



COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA

Wednesday 25 October 2023

at 4:00 PM

Apollo Bay Bowls Club

6 Moore Street, Apollo Bay

Next Council Meeting: 22 November 2023



COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 25 October 2023

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COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the next **COUNCIL MEETING OF THE COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL** will be held at Apollo Bay Bowls Club on Wednesday 25 October 2023 at 4:00 PM.

AGENDA

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING

OPENING PRAYER

*Almighty God, we seek your
blessing and guidance in our
deliberations on behalf of the
people of the Colac Otway Shire.
Enable this Council's decisions to be
those that contribute to the true
welfare and betterment of our community.*

AMEN

2 PRESENT

3 APOLOGIES

4 WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Colac Otway Shire acknowledges the original custodians and law makers of this land, their elders past, present and emerging and welcomes any descendants here today.

RECORDING AND PUBLICATION OF MEETINGS

Please note: All Council meetings will be live streamed and recorded when the meeting is held either at COPACC or online. This includes the public participation sections of the meetings. When meetings are held in other locations, Council will endeavour to make an audio recording of the meeting for community access. Matters identified as confidential items in the Agenda will not be live streamed or recorded regardless of venue or mode.

By participating in open Council meetings, individuals consent to the use and disclosure of the information they share at the meeting (including any personal and/or sensitive information).

As soon as practicable following each open Council meeting, the live stream recording will be accessible on Council's website. Audio recordings are also taken to facilitate the preparation of the minutes of open Council meetings and to ensure their accuracy. Recordings will be retained by Council for a period of four years.

As stated in the Governance Rules, other than an official Council recording, no video or audio recording of proceedings of Council Meetings will be permitted without specific approval by resolution of the relevant Council Meeting.

This meeting will be livestreamed to the public via Council's YouTube channel (search Colac Otway Shire Council at www.youtube.com).

5 QUESTION TIME

A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for question time. To ensure that each member of the gallery has the opportunity to ask questions, it may be necessary to allow a maximum of two questions from each person in the first instance. You must ask a question. Question time is not a forum for public debate or statements.

1. Questions received in writing prior to the meeting. Written questions must be received by 5pm on Monday 23 October 2023.
2. Questions from the floor.

6 PETITIONS / JOINT LETTERS

Nil

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A Councillor who has declared a conflict of interest, must leave the meeting and remain outside the room while the matter is being considered, or any vote is taken.

8 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- Council Meeting held on Wednesday 27 September 2023
- Unscheduled Council Meeting on Wednesday 11 October 2023

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 and the Minutes of the Unscheduled Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2023.

Item: 9.1

Petition - Sale of 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay

OFFICER	Ian Seuren
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to consider the petition received on 13 September 2023 and tabled at the 27 September 2023 Council meeting regarding the sale of Council property located at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has considered the potential sale of 69 McLachlan St, Apollo Bay on several occasions since 2016, in recognition that the building has served the community well for many decades as a kindergarten, but that the sale of the aging facility and property could assist in funding a new fit-for purpose kindergarten for the community at the Apollo Bay school site. The new kindergarten commenced operation in February 2022.

As construction of the new Early Years Hub neared completion in late 2021, Council resolved on 27 October 2021 to give notice of its intention to sell 69 McLachlan St, Apollo Bay. Council undertook the formal process in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and subsequently resolved on 22 February 2022 to sell the property known as 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay (former Apollo Bay Kindergarten).

Council considered the method of sale of the property at its August 2023 meeting and resolved to reaffirm its decision to sell the property, with the method of sale to be by public auction.

On 13 September 2023, Council received a petition from the Apollo Bay Community Voice requesting that Council not sell its property located at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay. The petition was available to be signed in both hard copy and online and received a total of 917 signatures. The petition was tabled at the September 2023 Council meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the petition received on 13 September 2023 from the Apollo Bay Community Voice requesting that Council not sell the property at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay.***
- 2. Notes that it has considered this matter on several occasions since 2016, and has resolved to sell the property at 69 McLachlan Street Apollo Bay at the following meetings:***
 - a. 23 February 2022***
 - b. 20 April 2022***
 - c. 23 August 2023.***
- 3. Reaffirms its intention to recover its financial contribution to the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub through the sale of the former kindergarten site, being 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay.***
- 4. Reaffirms its commitment to advocate on behalf of the community for solutions to its housing and childcare challenges.***
- 5. Advises the Apollo Bay Community Voice that it will proceed with the sale of the property at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

The sale of Council property at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay has been considered by Council on numerous occasions. This dates back to 2016 when Council first resolved to support the development of a new kindergarten at the Apollo Bay P-12 College and provided in-principle support for the sale of the then kindergarten site, located at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay.

Council has considered the matter of the sale of the property on several occasions since 2016, and has resolved to sell the property at 69 McLachlan Street Apollo Bay at the following meetings:

- 23 February 2022
- 20 April 2022
- 23 August 2023

At its 23 August 2023 meeting, Council reaffirmed its decision to sell the property through the following resolution:

That Council:

- 1. Notes that it gave notice of its intention to sell in accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020.***
- 2. Notes that it resolved to sell the property known as 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay at its:***
 - a. 23 February 2022; and***
 - b. 20 April 2022 meetings.***
- 3. Notes that Council has paid invoices totalling \$348k to contribute to the construction and fit out of the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub to recognise the incorporation of Maternal and Child Health into the facility consistent with Council's resolution of August 2016.***

- 4. Notes that Council resolved to reserve the remaining net sale proceeds for part funding of the childcare component of the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub.**
- 5. Notes that the status of the potential expansion of the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub referred to in point 4 above, is at concept stage and is not yet an endorsed project, and Council has not determined any role it may have in future service delivery of childcare in Apollo Bay, or anywhere else in the municipality.**
- 6. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to arrange the sale of 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay by public auction through a registered agent.**
- 7. Sets the reserve price for auction as the amount stated in the most recent Valuation provided as a confidential attachment.**
- 8. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute all necessary documentation to and incidental to, a contract of sale.**
- 9. Resolves to release the sale amount following the execution of a contract of sale.**
- 10. Will continue to advocate for childcare services in Apollo Bay.**

On 13 September 2023, Council received a petition from the Apollo Bay Community Voice requesting that Council not sell its property located at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay, which was tabled at the September 2023 Council meeting. The petition was available to be signed in both hard copy and online and received a total of 917 signatures.

The petition stated that there was a genuine level of concern about the sale of the property and much had changed regarding housing affordability in the two years since Council sought community feedback on its intention to sell the property. The petition requested that Council pause in making a decision to enable time to re-engage with the community. The premise of the petition was that social and affordable housing is pertinent to the sustainability of the community and the site could offer some solution to these challenges.

The petition requests that Council not sell the property for the following stated reasons:

- The proposed sale does not give priority to achieving the best outcomes for the local community and its future generations.
- By Council's own admission, it is the only vacant and suitably zoned land that it owns along the Great Ocean Road that could be used for social or key worker affordable housing in response to its declared housing crisis.
- History demonstrates the genuine stake the Apollo Bay community has in the property and the building, having purchased the land in the 1950's, secured Government funding, gifted it to the Council and raised further funds to complete the build and equip it as a Preschool and Infant Welfare Centre for the next 60+ years.

The site at 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay is approximately 800m² and zoned Neighbourhood Residential (NRZ). This zoning limits the development potential of the site and therefore would not provide a genuine or sizeable outcome to address the housing challenges.

In recent times, the Victorian Government has announced its housing reforms along with significant investments into affordable housing. In addition, the Federal Government announced in August 2023 the development of a new National Housing and Homelessness Plan, which will set out how these issues can be tackled head on by governments across Australia with short, medium and long term reforms.

Council, in partnership with its regional partners, continues to advocate to other levels of Government about the housing challenges experienced across the shire, which are even more pronounced in our coastal areas including Apollo Bay. It is understood that the Victorian Government has a good appreciation of the challenges associated with housing affordability in Apollo Bay, particularly for key workers, and is actively seeking ways of help address the needs of our community. It is anticipated that the strong advocacy will result in outcomes that will assist in addressing housing challenges across the shire.

The Apollo Bay Early Years Hub was completed in 2022 and is a modern contemporary facility providing a great service for the community. Council previously resolved to contribute approximately \$348,000 to the project from the sale of 69 McLachlan Street. Council has borne this cost and is yet to receive a return on its investment until the sale of the property.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report considers the following overarching governance principles:

- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.
- The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The sale of the property is in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Transfer of Land Act 1958*, and the Colac Otway Shire Council Acquisition and Disposal of Council Property.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable to this report.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Council undertook a community consultation process following its decision to give notice of its intention to sell the property known as 69 McLachlan Street, Apollo Bay. Council received nine submissions to this process. Following consideration of the submissions, Council resolved to sell the property at its 23 February 2022 Council meeting. It further reiterated this decision at its 20 April 2022 and 23 August 2023 meetings.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Public transparency is achieved through this matter being decided at an open Council meeting.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 2: We are a financially robust organisation.

Financial Management (s101 *Local Government Act 2020*)

In December 2020, Council committed to use the proceeds from the sale of the property as a contribution to the Maternal and Child Health component of the new Apollo Bay Early Years Hub (the Hub). Council's contribution to the construction and fit out of the Hub was approximately \$348,000. These funds have been paid, however Council is yet to receive the income from the sale of the property to pay back the costs already incurred.

Processing the sale of the property will recoup the funds that Council has already contributed to the Hub. Council has also resolved at its 20 April 2022 meeting to reserve the remaining net sale proceeds for part funding of the childcare component of the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub.

Service Performance (s106 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Following the construction of the new Apollo Bay Early Years Hub, the property is not required for its previous use as a kindergarten. As detailed earlier in the report, the site has very limited housing development potential and would not adequately address the housing affordability issues in Apollo Bay.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable to this report.

Communication/Implementation

Council's decision on this matter will be communicated to the Apollo Bay Community Voice, the submitter of the petition.

Human Rights Charter

Not applicable to this report.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Reaffirm Council's position to sell the property at 69 McLachlan Street Apollo Bay.

This option is recommended by officers as Council has resolved on several occasions to sell the property. Council has spent approximately \$348,000 on the development of the new Early Years Hub and is yet to recoup these funds through the sale of the property.

Option 2 – To determine not to sell the property at this point in time and undertake further engagement with the community.

This option is not recommended by officers as Council has considered this matter on several occasions and has resolved to sell the property, reaffirming its position at the August 2023 meeting. The proceeds from the sale of the property will be used to cover the costs incurred as Council's contribution to the development of the Early Years Hub.

Item: 9.2

Colac Otway Shire Annual Report 2022-23

OFFICER	Marlo Emmitt
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. 2022-23 Annual Report [9.2.1 - 182 pages]

1. PURPOSE

To present Colac Otway Shire Council's Annual Report 2022-23.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Annual Report 2022-23 for Council's consideration in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

This report is the second annual report against the Council Plan 2021-2025 and highlights Council's performance against its Annual Plan and Annual Budget for 2022-23. It details the breadth of Council's services and operations, financial and organisational performance, achievements, challenges and governance and management processes.

Colac Otway Shire Council has integrated its Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with its Council Plan 2021-2025, and this is the second year the reporting requirements for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan have been aligned and integrated with the Annual Report.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council meeting open to the public.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the Mayor's verbal report on the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-2025.***
- 2. Receives and notes the Colac Otway Shire Council's Annual Report 2022-23 (refer Attachment 1).***
- 3. Notes that the final designed copy will be published on Council's website and a copy made available in Council's Customer Service Centres.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Each year Council prepares an annual report that details Council's achievements and results from the previous financial year, in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Annual Report 2022-23 is divided into the following sections:

- Annual Report Overview
- Our Performance and Overview
- Our Council
- Our Performance
 - Theme 1: Strong and Resilient Economy
 - Theme 2: Valuing the Natural and Built Environment
 - Theme 3: Healthy and Inclusive Community
 - Theme 4: Strong Leadership and Management
- Our Governance
- Performance and Financial Statements.

The Council approved the annual Financial and Performance Statements 'in principle' at its meeting on 27 September 2023 and the Chief Executive Officer, Principal Accounting Officer and two Councillors, certified the statements. The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) has since audited the documents and issued an Independent Auditors Report outlining that the documents present fairly in all material aspects and in accordance with the relevant legislation. These signed reports are included in the attached Annual Report 2022-23.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The Annual Report 2022-23 demonstrates to the community the way in which priority is being given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations. By reporting on the key matters prescribed in the legislation and regulations, this also ensures that transparency is maintained and the community is aware of Council's performance on key matters.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The Annual Report includes information prescribed by section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act) and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* and has been prepared in accordance with the legislation.

Section 100 of the Act requires the Annual Report be presented to an open Council meeting within four months of the end of financial year. The Act also prescribes that the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council meeting open to the public.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Council is informing the community in respect of its performance for the 2022-23 financial year.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Section 100 of the Act prescribes that the Annual Report 2022-23 be presented to an open Council meeting.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 3: Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability.

Theme 2 - Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Objective 3: Protect and enhance the natural environment

Objective 4: We will satisfy our community's reasonable expectations to reduce waste going to landfill, increase resource recovery and minimise waste charges.

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 1: All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in our shire

Objective 2: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places

Objective 3: We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community.

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement.

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The Annual Report 2022-23 presents Council's financial performance and end of year position for the 2022-23 financial year.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Service performance is addressed throughout the Annual Report 2022-23.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

The final design copy of the Annual Report 2022-23 will be uploaded to Council's website and made available in its customer service centres as soon as practicable.

Human Rights Charter

Not applicable.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Council resolves to receive and note the Colac Otway Shire Council's Annual Report 2022-23

This option is recommended as it will ensure compliance with Council's statutory obligations.

Option 2 – Council does not resolve to receive and note the Colac Otway Shire Council's Annual Report 2022-23

This option is not recommended as Council will not be complying with its statutory obligations.



Colac Otway
SHIRE

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

Annual Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

The Colac Otway Shire

Located approximately 160 kilometres south west of Melbourne, Colac Otway Shire sits upon the land of its traditional custodians, the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Maar Nation.

It is a diverse landscape with rugged coastlands, rainforest, fertile farming lands and volcanic inland lakes. Its main industries are agriculture (including farming, cropping and dairying) timber, fishing and tourism especially in the region accessed by the Great Ocean Road.

Located within commuting distance of the major regional cities of Geelong and Ballarat and with Warrnambool to the west, the municipality features two main townships being Colac as the major administrative, retail and commercial centre and Apollo Bay.

The region benefits from a rich tapestry of smaller scenic townships both inland and coastal, which support a diverse range of small and medium sized businesses across a wide range of industries.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

The Colac Otway Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the Maar Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the Colac Otway region, the land and waterways upon which the activities of the Colac Otway Shire Council are conducted.

We pay our respects to their ancestors and elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

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Annual Report Overview

About our Annual Report

About Colac Otway Shire

Our Planning and Accountability Framework



About Our Annual Report

Introduction

The Colac Otway Shire Council Annual Report 2022-23 tells the story of the work, achievements and performance of the past financial year. The Annual Report highlights Council's performance against the four-year Council Plan and the annual budget. It details the breadth of our services and operations, our financial performance, our governance and management processes, and the responsibilities fulfilled by our Councillors, Executive Management Team and employees.

The report highlights achievements and challenges, provides comprehensive information about our democratic and corporate governance and presents our audited performance and financial statements. This report also includes statutory reporting and legislative information that fulfils Council's responsibilities under the *Local Government Act 2020* and other legislation.

In presenting this year's annual report, we aim to provide our residents, ratepayers, State and Federal governments, and other key stakeholders with an open and accurate account of our performance during 2022-23.

How to Read the Annual Report 2022-23

Our Annual Report is divided into six broad sections:

Annual Report Overview

This section contextualises the annual report, provides a snapshot of the shire and provides an overview of the year.

Our Performance and Overview

This is a financial update and details information about Council's major capital projects. This section also reviews progress towards achieving the objectives outlined in our Council Plan and provides a snapshot of our Community Satisfaction Survey results and Sustainability Report.

Our Council

This provides an overview of our Councillors, Executive Management Team, organisational structure and employees.

Our Performance

This section is grouped in accordance with the four Council Plan themes. It outlines our performance in a range of activities and includes a review of our budget funded services and prescribed performance measures. Our highlights and challenges are also contained in this section.

Our Governance

This section outlines our legislative obligations and details our democratic and internal governance practices.

This section also includes statutory information required by various pieces of legislation.

Performance and Financial Statements

These have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and audited by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO).

About Colac Otway Shire

The Colac Otway Shire

The Colac Otway Shire is a richly diverse area located less than two hours west of Melbourne, linked by rail and a dual highway.

Colac Otway is one of the most picturesque municipalities in Victoria, from its volcanic lakes, craters and plains in the north, to the lush forests of the Otway Ranges to the iconic Great Ocean Road coastline.

A large proportion of the southern half of the Shire is National Park, boasting waterfalls, bushwalking and some of the most significant environmental assets found in Australia.

The northern area of Colac Otway features equally significant environmental features including Lake Colac, Lake Corangamite and the surrounding Ramsar wetlands, overlooked by Red Rock Reserve.

The original inhabitants of the area are the Gulidjan people (from the Colac region) and the Gadubanud people (from the southern area of the municipality).





The City of Colac population is forecast to reach 20,000 by 2050, and Colac Otway Shire has a strategic plan to guide sustainable residential growth and infrastructure development.



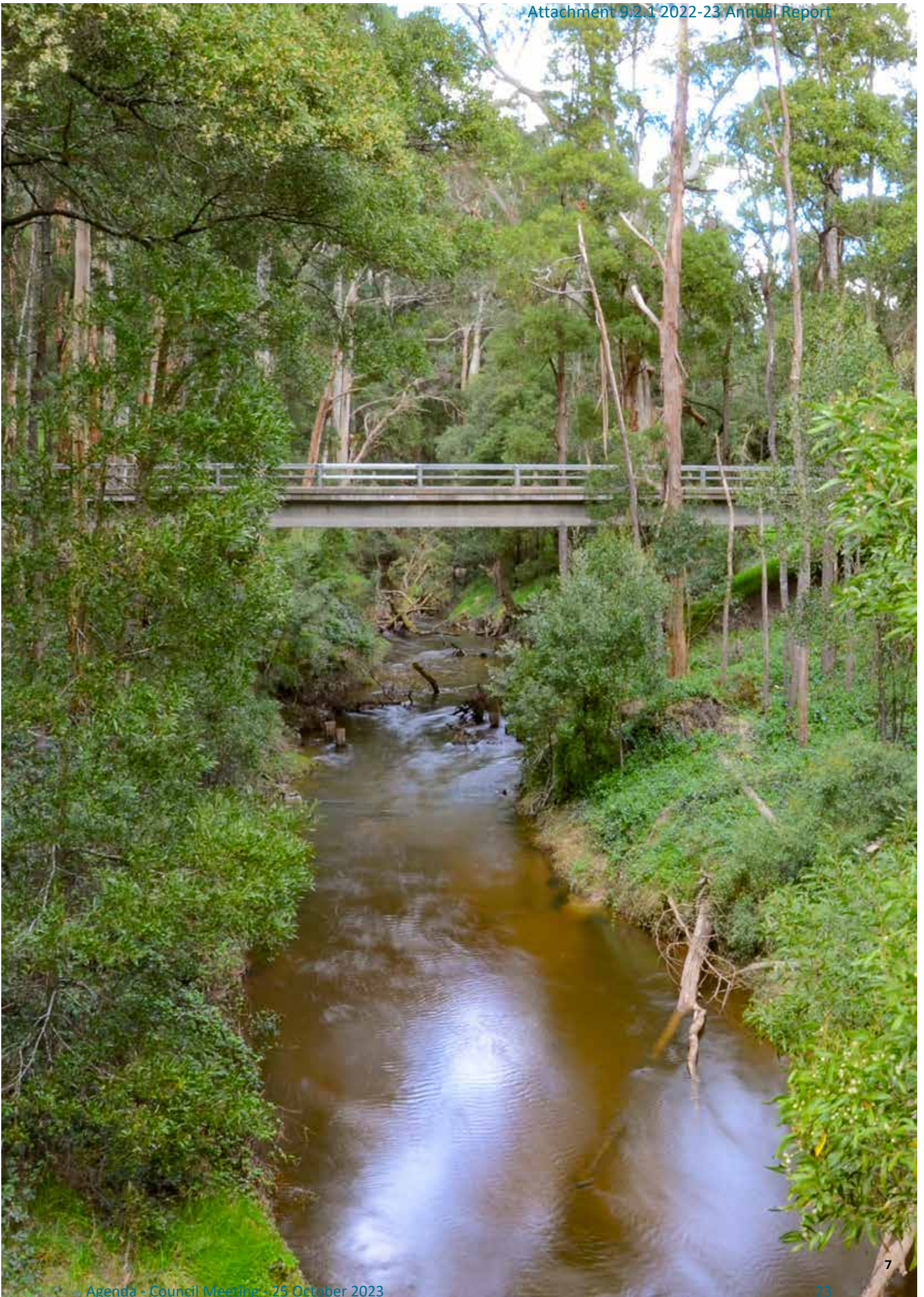
The second major urban centre is Apollo Bay, which has a permanent population of over 2,000 (Apollo Bay and Marengo) that swells to more than 15,000 during the busy summer tourist season.

More than 15 small towns and rural communities are spread across Colac Otway and provide a lifestyle choice for those looking for a quieter life through either a sea change or tree change.

About Colac Otway Shire

Colac Otway Shire has an estimated population of 22,188 people *		The median age is 45 ^	31% of the population is over 60 years old ^
1.4% of the population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander *	10.3% of the population were born overseas *	Ranked country of birth Australia (81.0%), United Kingdom (2.6%), New Zealand (1.0%), China (0.8%), Taiwan (0.7%)	
	40.9% own their property outright *	29.6% own their property with a mortgage *	20.6% of households rent their home *
22.3% of households are couples with children *	29.8% of people live on their own *	12.1% of houses are for visitors only (3.3% across the Shire) *	154 approvals were issued in 2022-23 for residential dwellings to be built *
The median weekly household income is \$1,277 ^	The median weekly rent is \$265 *		19% of people have volunteered at an organisation over the last 12 months *
More than 85% of Colac Otway's workforce lives locally *	There are 10,491 local jobs	29% of ratepayers are non-resident	65% of people who live in the Shire feel safe alone at night
Gross Regional Product \$1.64B	Largest employing industries Manufacturing (14.2%), Health Care and Social Assistance (13.3%), Agricultural, Forestry and Fishing (11.4%)		30.6% of economic output comes from the manufacturing sector #
14.8% of the population have a Bachelor or Higher degree	23.2% of the population have a vocational qualification		230 babies were born in the Shire in 2022-23

^ Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021 Census) * Sourced from the Colac Otway Shire (Profile ID) # Sourced from Remplan Economy



Our Planning and Accountability Framework

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to design, implement and monitor a suite of strategic documents underpinned by a deliberative engagement process.

These plans must be integrated and be able to demonstrably contribute to the achievement of a long-term community vision.

Community Vision

The key issues faced by our community, identified through the development of the Community Vision 2050, informs the choice of major projects and activities that Council identifies as its highest priorities.

Our Community Vision includes the key themes of:

- Strong and Resilient Economy
- Valuing the Natural and Built Environment
- Healthy and Inclusive Community
- Strong Leadership and Management.

Council Plan 2021-2025

Council adopted its Council Plan, Incorporating the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 on 27 October 2021.

The Council Plan sets out Council's strategic direction until 2024. It describes the goals we have for the term of the current Council and provides a road map for how we will achieve these goals.

The Council Plan contains four themes that represent the top strategic focus areas for the Council during its four-year term.

Supporting the themes are 17 strategic objectives that summarise what Council will do to achieve the priority attached to each theme. The Council Plan 2021-25 is available on our website.

Annual Action Plan

The 2022-23 Action Plan outlines courses of action and deliverables intended to contribute to the achievement of many Council Plan priorities.

Annual budget

Council prepares an annual budget each financial year that seeks to meet important demands for services and infrastructure, yet remain affordable for our community. It outlines the financial and non-financial resources that Council requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Council Plan.

The Budget Report 2022-23 (along with Quarterly Reports) is available on our website.

Annual Report

The Annual Report includes a range of information about each of the Council Plan themes. It reports on the implementation of strategies and actions outlined in the plan, along with financial information that relates to initiatives and services necessary to deliver the plan.

This information sits alongside prescribed performance measures and other commentary to present an open and accurate account of our performance during 2022-23.

The following diagram shows the relationship between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the local government integrated strategic planning and reporting framework.

Integrated Planning Framework



Our Performance and Overview

Message from the Mayor

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

A Year in Review

Financial Summary

Major Capital Projects

Sustainability Snapshot

Community Satisfaction Survey Snapshot

Performance against the Council Plan





Message from the Mayor



It is with great pleasure that I present the Colac Otway Shire Council's Annual Report 2022-23 to the community.

It has been another busy year for our Council and community as we continue to live and work in unusual times. The ongoing housing, workforce and cost challenges have required us to stay focussed, be flexible and value all that we have in our wonderful Shire. I am appreciative of the efforts of my fellow Councillors and our staff who have accomplished so much this year.

This report details the operational performance of the Council measured against the key objectives and strategies included in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Budget 2022-23.

You will see in this report that we continue to make progress against our many plans for the community, including addressing long-term challenges such as the land supply shortages of recent years. It is rewarding to see a number of growth areas opening up and the progress we are making with our strategic planning work starting to deliver benefits for the community.

Our community survey shows we still have much to do in relation to improving the perception people have of our performance, and Councillors and staff will together rise to this challenge. We will be clearer about our role and our services, learn from our mistakes, build our capabilities and celebrate our successes.

We have welcomed two new Councillors this year, with Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan and Cr Max Arnott joining the team, replacing Cr Joe McCracken and Cr Jamie

Bell. Our best wishes go to Joe and Jamie and we thank them for their commitment to the community over two years. We are delighted that Cr Finnigan and Cr Arnott have settled into their roles so quickly.

To serve as your Mayor during this period has been extremely rewarding, with my fellow Councillors and the entire organisation striving to get the best outcomes for our community.

Our achievements and challenges are spread throughout this Annual Report, however some that are worthy of highlight include:

- The release of 119 residential lots ready for housing and planning approvals granted for another 212 lots ready for development in the next few years.
- Council attracted \$695,000 in grant funding from the Victorian Government to undertake the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan. Work has commenced on the technical studies and community engagement. When complete this will enable 4,500 to 6,000 houses over the next few decades.
- Council sold approximately 4.2 hectares of land at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac, in November 2022 for \$2.6 million. This land will be developed by its new owner to create 54 residential lots including three lots for social housing.
- Two new floating pontoons, 55 and 60 metres long, were installed at the Port of Apollo Bay, providing more access at all tides and creating more space for boats to be temporarily moored. This work was funded through an \$800,000 grant from Better Boating Victoria.

- Council adopted the Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo Community Infrastructure Plan which sets the long-term vision for these coastal communities for the next 20 to 30 years. This is the outcome of many years of collaboration with the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority and local communities.
- Council endorsed the drafts of its new Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, which were informed by extensive community engagement. The draft documents attracted 40 survey responses and 78 written submissions, highlighting the importance of this work.
- Stage One of the Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project has delivered upgraded and expanded trails, achieved through a partnership of \$2.07 million funding from the Victorian Government and \$0.25 million from Council.
- Lighting upgrades were completed at Gellibrand, Irrewillipe, Alvie, Birregurra and Warrowie Recreation Reserves enabling users to train and play safely on these ovals well into the evenings.

These projects take us forward in our goals of facilitating more residential land for future housing, supporting the Apollo Bay Harbour to be the heart of the bay's prosperity and identity, planning for the future and playing our part in addressing and responding to the changing climate.

We will continue to work with our communities to understand what they need and how we support them, and with our Chief Executive Officer and organisation to continuously improve the core services you rely on.

Councillor Chris Potter
Mayor

Message from the Chief Executive Officer



I reflect on the last 12 months with pride in the hard work and achievements of the organisation. Our people have worked with care and commitment to deliver quality programs, projects and services for communities across the Colac Otway Shire.

We understand how important it is to balance achieving the community's aspirations with the cost of our services, and looking forward Council needs to continue to carefully monitor and manage its financial sustainability and performance in light of economic conditions.

