126 responses received (plus further hard copy responses received after close of the online survey)
- 60% of respondents Over 64 years old
- 71% of respondents were female
- 90% existing library members
- 60% of respondents use the services at least weekly
- Use of the static libraries is spread across the day with morning hours receiving more use
- Respondents reported using the libraries for a broad range of purposes
- Respondents reported high level of satisfaction with:
  - Facilities - 8.86/10
  - Range of books /resources - 8.59/10
  - Experience with staff assistance - 9.50/10

In respect of the Open Libraries concept:

- 35% of respondents said they would be likely to use the facilities outside of hours under an open libraries model
- If the facilities were accessible outside the current ordinary hours under an open libraries model, the most likely hours of use were on weekends 1pm-5pm and weekdays 5pm-8pm
- Respondents would require access to be restricted to registered user access only and security cameras remotely monitored.

In respect of the existing services, the most popular change suggestion was a greater range of books/resources.

Further individual comments and suggestions in respect of the services including the mobile library were also provided for consideration.

The survey data is a valuable resource and guide for future service provision. The open libraries model received a cautious but sufficient level of support to justify a trial be undertaken providing appropriate measures are in place, and in order to make the static library facilities accessible for a broader range of people outside the ordinary staffed hours.

In addition to the above, Council has been successful with a funding application of approximately \$200,000 to undertake improvements to the static library facilities to make them more contemporary, and user friendly. Among the intended improvements are improving the type and versatility of shelving, and the entrance at the Avoca facility.

In respect of the petition, it is evident from the level of participation, that the community value the library services highly, and while, there is currently no plan by Council to alter the staffing levels or the ordinary hours of the service, the community sentiment should reasonably be considered when making decisions about future budgets.

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

Priority 1 - People

1c. Improve accessibility and inclusivity.

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

Enabling Principles

b. Provide transparency and accountability

c. Use resources efficiently and effectively

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

Community engagement activities are detailed within the report.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2024.08 - Libraries Engagement - summary document [12.3.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. 2024.08 - Libraries Consultation Survey - PRINT VERSION [12.3.2.2 - 5 pages]
3. 2024.09.03 - PUBLIC Survey Results - Pyrenees Shire Libraries [12.3.2.3 - 5 pages]
4. 20240820\_-\_ Library Petition- Redacted [12.3.2.4 - 79 pages]

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

The library services including Avoca and Beaufort static libraries operation out of the resource centers in each town as well as the mobile library service are budgeted at approximately \$500,000pa.

(This cost excludes the estimated cost to provide Visitor Information Services which comprise approximately 11% of activity in Beaufort and 22% of activity in Avoca.)

Approximately 25% of the cost is supported by a state government operating grant which has remained static for three years, while costs continue to increase in the order of 4% per annum.

The financial sustainability of the current service model will require further consideration by the Council soon to be elected.

**CONCLUSION**

Library services are highly valued by the community as evident in the response to the recent engagement and customer survey outlined in this report.

The recent petition tabled with Council has also demonstrated the community desire for Council to retain current staffing and service levels.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the level of participation in the petition received and reinforce that it currently has no plan to reduce staffing or service levels.
2. Acknowledges and thanks respondents to the libraries survey for their feedback on the services and refers the feedback to library management for consideration.
3. Acknowledges and thanks the current resource centre and library staff for their valuable service.
4. Provides in principle support for an open library model (unstaffed outside ordinary hours) on a trial basis to compliment the current library service once appropriate measures are in place.

**An alternate motion was put forward:**

**Cr David Clark / Cr Damian Ferrari**

That Council:

1. Thanks the Petitioners for their submission to Council. Confirms that Library Services will continue without change for the current financial year.
2. Acknowledges and thanks respondents to the libraries survey for their feedback on the services and refers the feedback to library management for consideration.
3. Acknowledges and thanks the current resource centre and library staff for their valuable service.
4. Seeks a further report from Council Officers as to the logistics of implementing a trial of the Open Library Model in the next term of Council.