Council maintained a positive financial position during 2022-23 recording a surplus of \$6.56 million. Council's total financial assets totalled \$34.07 million on 30 June 2023, which comprised \$21.07 million of cash on hand or on-call, with a further \$13.00 million held in term deposits, totalling \$34.07 million financial assets at 30 June 2023. Much of the cash held by Council is allocated to specific purposes such as capital projects still to be delivered, rehabilitation and aftercare of Council's former landfill sites, and a range of statutory and contractual obligations.

It is pleasing to see the community embracing the four-bin kerbside collection service with 5,250 tonnes of material diverted from landfill. 4,062 people have downloaded the GoodSort app which includes the waste calendar and great information about which materials go in which bin. We will continue to use technology to improve our services where we can.

Renewing Council's aging assets will continue to present challenges, particularly as both standards and construction costs are drastically different to the time when most assets were originally constructed.

During 2022-23, Council received \$1.68 million of new assets constructed by Developers, in addition to Council's own Capital Works Program which delivered \$10.34 million in the year. This program had a focus of ensuring that existing assets are fit for the community's needs, with 68 per cent of works relating to asset renewal and a further 29 per cent improving and upgrading existing assets. This work was impacted by storms and floods at times, especially the unsealed road network and those roads through the Otways. Council has been successful in securing disaster recovery funding to minimise the financial impact on Council's ratepayers.

Transitioning to a new organisational structure early in 2022-23 was among our key internal achievements for the year. This has enabled us to find capacity within existing resources to create focus on important internal reforms. These include improving our customers' experience, strengthening asset management and enhancing our project management governance. Over the next few years, these changes will deliver important outcomes for our community in areas that they have told us matter most. Transition to the new structure involved some of our teams merging or shifting divisions and I thank and commend employees for having adjusted so seamlessly.

Council is one of the larger employers in the Shire, and this year our management and employees successfully negotiated a new three-year Enterprise Agreement in late 2022, which provides a strong framework for creating a supportive and effective workplace for our people. This negotiation took place in the midst of a cost of living crisis and our employees rose to the task of balancing their needs with those of the organisation.

Council also recognised the need to commence a Best Value Review of Aged and Disability Services to understand the implications of upcoming Commonwealth Government reforms in the provision of these services. I wish to acknowledge the professional way our employees involved in these services have responded to this review as they go about their work of delivering important services to older people in our community and those who need assistance due to disabilities.

In the last year we commenced a governance review of Council's Community Asset Committees that volunteer to look after and manage many community facilities across the Shire. We know we have more work to do to ensure that the facilities and committees receive the support they need.

I thank and congratulate all of our staff for their contributions and achievements during 2022-23 and look forward to further supporting their work for and with our wonderful community.

Anne Howard
Chief Executive Officer

A Year in Review

Highlights and Major Achievements - Fast Facts

 693 Children who attend the Maternal and Child Health service at least once in the year	 106,259 Physical library collection items loaned
 1,309,812 Kerbside bins collected in the year	 2,978 Active library borrowers this year
 5,250 Tonnes of material diverted from the landfill stream	 \$3.98m Towards the upgrade and renewal of local roads
 412 Planning application decisions made in the year	 \$1.26m Towards the upgrade and renewal of local bridges
 102,808 Visits to Bluewater Leisure Centre	 79 Council grants awarded to business and community groups
 87 Animals were rehomed	 186 Annual food safety assessments completed

Our performance – an overview

Financial Overview

Colac Otway Shire Council's performance was generally favourable when compared to the 2022-23 Budget and the previous financial year, as evidenced by:

- Cash and cash equivalents of \$21.07 million (up from \$13.81 million last year)
- \$67.90 million in revenue (up from \$63.83 million last year)
- \$47.71 million in expenses not including depreciation (compared to \$47.33 million last year)
- Income Statement surplus of \$6.56 million (\$5.75 million last year)
- Zero borrowings, with Council's last loan fully paid in June 2023.

Detailed information relating to Council's financial performance is included in the Financial Report and statements included at the end of this annual report.

Influences on performance

Like most businesses, Council has experienced significant increases in the cost of services, commodities and consumables this year. We know many of our contractors and suppliers are still experiencing workforce challenges and high inflation rates. This impacts their availability and the cost of materials and services purchased by Council. This has required Council to carefully manage, and in some cases defer, works that it had planned for the year.

Council had employee turnover rates that were again higher than historic trends. This started with post-covid workforce changes and may continue in the future. Offsetting this was Council's success in recruiting people to a number of positions where there have been prolonged vacancies. As a result, total employee costs in the year are higher than previous years, but these are largely offset by lower expenditure on agency staff and contractors who have traditionally backfilled vacancies. Not only is this financially favourable, it helps to build a more stable workforce and strengthens the underlying capabilities of the organisation.

Storms and floods impacted our annual plans, disrupting day-to-day operations and requiring Council to undertake unplanned repair and recovery work. This will be an ongoing challenge for all Councils and communities as the changing climate causes more frequent and extreme weather events and natural disasters.

Operating Performance

Council's operations delivered a net surplus of \$6.56 million, up by \$0.81 million on last year. An explanation of material variances can be found in Note 2.1.1 in the Notes to the Financial Report included at the end of this report.

Generating a net surplus is important because it enables Council to fund non-operating activities, including the provision of new infrastructure and the renewal of existing community assets. The net surplus also includes funds tied to specific purposes, such as our waste and recycling programs, operating projects and non-cash items such as depreciation and assets handed over to Council by developers. It also includes one-off capital grants that Council is obliged to deliver for specific purposes.

	Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000	Variance Fav/ (unfav) \$'000	% Variance
Revenue	56,423	67,902	11,479	20%
Expenditure	55,952	61,343	(5,391)	(9%)
Net surplus	472	6,559	6,087	1,290%
Cash and cash equivalents	14,234	21,069	6,835	48%
Borrowings	380	0	380	
Net assets	381,933	500,121	118,188	31%
Rates and charges revenue	29,863	33,000	3,137	11%
Capital expenditure	12,334	10,338	(1,996)	(19%)

Our performance

Working capital

Working capital ratio (current assets/current liabilities) is an indicator of an organisation's ability to meet its financial commitments over the coming 12 months. The working capital ratio at the end of the financial year was 243 per cent, which is higher than the budgeted position of 148 per cent. This variance is mainly driven by the increase of \$13 million in the balance of unrestricted cash but is offset by Conditional Grants unspent of (\$7 million).

Borrowings

Council has fully paid off a borrowing of \$380,000 in June 2023, and ends the financial year with no loans outstanding.

Cash position

Council's cash and investment balance is \$34.07 million, with \$8.16 million of income received that is tied to specific purposes and not able to be redirected to other purposes. Council has made allocations to a series of non-discretionary and discretionary reserves that amount to \$29.5 million. Not all of Council's obligations and commitments will present themselves in the next 12 months. With the progress Council has made in recent years in rebuilding its cash balances, it will be well-placed to meet its obligations when due.

Council's cash position in 2022-23 is more favourable than planned when the budget was adopted due primarily to the following:

- Sale of Bruce Street, Colac, for \$2.6 million.
- Advanced payment of Federal Assistance Grants, higher by \$4.8 million.

Asset Renewal

Council allocated \$8.7 million to renewing its assets in the 2022-23 Budget and delivered \$7.0 million in the year. Some projects were delivered at a lower cost than planned, some projects have been carried forward for completion in 2023-24 and some need further review before they can proceed to ensure that a value-for-money outcome can be achieved.

Projects and Programs

In addition to Council's day-to-day operations, Council funds and delivers a significant number of projects each year. They come in all shapes and sizes, some are straight-forward and some are complex. Below is a selection of projects delivered in 2022-23 that demonstrate the diversity of our programs.

Capital Works program

Project	Description	2022-23 Expenditure
Burrupa Road Bridge Replacement	This bridge was replaced in partnership with Corangamite Shire Council as it crosses the municipal border	\$416,977
King Track Bridge Replacement	Replacement of aged bridge across the Gellibrand River at Chapple Vale	\$255,167
Eastern Reserve Netball Court Upgrades	Rehabilitated and resealed netball court surfaces and installed new spectator seating	\$204,841
Sportsground Lighting upgrades	Sportsground lighting upgrades at Gellibrand, Irrewillipe, Alvie and Warrowie recreation reserves to 150 lux, which enables night football games	\$1,278,217
Wyndin Kindergarten Bathroom upgrade	Upgrade to aged bathroom facilities to provide contemporary fit-for-use facilities and ensure compliant facilities are provided for early years programs	\$88,932
Great Ocean Road Footpath Network Expansion	Completed Stages 1 and 2 of the new footpath along the Great Ocean Road between Costin Street and Marriners Lookout Road, Apollo Bay	\$347,269
Beeac Park Playground Redevelopment	Redevelopment and installation of a new playground and landscaping improvements to the main park in the township of Beeac	\$187,894
Cororooke Open Space and Play Space Development	Development of a new playspace, history walk and landscaping of open spare reserve in the township of Cororooke. The project implemented the majority of the works identified in the masterplan	\$451,217
Heavy Plant Replacement program	Replacement of major plant required for Council's operations, including new Flocon for road maintenance	\$431,056
Crack Sealing program	Annual crack sealing across the sealed road network, protecting road pavements from water infiltration	\$51,463
Unsealed Road resheeting	Completed annual resheeting program of the unsealed road network	\$825,244
Sealed Road Reconstruction	Completed annual road reconstruction program (including major patching, reconstruction and resealing) across the Shire	\$2,317,039
Rail Crossing Interface Safety Improvements	Upgraded level crossing (rail) interface safety with road on Black Larpent Road, Larpent and Whytcross Road, Birregurra	277,409
Landslip works	Addressing landslips resulting from storm events at multiple sites across the Otways	\$662,446
ICT systems	Completed important renewal and upgrade works required to ensure the critical ICT infrastructure is stable and secure and meets the operational needs of the organisation	\$333,967

Operational projects

Project	Description	2022-23 Expenditure
Deans Creek PSP	Council commenced the development of a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) this year, commencing technical studies and engagement	\$157,484
MoRE program	Delivery of the Modelling of Respect and Equality (MoRE) program developing local leaders to guide and mentor young men	\$42,959
Biosecurity project	Developed response planning and systems in preparedness for potential foot-and-mouth	\$10,994

Our performance

Performance against the Council Plan

Strategic indicators

Strategic indicators help us understand what is important to measure. The Council Plan includes indicators that measure the extent to which we have achieved progress against the strategic objectives and planned priorities. Where indicators have been identified, they are reported later in this report. A selection of key indicators are presented in the table below.

Indicators	Achievement	
Theme 1 - A strong and resilient economy		
Increase land supply by 200 new lots annually	119	✓
Number of residential lots approved by planning permits	212	✓
Number of commercial and industrial lots approved by planning permits (use and development)	18	✓
Theme 2 - Valuing the built and natural environment		
Road safety funding attracted and implemented	\$46,846	✓
Reduced waste to landfill	5,250 tonnes diverted	✓
Percentage of organic waste diverted from landfill stream and composted	38%	✓
Theme 3 - Healthy and inclusive communities		
Participation rates in Maternal and Child Health checks	76.26%	✓
Increased participation rates at libraries	13.43%	✓
Increased visitation and memberships at Bluewater Leisure Centre	102,808	✓
Increased visitation and memberships at Apollo Bay Aquatic Centre	6,638	✓
Theme 4 - Strong leadership and management		
Community satisfaction for overall performance increases annually from 63 points	50	✗
85 per cent of planning applications, and 100 per cent of Vicsmart applications, determined within 60 days	77	✗
Number of traineeships/apprenticeships	3 of each	✓

Actions

Council, in the adopted Annual Action Plan, set out 91 Council Plan actions for 2022-23. Of the 91 actions identified in the plan, 65 are complete, 23 have been initiated with implementation ongoing and three are not progressing. Progress of end of year performance for the 2022-23 actions is summarised below.

Annual actions	Completed	Ongoing	Not progressing
Theme 1 - A strong and resilient economy	14	7	0
Theme 2 - Valuing the built and natural environment	21	4	0
Theme 3 - Healthy and inclusive communities	19	3	1
Theme 4 - Strong leadership and management	11	9	2
Total	65	23	3

Community Satisfaction Survey

The results from the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey provides valuable insights into the community's perception of Council's performance and areas that Council should focus on to better meet community expectations.

The independent survey seeks community views on a range of Council services and is benchmarked against both state-wide and other large rural councils. It provides feedback on councils' overall performance, value for money in services and infrastructure; community consultation and engagement; decisions made in the interest of the community; customer service, local infrastructure, facilities, services and overall council direction.





The report produced by JWS Research, based on a phone survey of 400 residents, outlines that

Council continues to perform significantly higher than state-wide and other large rural Councils in the areas of art centres and libraries and elderly support services. Another positive outcome was Council's rating in the provision of customer service increasing from 63 in 2022 to 66 in 2023, in line with trends seen state-wide and in large rural Councils.

In overall performance, Council received a score of 50 in 2023, which is lower than the 2022 result of 56, and lower than the 'large rural group average' score of 52. Areas highlighted as being in most need of attention include planning and building permits, the maintenance of unsealed roads and sealed local roads and the communication of community decisions.

Sustainability Snapshot

The community's engagement in developing the Community Vision and Council Plan highlighted the importance of environmental sustainability and addressing and responding to climate change. Council has a broad role in the area of environmental sustainability with a snapshot of achievements highlighted below.

	100% of electricity sourced from renewable energy	57% of kerbside waste diverted from landfill	4,062 people have downloaded the GoodSort app
577 tonnes of glass recovered and processed	3,298 tonnes of organic waste collected for composting	3,936 tonnes of mixed recycling collected for processing	
Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 developed and exhibited for public comment			351 street trees planted across the Shire
15 community events held with an environmental theme	Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033 developed and exhibited for public comment		

Our Council

Our Councillors

Our Executive

Our Organisational Structure

Our People



Our Councillors

In 2022-23, Colac Otway Shire Council comprised the following elected representatives. The profiles outlined below reflect membership of those bodies and committees that were operating during this time.



**Mayor
Chris Potter**

*First elected as Councillor in 2016
and re-elected in 2020*

The Mayor is Chair of meetings of the Colac Otway Shire Council and Planning Committee.

The Mayor acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Central Reserve Advisory Committee
- G21 Regional Alliance (Board)
- SouthWest Victoria Alliance (Board).

Contact details

Phone: 0427 821 435

Email: councillor.potter@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Graham Costin**

*First elected as Councillor
in 2020*

Councillor Graham Costin acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Lake Colac Coordinating Committee
- Port of Apollo Bay Consultative Committee
- Australian Local Government Association
- G21 Managing Growth Advisory Group (G21 Region Alliance Pillar).

Contact details

Phone: 0475 444 006

Email: councillor.costin@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Max Arnott**

*First elected as Councillor (via
Countback) in 2023*

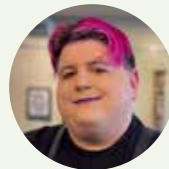
Councillor Max Arnott acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Colac Municipal Aerodrome Advisory Committee
- Mooleric Road Quarry Consultative Committee
- Ondit Road Quarry Consultative Committee
- Colac Otway Performing Arts Cultural Centre Trust
- Australian Local Government Association (substitute).

Contact details

Phone: 0475 777 002

Email: councillor.arnott@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Tosh-Jake Finnigan**

*First elected as Councillor (via
Countback) in 2023*

Councillor Tosh-Jake Finnigan acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Colac Regional Saleyards Advisory Committee
- Rural Council's Victoria (substitute)
- Timber Towns Victoria Committee
- G21 Culture and Economic Development Pillar (G21 Region Alliance).

Contact details

Phone: 0427 749 918

Email: councillor.finnigan@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Kate Hanson**

First elected as Councillor in 2016 and re-elected in 2020

Councillor Kate Hanson acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Audit and Risk Committee member
- Colac Road Safety Group
- Rural Councils Victoria
- Rural Financial Counselling Service Vic – Wimmera Southwest (RFC)
- Municipal Association of Victoria (substitute).

Contact details

Phone: 0409 038 843

Email: councillor.hanson@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Margaret White**

First elected as Councillor in 2020

Councillor Margaret White acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Audit and Risk Committee member
- Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens Advisory Committee
- Lake Colac Coordinating Committee
- Geelong Regional Library Corporation
- G21 Health and Wellbeing Pillar (G21 Region Alliance).

Contact details

Phone: 0475 111 388

Email: councillor.white@colacotway.vic.gov.au



**Councillor
Stephen Hart**

First elected as Councillor in 2002 and re-elected in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020

Councillor Stephen Hart acts as Council's representative (through membership) in relation to the activities and functions of the following committees or external organisations:

- Weeds Consultative Committee
- Colac Otway Performing Arts Cultural Centre Trust
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- G21 Sustainability Pillar (G21 Region Alliance).

Contact details

Phone: 0407 962 412

Email: councillor.hart@colacotway.vic.gov.au

**Councillor
Jamie Bell**

First elected as Councillor in 2020 and resigned on 25 January 2023

**Councillor
Joe McCracken**

First elected as Councillor in 2016 and re-elected in 2020. Resigned on 16 December 2022 – elected to Legislative Council for the Western Victoria Region

Councillor Allowances and Expenses

The Council Expenses Policy provides a broad overview of how the Council assists and supports the Mayor and Councillors in carrying out their roles and official duties. The Policy is available on Council's website under Council Policies.

In line with the Policy, support is provided to the Mayor in the form of a council vehicle. Information and communication technology is available to all Councillors. The Council Expenses Policy contains provisions for reimbursement of expenses for training, registration fees for conferences and functions and travel.

The following table sets out the allowance paid to Councillors and councillor expenses for the reporting period 2022-23.

Councillor	Allowances (including super)	Travel Expenses	Car Mileage Expenses	Information and Comms Technology Expenses	Conferences and Training Expenses	Other Expenses	TOTAL
Chris Potter Mayor	\$74,234	\$1,036	\$471	\$559	\$1,463	\$0	\$77,762
Kate Hanson	\$56,504	\$0	\$1,372	\$303	\$580	\$33	\$58,792
Graham Costin	\$37,370	\$1,279	\$5,219	\$492	\$2,583	\$33	\$46,976
Tosh-Jake Finnigan #	\$14,088	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$785	\$33	\$14,906
Stephen Hart	\$30,560	\$0	\$3,764	\$246	\$244	\$33	\$34,847
Max Arnott *	\$10,480	\$1,099	\$155	\$0	\$2,896	\$33	\$14,663
Margaret White	\$30,735	\$21	\$635	\$511	\$615	\$33	\$32,550
Jamie Bell ^	\$17,334	\$0	\$0	\$496	\$0	\$0	\$17,831
Joe McCracken*	\$5,429	\$0	\$0	\$621	\$0	\$0	\$6,050
	\$276,733	\$3,434	\$11,615	\$3,228	\$9,166	\$200	\$304,376

* Cr Joe McCracken was on a leave of absence from 5 September until 5 December 2023 and resigned on 16 December 2022.

Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan commenced as a Councillor on 18 January 2023.

^ Cr Jamie Bell resigned on 25 January 2023.

** Cr Max Arnott commenced as Councillor on 1 March 2023.

Council and Committee meeting attendance

1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

Councillor	Colac Otway Shire Council meetings (total 15)	Planning Committee meetings (total 6)	Submissions Committee Meetings (total 6)	Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Committee (total 2)	Audit and Risk Committee meetings (total 5)
Chris Potter Mayor	15	6	6	2	Not a member
Kate Hanson	15	6	5	2	3 (appointed on 14 December 2022)
Graham Costin	15	5	6	2	2 (member until 13 December 2022)
Tosh-Jake Finnigan #	8 (8)	2 (2)	3 (3)	2 (2)	Not a member
Stephen Hart	15	5	5	2	Not a member
Max Arnott **	6 (6)	1 (1)	3 (3)	2 (2)	Not a member
Margaret White	15	6	6	2	5
Jamie Bell ^	7	4	3	0	Not a member
Joe McCracken*	2	1	0	0	Not a member

* Cr Joe McCracken was on a leave of absence from 5 September until 5 December 2023 and resigned on 16 December 2022.

Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan commenced as a Councillor on 18 January 2023.

^ Cr Jamie Bell resigned on 25 January 2023.

** Cr Max Arnott commenced as Councillor on 1 March 2023.

Executive Management Team

The Executive Management Team assists in the overall leadership and governance of the organisation. The team plays an important role in ensuring that Councillors and organisation each have the information required to set priorities and implement decisions.

In particular, the Executive Management Team:

- provides impartial and professional advice to Council
- implements Council decisions efficiently and effectively
- leads the organisation and its people, including enhancing collaboration and providing stewardship for the future
- manages ongoing programs and services
- builds partnerships and advocates in the best interests of the community, consistent with Council priorities.



Anne Howard
Chief Executive
Officer

Anne has 22 years' experience in local government with qualifications that include a Master of Business Administration, Master of Infrastructure Engineering and a Bachelor of Engineering.

As the Chief Executive Officer, Anne has the most senior leadership position at the Colac Otway Shire Council and, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, is responsible for implementing Council decisions and for the day-to-day operations and affairs of the Council.

The Office of the CEO includes two departments of strategic importance to the operations of the Council, being the Governance Department and the Planning and Strategic Focus Department. This enables the CEO to have close connection to the important work done by these teams.



Heath Chasemore,
General Manager
Infrastructure and
Operations

Heath has over 25 years' experience in local government, with post graduate qualifications in Horticulture, Management and Leadership.

Heath has responsibility for a range of strategic and operational services including operations teams that maintain our civil infrastructure, parks and open space, buildings and streetscapes, as well as plant and fleet needed by the organisation. Heath oversees council's strategic asset management functions that underpins Council's immediate and longer-term asset plans and projects, engineering services, and the regulatory services that protect the natural and built environment. Heath also oversees the Port of Apollo Bay operation.



**Andrew Tenni,
General Manager Corporate
Services**

Andrew has over 20 years' experience in the public sector with qualifications including a Masters of Applied Science (Innovation and Service Management), Graduate Diploma in Business Leadership and Bachelor of Arts (Social Science).

Andrew ensures that Council's corporate services support the workforce and workplace as it goes about its business of service delivery. This includes responsibility for financial services, records management, technology services, procurement and contract management, and property management. Andrew's teams also include the Customer Service and Communications teams that have important frontline responsibilities.



**Marlo Emmitt,
Manager
Governance**

Marlo has over 20 years' experience in Local Government, with qualifications that include a Bachelor of Commerce (Business Law) and Diploma of Business in Hospitality Management.

Marlo provides high level support and advice to Councillors and the wider organisation, ensuring the organisation's reputation is preserved and enhanced, risks are anticipated and managed, well-informed decisions are made by the administration and Council and Council's corporate planning and statutory responsibilities are met.



**Ian Seuren,
General Manager
Community and Economy**

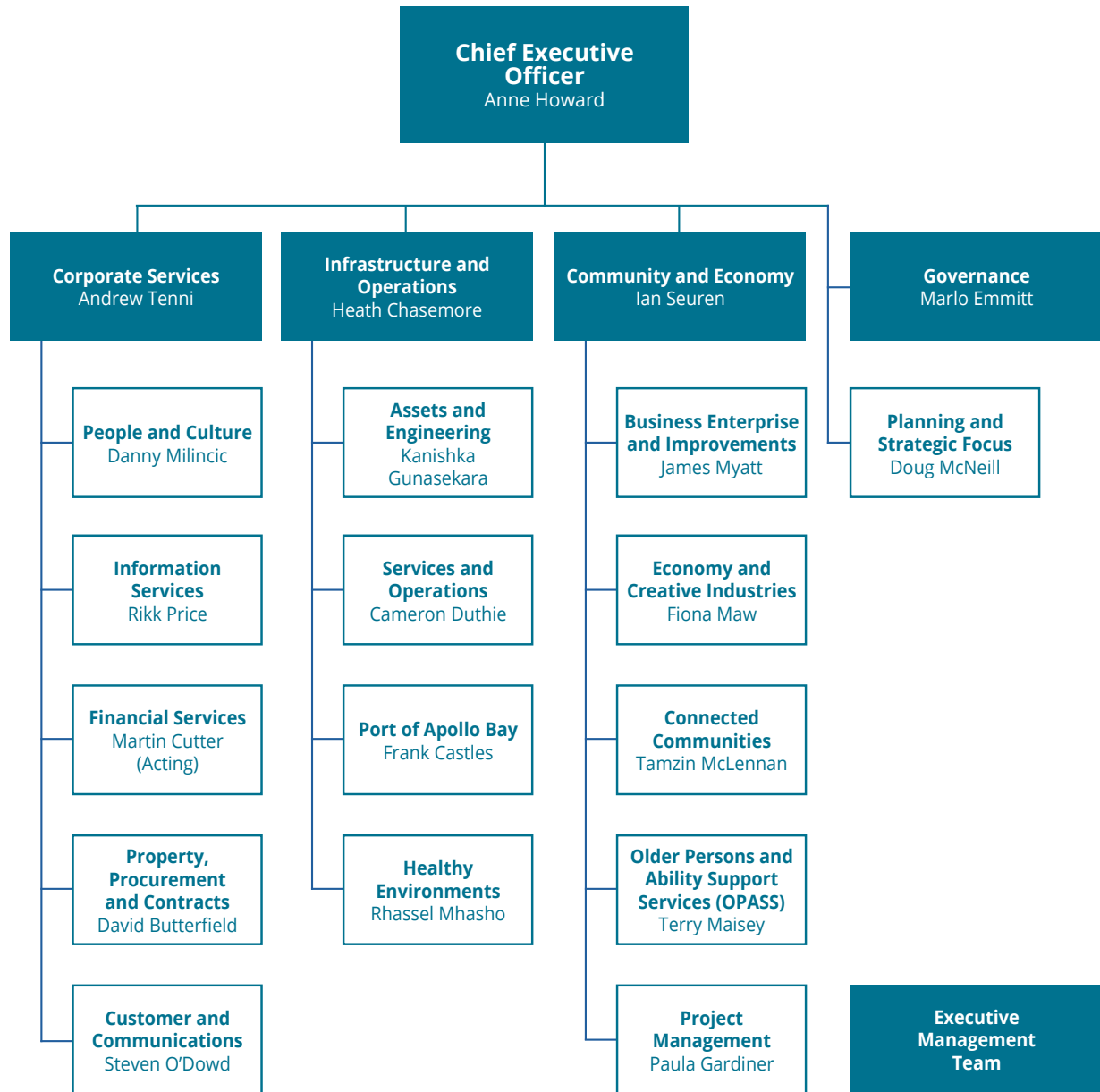
Ian has over 25 years' experience in the public service and not-for-profit sectors, with qualifications including a Master of Sport Business and Bachelor of Applied Science (Human Movement).

Ian is responsible for many of Council's functions that help the community stay connected and healthy including recreation, aged and disability services, youth and early years services, and libraries. Ian's teams also work closely with businesses and partners to support a thriving economy with responsibility for economic development, tourism and events, and a number of business enterprises such as the Colac Regional Saleyards, Bluewater Leisure Centre and COPACC.

Under the new structure Ian has taken the lead in ensuring internal project management services work closely with project sponsors and is overseeing important reforms in this team.

People and Structure

(as at 30 June 2023)



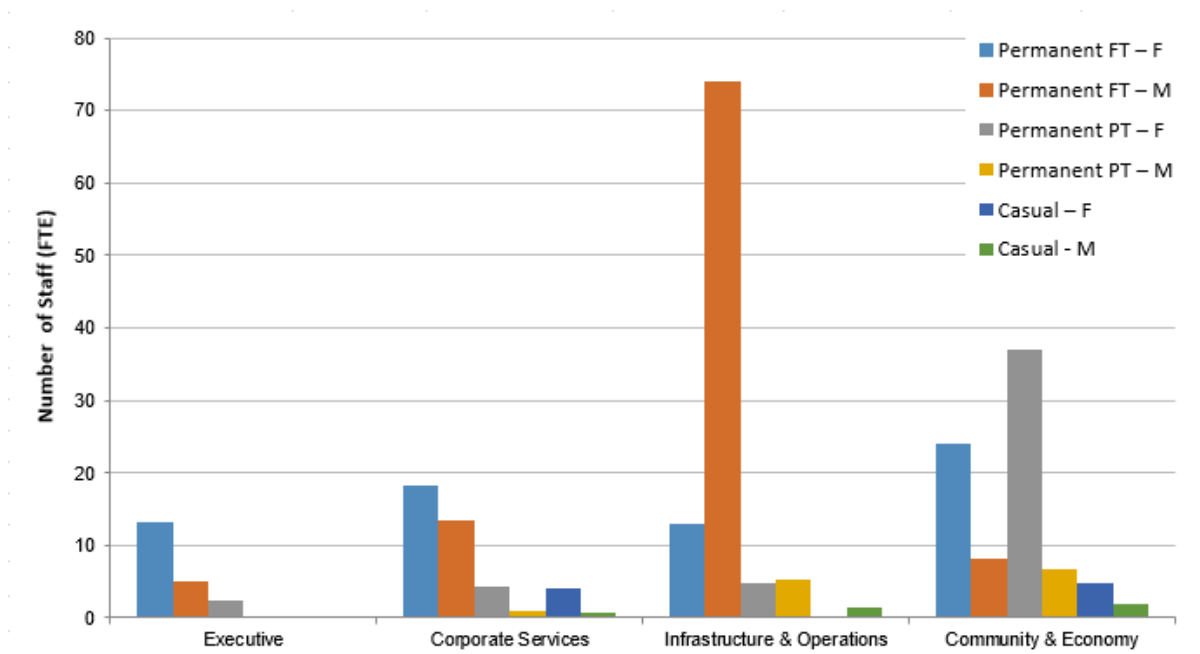
Our People

Staff by employment type

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council employees by organisational structure, employment type and gender.

Employee Type/Gender	Executive	Corporate Services	Infrastructure and Operations	Community and Economy	Total
Permanent FT – F	13	18	13	24	69
Permanent FT – M	5	14	74	8	101
Permanent PT – F	3	4	5	37	49
Permanent PT – M	0	1	5	7	13
Casual – F	0	4	0	5	9
Casual – M	0	1	1	2	4
Total	21	42	98	83	244

Legend: FT-Full time PT-Part time F-Female M-Male



Our People

Enterprise Agreement

Council successfully re-negotiated a three-year Enterprise Agreement. In developing the new agreement to determine future working conditions for Council staff, twelve negotiation workshops were held with representatives from the Australian Services Union, Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, and Professionals Australia along with self-nominated staff bargaining representatives and management. Approval by Fair Work Australia of the new agreement was confirmed in December 2022.

The new Enterprise Agreement provides improved terms and conditions for staff, including greater flexible working arrangements, increased Parental and adoption leave, paid leave for employees undergoing gender transition, blood donation leave and the ability to further contribute to the community by the way of volunteer leave.

Recruitment

During 2022-23, Council advertised 152 positions, attracting 865 applications. Vacancies ranged across nearly all departments of the organisation, including Finance, Community Care, Governance, People and Culture, Assets and Project Delivery and Services and Operations.

Organisational Alignment and Cohesion

During the year, the Executive Management Team oversaw the transition to a new organisational structure. This enabled council to find capacity within existing resources to create focus on important internal reforms. These include improving our customers' experience, strengthening asset management and enhancing our project management governance. These reform areas are essential to ensure that Council continues to build its organisational capabilities for the future.

To further enhance the productivity and cohesion opportunities that were identified with the organisational restructure, a large scale review of officer accommodation and workstation placement was undertaken during the year. The outcomes of the review, and subsequent office relocations will provide a more connected and cohesive work environment by aligning interdepartmental working relationships and connectedness in co-dependent service areas. The added benefits include increasing staff engagement, especially as we transition back to working in the office environment post COVID. The review and implementation of the office accommodation and

workstation placement will further build a positive and vibrant culture across the organisation.

Student Work Placements

Council recognises the importance of supporting young people's careers. We continue to work with schools and universities to provide opportunities for students to gain experience in a workplace setting and to provide them with insight into the important role local government plays in developing and supporting local communities.

This year the following work placements were supported within the organisation:

- One nursing student obtained experience in the practice of immunisation health with the Health Protection team.
- Our Maternal and Child Health team also hosted one nursing student.
- Two Year 10 students completed work experience and six students completed placements at Bluewater Leisure Centre with one gaining casual employment following placement.
- One Year 10, one Year 11 and one Year 12 student completed work experience at Colac Otway Performing Arts and Cultural Centre.
- Our Parks and Gardens team hosted one Year 10 and one Year 11 student for work experience.

Traineeships/Apprenticeships

Council is proud to support young people in obtaining employment and developing work skills and experience directly from the workplace and continues to offer opportunities to school leavers and mature age trainees and apprentices. Three apprentices and four trainees worked across Council in the areas of workshop mechanics, parks and gardens, civil construction, horticultural and business traineeships.

Two of the students have since completed their traineeships in Business and Civil Construction and gained permanent full-time employment at Colac Otway Shire Council.

Learning and Development

Council provides study assistance for employees wanting to further their education. Two employees were supported to undertake formal studies to further their knowledge.

Throughout the year, staff were trained in areas such as emergency management, introduction to

Local Government, cyber security, first aid, positive communication in the workplace, navigating workplace change and skills and compliance training relevant to their roles.

All new employees participate in our induction program which provides an overview of service areas and key responsibilities and extensive learning in the corporate online programs used across the organisation. New employees are also required to participate in site-specific inductions which covers corporate policies, procedures and business processes.

All employees participate in the Performance Development program. Through this program, each employee works with their manager to develop measurable goals for the year. Formal performance discussions between managers and employees occur twice a year, with more regular informal discussions taking place throughout the year to enable feedback, direction and support.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Our commitment to Equal Opportunity is covered in our local Enterprise Agreement and through Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Diversity and Inclusion and Unacceptable Workplace Behaviour Policies. We commit to compliance

with EEO and anti-discrimination legislation and to promoting equality of opportunity and the elimination of discrimination in employment policies and practices. We are also committed to ensuring an inclusive workplace culture that values diversity and ensures that the workplace is free from bullying, harassment and other forms of unacceptable workplace behaviour.

We identify ourselves as an 'Equal Opportunity Employer' in all external recruitment advertisements and ensure that all new employees are made aware of our EEO, Diversity and Inclusion and Unacceptable Workplace Behaviour Policies as a mandatory component of our induction program.

We also have a formal internal grievance policy and procedure that enables staff to raise complaints. There were no EEO/discrimination related complaints raised by staff during the year.

Compliance with EEO requirements is monitored by the People and Culture Department.

All staff are required to attend mandatory Equal Opportunity/anti-discrimination and unacceptable workplace behaviour refresher training at regular intervals. All staff were trained in the new Staff Code of Conduct. The Code outlines the standards of behaviours expected by Council employees and supports our commitment to organisational excellence and our organisation's values.



Appreciating our employees

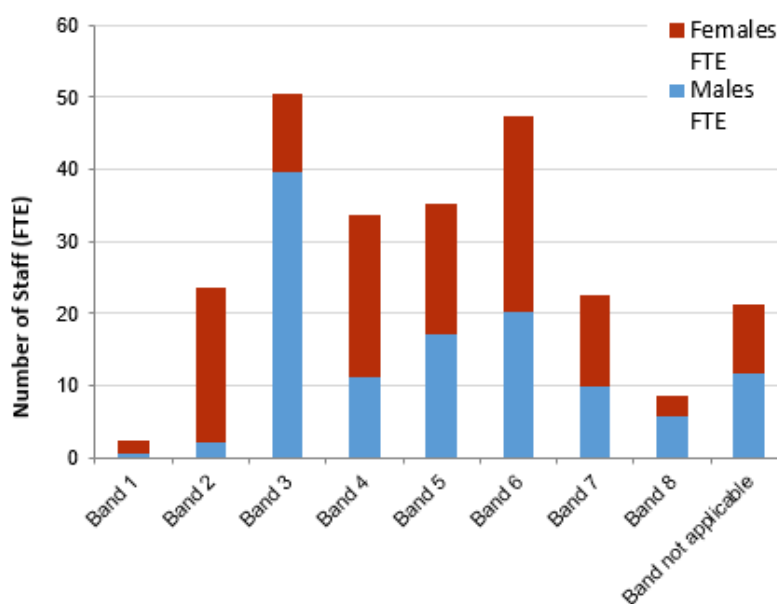
In 2022-2023, Colac Otway Shire Council recognised and acknowledged the continuous service of 36 employees from across the organisation. An event was held to acknowledge and highlight the valuable contributions our staff bring to the organisation and community and show appreciation for the work they do. Councillors, employees and a guest of recognised employees attended the event to show their appreciation.

Years of Service Milestone	Number of Employees Awarded
5	19
10	4
15	3
20	2
25	4
35	3
40	1

Employees by Employment Classification and Gender

Structure Classification	Band 1 FTE	Band 2 FTE	Band 3 FTE	Band 4 FTE	Band 5 FTE	Band 6 FTE	Band 7 FTE	Band 8 FTE	Other FTE	Total FTE
Permanent FT - F	0.00	0.17	1.89	7.30	13.82	25.73	10.89	2.78	6.12	68.68
Permanent FT - M	0.00	0.00	31.41	10.37	15.01	19.16	9.97	4.97	9.99	100.88
Permanent PT - F	1.35	21.01	2.12	13.74	4.32	1.47	1.76	0.13	2.91	48.81
Permanent PT - M	0.65	2.14	5.93	0.00	2.02	0.67	0.00	0.65	0.89	12.95
Casual - F	0.30	0.25	6.87	1.47	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.56	9.49
Casual - M	0.00	0.10	2.15	0.68	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.00	0.77	4.04
TOTAL	2.30	23.67	50.37	33.55	35.17	47.41	22.61	8.53	21.24	244.85

Legend: FT-Full time PT-Part time F-Female M-Male



Gender Equity

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* commenced in March 2021 to improve workplace gender equality. Local Government plays an important role in progressing gender equality in the workplace and the community. Council continues to work towards achieving the actions in our first Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) which outlines Council's commitment to take positive action on gender equality.

In February 2023, Councillors endorsed a Statement of Commitment to Gender Equality, as well as committed to flying the rainbow flag on IDAHOBIT Day annually. Council actively promotes gender equality in policies, programs and services by completing ongoing Gender Impact Assessments, and reporting to the Gender Equity Commissioner on its progress towards workplace gender equity.

Council is progressing its work towards compliance with the State Government's Fair Access Policy.

Health and Wellbeing

We recognise that our employees are our most important asset and we work to promote and improve our staff's safety, health and wellbeing.

Employees (and their families) have access to an extensive range of support services through our employee assistance program. Employees can discretely and confidentially access a range of emotional, physical and social support services including:

- 24/7 face-to-face and telephone counselling
- Health and wellbeing services
- Extensive online resources e.g. health risk assessment, mortgage assist, finance assist and legal assist.

A range of health and wellbeing activities were held during the year including: celebrating Harmony Week by hosting a "Taste of Harmony" morning tea, IDAHOBIT Day, R U OK? Day; superannuation information sessions; highlighting safety awareness by hosting a National Safe Work Month "SafeTEA" morning tea; and inviting staff to participate in a group working bee at the Colac Botanic Gardens.



Our Performance

Theme 1: Strong and Resilient Economy

Theme 2: Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Theme 3: Healthy and Inclusive Community

Theme 4: Strong Leadership and Management

Sustainability Report





Our Performance

Theme 1

Strong and Resilient Economy

Introduction

This chapter outlines Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan.

It provides:

- Key achievements and key challenges and future outlook
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives
- Progress in relation to major initiatives identified in the Budget
- Progress in relation to initiatives and actions in the Annual Plans 2021-22 and 2022-23
- Initiatives and actions for the 2023-24 year
- Progress towards the strategic objectives/outcomes in the Council Plan as per the indicators in that document.

The strategic objectives aligned to this theme are:

- Affordable and available housing will support a growing community and economy
- Attract, retain and grow business in the Shire
- Key infrastructure investments supports the economy and liveability
- Colac Otway Shire is a destination to visit
- Grow the Colac Otway Shire's permanent population by at least 1.5 per cent.

Measuring Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan



Completed

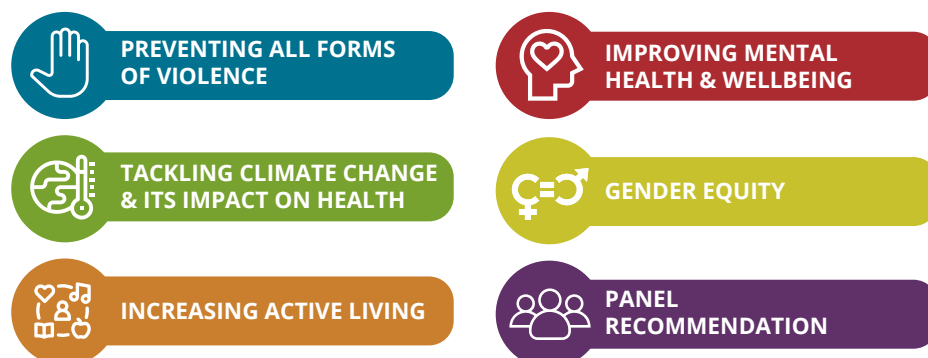


Carried over



Discontinued

Consistent with the Council Plan, Annual Plan Actions that contribute to the achievement of priority health and wellbeing areas are colour coded with a corresponding infographic, as outlined below:



Achievements

Release of land for housing in Colac

Freeing up land in Colac Otway Shire remains a key priority for the development of affordable housing to support a growing community and economy.

The Deans Creek Growth Area in Elliminyt is approximately 570 hectares and could accommodate from 4,500 to 6,000 houses over the next few decades. To progress this area for housing development, Council needs to complete the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan (PSP). Council was successful in attracting significant partnership funding in 2022-23, of \$695,000 from the Victorian Government and has commenced the technical studies and community engagement.

Council has identified the Elliminyt Wetlands Project as a key infrastructure investment to facilitate residential land provision in the Elliminyt area. The project will manage, control and improve the quality of storm water in the Elliminyt catchment with funding of \$3 million from the Victorian State Government and \$1.2 million from the Federal Government received to upgrade the existing storm water retarding basin. This will also help to unlock about 70 hectares of residential land for future development immediately upstream of the basin. The grants for the project will also enable Council to include and develop usable public open space on the site for nearby residents and the local community to enjoy.

The Elliminyt Wetlands Project will be delivered over a number of years. Several elements toward the completion of this project have been achieved including concept plans exhibited with community feedback received that has informed a final concept for the site. Site assessment is also underway, including biodiversity studies to identify flora and fauna; and cultural heritage investigations.

Council sold 4.2 hectares of surplus land at 36-52 Bruce street, Colac in 2022-23. Council exchanged contracts of sale in June 2022 with the property changing ownership in November. The developers acted promptly to submit a planning permit application which underwent public exhibition, and Council approved the planning permit in July 2023, for staged subdivision of this land into 54 lots for residential housing.

Delivery of growth/stimulation projects in partnership with Victorian and Federal government:

'Forrest MTB Revitalisation project'

Visitors and locals keen on mountain bike trail riding have more to experience in the Otways with the completion of a major partnership project with the Victorian Government. The Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project has enhanced and expanded the existing mountain bike trail offering. Stage One of the Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project is a capital works program of closed circuit three flow trails. New mountain bike trails and infrastructure has been constructed at the Southern Trails Network. Existing trails within the Southern Network have been reinvigorated to create a network of world-class experiences. All new and reworked trails have been re-profiled, including redirection of trails from areas with sensitive riparian values. Imported gravels have been used to resurface the trails to enable year-round use.

Stage One of the Forrest Mountain Bike Revitalisation Project was funded through a partnership between the Victorian Government and Council. The Victorian Government contributed \$1.57 million through the Victorian Public Land Economic Stimulus package and \$500,000 through the Regional Infrastructure Fund and Council made a contribution of \$250,000.

'Colac Otway Digital Transition Project' which lead into a further program of small business development workshops

25 local businesses benefited from a six month program delivered by Council that was fully funded by the Victorian Government. The businesses represented a wide range of localities and industries with the opportunity to participate in a small business digital support program. The program helped participants build knowledge of the use of digital tools to assist business owners to adapt to future changes in digital practice and market conditions.

The program included a 1:1 business assessment, self-paced online learning, four masterclasses on digital skills, creation of an action plan with an expert, as well as implementation of the action plan and 1:1 mentoring and drop-in sessions.

Our Performance – Theme 1

Working to upgrade Port boating facilities, floating pontoons, replacement of wooden jetty \$800,000

The \$800,000 upgrade of boating facilities has created better access and increased space for boats at the Port of Apollo Bay. The existing wooden jetty was replaced and a floating pontoon with larger and more durable floating pontoons was installed on each side of the boat ramp, creating provisions for all abilities. The two 55 and 60 metre long floating pontoons have created significantly more space for boats to be temporarily tied up, freeing up capacity at the ramp and improving the efficiency of vessel launching and retrieval. Access at all tides has been made easier through the pontoon replacement work and by dredging alongside construction. The project is part of the Victorian Government's investment into boating through Better Boating Victoria (BBV).

Challenges and Future Outlook

Key worker and affordable housing

Communities in the Colac Otway and broader region continue to face significant housing and accommodation pressures, impacting business and communities.

In February 2023, Council allocated \$300,000 for strategic planning work to support opening up additional residential land in the shire and \$120,000 of funds toward exploring development for key worker housing at the Nelson Street Depot in Apollo Bay.

Economic climate and cost pressures

Council and the community will continue to share the challenge of increasing costs for almost every commodity. Despite signs that this is abating, it will be some time before any relief is felt.

Council identified internal efficiencies and improvements in 2022-23 that led directly to a cost reduction in our recurrent operations of \$0.257 million. Council will continue to strengthen our financial, asset and project management practices to ensure that public money is used effectively and services are delivered in cost-effective ways.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Planning processes streamlined

Council has had a focus on stream-lining planning processes, removing unnecessary steps where possible. Council adopted Amendment C119 which reduces the extent of land covered by the Erosion Management Overlay by approximately 7 per cent, representing over 500 properties. Areas to benefit include parts of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Grey River and farmland at the northern edges of the Otways.

Amendment C118 was also adopted by Council to reduce planning permit requirements for minor works, including specific types of advertising signs, in the Colac Commercial Centre. The amendment adjusted the Design and Development Overlay and introduced exemptions within the Heritage Overlay for some development types that do not affect heritage values in the streetscape. Such exemptions do not apply to individually significant heritage buildings.

Council continued its work to understand the experience of planning customers, both through regular feedback surveys of people with real-life experience of the planning system, and through a practitioners' forum in December 2022. This feedback has been important to Council as it works to improve the customers' experience.

Work has commenced on a review of Council's website to simplify processes and information available.

Events Policy streamlined

Community and economic events are important to the region and Council had a focus in 2022-23 on improving the way it supports external events. Council's Grants Program was reviewed, including the events category, and the events application procedures were refreshed after consultation with event organisers and benchmarking of other Councils. Following this a comprehensive review of the Events Policy commenced. A draft policy with changes was exhibited and two workshops held to allow discussion as well as submissions. A new Events Policy will be finalised in 2023-24.

Building capacity of local businesses

Council and other levels of government invest significant funding through capital and other programs. It is important that local businesses are well-placed to participate in a variety of procurement activities so that they can also benefit from this work.

Council plans to deliver targeted workshops for local businesses in 2023-24, to assist them to understand government procurement and how to approach participating in processes to quote or tender for public works.

























Our Performance – Theme 1
























Performance

Priorities and Initiatives

The table below lists our Annual Plan and Budget initiatives against our four-year Council Plan priorities.

2022-23 Major Initiative	Status	Progress comments	
Facilitate the process of making additional residential land available			
<p>Of major significance in the Budget 2022-23 will be the progression of the strategic planning to unlock residential land development in the Deans Creek Growth Corridor, which will be supported by financial assistance from the Victorian Government. This important strategic work will result in the development of a Precinct Structure Plan that will establish the location of key open space reserves and linear linkages, drainage requirements, roads and key traffic intersections, and any other social and community infrastructure.</p> <p>The project will also deliver a Development Contributions Plan to guide how the required infrastructure would be delivered across the growth area. Upon completion, the Precinct Structure Plan and associated planning scheme changes will result in rezoned land for residential development.</p>		<p>Important progress has been made with preparation of the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan. The project governance has been established and a range of consultants have been engaged to prepare technical studies that are required to support the development of a concept plan for the precinct, including cultural heritage, stormwater/flooding, landscape significance, bushfire risk, flora and fauna and soil suitability.</p> <p>The development of the Plan is a multi-year project and work on the technical studies will continue in 2023-24. A community reference group will be established to further guide the project. The project will conclude with the planning scheme amendment which is expected to be completed in 2026.</p>	
Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Deliver a Strategic Growth Plan for the shire and settlement strategy for all small towns and rural living areas 	✓ Participate in Great Ocean Road Authority Strategic Framework Plan	✓ Participate in Great Ocean Road Authority Strategic Framework Plan	Commence Birregurra structure plan review  Commence Northern Towns Growth Plan project 
Deliver a refreshed Apollo Bay Structure Plan 			<i>Prepare information for Council to consider funding this as a 2024-25 project</i>
Facilitate the delivery of more diverse housing stock in Colac and Apollo Bay  	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Progress sale of the Council owned land at Bruce Street Colac for development with social housing✓ Work with the Apollo Bay community to progress actions that achieve key worker housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Continue to participate on and work with the Apollo Bay Key Worker Housing Action Group	Continue to work with Developers to promote greater diversity in housing stock, particularly developers of the Great Ocean Road subdivision at Apollo Bay, Bruce Street in Colac and the two sites being rezoned at Elliminyt in Irrewillipe Road and Harris Road/Colac Lavers Hill Road.  
Increase residential land supply in Colac  	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Commence Deans Creek Outline Development Plan and Development Contributions Plan✓ Support the sale of land process at Bruce Street for residential housing⌚ Complete Colac West Development Plan and Shared Infrastructure Plan✓ Process privately led Colac residential housing planning scheme amendments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⌚ Continue to progress the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan⌚ Finalise the Colac West Development Plan⌚ Progress Planning Scheme Amendments for rezoning land to residential in Colac	Continue to progress the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan   Finalise the Colac West Development Plan   Finalise Planning Scheme Amendments for rezoning land to residential in Colac  

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Deliver a Social Housing Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adopt Social Housing Strategy ✓ Work with G21 regional partners to finalise a regional plan ✓ Work with Homes Victoria and housing providers to deliver social housing projects under the State's Big Housing Build program ⌚ Support the delivery of social housing through development of the Council land at Bruce Street, Colac 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work with G21 regional partners to finalise a regional plan ⌚ Work with Homes Victoria and housing providers to deliver social housing projects under the State's Big Housing Build Program ✓ Support the delivery of social housing through development of the Council land at Bruce Street, Colac 	<p>Continue to work with Homes Victoria to advocate for social housing projects in the Shire</p>
Increase access to affordable accommodation for essential workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work with the Apollo Bay community to progress actions that achieve key worker housing ✓ Participate in a regional Key and Essential Housing Worker project ✓ Investigate site options for future provision of key worker housing in Apollo Bay ✓ Advocate to State and Federal Government for support towards key worker accommodation ✓ Review Council's local law exemption process to consider increased facilitation of short term accommodation on residential lots for essential workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Work with the Apollo Bay community to progress actions that achieve key worker housing ✓ Work with regional partner Councils to complete the regional Key and Essential Housing Worker project ✓ Investigate site options for future provision of key worker housing in Apollo Bay ⌚ Advocate to State and Federal Government for support towards key worker accommodation 	<p>Commence Stage 1 exploration of Key Worker Housing Feasibility on Council owned land at Nelson Street Apollo Bay</p> <p>Continue to advocate to State and Federal Government for funding support towards provision of key worker accommodation</p> 
Deliver Economic Development Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Prepare targeted accommodation investment prospectus for Colac and present to industry stakeholders 	<p>Prepare targeted accommodation investment prospectus for Colac and present to industry stakeholders</p>
Attract and retain a diverse range of businesses and industries, particularly those with green credentials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Deliver small business Digital Transformation program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deliver small business Digital Transformation program 	
Deliver City Deals project in Colac Otway Shire's coastal towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete year one milestones in projects plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implement City Deal projects to agreed plans 	<p><i>NOTE: Council no longer has a delivery responsibility but will continue to support the implementation of the City Deals projects to achieve the community's aspirations</i></p>

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Develop the Apollo Bay Harbour precinct for community activity, commerce and tourism  			Support GORCAPA's delivery of Great Ocean Road City Deal projects  
Attract investment to implement key master plans and projects that will drive economic growth including but not limited to Lake Colac Foreshore Masterplan, Public Toilet Strategy, CBD and Entrances Plan, Apollo Bay, Marengo and Skenes Creek CIP, Murray Street upgrades, township masterplans, Colac Civic Health and Rail Precinct, Memorial Square Masterplan Tourism Traffic and Parking Strategy   	✓ Finalise a list of Council priority projects for funding advocacy	✓ Advocate to State and Federal government for funding towards Council's priority projects	Complete Memorial Square Toilets project    
Deliver improvements to Colac and Apollo Bay CBD's to support their role as a hub for commerce, tourism and the community	 Finalise the Colac Civic Precinct Master Plan  Complete the Apollo Bay Community Infrastructure Plan	 Finalise the Colac Civic Precinct Master Plan ✓ Complete the Apollo Bay Community Infrastructure Plan	Finalise the Colac Civic Precinct Master Plan
Advocate to relevant authorities for new and upgraded infrastructure to support business growth e.g. roads, utilities, NBN	✓ Complete a Digital Infrastructure Gap Analysis study	✓ Advocate to the Department of Transport for road improvements	Seek grant funding to upgrade Mooleric Road
Advocate for implementation of the Forrest Wastewater scheme	✓ Advocate to Barwon Water and State government to fund Forrest Wastewater Upgrade	✓ Continue to advocate to Barwon Water and State government to fund Forrest Wastewater Upgrade	Support efforts by Barwon Water to introduce reticulated wastewater to Forrest 
Include consideration of arts and culture in strategic processes and projects			Engage with arts groups as the Civic Precinct Plan progresses 
Promote the Shire as a destination, not a gateway 			Continue to participate with GORRT promotions 
Maximise our key tourist attractions			Forrest Mountain Bike Trails   
Work with our community to promote our towns as places to stop, visit and explore		✓ Promote uptake of the GORRT partnership program to local tourism business	Consult with community stakeholders to complete the visitor servicing review 
Facilitate development of sustainable visitor infrastructure and accommodation	✓ Assist GORCAPA with information necessary to conduct the preliminary assessment required to start the Ecotourism certification process		
Support business growth through population attraction and retention 			NOTE: Council is not actively promoting population growth as this is currently self-driven but constrained by accommodation access

How we performed against our Indicators

Colac Otway Shire aims for several outcomes over the four years of its Council Plan 2021-2025. We measure progress by the indicators below.