**CARRIED**

### **12.3.3. TINY TOWNS FUND**

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

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

**Report Author:** Jim Nolan – Chief Executive Officer

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

**File No:** 22/16/36

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is for Council to support funding applications in relation to the Tiny Towns Fund.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Regional Development Victoria's Tiny Towns Fund supports local communities to deliver quality tourism and community facility projects.

Towns with populations below 5,000 people in the 48 local government areas of regional Victoria are eligible to apply.

<https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/grants-and-programs/tiny-towns-fund>

The objective of the program is to back community-driven projects that enhance the smallest towns, strengthen community connections and encourage more visitors to all corners of Victoria.

Grants between \$5,000 and \$50,000 are available for each project. The fund is open to applications from incorporated not-for-profit community organizations and Local Government Authorities that operate in Victoria.

Applications for Round 2 are now open and close at 5pm on 25 October 2024.

#### **ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

While specific applications are still to be determined, and various community groups are being encouraged to apply directly, there is an opportunity for Council lead applications to be made to deliver key projects consistent with the Council Plan.

As applications close during the election period, it is suggested that Council provide in principle support for the Chief Executive Officer to make applications as appropriate with the view to the newly elected Council endorsement should any application be successful.

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

Priority 1 - People

1b. Support a vibrant community arts, culture and heritage environment.

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

Enabling Principles

a. Motivate and inspire community involvement

b. Provide transparency and accountability

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

Various community groups have been engaged on the matter through Council's Community Development Team.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Program- Guidelines- Tiny- Towns- Fund- Round-2 [12.3.3.1 - 18 pages]

## **FINANCIAL / RISK IMPLICATIONS**

Any cash or in-kind contribution required will be subject to the newly elected council endorsement should an application be successful.

## **CONCLUSION**

Council's support is sought for application(s) to be made for funding under the Tiny Towns Fund.

## **Cr Ron Eason / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

That Council:

1. Endorses funding applications be made to the Tiny Towns Fund with any unbudgeted co-contributions to be endorsed by the newly elected Councils should any project application be successful.

**CARRIED**



### **13. COUNCILLOR REPORTS AND GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **Cr Clark**

In terms of this last month at council, I attended both of my external board meetings I represent Council on, the Highlands LLEN and CVGA, CVGA particularly is doing some really significant heavy lifting at the moment in the policy areas around both the consultation and development of transmission lines and wind farms but more particularly about community benefits and how they might flow to affected communities. That is really valuable work in terms of helping us, and we've considered that as Council as well.

I've attended a number of MAV and Rural Council Victoria's events and next week I'll actually be in Canberra at the national Emergency Management Authorities forecast affectively for this bushfire season, but it will also give me the opportunity to pursue councils discussion that we had earlier around recovery and the fact that how poorly the system is working for small rural councils like us in terms of getting money.

I attended the Waubra community cuppa, and the item of the Waubra Reserve which was spoken about extensively and thank you to Council for considering that tonight.

Finally, we had the Waubra Community Hub AGM which of course is a committee of management of Council, an assets committee. We have a number of young mums in our community and they nearly all put their hands up to join the hub committee. They have a very specific interest at the moment of getting a new playground there and they are doing some really good work, and absolutely to be encouraged both by the hub group and also by Council.

#### **Cr Eason**

I attended the annual meeting for the Avoca Food Pantry, an organisation with the Beaufort Food Pantry that work across our shire in the background, they don't get out there in front of everybody else, but they are a wonderful group of volunteers, providing urgent and necessary needs to our community and I congratulate them for continuing that wonderful service.

I attended a couple of the library community engagement sessions which were very very enlightening. I attended the councillor cuppa at Lexton.