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: Affordable and available housing will support a growing community and economy			
Indicators			
Strategic Growth Plan and Settlement Strategy developed	Not applicable. Was not a funded initiative in 2021-22	Not applicable. Was not a funded initiative in 2022-23	<p>Significant progress has been made in the provision of more residentially zoned land for housing in Colac. Many initiatives are multi-year projects that will continue beyond 2022-23. It is expected that rezoning of land at two precincts in Elliminyt will be finalised after completion of amendment processes, facilitating development of at least 800-900 residential lots.</p> <p>This will be supplemented by finalisation of a Colac West Development Plan for residential land adjoining the former Colac High School which will facilitate a further 450-500 lots for housing.</p> <p>Substantial progress has been achieved with the technical assessment phase of the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan, with this being a longer term project to accommodate the growth of Colac and ensure the availability of affordable housing.</p> <p>There is also progress being made to stimulate new social housing development. Negotiations with developers for land being rezoned in Colac will result in agreements for social housing to be provided as part of new housing estates in Colac. The developer of land at Bruce Street Colac, sold by Council in 2022, will result in at least three new social housing dwellings.</p>
Relevant Planning Scheme Amendments adopted	No residential amendments finalised in 2021-22	Planning scheme amendments progressed for two sites in Elliminyt at Harris Road/Colac Lavers Hill Road and Irrewillipe Road and an amendment submitted to the Minister for approval of land in Sinclair Street Colac to facilitate housing.	
Refreshed Apollo Bay Structure Plan delivered by 2022-23	Not applicable. Was not a funded initiative in 2021-22	Not applicable. Was not a funded initiative in 2022-23	
Increase land supply by 200 new lots annually	210 lots created	119	
Increased availability of affordable housing	Not available	Not available	
Levels of housing stress including rental and mortgage stress	Not available	Not available	
Number of hectares rezoned	No rezonings finalised	No rezonings finalised	
Number of residential lots approved by planning permits	51 new residential lots approved for Colac	212 new residential lots approved (91 in Colac/Elliminyt, 67 Apollo Bay/Marengo, 41 Birregurra and 13 elsewhere in the shire)	
Social Housing Strategy completed and implemented	Strategy adopted August 2021	Negotiations advanced with developers of land being rezoned at two sites in Elliminyt for provision of social housing, and advocacy to State Government for development on state owned land.	
Number of dwellings made available for social housing	Three additional dwellings under construction by Homes Victoria	Fourteen additional dwellings committed by Homes Victoria in Colac.	
More accommodation options are available in towns including Apollo Bay, Birregurra, Forrest and Colac, specifically for workers	Not available	Not available	

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: Attract, retain and grow business in the Shire			
Indicators			
At least 80% of actions from Economic Development Strategy completed	30 per cent complete. Note that the measure will be unachievable due to the percentage of actions that are ongoing rather than project based	67 per cent complete. Note that the measure will be unachievable due to the percentage of actions that are ongoing rather than project based	<p>Acknowledging the economy will continue to take time to recover from the COVID pandemic, interest in business development remains strong.</p> <p>The manufacturing and agricultural sectors continue to prosper, which provides ongoing benefits to our business community, particularly in the regional service centre of Colac.</p> <p>Cost of living pressures are being experienced across the country, with both community and visitors reviewing their discretionary spend.</p> <p>Council continued the development of the J Barrys Road Development Plan, which is anticipated to be completed in 2023-24 and will facilitate a significant amount of industrial land to be developed in Colac.</p> <p>Number of berthings at the Port of Apollo Bay can't be increased until reconstruction works for the breakwater wall and associated structures are complete in 2024.</p>
Community satisfaction with business and tourism increases annually from current result of 60%	The result of 59 points is similar to the average of large rural shires of 58 points and Council's 2020 result also of 58 points	The result of 51 points is lower than the average of large rural shires of 56 points for 2023 and Council's 2022 result of 59 points	
Increased level of investment in the region by 2025	No data available	No data available	
Number of commercial and industrial lots approved by planning permits (use and development)	17 properties issued permits for use and/or development	18 properties issued permits for use and/or development	
Gross Regional product increased	GRP decreased from \$1.497 billion in 2020 to \$1.491 billion in 2021 (Data Source: REMPLAN)	GRP increased from \$1.491 billion in 2021 to \$1.642 billion in 2022 (Data Source: REMPLAN)	
Greenfield industrial land in Colac developed (subdivision)	No new industrial subdivision approved	Thirteen lot subdivision approved in Colac	
All three City Deals projects delivered on time and on budget	Not applicable. Multiyear projects not due for completion in 2021-22	Not applicable. Projects transferred to GORCAPA for delivery.	
Doubled berthings for recreational and commercial boats (currently 33 combined)	Not available	32 berthings	
Funding secured from private sector or government for commercial development of the harbour waterfront	\$4,563,268 secured from Victorian Government across four projects	Projects funded under the City Deal program transferred to GORCAPA for delivery.	

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: Colac Otway Shire is a destination to visit			

Indicators

Increased visitor spend and stay	No current data available	No current data available	The regional tourism sector continues to recover from the COVID pandemic, and is anticipated to take a number of years to return to pre-pandemic visitation levels. Policy changes in other countries (eg: China) is expected to result in increased visitation in coming years. The availability of a diverse range and quality of accommodation across the Shire continues to influence our ability to attract visitation and increase length of stay. GORCAPA is the lead agency for the provision of infrastructure in our coastal areas. Council continues to work with GORCAPA to advocate for quality infrastructure to support a sustainable visitation economy.
Increased total visitor overnight stays	No current data available	No current data available	
Delivery of Destination Actions Plans	Not applicable	Not applicable	
In partnership with GORCAPA, achieve Ecotourism Certification	Completed the preliminary ecotourism certification assessment for the region	No further action was required by Council	
Increased availability of visitor accommodation	No current data available	No current data available	
Public Toilet Strategy completed and 60% of actions delivered by 2025	Draft Public Toilet Strategy was endorsed and exhibited, with public submissions received	Public Toilet Strategy adopted by Council in August 2022. Memorial Square toilet replacement was funded and project commenced	

Outcome: Grow the Colac Otway Shire's permanent population by at least 1.5%**Indicators**

Increase total population of working-aged people and young families	13,310 residents between the ages of 15 and 65 (ABS census 2021)	13,310 residents between the ages of 15 and 65 (ABS census 2021)	Housing availability and affordability is a key factor in growing the Shire's population. Council's key focus on increasing residential land supply is expected to improve its ability to attract people to live in our Shire.
1.5% annual population growth achieved	Average growth 1 per cent pa. Population increased from 21,362 in 2016 to 22,423 in 2021 (ABS Census)	Estimated resident population for 2022 is 22,188, which indicates a decline of 1%	
Reduced seasonality impacts on businesses by having stable permanent population	Not applicable	Not applicable	

Our Performance

Theme 2

Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Introduction

This chapter outlines Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan.

It provides:

- Key achievements and key challenges and future outlook
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives
- Progress in relation to major initiatives identified in the Budget
- Progress in relation to initiatives and actions in the Annual Plans 2021-22 and 2022-23
- Initiatives and actions for the 2023-24 year
- Progress towards the strategic objectives/outcomes in the Council Plan as per the indicators in that document.

The strategic objectives aligned to this theme are:

- We mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change
- We operate sustainably with a reduced carbon footprint
- Protect and enhance the natural environment
- We will satisfy the community's reasonable expectations to reduce waste going to landfill, increase resource recovery and minimise waste charges
- Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment.

Measuring Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan



Completed

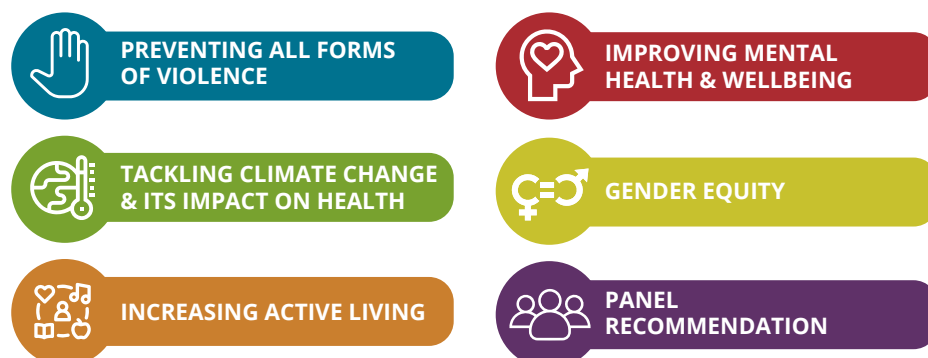


Carried over



Discontinued

Consistent with the Council Plan, Annual Plan Actions that contribute to the achievement of priority health and wellbeing areas are colour coded with a corresponding infographic, as outlined below:



Achievements

Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan

Protection of the environment and Council taking a leadership role to demonstrate best practice and what can be achieved to help protect our natural resources, has been highlighted as a matter of great importance to our community.

Informed by extensive community consultation, Council developed drafts of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan. When finalised in 2023-24, these will become key documents to guide Council's direction and action for the next decade.

Consultation with community, businesses, stakeholders and agencies took place across the shire in Colac, Beeac, Apollo Bay, Wye River, Lavers Hill, Gellibrand, Birregurra and Forrest. An online community information session was also held in addition to an online survey and written submissions.

Council endorsed the draft documents for public exhibition and received a total of 40 survey responses and 78 written submissions. These valuable submissions will inform the final documents.

Adoption of Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)

Council adopted its DWMP in August 2022, providing strategic direction to ensure services and assets meet the changing needs of the community and evolving environmental and financial conditions. The DWMP sets out how Council and the community manage onsite domestic wastewater management systems. This includes septic tank systems, treatment plants, worm farm systems and sand filter systems.

Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo Community Infrastructure Plan

Council adopted the Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo Community Infrastructure Plan (CIP) in April 2023, which sets the long-term vision for the next 20 to 30 years.

The CIP was developed in consultation with the community and Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) over a number of years and provides a clear pathway for Council to advocate to other levels of government about projects important to the community.

Key components of the CIP include a district plan outlining walking and cycling trails, master plans for Skenes Creek foreshore, the Apollo Bay central foreshore and Marengo foreshore, and design guidelines for the Apollo Bay streetscape.

Tree planting across the municipality

Council's annual Street Tree Planting program saw 351 trees planted across towns in the shire including Beeac, Colac, Elliminyt and Birregurra, with Apollo Bay to have trees planted in the next financial year.

In addition to the Street Tree Planting program, Council planted a selection of trees based on the local environment at Wyuna Reserve, Elliminyt to mark the Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Challenges and Future Outlook

Increasing variability of climatic conditions

Council acknowledges our communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

Colac Otway experienced a number of extreme weather events during 2022-23 which created landslips, impacted roads and caused extensive flooding. Council, alongside the community and other levels of government will continue to face significant challenges as we plan, respond and recover from extreme weather events that are expected to increase in both severity and frequency.

Changes in climate also present a challenge for Council's assets that were often constructed with materials and to a standard of a different time. As assets age, Council will have to be proactive in future-proofing its infrastructure to be fit for different conditions.

Supporting the implementation of CDS

Council welcomes the introduction of the new Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) as an exciting initiative for Victoria's waste and recycling system. Proposed collection points in the Shire are being investigated with consideration to be given to coastal communities within Colac Otway and access to collection points, particularly during peak holiday season when visitor numbers increase dramatically.

Council's kerbside data shows that glass and recycling materials increases from 19 to 58 tonnes

Our Performance – Theme 2

for comingled recycling, while glass increases from the 15 to 32 tonnes during the summer months. The Victorian CDS will provide shared benefits to the community, environment and economy by delivering more and better recycling and less waste.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Increased emergency management opportunities

Council has committed to a series of workshops to increase its capacity and capability in planning, mitigating and responding to emergencies. The workshops will build knowledge and better integrate our Business Continuity, Crisis Management and Emergency Management Plans while understanding our current capacity and capability, and how we can improve across the organisation.

Planning for a major emergency cannot be done in isolation as there would be a call on many recovery services involving numerous people and agencies.

To address that concern, Council will conduct the workshops in collaboration with Surf Coast Shire and Corangamite Shire to develop strong inter-agency relationships, build capacity through training and coordinate the planning process.

Council's fleet transition and electric charging stations to be installed in Colac and Apollo Bay Council/public spaces

Council continues to pursue emission reduction and prepare for the changing climate. A key action to reduce Council's emissions and demonstrate Council's commitment to mitigating climate change impacts is to transition to a clean energy electric fleet (light fleet and heavy plant and equipment).

Approximately 75 percent of Council's residual emissions are associated with fleet and plant fuel use. It is important to understand how Council may transition to a clean energy fleet.













An opportunity through the Barwon South West Climate Alliance (BSWCA) has allowed Council to partner with Golden Plains and Warrnambool City Council in the development of fleet transition plans for each council. This partnership allows councils to realise cost savings through economies of scale and share information and learnings.












Performance




Priorities and Initiatives

The table below lists our Annual Plan and Budget initiatives against our four-year Council Plan priorities.

2022-23 Major Initiative	Status	Progress comments	
Remaining Carbon Neutral			
<p>Council determined to become carbon neutral in the 2021-22 Budget through a series of important initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and a one-off budget allocation to offset residual carbon emissions.</p> <p>The Adopted Budget 2022-23 embeds that commitment through the introduction of a recurrent financial commitment to Council achieving its Carbon Neutral Target in the years ahead.</p>		<p>Offsets were purchased for 2020-21 emissions to achieve net zero emissions for Council operations in that year. Council resolved to defer the purchase of offsets for emissions in the 2021-22 year until community feedback was provided during consultation on the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan.</p> <p>A decision on whether Council will proceed with purchase of offsets will be made late in 2023. The operational budget contains funding for the purchase of offsets in 2023-24.</p>	
Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
<p>Deliver our Climate Change Action Plan in partnership with other organisations</p> 		<p> Develop the COS Climate Change Action Plan</p>	<p>Finalise the Climate Change Action Plan for Council Adoption</p> 
<p>Green our streets and public places</p> 	<p>✓ Deliver Council's Street Tree planting program to identified candidate streets</p>	<p>✓ Deliver Council's Street Tree planting program to identified candidate streets (Year 2)</p> <p> Deliver the Colac Botanic Gardens Master Plan</p>	<p>Deliver Council's Street Tree planting program to identified candidate streets (Year 3)</p> <p>Complete the Colac Botanic Gardens Master Plan</p> 
<p>Minimise the effects of climate change and extreme weather events on our community</p> 	<p>✓ Review and update (as required) emergency plans for emergency events and ensure Council is prepared to undertake its functions (e.g. Council's Pandemic Plans)</p> <p>✓ Provide support and input to community sustainability projects such as the Apollo Bay Neighbourhood Battery Feasibility Study, the Geelong+ Community Solar Program and the BSW Community Power Hub and Small Business Energy Saver Program</p> <p>✓ Complete scheduled capital works projects that address impacts from climate change and extreme weather events</p>	<p>✓ Implement and review emergency plans for emergency events and ensure Council is prepared to undertake its functions, if and when, required</p>	<p>Finalise the Climate Change Action Plan for Council Adoption</p> 
<p>Improve Council's sustainability practices through the reduction of Council's carbon emissions and/or need to pay for carbon offsets</p> 	<p>✓ Establish and verify Council's net-zero emissions/carbon neutral status by participating in a not-for-profit, revegetation based offsetting program</p> <p>✓ Conduct feasibility study into the opportunity to install electric heat pumps at Bluewater Leisure Centre to replace the existing Gas Heat Pumps</p>	<p> Develop a discussion paper relating to Council's Scope 3 GHG emissions</p>	<p>Investigate further the electrification of heat pumps and other plant at Bluewater Leisure Centre, including exploration of external funding programs</p> 

Our Performance – Theme 2

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Council supports the community to reduce carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Explore membership of a regional greenhouse alliance ✓ Support community initiated environmental projects through the Colac Otway Shire Grant Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Raise awareness of and promote whole-of-community climate change mitigation/adaptation focused education opportunities, programs and forums ✓ Support community initiated environmental projects through the Colac Otway Shire Grant Program ✓ Review the Council Grant Program to assess for carbon emission outcomes 	<p>Progress actions prioritised in the adopted Climate Change Action Plan (duplicate of action against priority 2.1.1) – will be subject to funding</p>  <p>Support community initiated environmental projects through the Colac Otway Shire Grant Program</p>
Educating and assisting our community to act on climate change by reducing waste, emissions and water usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	
Environment Strategy reviewed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the existing Environment Strategy and commence community and stakeholder consultation for the new Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➡ Develop the new Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 	<p>Finalise and adopt an Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033</p> 
Protect native vegetation, ecosystems, flora and fauna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deliver and support community and corporate environmental events (e.g. National Tree Day, World Environment Day, Clean Up Australia Day) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deliver and support community and corporate environmental events (e.g. National Tree Day, World Environment Day, Clean Up Australia Day) 	<p>Finalise and adopt an Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033</p> 
Undertake pest plant and animal management control programs and community education to target and reduce invasive species in natural systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinate and deliver annual pest plant and animal control programs across environmental reserves, road reserves and other council managed land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Coordinate and deliver annual pest plant and animal control programs across environmental reserves, road reserves and other council managed land ✓ Collaborate with, support and connect Landcare groups/networks and other environmental interest groups to facilitate regional pest plant and animal programs and projects 	<p>No Year 3 actions planned beyond BAU</p>
Increase community satisfaction by community education, phone apps, pursuing joint waste contracts and other innovative approaches in partnership with our community and business sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue to implement year one actions from the Colac Otway Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy, including roll out of the Colac Otway Shire Council “Good Sort” app for residents ✓ Continue to identify opportunities to collaborate with regional partners, including Barwon Water and Barwon South West Waste Resource & Recovery Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue to implement year two actions from the Colac Otway Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy, including roll out of the Colac Otway Shire Council “Good Sort” app for residents ✓ Continue to identify opportunities to collaborate with regional partners, including Barwon Water and Barwon South West Waste Resource & Recovery Group 	<p>Support the roll out of the Victorian Government reforms including the Container Deposit Scheme.</p>

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Reduce the % of food and organic (FOGO) waste in the landfill waste stream (red bin) by awareness raising and innovative approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Events Policy and include provisions for waste wise events Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Events Policy and include provisions for waste wise events Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	<i>Finalise the Events in a Public Place policy</i>
Reduce the % of contamination of the recycling waste stream (yellow bin) by awareness raising and innovative approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct detailed and targeted educational activities including bin audits, to educate the community in the correct sorting of household waste at the source 	
Divert glass from landfill by rollout of glass recycling bins (purple bin) and public awareness raising and innovative approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a fourth glass collection bin for the kerbside collection of glass, which will reduce the contamination of the current co-mingle stream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post the introduction of the glass collection bin for the kerbside collection of glass, monitor the volumes generated in this stream and assess the contamination of the comingle stream for the reduction in contamination. Continue to educate the community in the correct sorting at the source 	
Trial a hard waste collection service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and present options for a hard waste service leading to trials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a hard waste trial for kerbside collection (book and call) with supplementary vouchers and report back on the outcomes of the trial ie volumes, % age take-up, contamination and % age of volume to landfill post sorting 	
Maintain road and drainage assets to ensure they are safe and reliable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that identified road defects are rectified in accordance with settings in the Road Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that identified road defects are rectified in accordance with settings in the Road Management Plan Continue to apply for funding for priority safety improvements Advocate to State election candidates for road safety funding specific to Colac Otway Shire 	No Year 3 actions planned beyond BAU
Deliver a relevant Capital Works Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide efficient and effective Capital works delivery in line with agreed targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete projects in line with the adopted budget and capital program 	No Year 3 actions planned beyond BAU <i>(Note, Capital Works progress is reported separately)</i>
Council meets annual infrastructure renewal gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Council's Asset Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence implementation of priority actions outlined in the Asset Plan 	Update Buildings AMP based on new condition data
Ensure planning processes and policies for new developments meet the intent of this objective			Consider the principles of the Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria and other relevant guidance documents when assessing planning applications for new developments.

Our Performance – Theme 2

How we performed against our Indicators

Colac Otway Shire aims for several outcomes over the four years of its Council Plan 2021-2025. We measure progress by the indicators below.

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change			
Indicators			
Climate Change Action Plan completed by 2022	Environment Strategy review commenced in preparation for Action Plan to be delivered in 2023	Draft Climate Change Action Plan placed on public exhibition in May 2023	Council has had a strategic focus in 2022-23 working to establish its long-term direction and roadmap for future action to mitigate climate change. The community has had a great influence in this work through its participation in an extensive consultation process undertaken to develop the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan. Council was also supported in its tree planting program through receipt of the Queen's Jubilee grant. Council's partnerships in emergency management again underpinned Council's coordinated approach to emergency management planning, highlighted by the first in-person tri-council workshop since COVID.
Number of trees planted in public spaces (open space and streetscape)	316	351	
Development of an urban cooling strategy and canopy target as part of the reviewed environmental strategy Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Review the quality of street trees and streetscapes when planting appropriate trees in the future	Not applicable	Appropriate street trees were selected based on location and planted for the 2022-23 program	
Emergency Management Plan regularly reviewed	Not applicable	The Municipal Emergency Management Plan was updated in 2020 and is next due for review in 2023	
Community satisfaction with emergency and disaster management increases annually from the current result of 73 points	The result of 67 points is very similar to the Council's result of 68 points in 2020 and average for large rural shires of 66 points	The result of 62 points is lower than the previous year but similar to the 2023 result for large rural shires of 64 points	
Upgrades completed in vulnerable locations	Not applicable	Not applicable	



Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We operate sustainably with a reduced carbon footprint			
Indicators			
Maintain Council's net zero carbon emissions and reduce dependence on carbon offsets through implementation of emission reduction projects	Prior year 2020-21 carbon emissions were audited and cost for offsets included in the 2021-22 budget	Council deferred the decision to purchase offsets in 2022-23 to enable community input to be considered	Most of the remaining carbon emissions from Council operations result from use of gas and Council's light and heavy fleet. Council commenced developing a Fleet Transition Plan in 2023 to move to a zero emission fleet. Council formalised its regional partnerships in relation to climate action through becoming a member of the Barwon South West Climate Alliance.
Community satisfaction with environmental sustainability increases annually from current result of 62 points	The result of 58 points is lower than Council's result in 2020 of 54 points and similar to the average for large rural shires of 59	The result of 56 points is slightly lower than Council's result in 2022 and the average for large rural shires in 2023 (both 58 points)	
Council has considered opportunities for regional partnerships in relation to climate change	In April Council resolved in to join the Barwon South West Climate Alliance for 2022-23	Council joined the Barwon South West Climate Alliance and actively participated as a member.	
Raised awareness of whole-of-community climate change mitigation/adaptation focused activities	Not applicable	Council partnered with Geelong Sustainability and surrounding Councils to develop and promote the All Electric Homes program and enable transition of households away from gas and increase energy efficiency.	
Reduction in CO2 emissions for Colac Otway	Not available	Not available	
Reduced waste to landfill, emissions and water usage in the community	Data not available	5,250 tonnes of material was diverted from the landfill stream through the kerbside service	
Outcome: Protect and enhance the natural environment			
Indicators			
Reviewed Environment Strategy adopted by Council and implementation commenced by 2022	Community consultation has commenced for revised Environment Strategy	Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy placed on exhibition in May 2023	A strong focus of the Environment team has been engagement of contractors to undertake the roadside weed management program to protect roadsides with high quality conservation values and target the highest risk and most invasive weeds. Work has also occurred to manage conservation values in several environmental reserves.
Number of community activities and education initiatives that promote stewardship of the natural environment	19 activities conducted for school children and youth Four events held to promote environmental stewardship to the wider community	15 community based events held	
Connecting and supporting Landcare and environmental interest groups	Ongoing support was provided to these groups through the year	Ongoing support was provided to these groups through the year. Grants provided to Landcare, Sustainability and Climate Action groups for events, community education and environmental rehabilitation activities.	
Kilometres or hectares of roadside weed control conducted	Weed control completed for 774km of unsealed road and 500km of sealed roadside	Weed Control completed to 500kms of sealed and 774kms of unsealed road. Wetter than usual conditions required additional slashing and spraying in spring and summer	

Our Performance – Theme 2

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change			
Indicators			
Community satisfaction survey (waste management components) (Score of 69 points in 2021)	The result of 67 points is slightly higher than Council's result of 65 points for 2020 and the average for large rural shires of 65 points	The result of 64 points is lower than the previous year but similar to the 2023 result for large rural shires of 65 points	The four-bin kerbside program has continued to settle in with good support from residents. The uptake of the GoodSort App continues to grow and customers provide positive feedback about this tool. Testing the hard waste service in the market through a tender process provided Council with an understanding of the true cost of the service and informed its decision to abandon the project.
Waste management charges	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Percentage of organics waste diverted from landfill stream and composted	35 per cent	38 per cent	
Percentage of contamination in recycling stream	16 per cent (2021)	16 per cent (2021)	
Percentage of glass diverted	8 per cent	9 per cent	
Hard waste trial conducted, evaluated and recommendations made to Council	Recommendations for a hard waste service provided to Councillor Briefing session in March 2022. Hard waste trial scheduled for 2022-23	Project no longer going ahead	



Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment			
Indicators			
Community satisfaction with sealed roads increases annually from current result of 53 points	The result of 47 points is slightly higher than Council's 2020 result of 44 points and the average for large rural shires of 45 points	The result of 39 points is significantly lower than the 2022 result, but very similar to the 2023 result for large rural councils of 40 points	<p>The 2022-23 year saw a series of flooding and storm events across the Shire, which had a significant impact on the local road network.</p> <p>Council responded to the community with a range of support including, additional waste service and cleaning debris from roads and waterways.</p> <p>Local roads in the Otways were impacted by a number of landslips that required Council's engineers and civil crews to re-prioritise their work. This contributed to Council not achieving 100 per cent compliance with its Road Management Plan.</p> <p>Recovery from these events will continue over the next year or two.</p>
Community satisfaction with unsealed roads increases annually from current result of 44	The result of 37 is slightly higher than the average for large rural shires of 45 points and Council's result of 44 points in 2020	The result of 32 points is lower than the 2022 result, but similar to the 2023 result for large rural councils of 35 points	
Development of a Road Safety Strategy	Not applicable	Not funded in 2022-23	
Road safety funding attracted and priority improvements implemented	\$370,712 secured across two projects	\$46,486 secured for one project	
Road Management Plan compliance 100 per cent	Not achieved	Not achieved	
Complete 85 per cent or more of capital projects annually against allocated budget	Capital works delivery was 62 per cent against amended budget	Capital works delivery was 78 per cent against amended budget.	
Greater than 85 per cent of renewal work for sealed and unsealed roads annually	Completion of 94 per cent of projects associated with the renewal of sealed and unsealed roads for 2021-22 was achieved	Completion of 96 per cent of projects associated with the renewal of sealed and unsealed roads for 2022-23 was achieved	
Asset Management Plans completed	Asset Management Plans for six major infrastructure classes were completed (buildings, roads, bridges, pathways, stormwater, open space and recreation)	Asset revaluation of roads and footpaths was completed and will inform future asset management plan updates for these classes	
Capital funding allocated annually in accordance with levels identified in AMPs	Not applicable	Not achieved	
Landscape Guidelines for developers completed	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Conditions relating to quality landscape, open space, streetscape and urban design outcomes developed and enforced	Not available	Not applicable	

Theme 3

Healthy and Inclusive Community

Introduction

This chapter outlines Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan.

It provides:

- Key achievements and key challenges and future outlook
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives
- Progress in relation to major initiatives identified in the Budget
- Progress in relation to initiatives and actions in the Annual Plans 2021-22 and 2022-23
- Initiatives and actions for the 2023-24 year
- Progress towards the strategic objectives/outcomes in the Council Plan as per the indicators in that document.

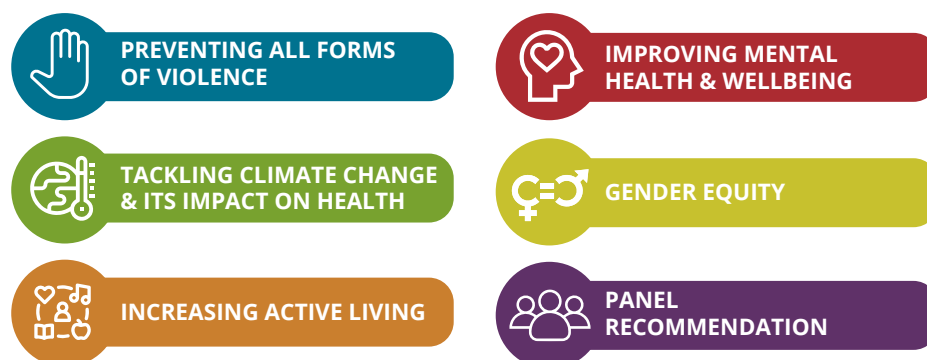
The strategic objectives aligned to this theme are:

- All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in the shire
- People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places
- We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community.

Measuring Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan

- ✓ Completed
- ↻ Carried over
- ✗ Discontinued

Consistent with the Council Plan, Annual Plan Actions that contribute to the achievement of priority health and wellbeing areas are colour coded with a corresponding infographic, as outlined below:



Achievements

Lighting Upgrades at Five Regional Sporting Reserves

Council delivered upgrades to the sports oval lighting at Gellibrand, Irrewillipe, Alvie, Birregurra and Warrowie Recreation Reserves to Colac and District league competition standards, allowing safe night-time use, helping the clubs to establish women's teams and host future night-time matches.

The project involved installation of 150-lux LED lighting illuminating the grounds, providing home clubs with more opportunities to use the whole oval well into the evening.

The sports lighting projects were made possible through a funding partnership between the Victorian Government, Council and the Birregurra Football Netball Club. This investment improves the health, wellbeing and social outcomes for our community.

The benefits of this project were realised with Alvie hosting their first night match on Good Friday in 2023 which drew a large crowd under the lights.

Fly the Rainbow Flag on 17 May for IDAHOBIT

Council demonstrated a commitment to our allyship with our LGBTQIA+ communities with the unanimous vote by Councillors to fly the Rainbow Flag each year on May 17 for IDAHOBIT.

IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex Discrimination and Transphobia) is celebrated on May 17 each year to mark the anniversary of the World Health Organisation removing homosexuality from the Classification of Diseases.