I attended the Sunraysia Highway committee meeting, again another group of people behind trying to get our roads in better condition than they currently are, state government isn't necessarily full of funds at the moment to try and help, but they do things when they can, and that committee gives them a lead as to what we consider to be urgent.

I attended a citizenship ceremony here the other day which was lovely to see a young mother from across the ditch become an Australian citizen something that makes an important part of what councils about, citizenship ceremonies, they are very, very important.

Mr Mayor, congratulations on your lengthy term in council, it's been an honour to be on council with you for my 12 years.

#### **Cr Kehoe**

Along with the other councillors, it was wonderful to catch up with everyone at the Waubra community cuppa, and then to head up to Natte Yallock just last week and see the amazing and beautiful countryside

up there and it is amazing how diverse and how amazing our shire is and we are very blessed to live in this part of the country.

I also attended one of the library consultation sessions here in Beaufort, thank you to all those people that turned up to those consultations and let us know feedback in other ways as well.

Last week in the Mt Emu ward we had another leg of the awesome little Beaufort Connect Tiny Halls Tour, it was a success again at the Lake Goldsmith Hall last Friday, with the attendees thoroughly enjoying a beautiful evening of entertainment and fellowship of others who were there.

Relating to the beautiful weather that we have had, although it may be bringing out a few snakes, they are on the move a little bit so be careful, the crops are looking particularly good, particularly the canola across the ward, the rain was well received over the weekend, I know farmers were grateful for that so we continue to hope and pray that the farmers will experience a productive season coming up, we are thinking of you all.

Continuing as we have spoken tonight about improving our road and bridge network, which we have been actively aiming to do, and of course the cropping season, as that equipment will be moving around on the roads that will begin soon, please drive safely and be very careful of bridge access etc. and crossings.

I would like to give a huge congratulations to all of the local sporting groups as they wind up their winter season, congratulations to award winners, best and fairest etc. But above all, huge thanks to all those amazing volunteers who make these sporting events occur across the shire, thanks to the club committees, the coaches, the referees, tuck shop teams, parents and friends who get players there and the support crew that support their communities. There is one gentleman who I am going to embarrass in the gallery who is there every home game here at Beaufort collecting the gate fees and greeting people as they go in so warmly when the weather is not so warmly, George Kirsanovs, it is awesome to see you every time we rock up to the football, thank you to people like you because it wouldn't happen and what is important is often groups as we know, such as our football and netball clubs, they're incredibly important for bringing the community together and creating a social space and a safe space that supports the emotional and mental health often of community members so again a huge thanks.

A massive congratulations Cr Vance, what an achievement, over so many years and the people that you have impacted, it is just absolutely mind blowing and what an achievement. It has been great to be on council for the last twelve years, but you've been here a lot longer than I have and I am sure you have made such an impact so congratulations.

### **Cr Ferrari**

Attended the cuppas and the chat, up to Natte and had to note that the oval was looking pretty good up there and there was a couple of people training so that was good.

Had some constituent meetings regarding the library services and activities, it has been a pretty hot topic over the last couple months, it's good that people are still interested, they are still making contact and wanting to know what's going on and having that communication, I encourage people to keep doing that and then if they have got the most current information, they are going to be up to date with what is actually happening and what's not actually happening, it's important we keep those communication lines going.

I have had a few enquiries and discussions with constituents regarding the ongoing recovery matters. I think it's important to highlight, it's not too late for assistance for people and don't hesitate to ask for help if you need it because you're absolutely entitled to it and as I said to the people that I have spoken to, and

I'll say it again tonight, the incident usually occurs quite quickly, but the recovery can be ongoing for quite a long time and that's just the nature of how it is and what happens. The incident happens really quickly but recovery takes a long time and that's not uncommon, that's just how it is, so just hang in there and don't be afraid to ask for help if needed.