Flying the Rainbow Flag is another step toward all people in our community feeling safe and supported.

Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE) Project

Colac Secondary College and Council partnered to deliver the Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE) program in the Shire. The project aims to create a positive culture of masculinity for participants, to generate social change at grassroots level.

The launch of the program included a round-table discussion around the program and attracted over a hundred people from a diverse cross-section of the community.

The two-day workshop was developed by Jesuit Social Services to explore societal pressures around masculinity and how to support our young people to understand what it means to be a man in our community. 25 local men (or masculine-identified people) in leadership positions within the community participated in these workshops where they explored how to positively influence boys and men, and to create positive role models and promote healthy masculinity where boys and men work, live and play in the Shire.

Council received funding from VicHealth to deliver the Modelling Respect and Equality (MoRE) program in our community.

Reconciliation Week Morning Tea Colouring Competition and Flags on Murray Street

This year's Reconciliation Week Theme – Be a Voice for Generations – encouraged all Australians to be a voice for Reconciliation, where we live, work and socialise, to help create a more just, equitable and reconciled country for all.

Council hosted a Reconciliation Week event at COPACC with a Welcome to Country and a Smoking Ceremony conducted for the official launch of an exhibition of a Shire-wide colouring competition which featured the artwork of local First Nation's artist, Gerard Black. The exercise helped children in the Shire to learn of the importance of Reconciliation and Aboriginal culture.

The winning entries were printed on flags which flew in Murray Street, Colac during Reconciliation Week. Designs were also printed on giant stickers displayed in Murray Street and Council buildings.

Challenges and Future Outlook

Commonwealth Government's Aged Care Reforms

The Commonwealth Government's Aged Care Reforms will bring significant change including to reporting and accountability requirements, changes to provider accreditation, new governance standards and increased prudential and financial reporting.

In response, Council commenced a Best Value Review of its aged care and disability services. The review includes consultation with clients, employees and community as well as the use of experts

Our Performance – Theme 3

to undertake program evaluation, community consultation and engagement, financial analysis and risk assessment.

The review will help Council understand its capability to continue provision of services including, assisting older people, those recovering from acute care and people with disabilities to continue to live independently in the community.

The Best Value Review report will be presented at a Council meeting late in 2023 or early 2024 and aims to enable Council to consider its future role and provision of aged and disability services in the Colac Otway Shire.

Ageing Open Space, Sports and Recreation Infrastructure and Implementing Fair Access Policy

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires the Victorian public sector, local governments and universities to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality.

In August 2022, the Victorian Government announced a new Fair Access Policy Roadmap, which supports gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure across the state. Local Government is required to respond to this legislation and policy position via a range of actions within a timeline set by the Victorian Government.

This new policy requires facility owners and managers to review access and usage policies to ensure females have a fair share of access to the highest quality facilities at the best and most popular times. Usage policies need to consider competition time, training times, and the distribution between traditional competition and other participation opportunities within a variety of sports.

One of the challenges that Council faces as it works towards compliance with the Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy Roadmap is that many of the recreation facilities and assets across the Shire are aging and were built at a time when standards and community expectations were different to today. Council will not be able to bring all facilities into compliance quickly and so will need to work with communities across the Shire to progressively upgrade facilities over many years.

Council will support clubs and communities to work within the new policy framework, and this will be a new piece of work for Council's small recreation team in the coming year.

Supporting Community in Limited Childcare Provision

Access to high-quality, affordable and close-to-home childcare is recognised as a key foundation for workforce participation. There is significant concern about the future of childcare provision in a number of communities in the Colac Otway Shire.

While Council isn't involved in the delivery of childcare, we are regularly talking to government about this important service, as well as private operators looking to set up new childcare businesses in our community.

Access to childcare is already lower across regional Victoria than in metropolitan Melbourne. The female workforce participation rate (57.7%) is also lower than for men (65.2%), and the limited access to childcare is cited as a contributing factor to this, particularly in remote towns such as Apollo Bay.

Council's advocacy has successfully highlighted the particular challenges in Apollo Bay, and has been actively advocating for a state-managed facility under the Best Life, Best Start program, however this remains a challenge as there are childcare pressures across the State and the program has competing demands.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Ongoing Support for Community Asset Committees for them to be successful in their role

Community Asset Committee members willingly volunteer and apply their skills and experience to ensure public halls, recreation reserves and sporting facilities are maintained and support the health and wellbeing of our small town communities.

Council acknowledges members have had to work through a range of anomalies following the introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020* in relation to a management and governance model for the committees.

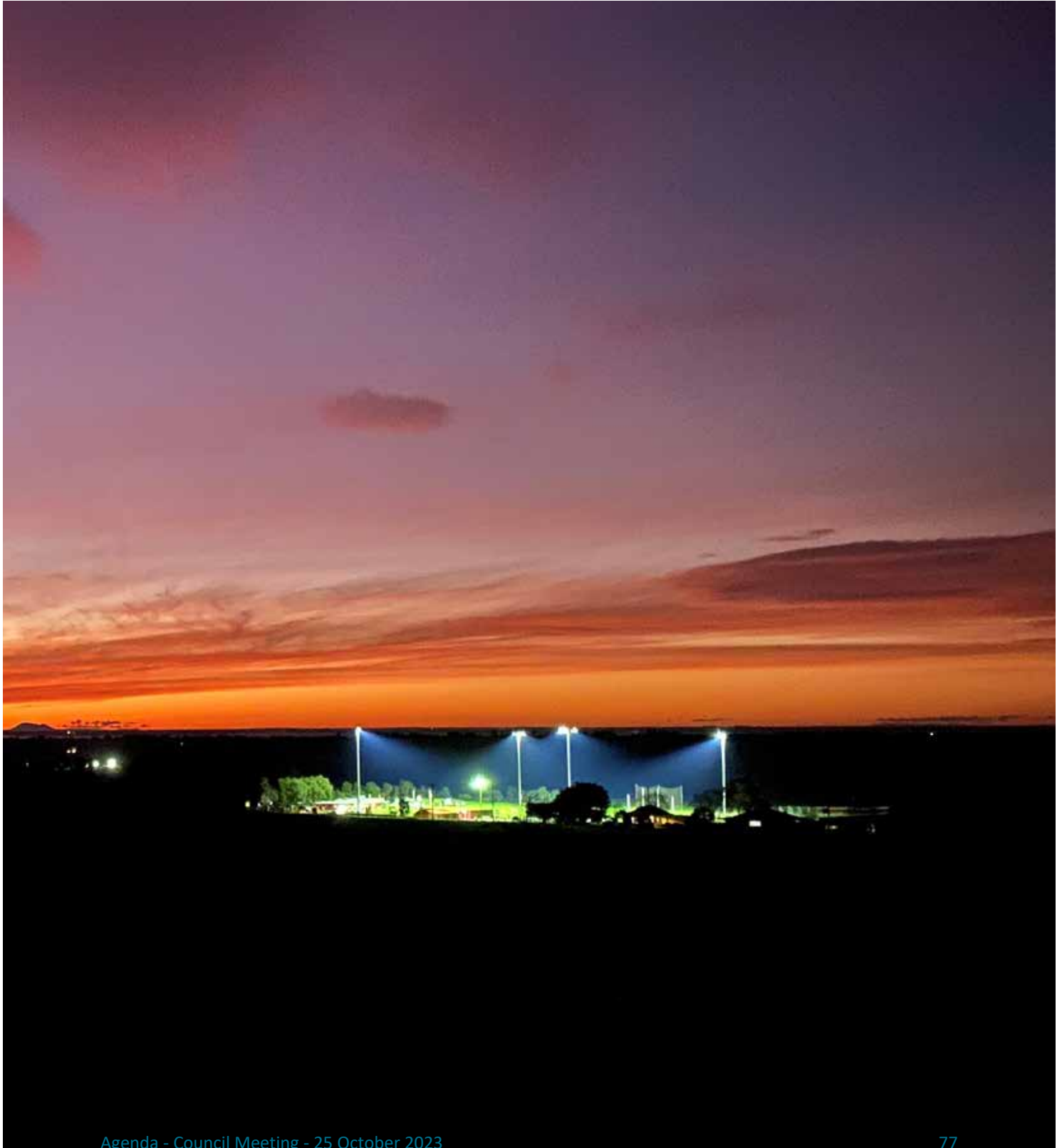
Council has developed and implemented a training program framed around its Community Asset Committee Induction Guide to support our committees, and are working with individual Committees to support them in their role and provide information to ensure all committee members are confident in undertaking their responsibilities.

Community Conversations

Informal discussions between Council and residents in their local community are a positive way to meet with and demonstrate Council's commitment to work with the community. These 'Community Conversations' provide people in the community with the opportunity to ask Council about local projects, raise local issues or discuss bigger picture

priorities. These can also help the community to gain an improved understanding of Council's role or activities, and importantly allows Councillors and officers to listen to local issues and gain local insight and knowledge from our residents.

Council will seek to establish a number of Community Conversations across the Shire.






















Our Performance – Theme 3





















Performance

Priorities and Initiatives

The table below lists our Annual Plan and Budget initiatives against our four-year Council Plan priorities.

2022-23 Major Initiative	Status	Progress comments	
Caring for our older persons			
The Adopted Budget 2022-23 incorporates continued growth in the delivery of services to our aged community. This important service provides essential care for our aging community, supporting people to age safely in their own homes for as long as possible.	X	<p>Council continued to deliver a highly valued service to our aged community, as evidenced by our Community Satisfaction Survey result. Council maintained the levels of service throughout 2022-23 however further growth in service was not realised, primarily due to workforce shortages which are shared across the country.</p> <p>Council recognised the significance of the upcoming Commonwealth Government reforms to aged care and commenced a Best Value Review to enable it to understand the future provision of this service by Council.</p>	
Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Advocate for access to and provision of education, employment and lifelong learning opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🔄 Deliver Small Business Digital Transformation project✓ Deliver the Colac Otway Careers/Jobs Fair	✓ Deliver Small Business Digital Transformation project	
Create environments where children can be happy, healthy, supported, educated and safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🔄 Continue to work towards securing long-term childcare solutions for Apollo Bay and Colac🔄 Complete Early Years Infrastructure Plan to guide facility maintenance and investment decisions across the shire✓ Work with service providers, P-12 College and community to transition the Apollo Bay Preschool into new Apollo Bay Early Years Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Continue to work towards securing long-term childcare solutions for Apollo Bay and Colac🔄 Complete Early Years Infrastructure Plan to guide facility maintenance and investment decisions across the shire✓ Attract more Educators to grow Council's Family Day Care program and enhance childcare availability and choice in the shire✓ Secure grant funding for an upgrade of Winifred Nance Kindergarten's playground✓ Complete bathroom upgrades at Wydinia and Colac East kindergartens	<p>Continue to work towards securing long-term childcare solutions for Apollo Bay and Colac</p> <p></p> <p>Complete Early Years Infrastructure Plan to guide facility maintenance and investment decisions across the shire</p> <p></p>
Provide services to enable lifelong health and wellbeing from the early to senior years 	✓ Partner with other community organisations within Colac Otway Shire and boarding Aged Care and Disability services to enhance relationships with the community in building high quality and accessible service delivery to the home and community	✓ Continue to provide high quality and accessible home and community services	Complete Best Value Review of Ages and Disability Services
Provide safe, inclusive, accessible and integrated transport networks that support active transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🔄 Construction of a shared pedestrian and cycling path along the Great Ocean Road north of Cawood Street, Apollo Bay✓ Upgrade the shared path along the Barongarook Creek, Colac	<ul style="list-style-type: none">🔄 Complete the Lake Colac perimeter path feasibility study✓ Construction of a shared pedestrian and cycling path along the Great Ocean Road north of Cawood Street, Apollo Bay	No Year 3 action planned beyond BAU

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Plan for and supply quality public open space to meet community needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete upgrades to Memorial Square Playspace and ⌚ Cororooke Open Space ⌚ Secure land on the former Colac High School site for future public open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete upgrades to the Cororooke Open Space ✓ Secure land on the former Colac High School site for future public open space 	Complete Birregurra Play Space redevelopment project  Complete Donaldson Street Play Space renewal works 
Provide fit for purpose accessible and well-utilised recreation, arts and community facilities and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Complete masterplans with four city reserves (Eastern Reserve, Western Reserve, Lake Oval and Central Reserve) to provide direction for facility upgrades and improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue work on detailed designs for the Elliminyt Recreation Reserve off field facilities ✓ Complete City Reserves Masterplans (Eastern Reserve, Western Reserve, Lake Oval and Central Reserve) to provide direction for facility upgrades and improvements. 	Undertake Birregurra Hall and streetscape works 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Implement oval lighting upgrades at five sporting reserves, being Alvie, Birregurra, Gellibrand, Irrewillipe and Warrowie recreation reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete oval lighting upgrades at five sporting reserves, being Alvie, Birregurra, Gellibrand, Irrewillipe and Warrowie recreation reserves. 	Undertake kitchen renewal at Colac Central Bowling Club  Undertake key renewal works at Lavers Hill Hall 
Plan, design and maintain attractive and safe public spaces in partnership with our community and key agencies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participate in the Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority's (GORCAPA) master planning process for the Apollo Bay Recreation Reserve 	
Increase participation in physical activity throughout the shire through direct service provision and partnerships with health services and the wider community 			<i>Community grants process scheduled for review in 2024-25, to encourage projects that encourage physical activity</i> 
Promote and demonstrate gender equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Develop and implement the Gender Equality Action Plan 		Report GEAP implementation to Gender Equality Commissioner 
Support stakeholders such as Colac Area Health, Great Ocean Road Health, Barwon Health, Hesse Rural Health, Headspace and other community groups to improve mental health and wellbeing in our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support Colac Area Health's advocacy for a Headspace facility in Colac 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Support the ongoing operation of Colac's Headspace via collaboration with partners on the Headspace Consortium. 	

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Support relevant stakeholders to improve healthy eating and living in our community 	 Conduct an EOI for a private operator to open a café facility in Bluewater that provides health eating options	 Conduct an EOI for a private operator to open a café facility in Bluewater that provides health eating options  Deliver youth health promotion modules focussed on building active communities; creating connected and supportive communities; and building healthier food systems in line with Council's VicHealth grant funding	
Diversity is embraced 	 Conduct community consultation to understand community views and perceptions on the future of Councils Australia Day Events		Install Ceremonial/ Recognition Flagpole at Civic Precinct Colac 
Deliver a Reconciliation Action Plan in consultation with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Cooperative 	 Complete Reflect Action Plan in partnership with local Aboriginal community, ensuring it includes a specific section for the early years	 Complete the 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan  Deliver an event during Reconciliation Week	
Provide community safety services that enhance the liveability of our shire 	 Commence a campaign to highlight the positive aspects of Council's compliance activities	 Commence a campaign to highlight the positive aspects of Council's compliance activities  Commence the review of the Local Laws  Develop, implement and review fire prevention plans/programs and awareness raising activities for Council and the community	Complete General Local Law review 
Support health, enforcement and other services to support initiatives to reduce all forms of violence 	 Raise awareness about gender equity by displaying flags in Murray Street as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, and partner with other agencies to support events during this period		
Reduce gambling-related harm in the Colac Otway Shire 			Consider the merits of a Gambling Policy as part of the Planning Scheme Review

How we performed against our Indicators

Colac Otway Shire aims for several outcomes over the four years of its Council Plan 2021-2025. We measure progress by the indicators below.

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in the Shire			
Indicators			
Reduced youth unemployment rate	Relevant 2021 census data unavailable until October 2022	4.7% (2021 Census Data)	Our strong and diverse local economy provides employment opportunities for our young people, influencing the very low unemployment rate across the shire. This can also influence education attainment levels with opportunities for apprenticeships and the demand for labouring roles meaning some young people are entering the workforce prior to completing secondary school.
Reduced total unemployment rate	Relevant 2021 census data unavailable until October 2022	2.8% (2021 Census Data)	
Links facilitated between employers and educators to ensure workforce skills meet community needs	Workshops with school career advisers and local employment agencies and further education providers held	Ongoing discussions with school career advisers and local employment agencies and further education providers were held	
Increase Year 12 or equivalent completion rate to at least the Victorian average (43.5 per cent as at the 2016 census)	2021: 41.8 per cent for Colac Otway (Census 2021 ABS)	2021: 41.8 per cent for Colac Otway (Census 2021 ABS)	
Funding for early years infrastructure secured (\$)	Funding secured: Shade sail replacement Wydinia Kindergarten \$14,457 Colac East Kindergarten bathroom upgrade \$137,300 Wydinia Kindergarten bathroom upgrade \$100,900	Funding secured: \$300,000 for upgrade of Winifred Nance Kindergarten playspace Funding secured: \$42,000 for development of a Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan	Council continues to work with schools and employment agencies to support our sectors in securing required workforce. Workforce and accommodation challenges across the nation have also impacted workforce access locally. Health services and early childhood workers are particularly scarce and access to key workers will continue to have an influence on the desired outcome of a thriving community.
Increased childcare options/ availability	One additional Family Day Care educator recruited	One additional Family Day Care educator recruited Support provided to Creative Minds Early Years as part of their registration processes.	As a result of the COVID pandemic, new ways of working, schooling and socialising were introduced that continue to influence peoples' behaviours and confidence.
Partner with agencies to decrease 23.3 per cent children developmentally vulnerable in one or more domain	2018: 23.3 per cent 2021: 20.2 per cent	2021: 20.2 per cent (2021 Australian Early Development Census)	
Increase in 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten participation rates	99.6 per cent (2018 Australian Early Development Census) 96.4 per cent (2021 Australian Early Development Census)	96.4 per cent (2021 Australian Early Development Census)	
Community satisfaction for Family Support Services increases annually from current result of 70 points	67 points	The result of 64 points is lower than the 2022 result, but higher than the 2023 average result for large rural councils of 61 points	
Community satisfaction for Elderly Support Services increases annually from current result of 69 points	This remains one of Council's highest rated services and with a result 69 points is higher rated than the average for large rural shires of 64 points	The result of 66 points is lower than the 2022 result, but higher than both the average results for large rural councils and State-wide of 63 points	
Participation rates in Maternal and Child Health checks	75.83 per cent	76.26 per cent	

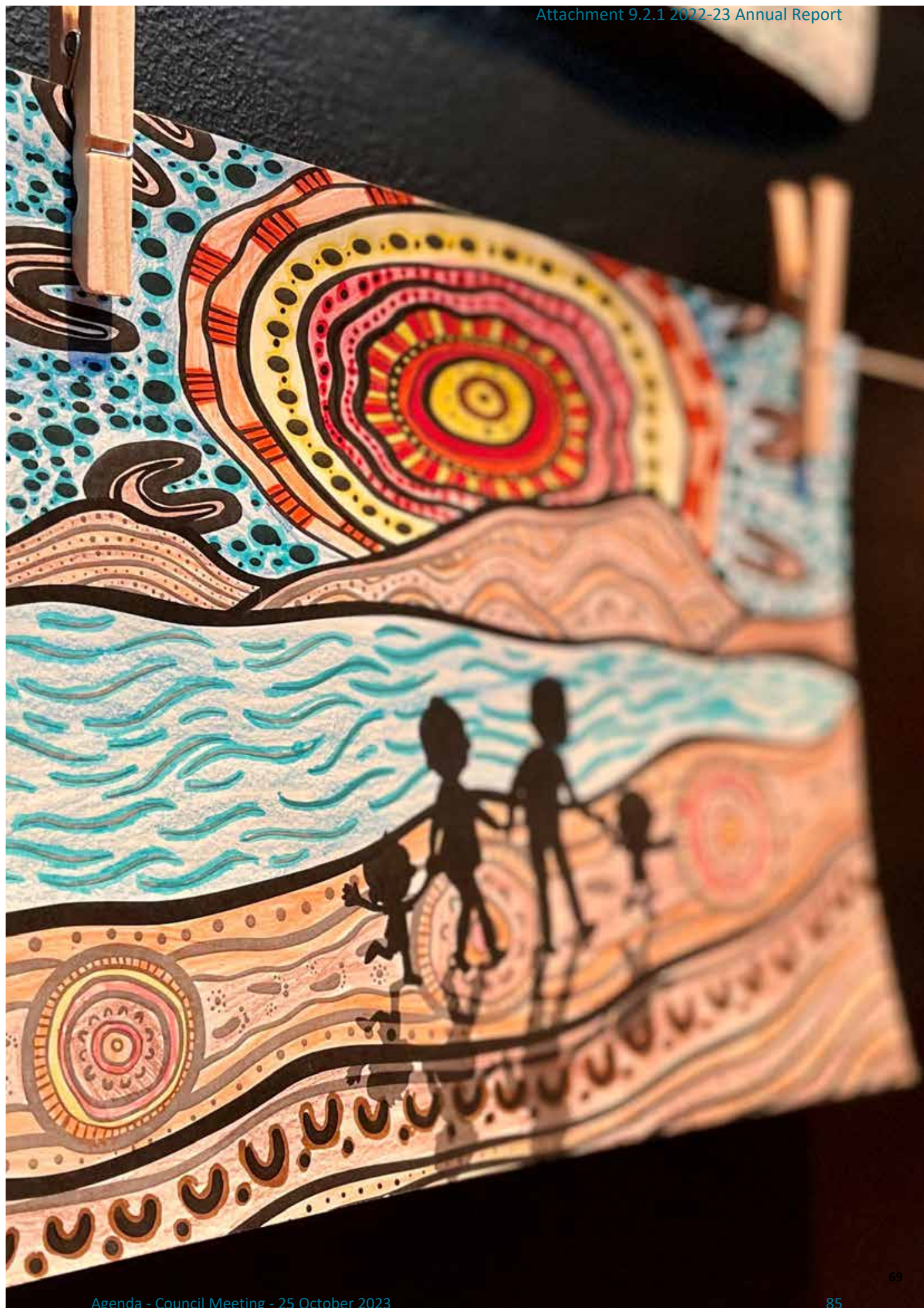
Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places			
Indicators			
New or upgraded priority footpath, trail and cycling connections and improvements delivered annually (metres)	3,314 metres of new or upgraded pathways were completed in 2021-22	1,918 metres of new or upgraded pathways were created in 2022-23	A significant contribution this year has been major lighting upgrades at five recreation reserves. This increases accessibility and safety for all users. It is particularly beneficial in supporting female participation where increased lighting contributes to greater confidence in participation. Ongoing access to external funding is a major influence on Council's ability to provide quality spaces and places. The benefits are maximised by incorporating open space contributions from Developers through residential land developments.
Review strategic footpath plans for Apollo Bay and Colac	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Council-managed open space provision aligns with standards for development outlined in the Public Open Space Strategy	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Colac Otway Playspace Strategy developed and adopted	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Community satisfaction for recreation facilities increases annually from current result of 72 points	The result of 66 points is the same as the average of large rural shires and slightly higher than Council's result of 64 points in 2020	The result of 63 points is lower than the 2022 result, but similar to the 2023 average for large rural council of 65 points	
Community satisfaction for arts, centres and libraries increases annually from current result of 72 points	The result of 69 points is the same as the average for large rural shires and slightly higher than Council's result of 64 points in 2020	The result of 66 points is lower than the 2022 result and the 2023 average for large rural councils of 69 points	
Increased participation rates at libraries; and increased visitation to COPACC programs	11.98 per cent active library borrowers per capita 27.32 per cent average audience attendance at COPACC shows. This was impacted by COVID-19 venue capacity restrictions	13.43 per cent active library borrowers per capita in 2022-23 reporting period.	
All new and upgraded Council facilities are universally accessible	Achieved	Achieved	
Community satisfaction for appearance of public spaces increases annually from current result of 69 points	69 points	The result of 63 points is lower than the 2022 result, but similar to the 2023 average result for large rural councils of 65 points	



Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Perceptions of safety during the day greater than 97.6 per cent and after dark greater than 65.5 per cent	Not available	No new figures available since 2015	Visitation has increased at Bluewater Leisure Centre by over 25 per cent. This is largely due to the centre being able to operate for a full year without closures due to COVID-19.
Increased visitation and memberships at Bluewater Leisure Centre and Apollo Bay Aquatic Centre	Total visitation of over 80,000 at Bluewater Leisure Centre. Visitation has decreased due to COVID-19 impacts such as closures and restrictions Total visitation of 6,326 at Apollo Bay Aquatic Centre	Total visitation of 102,808 (excluding stadium usage) at Bluewater Leisure Centre. Total visitation of 6,638 at Apollo Bay Aquatic Centre.	
Level of community grants funding directed to projects that encourage physical activity	\$67,138 funded across 15 projects	\$136,139 funded across 31 projects	
Gender Equality Plan for Council adopted and implemented	The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) was approved by 31 March 2022 in accordance with the Gender Equality Act 2020. The GEAP is compliant with the requirements of the Act and implementation has commenced.	Council made a Gender Equality Statement in the Council Chamber in February 2023	
New and upgraded community facilities accommodate gender neutral design principles	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Community facility fees and charges structures encourage facility users to embrace gender equity	Not applicable	Not applicable	



Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community			
Indicators			
Accessibility of services that lead to reduced rates of: Suicide and self-inflicted injuries (101 per 100,000 people) Psychological distress (20.3 per cent) Anxiety or depression (31.7 per cent)	People reporting high to very high levels of psychological distress rates reduced in 2020 to 18.5 per cent Other measures not surveyed in 2020 Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) at a Local Government level	Data not yet available from the 2023 Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS)	Our greatest contributions this year have come through the ability to partner with other organisations, such as the opening of Headspace Colac. Our influence on these complex matters is generally providing a supporting role and advocating on behalf of our community.
Reduced rates of diet-related chronic disease	Not surveyed in 2020 Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) at a Local Government level	Not surveyed in 2020 Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) at a Local Government level	
Community facility fees and charges structures encourage facility users to embrace healthy eating, reduced tobacco, alcohol and other drug use	Not available	Not available	
Increased partnerships and advocacy with relevant organisations	Not available	Council worked with existing partners	
Greater than 45 per cent of residents' support multiculturalism as measured by Department of Health data	60.1 per cent (2020 Victorian Population Health Survey)	Data not yet available from the 2023 Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS)	
Contribute to greater than 57 per cent of residents feel valued by society	Not available	Not available	
Key council documents and communications are provided in accessible formats and multiple languages	Not available	Not achieved	
Increase in number of community events that celebrate diversity	Not available	Flew the flag for IDAHOBIT and supported a community-led Rainbow event	
Reflect level Reconciliation Action Plan delivered by 2022	Reconciliation Action Plan in early draft form, with next step being engagement with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation	RAP work paused to be guided by First Nations Peoples	
Community satisfaction for enforcement and local laws increases annually from current result of 67 points	64 points	The result of 61 points is lower than the 2022 result, but identical to the average result for large rural councils and State-wide of 61 points	
Local Law reviewed by 2023	Not applicable	Achieved	
Decrease family violence incident rates	Not available	Number of incidents 2021-22 reporting period: 393 Number of police reported FV incidents per 100,000 persons 2021-22: 1761.57 Source: crimestatistics.vic.gov.au	
Gambling Policy developed for inclusion in the planning scheme	Not applicable	Not funded	



Our Performance

Theme 4

Strong Leadership and Management

Introduction

This chapter outlines Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan.

It provides:

- Key achievements and key challenges and future outlook
- Continuous Improvement Initiatives
- Progress in relation to major initiatives identified in the Budget
- Progress in relation to initiatives and actions in the Annual Plans 2021-22 and 2022-23
- Initiatives and actions for the 2023-24 year
- Progress towards the strategic objectives/outcomes in the Council Plan as per the indicators in that document.

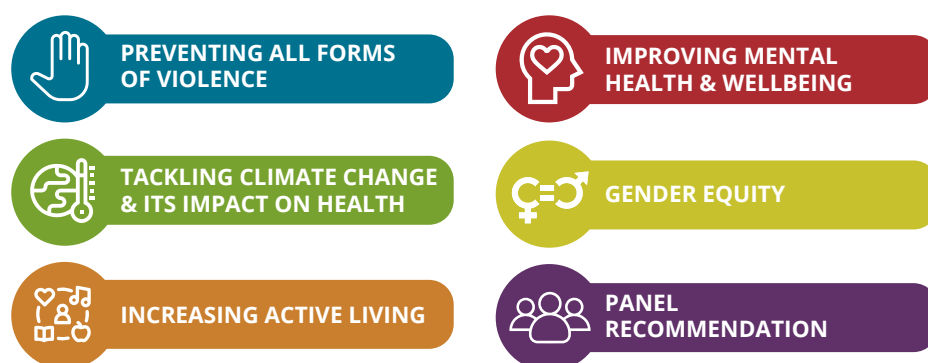
The strategic objectives aligned to this theme are:

- We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement
- We are a financially robust organisation
- We provide exceptional customer service
- We support and invest in people.

Measuring Council's performance against the key themes and objectives in the Council Plan

- ✓ Completed
- ↻ Carried over
- ✗ Discontinued

Consistent with the Council Plan, Annual Plan Actions that contribute to the achievement of priority health and wellbeing areas are colour coded with a corresponding infographic, as outlined below:



Achievements

Enterprise Agreement

Council finalised a new Enterprise Agreement which was officially approved by Fair Work Australia in December 2022.

The new Enterprise Agreement outlines workplace conditions for a contemporary organisation and culture; promotes a safe and inclusive workplace that values diversity, makes us more competitive as an employer and supports work/life balance for employees.

Improved terms and conditions for employees as part of the Enterprise Agreement include greater flexible working arrangements, increased parental and adoption leave, paid leave for employees undergoing gender transition, blood donation leave and the ability to further contribute to the community by the way of volunteer leave.

CRM Implementation – Phase 1

Council developed and implemented a new Customer Request Management (CRM) system to replace the ageing, stand-alone Merit system.

The Civica Authority CRM integrates with our core Authority modules that support other parts of Council's operations. This provides for greater streamlining and automation of our customer related functions.

For the community, the new CRM now generates an email acknowledging their enquiry providing a unique reference number to make any follow up contact with Council easier and more efficient.

For Council, the CRM will enable us to collect data to better understand customer issues, how we respond to them and what outcomes are delivered. This will be used to inform how improvements can be made to ensure Council delivers timely responses and a positive experience for customers.

Moving forward, Council will work to expand the use of CRM's capabilities to make broader improvements to our approach to customer service generally.

Financial Transparency

Council has enhanced transparency around the financial management of projects for Councillors and the community through the introduction of budget transfer reports. At each Council meeting, a monthly report is presented that provides details of project budget adjustments for the period and seeks approval for those adjustments to be made.

For each report, an assessment of progress of each capital project and operational project is undertaken. This assessment includes consideration of both income and expense budgets, if they are on track or required adjustment. Assessment is also made about which projects should be deemed complete.

The introduction of these reports and the new process provide greater visibility to Councillors and the community of the Capital Works Program and Operational projects.

Joint Emergency Management Exercise with Neighbouring Councils

Planning for a major emergency cannot be done in isolation. In the event of an emergency, there is a need to have all hands on deck, which usually involves numerous people and agencies working well together and with the community. Coordination and planning is essential and to build this, Council conducted a full day emergency management capacity building exercise with neighbouring Corangamite and Surf Coast Shire Councils, including the Executive Management teams.

The exercise generated discussion and planning of personnel required, highlighted the various Emergency Management roles Council may have and tested the newly-developed role cards that Council will use during an emergency incident.

The workshop developed strong inter-agency relationships, built capacity through the training and provided participants with a coordinated planning process.

Our Performance – Theme 4

Challenges and Future Outlook

Cyber Security

Throughout 2022-23 there has been a heightened focus on Cyber Security within Council, as it has for organisations generally. As the risk of attempts by malicious actors to compromise internal systems increases, processes have been reviewed and tightened over the year to reduce both the attack footprint and subsequent risk. This is a fast evolving field so constant monitoring and vigilance is required, along with ongoing training for employees to improve cyber security awareness.

Sector Disruptions (Conspiracy Theory Groups and Sovereign Citizens)

Colac Otway Shire Council remains committed to operating transparently and being accountable and accessible to our community, acknowledging Council is the most accessible level of government and a forum for debate on issues that affect the Colac Otway community.

During the 2022-23 financial year, some local government areas experienced an increase in disruptive and intimidating behaviour toward Councillors at Council meetings by members of the public, causing the councils to make the decision to close their meetings.

Threatening and unpredictable behaviour is not acceptable in any workplace, including a Council chamber. Training has been provided to some Councillors and employees to ensure they have the skills to respond if a situation arises at Colac Otway Shire Council for the safety of those in attendance, including community members present in the gallery. Colac Otway is supportive of local government working together to ensure our meetings remain a place where community members can participate in decision making.

Workforce Shortages in Key Services

One pressing challenge facing the organisation from a People and Culture perspective is the shortage of skills and labour in some critical areas in particular the areas of accounting, project management, planning and engineering. Colac Otway Shire Council is not alone, with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) reporting that “more than nine out of ten councils are currently facing jobs and skills shortages” (Source: Jobs and Skills Crisis in Local Government online article, 2 September 2022).

Whilst employee turnover has improved over the year, a significant challenge still exists in attracting and retaining skilled candidates to regional areas,

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

CRM Project – Phase 2

Work will commence with a Phase Two of the CRM project. This will see the continued development of systems and processes to deliver more responsive services and improve customer satisfaction and engagement.

Council will develop usage of the new CRM functions to support improved customer service through close-on-first-contact processes, which delivers an immediate response to a customer enquiries or requests.

Customer Complaints Policy

A Customer Experience Coordinator was engaged early in 2023 to provide a focus for organisational wide improvement. Sitting outside the structure of the front facing Customer Service team, this position plays a key role in improving the customer service culture of Council employees and community perceptions of the service. Development of a draft Customer Experience Strategy has commenced which outlines the principles and priority actions for Council, and a Customer Experience Governance structure has been established. Council will review its Complaints Policy and procedures for handling complaints, with the draft policy due to be considered by Council in the latter part of 2023.

Performance

Priorities and Initiatives

The table below lists our Annual Plan and Budget initiatives against our four-year Council Plan priorities.

2022-23 Major Initiative	Status	Progress comments	
Improving the Customer Experience			
<p>The most significant project under this theme will be the implementation of a new Customer Request Management (CRM) – A good CRM is a vital tool to assist with the effective and efficient operations of Council.</p> <p>For a number of years Council has persisted with a system that is lacking in its capacity to deliver to a satisfactory level. The new system will be user friendly, provide good efficiencies, greatly improved response times, integration opportunities and offer improved front end engagement with ratepayers.</p> <p>Council has determined that significantly improved benefits can be gained with the implementation of a new CRS, ensuring that customer requests for service are captured, tracked and completed.</p>	<div>✓</div>	<p>Council achieved progress in its efforts to improve customer experience with the employment of new Customer Experience Coordinator early in 2023 to help drive improvement across the organisation.</p> <p>A new Customer Request System was implemented to replace an old and outdated system to improve recording and response to customer requests, enabling improved reporting of Council's performance.</p> <p>A review of the Complaints Handling Policy and associated procedure commenced, and fresh training on complaint handling processes will be delivered in 2023-24 to increase the effectiveness of Council response to complaints.</p>	
Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Identify and embrace best practice and modernise systems to realise efficiencies	<div>✓</div> Upgrade to a modern cloud based phone system for access to enhanced features, improving reliability, security, scalability and accessibility from anywhere, including during an emergency, whilst delivering a seamless customer experience	<div>✓</div> Investigate and scope further cyber security and data protection measures to provide continued protection and compliance for council systems	Undertake an internal audit relating to cybersecurity controls
	<div>✓</div> Investigate and scope further cyber security and data protection measures to provide continued protection and compliance for council systems	<div>✓</div> Upgrade conference rooms to modern meeting technology	
	<div>🕒</div> Upgrade conference rooms to modern meeting technology		
Digital transformation to improve customer experience and interactions with community	<div>✓</div> Develop online process to submit new animal registrations (Cats and Dogs) through Council's website	<div>✓</div> Replacement of Customer Request Management System	
	<div>✓</div> Develop online process to submit 'Request forms' through Council's website	<div>✓</div> Develop online process for Public Event Permit applications	
	<div>🕒</div> Develop online process for Public Event Permit applications		
	<div>✓</div> Deliver an online self-assessment tool for small business to establish their permit requirements through the Better Approval process		

Our Performance – Theme 4

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
Building and Planning services are customer and solution focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduce customer survey for planning and building related services ✓ Prepare report on expanding the scope of applications suitable for VicSmart approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Undertake review of local VicSmart provisions to increase the number of permit applications that could be assessed via a streamlined planning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a planning scheme amendment to implement changes to local VicSmart provisions Undertake service specific feedback activity to identify opportunities to improve community perception
Undertake a rolling program of service reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Conduct a service review of Colac Regional Saleyards ⌚ Conduct a service review of Services and Operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Conduct a service review of Colac Regional Saleyards ⌚ Conduct a service review of Services and Operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Best Value Review of Community Care Review Complete a service review of Colac Regional Saleyards Complete a service review of Services and Operations Complete visitor servicing review
Plan for sustainable portfolio of assets to deliver the services the community needs within our financial constraints ●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Capital Funds Allocation and Prioritisation Policies adopted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Capital Funds Allocation and Prioritisation Policies adopted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Asset Management Strategy actions ●
Adopt a policy and approach to guide the disposal of assets no longer required ●		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Develop methodology for decommissioning of assets ⌚ Continue work on public halls and social infrastructure needs analysis, to better understand service levels and future facility requirements 	
Manage procurement to get best value for the community			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Internal Audit into Procurement
Council businesses maximise community utilisation and minimise council subsidy ratios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Conduct a service review of Colac Regional Saleyards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer earlier priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake strategic fee review for COPACC and Bluewater
Financial and risk management practices are responsible and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review Revenue and Rating Policy ⌚ Review Council's Investment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Develop Statutory and Discretionary Reserve Policy ⌚ Review Council's Borrowing Policy ⌚ Review Council's Investment Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Statutory and Discretionary Reserve Policy Review Council's Borrowing Policy Review Council's Investment Policy
Council service delivery is efficient, accessible, solution-focused and responsive to the needs of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌚ Development of online forms and payment options to deliver accessible customer services for all customers ⌚ Development and Implementation of Customer Service Charter ⌚ Undertake engagement with our coastal communities to better understand factors that contribute to perceptions of Council's performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Development of online forms and payment options to deliver accessible customer services for all customers ⌚ Development and implementation of Customer Service Charter ✗ Undertake engagement with our coastal communities to better understand factors that contribute to perceptions of Council's performance ⌚ Establish Council's safety programs to the national audit tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Customer Experience improvement program Review Complaints Policy

Our 4-year priorities are	Our 2021-22 focus was	Our 2022-23 focus was	Over the next year we will
We respect and invest in our employees and continue to strengthen our workplace culture ● ●	🕒 Commence the development of the organisation's purpose with engagement at the team level	✓ Commence the development of the organisation's purpose with engagement at the team level	Develop action plan based on People Matters Survey results ● ●
We commit to safe work practices and take a positive approach to our work ●	🕒 Review Council's safety programs against best practice using the National Audit Tool ✓ Implement the actions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Plan	✓ Measure alignment and adherence to safe work practices via annual performance plans ✓ Implement the actions of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Plan	Implement actions from Internal Audit into WHS systems ●
Develop a skilled and diverse workforce by investing in training and development ● ●	✓ Investment in leadership programs across the organisation to create internal pathways for career progression, development and succession planning ✓ Develop a Workforce Plan	✓ Investment in leadership programs across the organisation to create pathways for career progression and development	Develop an organisation wide training program for mandatory and compliance training ● ● ●
Council provides clear, accessible communication and opportunities for the community to participate in decisions that affect them in line with the Community Engagement Framework	✓ Deliver training to Council employees to improve Council's community engagement practices in line with the Community Engagement Policy and Framework	✓ Deliver training to Council employees to improve Council's community engagement practices in line with the Community Engagement Policy and Framework	Conduct two 'community conversations' in small towns
Council decisions are open and transparent and the public has access to relevant Council information			Review decisions made in closed Council meetings and develop further guidance to maximise public decision-making



Our Performance – Theme 4

How we performed against our Indicators

Colac Otway Shire aims for several outcomes over the four years of its Council Plan 2021-2025. We measure progress by the indicators below.

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement			
Indicators			
Community satisfaction for Council's overall performance increases annually from current result of 63 points	Council's overall performance of 56 points was very similar to the average of other large rural shires. The lift in performance in 2021 has not been replicated and this year's result is very similar to Council's result in 2020 of 55 points	This result is 6 points lower than the previous year, but similar to the average result for large rural councils of 52 points	Whilst Customer Satisfaction survey results are low for Building and Planning, surveys of planning permit applicants indicate a high level of satisfaction with Council's service and feedback from the surveys is used to drive service improvements. These applicant surveys are a more reliable indicator of the quality of Council's Planning service compared to perceptions of the community measured in the Annual Council Satisfaction survey.
Number of services that can be accessed by customers online	Not available	Not available	
Community satisfaction for Planning and Building services greater than 50 points by 2025	Community satisfaction with these services remains lower than the average of 46 points for and surveys indicate that time and complexity of applications are issues that contribute to this result	Community satisfaction with these services remains lower than the average of 42 points for large rural councils and surveys indicate that time and complexity of applications are issues that contribute to this result	
85 per cent of planning applications, and 100 per cent of VicSmart applications determined in 60 days	75.77% of applications Determined with 60 Statutory Days and 86.73% of VicSmart applications determined within 10 Business Days	75.60% of applications Determined with 60 Statutory Days and 83.54% of VicSmart applications determined within 10 Business Days	
Conduct at least two service reviews annually and implement decisions made by Council, with a view to saving at least \$250,000 per year	These two service reviews were put on hold while other financial and operational priorities were addressed and will be undertaken in 2022-23	Four service reviews have commenced in 2022-23 and contributed to \$257,000 savings found in the year	
Outcome: We are a financially robust organisation			
Indicators			
Asset Management Policy reviewed to address asset decommissioning and divestment	Draft policy endorsed for exhibition. Decommissioning and divestment is part of separate Asset Disposal Policy	Adopted by Council in August 2022	Council has continued to strengthen governance in relation to the financial management of projects through the introduction of a practice to provide monthly budget transfer reports to Council meetings for formal approval. This also enhances transparency for Councillors and the community on how council funding is being managed.

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Asset Management Strategy and Plans adopted	Completed	Completed	Major influences over Council's financial position continue to be its constrained ability to generate greater revenue due to Victorian Government policies, cost of living pressures and appetite to ask for greater contribution from users. Matters influencing Council's expenses include the number of services delivered to a dispersed community, and external impacts on costs such as CPI, regulatory requirements and market increases.
Asset Management Plans include strategic service planning recommendations	Completed	Completed	
Capital Funds allocation and prioritisation policies adopted	Drafts exhibited	On hold	
Agreed audit recommendations are implemented within defined timelines	Not applicable	Ongoing	
Rolling internal audit program implemented	Completed	Ongoing	
Reduced subsidy ratio for Council businesses (airports, saleyards, COPACC, Bluewater and Visitor Information Centres)	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Deliver 10-year Financial Plan	Completed	No further update	
VAGO LGPRF financial sustainability measures	Expenses per head of population: \$2,726.65 Infrastructure per head of population: \$17,967.21 Population density per length of road: 13.20 Own source revenue per head of population: \$1,919.00 Recurrent grants per head of population: \$653.40 Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage: 3 Percentage of employee turnover: 23.15 per cent	Expenses per head of population: \$2,764.44 Infrastructure per head of population: \$19,268.12 Population density per length of road: 13.63 Own source revenue per head of population: \$1,999.37 Recurrent grants per head of population: \$674.75 Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage: 3 Percentage of employee turnover: 19.8 per cent	

Outcome: We provide exceptional customer service

Indicators

Community satisfaction for Customer Service increases annually from current result of 69 points	The result of 63 points is lower than the average result of other large rural shires of 67 points and returns to the same result Council achieved in 2020. Six in ten residents provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good'	The result of 66 points is higher than the previous year and higher than the average result in 2023 for large rural shires of 65 points. 13 percent of respondents cited customer service as one of the best things about Council.	Council's Customer Request Management system (CRM) has been updated and upgraded to provide enhanced, automated and streamlined workflows. This will enable customer and service requests to be managed and resolved quicker and more effectively, further improving our approach to customer service.
Seek to understand factors contributing to the community's perception of Council's performance in Apollo Bay and surrounds	Not commenced	Not proceeding	

Outcomes and Indicators	Results 2021-22	Results 2022-23	Contribution/Influence 2022-23
Outcome: We support and invest in people			
Indicators			
Employee satisfaction and engagement	Survey not conducted	Survey not conducted	<p>As the organisation moved out of the COVID 19 pandemic, priority continues to be given to ensuring the wellbeing of our people. Approaches such as flexible working arrangements and working from home are implemented to help support the wellbeing of people.</p> <p>A leadership program has commenced with senior officers and people leaders to enhance these skills, knowledge and capability in being effective leaders not only to their teams but across the organisation. The program will continue over the next two years to embed effective leadership into the culture of the organisation and support the attraction and retention a skilled and quality workforce.</p>
Delivery of targets and measures as outlined in the OHS Strategic Plan	The 2021-23 Occupational Health and Safety Plan was implemented outlining new objectives. Progress was made on the action items and now forms part of the organisation review of safety systems and processes	The 2021-23 strategic plan was reviewed as part of an internal audit process into Workplace Health and Safety. An outcome of that process is the refresh of a the OHS strategic plan, which has commenced.	
Attraction and retention of skilled workforce	The Workforce Plan identified a comprehensive action plan to respond to the attraction and retention challenges. This underpinned the strategy for the enterprise agreement negotiations to ensure Council works towards an employer of choice and market competitiveness	The Colac Otway Shire Enterprise Agreement was approved, providing new and revised provisions that create a modern and contemporary framework for employees that positions Council well to attract and retain a quality workforce.	
Number of secondments within the organisation	There were four formal internal secondments	There were two formal internal secondments	
Number of internal promotions	There were 135 formal higher duties appointments	There were 117 formal higher duties appointments	
Number of hours of training	In the absence of resources, due to long term illness, this manual task has not been undertaken in this period	There were 2600 hours of training.	
Number of traineeships/apprenticeships	There are four traineeships and three apprenticeships	There are three traineeships and three apprenticeships	
Development of a Workforce Plan	Completed	No further update	
Community satisfaction for Consultation and Engagement increases annually from current result of 60 points	53 points	The result of 47 points was lower than the 2022 result, but similar to the 2023 average result for large rural councils of 49 points	
Rolling program of Community Conversations implemented	Not applicable	Not commenced	
Number of decisions made in closed Council meetings	2.27 per cent	4.69 per cent	
Community satisfaction for Council's community decision making increases annually from 58 point	53 points	The result of 45 points was lower than the 2022 result, but similar to the 2023 average result for large rural councils of 48 points	
Compliance with Public Transparency Policy	Achieved	No further update	



Sustainability Report

Colac Otway Shire Carbon Neutral Target and Purchase of Carbon Offsets for 2021-22

Council has significantly reduced its annual carbon emissions (by 68% since 2010) and shown strong corporate leadership in offsetting the remaining emissions to become a carbon neutral organisation whilst it transitions towards zero corporate greenhouse gas emissions. Council formalised its Carbon Neutral status for the 2020-21 financial year in September 2022 by purchasing carbon emission offset credits equivalent to 1,520 tonnes of CO₂-e. Council verified its carbon emissions inventory in line with the National Carbon Neutral standard to ensure there is integrity, transparency and rigour to its claim of carbon neutrality and the offsets purchased are certified accordingly.

Meeting Council's 2020 carbon neutral target is the culmination of 10 years of energy efficiency, renewable energy and emissions reduction work – an investment of approximately \$1.5 million (which includes \$500,000 of government grants). This investment has now been fully paid back through ongoing savings which have resulted from the upgrades (approx. \$250,000 per year).

Current residual carbon emissions that require the purchasing of offsets will continue to be reduced by future emissions reduction projects focusing on Council's gas and transport fuel usage over the next ten years. It is not feasible to eliminate all residual emissions without investing in offsets to maintain its Carbon Neutral status in the short term, but rapidly evolving technology and market forces will facilitate emissions reduction possibilities during this decade.

Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan

A draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan were prepared and placed on public exhibition following extensive stakeholder and community engagement. Once finalised, these documents will be Council's roadmap to guide its actions for the next ten years to ensure that it protects and enhances the environment and takes appropriate action to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate.

The draft Climate Change Action Plan includes a range of measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions including energy efficiency and renewable energy, waste reduction and recycling and sustainable transport. The Plan also includes initiatives aimed at building resilience to climate change impacts such as emergency management planning, land use planning reforms, urban greening, and biodiversity conservation programs, and aligns with Council's goal to be carbon neutral.

Environmental Education Events

Council's Environment and Sustainability Team partnered with COPACC to deliver environmental education themed offerings for local schools and families, in particular to mark World Environment Day. This very successful partnership allows children to engage with environmental issues through a performing arts lens and this year the events below saw 427 students, teachers and parents from six schools and one kindergarten attend.

The Whale's Tale was presented at Lavers Hill P-12 College for our rural students in August 2022 - an environmental tale and interactive performance about a beached whale to warm the heart and inspire students to play their part in caring for the planet and the animals we share it with. It has been forecast that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the sea than fish. The Whale's Tale was a timely tale that hopefully inspired the school children to want to make a difference and play their part in caring for our planet and the animals.

Junklandia was delivered by COPACC in partnership with Council's Environment Department to mark World Environment Day in June 2023. The show took students and families on a journey where they could shift their usual perspective on rubbish as an insurmountable problem to an exciting opportunity to get creative, make something, and have fun in the process and aimed to ignite a fresh perspective on the terms reduce, reuse and recycle.



Organisational Emissions for 2022-23

Organisational emissions have remained relatively steady since 2021-22. Emissions increased by 0.6% overall in 2022-23. The impact of ongoing sustainability initiatives such as energy efficiency upgrades to heating and ventilation systems, street lighting and solar installations has been difficult to distinguish from COVID-19 lockdown related emission reductions over the last couple of years. The effectiveness of previous upgrades is becoming more evident with Council facilities returning to business-as-usual operation. For 2022-23, despite reopening of facilities and returning to work and full operations, consumption and emissions continue to remain lower than pre-COVID-19.

On 1 July 2022 Colac Otway Shire Council became one of 51 Victorian Councils who joined the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) which is the largest example of a collective buyers group for renewable energy in the country. As a result, VECO is also the largest ever emissions reduction project by local governments in Australia, with renewable energy generated from wind farms in western Victoria, used to power council-owned infrastructure, such as halls, sports grounds, community venues, leisure centres and streetlights. The collective emissions reduction by participating Councils is equivalent to powering up to 45,000 homes or taking more than 90,000 cars off the roads each year.

Total COS Greenhouse Emissions (CO2-e tonnes)					
Buildings	Buildings	Gas	Street/Public Lighting	Fleet	Total
2010-11	1,999	311	1,181	2,114	5,605
2011-12	1,916	290	1,202	1,727	5,135
2012-13	1,879	323	1,182	1,698	5,082
2013-14	1,484	186	1,014	1,523	4,207
2014-15	1,356	3	872	1,530	3,761
2015-16	1,846	282	436	1,269	3,833
2016-17	1,881	478	412	1,560	4,331
2017-18	1,887	488	406	1,329	4,110
2018-19	1,747	470	406	1,263	3,886
2019-20	1,389	466	417	1,333	3,605
2020-21	0* (1,121)	412	0* (368)	1,108	1,520 (3,009)
2021-22	0* (1,254)	431	0* (327)	1,276	1,707 (3,288)
2022-23	0* (1,128)	446	0* (321)	1,273	1,719 (3,168)

*Numbers in brackets show emissions avoided by purchasing 100% clean renewable electricity (VECO)

**Emissions figures for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 have been revised to reflect the emissions boundary set by Council as part of its carbon emissions inventory verification in line with the National Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.

Buildings

Council's ongoing commitment to purchasing 100% clean renewable electricity continues to provide emissions-free electricity consumption for buildings. The 10% decrease in consumption can be attributable to flexible work arrangements with many staff continuing to work from home some of time and ongoing energy efficiency gains through upgrades of IT and other equipment.

The 8% increase in gas consumption is largely due to Bluewater Leisure Centre returning to full operations for the entirety of 2022-23, while it was still largely closed for the first quarter of 2021-22 due to COVID. However, it is important to note that gas consumption remains lower than pre-COVID levels, reflecting energy efficiency upgrades in recent years (e.g. upgrades and optimisation of Building Management Systems).

Streetlights

VECO also provides emissions-free, clean renewable electricity for street and public lighting. Consumption has decreased by 2%, attributable to ongoing replacement of old street lights with energy efficient LED lights as part of maintenance and renewal works.

Fleet

Fleet and equipment related fuel emissions remained relatively steady. As Council moves to gradually electrify its fleet, hybrid and electric vehicles and equipment will continue to be prioritised during fleet renewal.

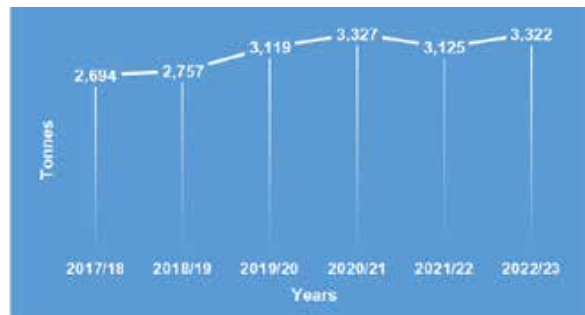
Water Usage for Council Facilities

Year	Water Usage (kilolitres)
2016-17	80,887
2017-18	92,787
2018-19	92,935
2019-20	91,058
2020-21	67,333
2021-22	82,727
2022-23	89,950

Water use has increased by 8.7%, largely due to sport and recreational facilities returning to full operations post COVID. For example, water use at Bluewater Leisure Centre increased again in 2022-23 as it returned to full operations for the entirety of 2022-23, while it was still largely closed for the first quarter of 2021-22 due to COVID.

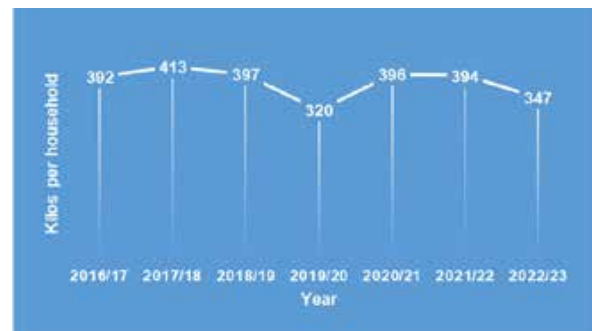
Waste

Organic Waste Diverted from Landfill



Council recorded an increase of 197 tonnes of organics material during the 2022-23 period. Keep up this great work and be a GoodSort and use the right bin.

Household Waste to Landfill



The total general waste going to landfill from households via the kerbside collections is lower than the previous year. Waste data collected via the waste monitoring dashboards is valuable data that we can use for targeted education in the coming year.

Council encourages the community to download the GoodSort Waste and Recycling App to reduce their waste to landfill and 'get it right on bin night'.



Our Governance

Democratic Governance

Corporate Governance

Statutory Information

Governance and Management Checklist



Governance

Democratic Governance

Statutory responsibility for local government lies with each Australian state or territory. An Act of each State Parliament specifies local government powers, duties and functions.

In Victoria, the legal basis for councils is established under the *Constitution Act 1975*, the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Councillor Code of Conduct

Council's Code of Conduct was revised and adopted by Council on 27 April 2022. The Code outlines the principles of good governance, guides Councillors' behaviour, accountability and provides for dispute resolution processes between Councillors. The Code is available on Council's website.

Decision-Making Process

Council is authorised to make decisions in only one of two ways:

- By resolution at Council meetings and Delegated Committees of Council; or
- By Council officers under delegated authority. The Chief Executive Officer is authorised under the Act to manage the day-to-day operations of the organisation. The CEO has the power to delegate decisions on operational matters to officers. There are certain powers that Council cannot delegate.

Council meetings

Open Council meetings are generally held on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Agendas for these meetings are published on Council's website prior to the meeting and the community is welcome to attend in person or watch via live streaming. Council meeting minutes are also posted on the website following the meeting.



Council Committees

A Council may by instrument of delegation, delegate to members of a delegated committee any of its powers, duties or functions, under the *Local Government Act 2020* or any other Act (with exceptions).