I'd like to congratulate Beaufort, the football netball clubs had a really tough year and they have battled through and got through to the end of the year, but I'd really like to congratulate the A Grade netballers and the under 13 netballers for making the finals, they're both out now but it was a really great effort to battle on and they really just battled hard and made it probably above where everyone was expecting them to make it, so congratulations to the A Grade netballers and the under 13 netballers, I am sure it is going to sit you in good stead for next year.

Last but not least, I would like to congratulate Rob Vance, the Mayor, for his long-term service as ward councillor for De Cameron ward. It's an amazing feat and I can mention that he is still very about our communities and especially those within his ward so even though he might be stepping down as a councillor, he is still very, very passionate about are area, particularly his own little patch and I don't think that's ever going to go out of him. Over that long period of time that's just an unbelievable feat. I would also like to thank Rob for his advice, guidance and support to me during his time that we have shared on the council and we've had many good conversations, especially whilst travelling in the car, not always about council but we've had some really good conversations. Rob has been a really good support to me with some really good, sound, level-headed advice and I just can't thank him enough for that. To that end, I wish Rob all the best for the future and again thank you for your outstanding service.

#### **Cr Vance**

Thank you very much to my co councillors for the kind words.

During the last month I attended a Local Government Mayoral Advisory panel meeting in Melbourne with the other nine people that were put on this committee to advise the Minister for Local Government. I think it wasn't totally a waste of time, but it was close at some stages, I'm sure the Minister had her mind made up but it was good to mix with other councillors and hear their thoughts about what was happening in local governments world.

Following that meeting I had to drive all the way from Bacchus Marsh to Trawool which is the other side of Seymour for a Rural Councils Forum, we had a wonderful gathering there and a great forum, even though as you walk this lifetime, I heard somebody say that it's probably not what you do but it's the memories that you make that stick with you and to be recognised by your peers is always rewarding for the efforts that you put in. It was nice to be recognised by the RCV for the time that I had served there.

The following week I went off down to Warragul with the Timber Towns Group that I had also been involved with for a very long time and to be recognised by them, I was presented with a piece of redgum wood, a foot block, with a lovely plaque on it, it was very rewarding and a great memory to carry. We had our AGM after the forum.

On the Wednesday I attended Lexton for the cuppa and chat.

I attended the libraries engagement session.

I attended a virtual meeting with Rural Councils the following week.

On the Sunday I had the privilege of attending the Vietnam Veterans Memorial service at Ararat, it was great to catch up with vets and it was a well-attended service which was really pleasing to see.

I attended a GBAC meeting in Ballarat with Jim and then on the 22<sup>nd</sup> I went off to Melbourne to the Mayors and CEO's MAV Delegates Networking Night and then the next day attended the State Council meeting.

I attended a citizenship ceremony here in this very chamber on the second last day of August where we welcomed a young mother from Snake Valley, a lovely girl with three great kids that were bouncing around, full of life.

***Cr Vance then read a message that he wanted to deliver as his last:***

As this is my last Ordinary Council meeting as Mayor of Pyrenees Shire and the last as your councillor for the De Cameron riding. I want to use this opportunity to say a few words. I'd like to thank my fellow Councillors and all the staff that I have worked with over the years, and to highlight a few achievements that this Council has delivered in this current term.

We developed and adopted the Council Plan 2021-2025, and the Council vision was informed by a deliberative engagement process involving a diverse range of our residents, and this plan has provided the key strategic direction for Council during this term of Council.

Roads and bridges are our biggest expenditure as was explained tonight, we've spent almost \$40 million in the upgrade improvements over five years to ensure that our agriculture sector and our residents have a fit for purpose transport network that meets their essential access to farms and to residences.

I also want to highlight another essential service which affects every individual resident in the Shire. In this term, Council introduced a universal multi-bin roadside waste collection service rolled out to every resident in the Shire. This is an incredible uplift in the service standard and one in which Pyrenees has shown to be early adopter of the state's Circular Economy Policy objectives.