Planning Committee

Colac Otway Shire has a Planning Committee comprised solely of all seven councillors, which considers and determines all matters referred to it pursuant to its instrument of delegation, including matters relating to strategic issues, and other matters referred to the Committee. Planning Committee meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of the month, as required.

Community Asset Committees

Community Asset Committee members willingly volunteer and apply their skills and experience to ensure that the provision of public halls, recreation reserves and sporting facilities contribute to the health and wellbeing of communities throughout Colac Otway Shire.

In accordance with the section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council has established 21 Community Asset Committees:

- Alvie Recreation Reserve
- Apollo Bay Senior Citizens Centre
- Barongarook Hall and Tennis (not operational)
- Beech Forest Hall
- Beech Forest Recreation Reserve
- Birregurra Public Hall
- Carlisle River Recreation Reserve
- Chapple Vale Public Hall
- Cororooke Public Hall
- Cressy Hall
- Eurack Public Hall and Tennis Reserve
- Irrewillipe Hall and Reserve
- Kennett River Tennis Reserve
- Larpent Hall
- Lavers Hill Hall
- Pirron Yallock Recreation Reserve
- Stonyford Hall
- Swan Marsh Hall and Tennis Reserve
- Warncoort Tennis Reserve
- Warrion Public Hall
- Yeo Recreation Reserve.

Officer Delegations

Colac Otway Shire Council's powers under the *Local Government Act 2020* or any other Act may also be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer or individual staff, or sub-delegated to a Colac Otway Shire Council officer by the Chief Executive Officer.

Conflict of Interest

Councillors are elected by their communities to make decisions in the best interests of the municipality. To ensure the public interest is served at all times, Councillors are required to separate their private interests from their public duties, which may mean stepping aside from a decision where a conflict of interest arises.

During 2022-23, Councillors disclosed twelve conflicts of interest during Council meetings and two conflicts of interest at Planning Committee meetings.

Corporate Governance

Having strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by Council. The Act requires Council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist and include this in its report of operations.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee of Council and its purpose is to provide a structured, systematic oversight of Council's governance, risk management and internal control practices. The Audit and Risk Committee assists the Council and management by providing advice and guidance on the adequacy of initiatives for:

- Governance structure
- Risk management
- Internal control framework
- Oversight of the internal audit activity, external auditors and other providers of assurance
- Financial and performance statements and public accountability reporting.

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter was reviewed and adopted by Council on 28 September 2022.

Our Governance

Audit and Risk Committee members

The Audit and Risk Committee comprises two Councillors and three independent members.

The maximum term of an independent member is three terms of three years, or nine years. Councillor appointments to the Audit and Risk Committee are reviewed in November each year.

In 2022-23, the independent members were:

- Brian Keane (Chair)
- Richard Trigg
- Melissa Field.

Brian Keane BEc, FCPA first appointed from December 2018 and Chair from December 2021

Over 40 years' experience in Banking, Finance and Information Services, including over 25 years in executive management roles in both private and public sector companies. Now focused on providing expertise in these areas, especially in strategic risk and governance. Leadership roles in many transformation initiatives have provided experiences that assist in identifying good business practice and strategic opportunities.

Richard Trigg appointed from December 2020

Richard has more 40 years involvement with the Accounting profession in tax, business management and audit, including as partner of a large chartered accounting firm so he is well equipped to contribute to the leadership and governance of Council through the Audit and Risk Committee. Richard also spent 15 years in Local Government including positions as Finance Manager, Director Corporate Services and Acting CEO, providing valuable insight into the role that the Audit and Risk Committee plays in local government.

Melissa Field, B. Comm, MBA, CA appointed from December 2021

Over 30 years commercial and financial experience, including 15 years in Big 4 Chartered Accounting firms. Melissa is an established independent governance professional. She has held Independent Non-Executive Director and Chair roles in multiple organisations and industries including privately held and publicly held multinational IT services, national Not for Profit organisations and state government bodies. She is also an experienced Audit and Risk Committee Chair, having held this role in private company, public company, not for profit and local government settings. Her passion is using the levers of governance to add value to all stakeholders.

Audit and Risk Committee meetings

The Audit and Risk Committee meets five times in an annual cycle and has consisted of the following members over the financial year:

Attendee	Role	10 Aug 22	6 Oct 22	7 Dec 22	15 Feb 23	17 May 23
Brian Keane	Chairperson (Reappointed December 2022)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Richard Trigg	Independent member	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Melissa Field	Independent member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cr Margaret White	Councillor representative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cr Kate Hanson	Councillor representative	Not a member	Not a member	✓	✓	✓
Cr Graham Costin	Councillor representative	✗	✓	✓	Not a member	Not a member

Internal Audit

Council's internal audit service assists in maintaining robust, relevant and effective internal controls. On 29 June 2022, Council appointed Moore Australia Pty Ltd to deliver internal audit services for an initial term of two years, with three one year options to extend.

External Audit

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office is responsible for external audit. It focuses on three key areas: strategic planning, detailed audit system testing and financial statements.

Risk management

Council is committed to risk management and to creating an organisational culture that ensures that effective risk management is embedded in all activities and business processes. Throughout 2022-23, the Audit and Risk Committee and officers commenced an extensive review of Council's risk management framework.

This review aims to formalise an approach to risk that provides for the effective identification, analysis, management and escalation of risk, enhanced decision making, and visibility to council and the community that risks are being managed effectively. This approach will be formalised through risk management framework in early 2023-24.

Business Continuity

After an independent review of its business continuity framework in 2020, Council took the opportunity to capture and apply learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic to further mature its response to business disruption. Council's approach towards this project has been a collaborative one, combining business continuity planning with various aspects of emergency management planning to develop a cohesive, interlinked plan across the organisation, including the resourcing of key staff during an emergency.

In addition to the ongoing work required to maintain accurate and effective business continuity practices and critical function response plans within each business unit, work will continue into 2023-24 to finalise this project and embed a strong foundation for continuous improvement.

Policies, Strategies and Plans

The following policies, strategies and key plans were reviewed, endorsed and/or adopted by Council during 2022-23:

- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2021
- Public Toilet Strategy
- Asset Management Policy
- Governance Rules
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Irrewillipe Road Development Plan
- Grants Program Guidelines 2023-2024
- Apollo Bay, Skenes Creek and Marengo Community Infrastructure Plan
- Colac City Reserves Project Final Report, inclusive of reserve specific masterplans for Eastern Reserve, Central Reserve, Lake Oval and Western Reserve
- Bulla Development Plan
- 2023-24 Annual Plan.

Statutory Information

The following information is provided in accordance with legislative and other requirements.

Beneficial Enterprises

Some parts of Council's role are better performed in partnership with others, and Council has therefore resolved to participate in the following beneficial enterprises:

- SouthWest Victoria Alliance (Council resolved to join on 20 April 2022)
- Barwon Southwest Climate Alliance (Council resolved to join on 27 April 2022).

Council complied with section 110 of the *Local Government Act 2020* when it joined these organisations.

Through 2022-23 both organisations have performed their role in accordance with their corporate requirements. No financial or non-financial risks arising from the operations have been identified.

Our Governance

Contracts

Council issued 17 tenders via Councils online portal, three via Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) portal and four Expressions of Interest (EOI) in 2022-23, covering the following service categories:

- consultancy and other work - 2
- capital and infrastructure works – 15
- operational services – 1 MAV
- Heavy Fleet – 2 MAV

Prior to commencing the procurement process, each service, goods or works was considered to affirm the ongoing need and strategic alignment to Council's goals, the optimal delivery model, and the market environment. These informed a complexity assessment and a contract-specific Procurement Plan developed to determine the most appropriate means of procurement.

Council did not enter any other contracts valued at \$250,000 or more for goods or services without engaging in a competitive process.

Documents available for inspection

Council adopted a revised Public Transparency Policy on 27 April 2022. It outlines Council's commitment to providing transparency to the community and the ways in which information is made publically available.

Following is a summary of information that is available to the public:

Council records

- Agendas, minutes, live stream and audio recordings of Council meetings and Committee meetings
- Terms of reference or charters for Council committees

Local Laws

- No. 1 Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law
- No. 2 General Local Law
- No. 3 Livestock Local Law
- No. 4 Governance Local Law

Policies, strategies and reports

- Council plan and Community Vision
- Annual report
- Strategies
- Council policies
- Budget

Organisational Chart

Councillors

- Contact details

Council elections

- Election campaign donation returns
- Candidate information (during elections)

Grant programs

- Guidelines to the Grant program
- List of previous recipients

Planning

- Development plans, reference and incorporated documents
- Current planning applications

Businesses

- Awarded tenders

Council Operations

Events information

- Waste management and recycling information
- Information relating to families, positive ageing, childcare and pets
- Tourism and local area – variety of information
- Parks and reserves – listings

Registers

- Register of Authorised Officers
- Register of Instruments of Delegations
- Summary of Biannual Returns
- Register of Conflicts of Interest
- Register of Leases
- Register of Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality (councillors and staff).

Domestic Management Animal Plan (DAMP)

In accordance with section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan at four yearly intervals and evaluate its implementation in the annual report.

Council adopted the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-25 in December 2021. The new Plan was developed in consultation with various departments and was exhibited for a six week public consultation period from 27 September 2021.

Food Act Ministerial Directions

In accordance with section 7E of the Food Act 1984, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report. No Ministerial Directions were received by Council during 2022-23.

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) provides the community with the right to request access to information held by Council. Access to certain types of documents may be limited by exemptions outlined in the FOI Act.

Documents can be requested as detailed in section 17 of the FOI Act. To be valid, an application must:

- be in writing;
- provide as much information about the documents being sought as practicable, so an officer of Council can identify the documents being requested; and
- accompanied by an application fee.

Council received 11 Freedom of Information applications in 2022-23.

More information, including an application form, is available on Council's website

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Standards set out by Victoria's *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, and our Privacy Policy, control how we manage personal information. Privacy compliance is included in our staff induction program. We have a dedicated privacy team to help staff and members of the public with privacy-related queries or issues.

No complaints from regulatory bodies were received in 2022-23.

Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012

The Colac Otway Shire is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*. Council has established guidelines for responding to public interest disclosures. Reports of improper conduct, corrupt conduct, criminal offences, serious professional misconduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety by Colac Otway Shire or its employees, can be made to the nominated Council staff or the independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission.

Disclosures may be made by any person including a member, officer or employee of Colac Otway Shire.

A copy of the Public Interest Disclosures Policy is available from Council's website.

During 2022-23 no disclosures were notified to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission.

Road Management Act Ministerial Direction

Council, as a road authority, is required under Section 22 of the Act to publish a copy or summary of any direction received from the Minister in its annual report.

No Ministerial Directions were received during 2022-23.

Infrastructure and Development Contributions

In accordance with section 46GM and 46QD of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, a council that is a collecting or development agency must prepare and give a report to the Minister for Planning on infrastructure and development contributions, including levies and works in kind.

The report must be published in the council's Annual Report. Council does not have any development contribution plans recognised under the planning scheme, therefore no contributions were received in 2022-23.

Customer Complaints

During the 2022-23 year, 119 complaints were recorded in the Complaints register. 98 of these were resolved, with 21 remaining open, largely related to ongoing works or multi-agency liaison required to resolve.

The average time to resolve complaints was 21.4 days. Council's standard for resolving complaints is within 28 days.

- 45 per cent were upheld, 32 per cent were partially upheld, and 19 per cent were not upheld.
- 31 complaints resulted in recommendations for improvement in service delivery.
- No complaints proceeded to an internal review or escalated to an external body.

Governance and Management Checklist 2022-23

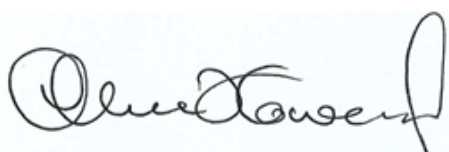
The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

Governance and management items	Assessment	
Community engagement policy (policy under section 55 of the Act outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption: 29 June 2022	✓
Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Current guidelines in operation. Date of adoption: 3 February 2021	✓
Financial Plan (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next ten financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Date of adoption: 27 October 2021	✓
Asset Plan (plan under section 92 of the Act setting out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act. Date of adoption: 29 June 2022	✓
Revenue and Rating Plan (plan under section 93 of the Act setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act. Date of adoption: 24 June 2021	✓
Annual budget (plan under section 94 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required)	Adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act. Date of adoption: 28 June 2023	✓
Risk policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Date of commencement of current policy: 24 October 2018 <i>Currently under review</i>	✓
Fraud policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Date of commencement of current policy: 27 May 2020 <i>Currently under review</i>	✓
Municipal emergency management plan (plan under section 60ABD of the Emergency Management Act 2013 for emergency mitigation, response and recovery)	In accordance with section 60ABD of the Emergency Management Act 2013 Date of adoption: 30 October 2018	✓

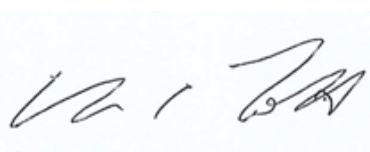
Governance and management items	Assessment	
Procurement policy (policy under section 108 of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council)	Date of commencement of current policy: 24 June 2021	✓
Business continuity plan (plan setting out the actions that will be taken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Date of operation: 21 February 2018 Critical Incident Management Plan: 21 February 2018 <i>Currently under review</i>	✓
Disaster recovery plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Date of commencement of current plan: 10 February 2021	✓
Risk management framework (framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Date of commencement of current framework: 2 March 2016 <i>Currently under review</i>	✓
Audit and Risk Committee (advisory committee of Council under section 53 and 54 of the Act)	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act. Date of establishment: 26 August 2020	✓
Internal audit (independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)	Date of engagement of current provider: 1 August 2022	✓
Performance reporting framework (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 131 of the Local Government Act 1989)	Current framework in operation: 28 July 2014	✓
Council Plan report (report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year)	Dates reports presented: Q1. 23 November 2022 Q2. 22 February 2023 Q3. 24 May 2023	✓
Quarterly budget reports (quarterly reports to Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	Dates reports presented: Q1. 23 November 2022 Q2. 22 February 2023 Q3. 24 May 2023	✓
Risk reporting (six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Date of reports: 10 August 2022 7 December 2022	✓

Governance and management items	Assessment	
Performance reporting (six-monthly reports of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Local Government Act 2020)	Only one performance report was prepared as part of the Annual Report. Reason: While quarterly reports on progress against the Council Plan have been presented to Council, measurement against the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Local Government Act 2020 has only been conducted annually. An assessment was conducted and reported to Audit and Risk Committee on 15 February 2023 and officers will work towards building this into a Corporate Planning and Performance Framework for 2023-24.	✗
Annual report (annual report under sections 98, 99 and 100 of the Local Government Act 2020 containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	Presented at a meeting of the Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act. Date presented: 26 October 2022	✓
Councillor Code of Conduct (Code under section 139 of the Act setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters.)	Adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act. Date reviewed and adopted: 27 April 2022	✓
Delegations (a document setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act)	Reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act. Dates of most recent reviews: Council to CEO - 24 June 2021 Council to Planning Committee - 27 October 2021 Council to members of staff - 29 March 2023	✓
Meeting procedures (Governance rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act. Date reviewed and adopted: 28 September 2022	✓

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.



Anne Howard
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 16 October 2023



Cr Chris Potter
Mayor
Dated: 16 October 2023



Performance and Financial Statements

Audited Performance Statement

Unaudited LGPRF Performance Indicators

The Financial Report

Understanding the Financial Statements

Audited Financial Statement





Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of Colac Otway Shire Council

Opinion	<p>I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Colac Otway Shire Council (the council) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2023 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2023 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2023 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2023 • other information and • certification of the performance statement. <p>In my opinion, the performance statement of Colac Otway Shire Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2023 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020</i>.</p>
Basis for Opinion	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	<p>The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020</i> and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p>

**Auditor's
responsibilities
for the audit of
the performance
statement**

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
18 October 2023



Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria



Colac Otway Shire Council

Performance Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Performance Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Description of municipality

Colac Otway Shire is situated about 160 kilometres south-west of the Melbourne CBD and approximately an hour's drive to the large regional cities of Geelong to the east, Ballarat to the north and Warrnambool to the west. Colac Otway Shire has a unique and precious natural environment containing some of the most picturesque scenery in the State. A large proportion is Forest Park and National Park but it also includes beaches, rugged coastline, rainforests, waterfalls, volcanic lakes and craters.

The municipality offers a great lifestyle, being ideally located for those looking for a rural idyll within a comfortable commuting distance to major centres.

The five major industry sectors include:

- Manufacturing
- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Retail Trade
- Tourism.

Colac Otway Shire Council provides many high quality services and facilities across a wide range of areas from, community services, environmental management, customer services, health and wellbeing, family and children's services, open spaces, waste management, tourism, parks and gardens; to business development, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability for Council' budget.

Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2023

<i>Indicator / measure</i> [formula]	Results				Comment
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Population					
<i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i>	\$2,577.70	\$2,527.05	\$2,726.33	\$2,764.44	This measure has increased by \$38 year on year, driven in the most part by growth in total council expenses of 5.3% (\$3.22 million), being 1.3% greater than growth in municipal population of 3.9%. Growth in total council expenses driven mostly by uplift in employee costs and depreciation of Council assets.
[Total expenses / Municipal population]					
<i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i>	\$15,319.07	\$15,917.69	\$17,967.21	\$19,268.12	An asset revaluation (and indexation) was completed in 2022-23 for Road and Footpaths assets, which represents the largest asset class, and revaluation significantly increased Council's overall infrastructure value. Council's overall asset base continues to grow in value whilst population remains relatively stable.
[Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]					
<i>Population density per length of road</i>	13.28	13.34	13.20	13.63	This indicator has increased by 3% reflecting the increase in municipal population in the last 12 months.
[Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]					
Own-source revenue					
<i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i>	\$1,797.15	\$2,019.76	\$1,919.00	\$1,999.37	The increase in own sourced revenue in 2022-23 has outpaced the growth in municipal population and the sale of assets have contributed to the increase.

<i>Indicator / measure</i> [formula]	Results				Comment
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
[Own-source revenue / Municipal population]					
Recurrent grants					
<i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	\$560.47	\$557.80	\$653.40	\$674.75	There has been a modest increase in recurrent grants provided by the Victorian government to local government councils.
Disadvantage					
<i>Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage</i> [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	No variation in this indicator has been observed over recent years and the Colac Otway community continues to experience significant socio-economic disadvantage in some parts of the community, while other parts do well and prosper.
Workforce turnover					
<i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	11.2%	12.0%	23.1%	19.8%	Council's staff retention rate has improved this year as employees begin to adjust to working arrangements post pandemic and internal opportunities within Council.

Definitions

"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than:

- (a) non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and
- (b) non-monetary asset contributions; and
- (c) contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above

"infrastructure" means non-current property, plant and equipment excluding land

"local road" means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the Road Management Act 2004

"population" means the resident population estimated by council

"own-source revenue" means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)

"relative socio-economic disadvantage", in relation to a municipality, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipality is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (Catalogue Number 2033.0.55.001) of SEIFA

"SEIFA" means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet website

"unrestricted cash" means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash.

Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Service/indicator/measure [formula]	Results				Comment
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Aquatic Facilities Utilisation <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	5.17	1.68	1.73	4.64	The increase in utilisation is partially attributed to Bluewater being closed for three months the previous year due to COVID restrictions. In addition, management rolled out a new marketing plan including 'family fun days' which successfully increased membership numbers.
Animal Management Health and safety <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100%	100%	0%	0%	There were no animal management prosecutions in 2022-23.
Food Safety Health and safety <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	97.50%	90.00%	88.89%	100.00%	23 notifications were received and all were followed up.

Service/indicator/measure [formula]	Results				Comment
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Governance Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	50	58	53	45	Decisions made in the interests of the community declined by 8 points (15%) compared to last year. This year's result of 45 points is comparable with the score of 48 points for large rural councils. The downward trend was also evident across the State (average decline of 3 points).
Libraries Participation <i>Active library borrowers in municipality</i> [Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100	15.45%	0.00%	3.98%	8.50%	This calculation is based on three years of data and because Colac Otway Shire has only been a member of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation for two years, this is not yet a full data set.
Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	55.23%	75.83%	75.84%	76.62%	There has been a small but continued increase in overall participation rates since 2019.
Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	55.26%	72.00%	79.63%	85.71%	The continued increase in participation by Aboriginal children can in part, be attributed to active engagement by MCH Nurses and New Beginnings Project.

Service/indicator/measure [formula]	Results				Comment
	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Roads Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	44	53	47	39	Satisfaction with sealed local roads declined by 8 points (17%) compared to last year. This year's result of 39 points is comparable with the score of 40 points for large rural councils. The downward trend was also evident across the State (average decline of 5 points).
Statutory Planning Decision making <i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	50.00%	0.00%	100.00%	80.00%	Of the five matters referred to VCAT, one resulted in Council's decision being overturned.
Waste Collection Waste diversion <i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	60.38%	57.53%	55.44%	57.15%	Waste diversion is showing a slight increase this year with the community getting it right on bin night with around 80,000 searches of the waste materials guide on the GoodSort App.

Definitions

"Aboriginal child" means a child who is an Aboriginal person

"Aboriginal person" has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

"active library borrower" means a member of a library who has borrowed a book from the library

"annual report" means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act

"class 1 food premises" means food premises, within the meaning of the *Food Act 1984*, that have been declared as class 1 food premises under section 19C of that Act

"class 2 food premises" means food premises, within the meaning of the *Food Act 1984*, that have been declared as class 2 food premises under section 19C of that Act

"critical non-compliance outcome notification" means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984*, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health

"food premises" has the same meaning as in the *Food Act 1984*

"local road" means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the *Road Management Act 2004*

"major non-compliance outcome notification" means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984*, or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken

"MCH" means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age

"population" means the resident population estimated by council

Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Dimension/ <i>indicator/measure</i>	Results					Forecasts			Material Variations and Comments
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Efficiency									
<i>Expenditure level</i>									
<i>Expenses per property assessment</i>	\$3,609.44	\$3,500.51	\$3,668.96	\$3,825.47	\$3,798.89	\$3,846.62	\$3,913.27	\$4,013.85	Council's average expenses per property have been relatively stable over recent years. The trend has continued this year.
[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]									
<i>Revenue level</i>									
<i>Average rate per property assessment</i>	\$1,811.10	\$1,827.60	\$1,831.50	\$1,871.96	\$1,950.38	\$2,024.10	\$2,101.47	\$2,182.76	The average rate per property assessment increased by 2% over the last year. This is quite significant given the relatively stable rate per property assessment in previous years.
[Total rate revenue (general rates and municipal charges) / Number of property assessments]									
Liquidity									
<i>Working capital</i>									
<i>Current assets compared to current liabilities</i>	178.40%	189.73%	187.14%	243.91%	256.68%	269.03%	280.36%	289.47%	Working capital ratio has increased by more than 30% compared to 2021-22 due to the increase in the balance of unrestricted cash of \$13,000 but offset by Conditional Grants unspent of (\$7,000).
[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100									

Dimension/indicator/measure	Results				Forecasts				Material Variations and Comments
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Unrestricted cash									
Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities	104.93%	93.11%	-16.72%	64.42%	209.10%	227.44%	238.83%	248.06%	Although this indicator has returned to a positive ratio, it is still 30% lower than 2020-21. The underlying cause is that the cost of delivering Council's services continues to exceed its capacity to generate revenue.
[Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100									
Obligations									
Loans and borrowings									
Loans and borrowings compared to rates	3.27%	2.31%	1.81%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Council has fully paid off a borrowing of \$380k in June 2023. Council has no more loans outstanding.
[Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100									
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates	5.74%	1.06%	0.55%	1.86%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Council made a lump sum payment in June 2023 to pay off the outstanding loan completely.
[Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100									
Indebtedness									
Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue	27.14%	16.12%	11.86%	10.98%	11.30%	10.96%	10.56%	10.19%	There has been a modest increase in own source revenue compared to 2021-22 while non-current liabilities have remained stable.
[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100									

Dimension/indicator/measure	Results				Forecasts			Material Variations and Comments	
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026		2027
Asset renewal and upgrade									
Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation	108.81%	97.61%	105.27%	74.11%	55.23%	55.62%	57.65%	59.76%	In 2022-23 this indicator has dropped by almost 30% reflecting the increase in depreciation from the previous year now exceeding \$13m whilst there has been a 10% reduction in asset renewals and upgrades
[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100									
Operating position									
Adjusted underlying result									
Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	-3.55%	7.60%	0.91%	1.85%	-7.25%	-6.48%	-6.05%	-5.48%	This ratio has doubled from the previous year mainly due to the increase in own sourced revenue.
[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100									
Stability									
Rates concentration									
Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue	58.39%	53.83%	55.67%	54.10%	62.26%	63.33%	64.34%	64.78%	This indicator remains relatively stable and is close to the average of other councils similar to Colac Otway.
[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100									
Rates effort									
Rates compared to property values	0.47%	0.44%	0.41%	0.29%	0.30%	0.31%	0.32%	0.34%	Property values have increased at a higher rate than rates revenue in the last year.
[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100									

Definitions

"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than:

- (a) non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and
- (b) non-monetary asset contributions; and
- (c) contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above

"adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)" means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure

"asset renewal expenditure" means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability

"current assets" has the same meaning as in the AAS

"current liabilities" has the same meaning as in the AAS

"non-current assets" means all assets other than current assets

"non-current liabilities" means all liabilities other than current liabilities

"non-recurrent grant" means a grant obtained on the condition that it be expended in a specified manner and is not expected to be received again during the period covered by a council's Strategic Resource Plan

"own-source revenue" means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants

"population" means the resident population estimated by council

"rate revenue" means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges

"recurrent grant" means a grant other than a non-recurrent grant

"residential rates" means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges levied on residential properties

"restricted cash" means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of the AAS, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year

"unrestricted cash" means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash.

Other Information

For the year ended 30 June 2023

1. Basis of preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report. The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed sustainable capacity, service performance and financial performance indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district and an explanation of material variations in the results. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g. Australian Bureau of Statistics).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the results forecast by the council's strategic resource plan. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

The forecast figures included in the performance statement are those adopted by council in its 2023-24 financial budget on 28 June 2023. The outer years of the 2023-24 adopted budget includes estimates based on key assumptions about the future that were relevant at the time of adoption and aimed at achieving sustainability over the long term. Detailed information on the actual financial results is contained in the General Purpose Financial Statements. The financial plan can be obtained by contacting council.

Certification of the Performance Statement

In my opinion, the accompanying performance statement has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.



Xavier Flanagan CPA

Principal Accounting Officer

Dated: 16 October 2023

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the Colac Otway Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2023 presents fairly the results of council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify this performance statement in its final form.



Cr Margaret White

Councillor

Dated: 16 October 2023



Cr Kate Hanson

Councillor

Dated: 16 October 2023



Anne Howard

Chief Executive Officer

Dated: 16 October 2023

Unaudited Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

Results					
Service / indicator / measure	2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
Aquatic Facilities					
Service standard					
AF2 <i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	A single Council owned and operated aquatic facility (Bluewater Leisure Centre) was inspected in accordance with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and regulations during the 2022-23 period.
Service cost					
AF7 <i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	\$5.41	\$23.59	\$12.77	\$4.02	The reduction in cost is due to increased utilisation plus a decrease in the overall operating cost driven by decreased utility of casual staff and increased membership income.
Animal Management					
Timeliness					
AM1 <i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	1.00	1.00	1.18	1.02	The 14% decrease in time taken to action animal management requests compared with last year can be attributed to improved processes.
Service standard					
AM2 <i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100	48.62%	61.14%	71.36%	49.24%	The number of reclaimed animals is 65% higher than the previous year, the majority of which were dogs. The total number of animals collected is double the prior year, which means the overall percentage of animals reclaimed is less.

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
AM5	Animals rehomed [Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x100	42.46%	23.83%	22.07%	22.08%	Council has successfully rehomed 30 dogs and 57 cats for the 2022-23 year. This is an increase of 89% on the previous year.
AM6	Service cost Cost of animal management service per population [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	\$15.98	\$14.69	\$14.49	\$13.28	While the cost of animal management service per population is relatively consistent with previous years, the decrease is due to a slight reduction in direct costs and increase in population.
Food Safety						
FS1	Timeliness Time taken to action food complaints [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.41	0.50	2.31	3.20	18 out of 20 complaints were actioned within 4 days, and the other two businesses were contacted in a timely manner, however in person inspection took longer to coordinate.
FS2	Service standard Food safety assessments [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x100	101.24%	49.02%	54.01%	79.49%	With fewer COVID impacts and disruptions in 2022 the Health Protection team was able to re-focus on business improvements.