Maintenance and renewal of our building assets is another area where council has made significant investments in this term. The completion of the \$3.8 million Lexton Community Hub, a state-of-the-art recreation and community facility. I was so proud to participate in the official opening with Federal Minister Catherine King and our lovely Member for Ripon Martha Haylett this year which saw the culmination of many years of planning to deliver this project for the community which has recently become known as the Hub-Pub. As we all know, their local hotel ceased to operate so the community building is now being used as a centre for a quiet ale when they need and provide facilities for the sporting groups as well.

During this term council had to make a very difficult decision in ceasing to be providers in Home Age Care Service because of administrative changes at a federal level. Council continues to support active ageing in our community through our Community Development Team and we will continue to advocate and monitor the delivery of aged care services by other providers to ensure that our elderly community needs are met.

Councils' library services have been the subject of review this year and whilst council has not made any decision to adjust service levels, Council appreciates just how valued the services are by community.

The completion of the Correa Park residential development in Beaufort during the term of this council is the culmination of a 10-year initiative and investment to stimulate housing and to grow our population. Council has further committed to play its part in stimulating housing by purchasing additional land in Beaufort and Avoca for future residential development.

We have faced many natural disasters in recent history, and we continue to plan for, respond to, and recover from floods, fire, drought and storm. The 2022 flood event was widespread across the Shire and the recovery from this event will be an ongoing focus until the damage to our roadwork is restored.

The devastating bushfire in February this year saw the loss of many homes, the destruction of both public and private property and some of our magnificent natural forests. Council remains committed to our communities in our recovery efforts from this devastating event. Whilst trauma and loss were plentiful, council was firm in its decision to remove a number of hazardous trees from the many roads affected by this fire. This difficult decision was made to ensure council met its responsibilities in keeping our road users and our community safe. While this was not a popular decision by some, it was nevertheless the most responsible decision in the interest of public safety, and to restore safe access for residents and businesses.

While I don't propose to speak to all the services and highlights of this council term or of my term as councillor, I would like to recognise the committed and talented staff that support council and deliver the council vision. This workforce is one of, if not the smallest workforces of any local government in Victoria and yet this team continues to deliver excellent services and I would like to thank each and every one of them for their contribution in making a difference to the Pyrenees communities.

Council recently made a decision to reappoint our current Chief Executive Officer for a further term. After an extensive review process, Council decided that Jim is the best person to guide our Council and lead our organisation to continue the delivery of Councils long term vision for the community.

While there are many challenges ahead for the new Council soon to be elected, there are also many reasons to be hopeful that the future of Pyrenees is bright with magnificent landscapes, productive land and wonderful communities, our Council and the organisation stand together to continue to lead and serve you into the future.

I just want to reminisce for just a short time on things that are special to me.

Back in 1994 and leading up to 94 when amalgamations were being discussed, I spent a fair bit of time with councillor Lyle Driscoll and our former shire secretary Ken Shearer in the Avoca Shire, lobbying state government in producing what is now known as the Pyrenees Shire. We looked at options, we looked at the Northern Grampians town of Stawell and St Arnaud, and we looked at Maryborough and we looked at Ararat, the towns all around us and we decided that we wanted to create a rural council. We didn't want the influence of the big city centres, or as we thought those days, 10,000 people was a fairly large city, so after some long deliberations and consulting with, I can clearly remember going to Ballarat and meeting at the Mid City Hotel with Steven Elder and Rob Knowles who was the current Minister for Health and putting the pressure on to allow us to create a rural council and we see the result today. At that stage they said - we will give you two years to see how it works and if it's successful your good to go and if you're not, you will be amalgamated with the larger centres.

That was one occasion that I feel very proud about and also we went off to Mortlake when the announcement was made after 18 months of commissioner operation to say that the new shire would be released and I had the privilege of moving that it be called the Pyrenees Shire and the late Marjorie Oddie seconded that motion, Marjorie was from the Ripon Shire.

That's a little bit of history that I feel very proud about and a few projects that I have been involved with over the years, two resource centres that we have developed, we purchased the Avoca site off the Maryborough knitting mills, the Avoca Resource Centre and we purchased the Beaufort Resource Centre off Wotherspoon motors and created that also. Both today, very great centres that promote our region. I can recall Catherine King who is now the Minister of Local Government and federal government when she was setting out in her adventures to join federal politics, we twisted her arm a little bit because we needed a new pavilion at the Avoca Racecourse and that was one of the promises that we got out of the former members, John Mildren, that he would come up with the money if they got over the line, well as luck happened we got a new centre at the racecourse in Avoca so that was great.

To see the windfarms come into the region, we have seen Waubra develop, we've seen our Stockyard Hill windfarm come to reality, we've seen the Crowlands windfarm come to reality, I was involved with advisory group with the Ararat windfarm when it was brought about. People have mixed feelings about the windfarms but it is the future and we can't deny the future.

I was involved with the development of the Landsborough water supply, going to Wattle Creek where the treatment plant has been placed on a property that I owned some years ago.

I have been involved with the development of the wineries in the Moonambel and Landsborough region and I have a great deal of pride in the fact that I rubbed shoulders with the likes of John Robb and Paul Henning and other developers that were the early days, Mark Summerfield now is a real champion of the area and our wineries are world renowned which is great.

I want to finish up by once again, thanking all of the councillors and the staff that I have worked with. It's not going to be easy, I love local government and all the people I have worked with, and I have really got to thank my wife, and my family for the support that they have given me over almost 37 years.

Thank you all.

#### **Cr Clark**

Mr Mayor, I would like to move a **formal vote of thanks** to you to record in the minutes, we have just done that, but I would also like to add my words to theirs.

It is 37 years since you started, I've got you down as 6 terms at Pyrenees, I am not sure of Avoca, 7 terms as Mayor. You've mentioned some, but you have missed a couple that really stand out to me, your commitment to the rural community, your commitment to roads, your commitment to telecommunications, particularly those 2 towers at Landsborough and Moonambel, I remember very, very well and you have also talked very much about your commitment to the greater municipality, Correa Park is one but I think growing the industry in the municipality and I think about things like Pyrenees hay and those kind of things.

Back to you as a person, I think you had a profound influence on all of us here, you are practical, you are absolutely no nonsense, you tell it as you see it and that was no more evident than this year in the fires in your dealing with the community and the media. Were a bit different to what we were when we started, we have now got phones, zoom and all that kind of thing but as a farmer the bit I like to finish on is the little bit of reality that you bring to those things that you do when you are on zoom as a farmer, particularly for our city cousins, they just can't image that you have actually come to them from the woolshed, out carting water or out feeding the sheep or cattle, it is an amazing sense of reality of how our life works out here that they don't get, except through dealing with you.

Thank you very much.

## 14. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

### 14.0.1. CLOSE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

#### CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

**Cr Ron Eason / Cr Damian Ferrari**

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

15.1 - Beaufort Lake Caravan Park Accommodation Upgrade

**CARRIED**

*The live streaming of Ordinary Meeting of Council - 10 September 2024 stopped at 7.44pm to consider confidential items.*

*The live stream re-commenced at 7.58pm and the Mayor chose to report on confidential items discussed in closed Council which are noted below.*

Item 15.1 - Beaufort Lake Caravan Park Accommodation Upgrade

- Council awarded a tender to Todd Devine Homes Pty Ltd for the supply of the DDA cabin.
- Council awarded a tender for the block of four motel units to Federation Luxury Transportables Pty Ltd

## 15. CLOSE OF MEETING

**Cr Ron Eason / Cr Tanya Kehoe**

The Ordinary Meeting of Council - 10 September 2024 closed at 8pm.

**CARRIED**

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

2024

Mayor Cr Robert Vance