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
Service cost						
FS3	<p><i>Cost of food safety service</i></p> <p>[Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]</p>	\$468.48	\$458.84	\$298.02	\$395.11	The direct costs of food safety service have increased compared to 2021-22, however, the number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Act has decreased by 55. This has resulted in a large increase in the cost of the food safety service.
Governance						
Transparency						
G1	<p><i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i></p> <p>[Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100</p>	8.11%	7.64%	2.27%	4.69%	There has been a increase from 2.27% to 4.69% in Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public from 2021-22 to 2022-23. This indicates that there was a greater number of decisions considered to be confidential in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020. Note: of the decisions made in meetings closed to the public, 33.3% of these resolutions were not considered to be confidential after the contracts were executed. This leaves only four council decisions remaining confidential out of a total of 128 decisions.
Consultation and engagement						
G2	<p><i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i></p> <p>[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]</p>	55.00	60.00	53.00	47.00	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement declined by 7 points (11.32%) compared to last year. This year's result of 47 points is comparable with the score of 49 points for large rural councils. The downward trend was also evident across the State (average decline of 2 points).

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
G3	Attendance					
	<p><i>Councillor attendance at council meetings</i></p> <p>[The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) × (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100</p>	92.48%	98.57%	98.35%	99.05%	<p>Councillor attendance at Council meetings has remained high, with a small increase from 2021-22.</p> <p>Note: two Councillors resigned during the financial year and two new Councillors were elected via countback.</p>
G4	Service cost					
	<p><i>Cost of elected representation</i></p> <p>[Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]</p>	\$44,852.14	\$47,857.87	\$45,724.81	\$50,198.36	<p>The slight increase in costs of elected representation can be attributed to mandatory training for the two recently elected Councillors, along with the Victorian Government determined increase in Councillor allowances.</p>
Libraries						
LB1	Utilisation					
	<p><i>Physical library collection usage</i></p> <p>[Number of physical library collection item loans / Number of physical library collection items]</p>	3.51	1.98	2.78	3.44	<p>The percentage of physical collection items borrowed continues to increase as per the recent trend.</p>
LB2	Resource standard					
	<p><i>Recently purchased library collection</i></p> <p>[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100</p>	66.40%	50.28%	59.10%	58.49%	<p>A greater number of library purchases has been made in the last five years than previously, however the total number in the collection has reduced.</p>

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
Service cost						
LB5	<p><i>Cost of library service per population</i></p> <p>[Direct cost of the library service / Population]</p>	\$32.59	\$34.30	\$38.70	\$31.89	This is the second full year with the Geelong Library Corporation. The operational cost per capita has reduced as there were additional costs in the first year, as Council transitioned to the Geelong Regional Library Corporation.
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)						
Service standard						
MC2	<p><i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i></p> <p>[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100</p>	99.57%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	While the number of birth notifications is slightly less, 100% enrolment has been maintained.
Service cost						
MC3	<p><i>Cost of the MCH service</i></p> <p>[Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]</p>	\$68.33	\$73.60	\$72.29	\$71.86	This result is consistent with previous years.
Satisfaction						
MC6	<p><i>Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit</i></p> <p>[Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100</p>	88.09%	103.35%	94.98%	94.78%	This result is consistent with previous years.
Roads						
Satisfaction of use						
R1	<p><i>Sealed local road requests</i></p> <p>[Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100</p>	28.50	24.21	18.94	21.48	This increase in service requests reflects the prolonged wet weather.

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
R2	Condition <i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards</i>	93.11%	100.00%	96.00%	97.70%	Performance is consistent with the prior year.
	[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100					
R3	Service cost <i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i>	\$51.70	\$87.30	\$128.75	\$0.00	Council did not undertake any sealed road reconstruction last year.
	[Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]					
R4	Service Cost <i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i>	\$5.14	\$5.16	\$4.41	\$6.04	The 37% increase in cost is predominately due to increase in contract costs.
	[Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]					
Statutory Planning						
SP1	Timeliness <i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i>	91.00	74.00	78.00	91.00	Council experienced challenges recruiting to fill vacant planning officer positions which impacted adversely on time taken to process permit applications.
	[The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]					

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
Service standard						
SP2	<p><i>Planning applications decided within required time frames</i></p> <p>[(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100</p>	80.23%	77.19%	78.33%	76.94%	The time taken on average to process applications was similar to the previous year, reflecting ongoing challenges attracting planning staff to fill vacant roles and meet the high level of permit activity, despite increased resources made available to address this.
Service cost						
SP3	<p><i>Cost of statutory planning service</i></p> <p>[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]</p>	\$3,447.93	\$1,998.25	\$2,247.33	\$2,452.92	The cost of the service was higher in 2022-23 due to a reliance on contract planning support to manage service continuity during a period of high planning application numbers and staff vacancies.
Waste Collection						
Satisfaction						
WC1	<p><i>Kerbside bin collection requests</i></p> <p>[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x1000</p>	68.36	87.94	130.52	179.81	The number of kerbside requests has increased this past year, due to the increase of 10,600 bins in service from the introduction of the Glass only bin.
Service standard						
WC2	<p><i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i></p> <p>[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000</p>	1.63	3.09	5.75	4.61	Improvements to waste collection programming has resulted in a reduced number of missed bins.

Service / indicator / measure		2020	2021	2022	2023	Comments
WC3	Service cost					
	Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$141.50	\$99.09	\$115.52	\$117.82	Costs to garbage service is showing a slight decrease as the community reduced waste to landfill by 5% from this time last year.
WC4	Service cost					
	Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$61.21	\$62.04	\$45.44	\$53.01	The increase in the cost of recycling is taking into account the three recycling streams. Co-mingled down by 18.5%, glass up by 74% and FOGO up by 1.1% from this time last year.

The Financial Report

Introduction

Council is committed to providing accurate, understandable and fair reporting on financial performance for 2022-23 and our financial position at the end of the reporting period. The financial report enables an assessment of our ability to deliver current services and maintain existing facilities in the longer-term.

Council's 2022-23 Financial Statements present the following key outcomes for the financial year:

- Net surplus \$6.56 million.
- Capital works program \$10.34 million, of which 68% related to asset renewal projects and \$2.89 million was carried forward to 2023-24.
- Working capital \$23.35 million (including \$3.68 million capital grant revenue and \$4.48 million operating grant revenue received in advance).
- Cash and cash equivalents balance \$21.07 million and Other financial assets balance \$13 million. Council ended the financial year with a total cash and cash equivalents balance of \$21.07 million. This is an increase of \$7.26 million from the prior year. Refer to Statement of Cash Flows for more details.

Operating Results

The 2022-23 results show that Council achieved an operating surplus of \$6.56 million for the year, \$0.81 million greater than \$5.75 million in the prior year. It is important to note, however, that the operating result include non-recurrent items. Any trends need to be assessed over a longer period than year-on-year comparisons.

Council's major challenge in future years remains that of ensuring sufficient revenue is generated to fund service delivery and infrastructure renewal requirements. Council established a Financial Plan in September 2021 for a 10-year period. This plan forecasts ongoing deficits and significant challenges to Council's financial sustainability. Council's 2022-23 result is consistent with projected trends.

Operational efficiencies will need to be strongly pursued but are unlikely to have a material impact on Council's overall challenges without significant intervention.

Revenue

Total revenue for 2022-23 is \$67.90 million (budgeted \$56.42 million) compared with \$63.83 million for 2021-22. Further detail on income can be seen in the Comprehensive Income Statement and notes 3.1 to 3.7 of the 2022-23 Financial Statements.

An analysis of Council's revenue sources highlights that 74% of income is derived from two income categories:

- Rates and charges 50% (2021-22: 52%)
- Operating grants 24% (2021-22: 25%).

Expenditure

Total expenses for 2022-23 is \$61.34 million (budgeted \$55.95 million). Notable contributions to the higher expenditure are in the two following areas:

1. Materials and services higher than budgeted in a number of areas including:

- Contract Payments, (\$1.27 million unfavourable to budget), it is noting that "Contract Payments/ Consultants" have been used interchangeably.
- Consultants, noting that these include several contracts for professional services on operating projects (particularly City Deals) that were not included in the budget but carried forward from the prior year (\$0.04 million unfavourable to budget).
- Agency staff (\$1.03 million unfavourable to budget) required to support continuity of service delivery in roles that would preferably be filled by employees in nondiscretionary areas including engineering and project management. Agency staff were also used to deliver a range of operating projects.
- When the Contractors/ consultants/ agency staff are considered together, the overall variance is \$2.34 million unfavourable and generally on capital and operating project expenditure not included in the adopted budget.

Performance and Financial Statements

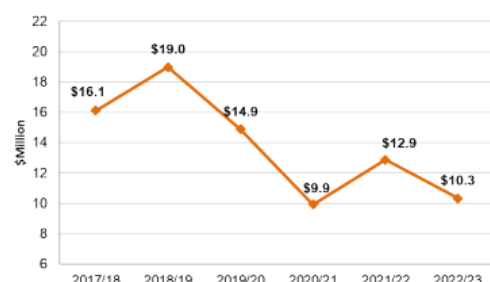
2. Depreciation and amortisation, higher than budgeted due to:

- \$2.63 million unfavourable to budget which is largely due to revaluation adjustments.

In summary, an analysis of expenses indicates that 96 % were in the following three categories:

- Employee costs 40% (2021-22: 38%)
- Materials and services 35% (2021-22: 40%)
- Depreciation and amortisation 22% (2021-22: 19%).

Capital Works



In 2022-23 Council's Capital Works delivery decreased by \$2.54 million compared to the prior year, to a total of \$10.34 million.

Renewal of existing assets accounted for \$7.05 million, new assets accounted for \$0.25 million and upgrade to existing assets totalled \$3.05 million. Investment in capital works is a strategic approach to maintaining or renewing the community's existing assets as they age.

Activities included:

- \$4.04m on road works
- \$0.21m on drainage and storm water
- \$1.3m on bridge works
- \$0.68m on renewal of Council's plant, machinery and equipment
- \$0.57m on footpaths and cycle ways
- \$0.70m on buildings
- \$2.24m on other infrastructure.

Assets

Total assets are valued at \$521.15 million; primarily consisting of:

- Property, plant, equipment and infrastructure (land, buildings, roads, bridges etc.)
- Cash assets (mainly short-term investments).

The main contributor to the overall increase in the total assets was due to the revaluation of significant asset classes. These included:

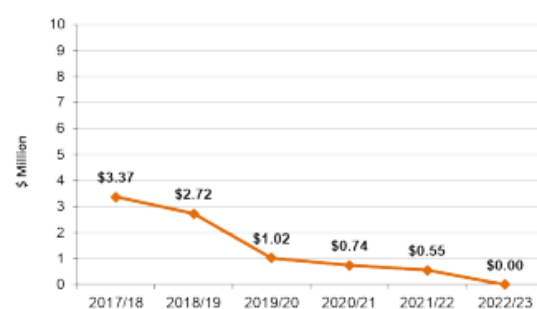
- Roads - \$39.08 million
- Footpaths - \$11.76 million
- Buildings - \$0.31 million.

Liabilities

Total liabilities were \$21.03 million at 30 June 2023. Liabilities include loans, lease obligations, amounts owed to suppliers, provisions for landfill rehabilitation and amounts owed to employees for leave entitlements. Liabilities decreased by \$0.67 million, in comparison with 2021-22.

Unearned income has decreased from 2021-22 by \$2.10 million. This was due to amounts received in advance for specific purpose government grants for operations.

Loan Liability

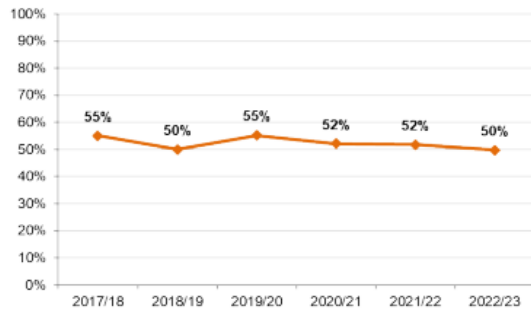


Council's borrowings liability levels reduced from \$0.59 million in 2021-22 to \$0 in 2022-23.

Financial Indicators

The financial indicators included in this report provide information on performance trends over time.

Revenue Ratio



The Revenue Ratio shows the level of reliance on rate revenue. It is an indication of how much total revenue comes from rates and charges. It is influenced by other revenue sources such as government grants, contributions, special charges, user fees and charges. Rate income is a secure and predictable source of revenue. A low ratio can warn of undue reliance on other forms of revenue, which may or may not be sustainable, e.g. government grants. The preferred position is for a reliance on rates and other commercial revenue, with a low dependency on government grants.

Financial Sustainability Indicators

Financial sustainability is defined in a number of different ways. A generally accepted definition is whether local governments have sufficient current and prospective financial capacity (inflows) to meet their current and prospective financial requirements (outflows).

To be sustainable, councils need to have some excess capacity at any point in time to be able to manage future financial risks and shocks without having to radically adjust their current revenue or expenditure policies.

The following seven indicators are utilised and published by the Victorian Auditor General annually, to assess the financial viability of councils. The figures for the prior financial years are taken from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) report that can be found at:

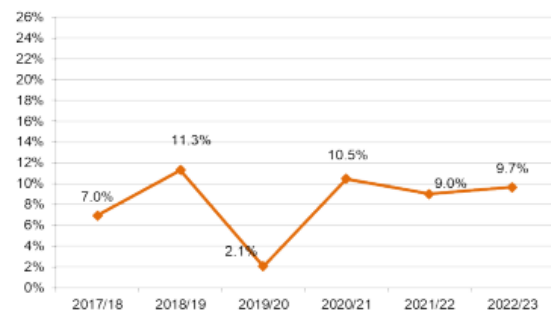
<https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/report/results-2019-20-audits-local-government>

The following table summarises Colac Otway Shire Council's result for 2022-23:

Indicators	Colac Otway Result	Risk Levels		
		High	Medium	Low
Net Result Ratio	9.6%	Less than Negative 10%	Between negative 10% and zero	Greater than zero
Adjusted underlying result	1.9%	Less than 0%	Between 0% and 5%	Greater than 5%
Liquidity Ratio	243.9%	Less than 75%	Between 75% and 100%	Greater than 100%
Indebtedness Ratio	11.0%	Greater than 60%	Between 40% and 60%	Less than 40%
Internal Financing Ratio	218.2%	Less than 75%	Between 75% and 100%	Greater than 100%
Capital Replacement	86.5%	Less than 100%	Between 100% and 150%	Greater than 150%
Renewal Gap	74.0%	Less than 50%	Between 50% and 100%	Greater than 100%

The following information provides a definition for each indicator and the five-year trend for each:

Net Result Ratio



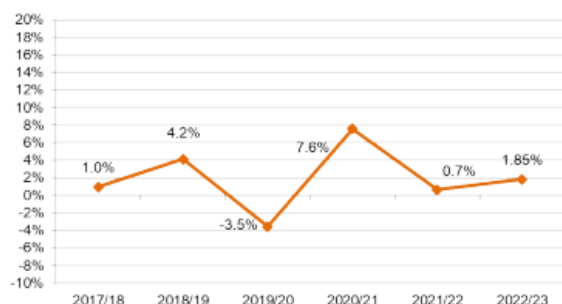
This measures how much of each dollar collected as revenue translates to net result. A positive result indicates a surplus, and the larger the percentage, the stronger the result.

This ratio includes capital grants and grants received in advance that aid in generating a surplus. This can be utilised for new assets or asset renewal. This result places Council within the 'Low' risk category for financial sustainability. Slight year on year improvement in ratio driven by greater income generated, and slight improvement in surplus.

Adjusted Underlying Result

This measures an entity's ability to generate surplus, or pay for its own operations, in the ordinary course of business—excluding non-recurrent capital grants, non-monetary asset contributions, and other contributions to fund capital expenditure from the net result. A deficit suggests a reduction in the operating position.

Performance and Financial Statements

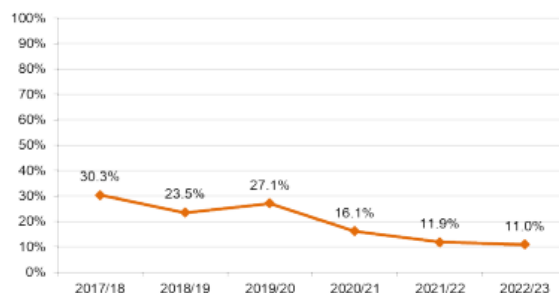


This indicator has improved, year on year, primarily due to increases in revenue types that cover operating costs, such as sale of property (\$2.4m), rates (\$0.82m), and user fees (\$0.86m). Council has reviewed its Long-Term Financial Plan, which focuses on reducing future costs to improve this result.

While there is improvement in this measure, there is still significant improvement to be made in this space to assure Councils medium to long term stability.

Indebtedness Ratio

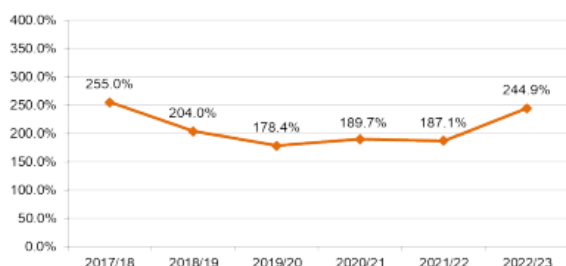
This assesses an entity's ability to pay liabilities, as and when they fall due, from the funds it generates. The lower the ratio, the less revenue the entity is required to use to repay its total debt. Own-sourced revenue is used, rather than total revenue, because it does not include grants or contributions



The ratio is comfortably in the low-risk category, indicating that we are generating sufficient funds to cover debt without requiring outside assistance.

This indicator has remained steady in 2022-23 with minor movement in non-current liabilities.

Working Capital Ratio



This measures an entity's ability to pay existing liabilities in the next 12 months. A ratio greater than 100% means there are more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.

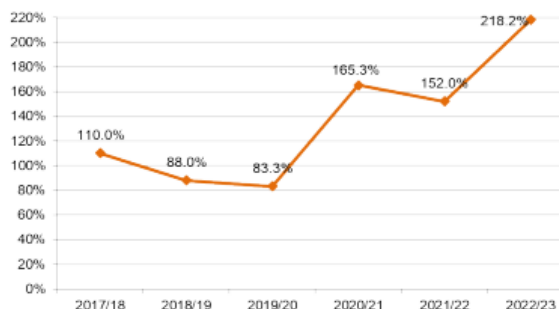
The Working Capital Ratio expresses the level of current assets, such as cash and investments, that Council has available to meet our current liabilities.

This includes outstanding creditors and employee entitlements.

The current ratio of 244.9% represents a 57.7% year on year improvement driven in the most part by a \$7.3m year on year increase in Cash and cash equivalents.

Internal Financing Ratio

This measures an entity's ability to finance capital works using cash generated by its operating cash flows. The higher the percentage, the greater the ability for the entity to finance capital works from its own funds.

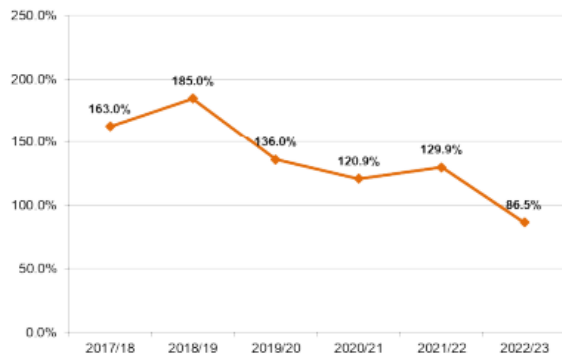


Results indicate that Council's ability to generate sufficient cash from operations to fund the renewal of existing assets has improved year on year.

This indicator is favourably influenced by reduced capital works expenditure, with a \$2.54 million decrease year on year, and Proceeds of sale of assets reaching \$2.80 million.

Capital Replacement Ratio

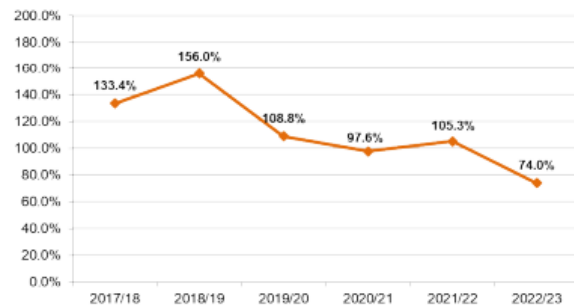
This compares the rate of spending on infrastructure, property, plant and equipment, and intangibles with its depreciation and amortisation. This is a long-term indicator, as capital expenditure can differ in the short term if there are insufficient funds available from operations, and borrowing is not an option. A ratio less than 100% means the spending on capital works has not kept pace with consumption of assets.



This ratio is about the overall spending on assets, both new and existing. The 2022-23 result is assessed as high risk and is impacted by the increase in carry forward of capital projects of \$2.89 million to 2023-24, and a material increase in Plant and Equipment, and Infrastructure depreciation of \$2.56 million.

Renewal Gap Ratio

This compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, and replacing existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 100% indicate that spending on existing assets is faster than the depreciation rate.



This ratio is about the renewal and upgrade of our existing assets (i.e. replacing one asset with another of the same or better quality). There has been a material degradation in the 2022-23 result, which is now in the medium-risk category, driven in the most part by a \$1.3 million decrease in renew and upgrade capital expenditure and a \$2.88 million increase in Depreciation.



Understanding the Financial Statements

Introduction

The financial statements show Council's performance during 2022-23 and its overall financial position as at 30 June 2023. Council presents the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. Particular terms required by the standards may not be familiar to some readers. Council's commitment is to be as transparent as possible. It is in this context that the following explanations have been developed to assist readers to understand and analyse the financial report.

Annual Financial Statement

The Annual Financial Report contains the General Purpose Financial Statements. The data throughout this report includes all entities controlled by Council. Council's financial report has two main sections, the Report and the Notes. There are five Statements and ten notes. These are prepared by Council staff, reviewed by Council and Council's Audit and Risk Committee and then given audit approval by the Victorian Auditor-General. The five statements included in the first few pages of the report are the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement Cash Flows and Statement of Capital Works. The Notes detail Council's accounting policies and give further information about the make-up of the values contained in the statements.

Comprehensive Income Statement

This statement includes all sources of income, less all operating expenses incurred in delivering Council services. It also includes depreciation of the value of buildings, roads, footpaths, drains and all other assets used to deliver Council services. These assets are depreciated over their life as they are used. Capital costs or new assets acquired or created during the year are excluded from this statement. Preparation of the statement is on an 'accrual' basis. This means that all income and costs for the year are recognised even though the income may not have been received (interest on bank deposits), or expenses not paid (invoices not received for goods and services already used). Similarly, income, such as grant revenue, that is received in advance is held

on the Balance Sheet as a current liability and not recognised as revenue until earned (i.e. the required performance obligations have been met under the funding agreement).

The key figure to look at is the underlying surplus/ (deficit) for the year. A surplus that is positive means that recurrent revenue was greater than recurrent expenses. Continual deficits (losses) may raise questions about Council's ability to be financially viable in the longer-term.

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet is a one-page summary of Council's financial position as at 30 June each financial year. It shows what we own (assets) and what we owe (liabilities). The bottom line of this statement is net assets or the 'net worth' of Council. The assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current. Current means those assets or liabilities which will fall due or will be used in the next 12 months. The components of the balance sheet are described below.

Current and Non-Current Assets

- Cash and cash equivalents include cash held at bank, petty cash and term deposits with an original investment period of 90 days or less.
- Other Financial Assets include investments, such as term deposits with original investment periods greater than 90 days.
- Trade and Other Receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and other customers.
- Inventories include any stock being held by Council.
- Other assets include accounts which have been prepaid.
- Investment in Associates and joint ventures is the investment in the Geelong Regional Library Corporation.
- Property, Plant and Equipment, Infrastructure is the largest component of Council's worth and represents the value of all land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment, and other items.
- Right-of-use assets consist of leased assets, which Council has the right to use over the life of a lease.

Performance and Financial Statements

Current and Non-Current Liabilities

- Trade and other payables include monies owed by Council as at 30 June each financial year and unearned income received in advance.
- Trust funds and deposits are monies received and held by Council.
- Provisions include landfill rehabilitation works and employee benefits, such as accrued long service and annual leave.
- Interest bearing loans and borrowings includes loans repaid over a set period of time.
- Lease liabilities are financial obligations to make the payments arising from leased assets, where control of the asset is transferred to Council.

Net Assets

This term is used to describe the difference between the value of total assets and the value of total liabilities. It represents the net worth of Council as at 30 June each financial year. The net value of Council is also synonymous with total equity.

Total Equity

- Asset revaluation reserve is the difference between the cost of property and infrastructure assets and their current valuations.
- Other reserves are allocations of the accumulated surplus for specific funding purposes. Some are required by legislation, some are mandated under Council policy.
- Accumulated surplus is the value of all net assets accumulated over time.

Statement of Changes in Equity

The value of total equity, as set out in the balance sheet, changes during the year. The statement shows the movement in total equity and any movement between accumulated surplus and reserves. The main reasons for changes in equity are:

- The 'profit and loss' from operations, described in the Comprehensive Income Statement as the surplus/(deficit) for the year.
- The use of monies from Council's reserves and transfers to Council's reserves.
- Revaluation of assets occurs to ensure that assets are correctly valued at current replacement value.

Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows summarises Council's cash payments and cash receipts for the year. This statement is presented according to a very specific Accounting Standard and needs some care in analysis. The values may differ from those shown in the Comprehensive Income Statement because this statement is prepared on an accrual accounting basis.

The amounts disclosed in the Cash Flow Statement are cash flows generated from, and used in, three main areas:

1. Cash Flow from Operating Activities Receipts

All cash received into Council's bank account from ratepayers and other monies owed to Council. Receipts also include the interest assets from Council's cash investments. It does not include the costs associated with the sale of assets. Payments. All cash paid from Council's bank account to suppliers, staff and other persons. It does not include the costs associated with the creation of assets.

2. Cash Flow from Investing Activities

The accounting term Investing Activities relates to payments for the acquisition of assets, such as new plant, roads and other long-term revenue producing assets. It also includes the proceeds from the sale of assets, such as plant, and land.

3. Cash Flow from Financing Activities

This is where the receipt and repayment of borrowed funds are recorded, as well as any movement in trust funds and deposits held by Council. The bottom line of the Statement of Cash Flows is Council's total cash at the end of the financial year. The Statement of Cash Flows is important as it shows the source of Council's funds and details how they are spent.

Statement of Capital Works

The Statement of Capital Works summarises Council spending on assets for the year. The Statement of Capital Works breaks all capital expenditure incurred by Council into three broad headings – Property, Plant and Equipment, and Infrastructure, with relevant sub groups below these. The Statement of Capital Works also shows asset spending by three categories:

- New asset expenditure – spending on assets that Council has not possessed previously.
- Asset renewal expenditure – spending on renewing Council's existing assets back to their original service provision capacity.
- Asset upgrade expenditure – spending on improving the service capacity of Council's existing assets.

Notes to the Accounts

The Notes are an important and informative section of the report. The Australian Accounting Standards are not prescriptive on a lot of issues.

Apart from the accounting policies, the Notes also give details behind many of the summary figures contained in the statements. The Note numbers are shown beside the relevant items in the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity and the Statement of Cash Flows.

Note 1 provides for a comparison between end of year actual results and Council's adopted budget, highlighting and providing explanations for major variances.

Where Council wishes to disclose other information that cannot be incorporated in the statements, then this is shown in the Notes. Other Notes include:

- The cost of the various functions of Council.
- The breakdown of expenses, revenues, reserves and other assets.
- Transactions with persons related to Council.
- Financial performance indicators.

The Notes should be read in conjunction with the other parts of the Financial Statements to get a clear picture of the accounts.

What is the Performance Statement?

The Performance Statement reports on Council's progress for the financial year against the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework indicators adopted as part of the annual budget. They include financial and non-financial data. Council's external auditors review the evidence and accuracy of the results.

Statements by Principal Accounting Officer and Councillors

The Certification of the Principal Accounting Officer is made by the person responsible for the financial management of Council. It assures that, in her/his opinion, the financial statements have met all the statutory and professional reporting requirements.

The Certification of Councillors is made by two Councillors on behalf of Council confirming that in their opinion the financial statements are fair and not misleading. The Chief Executive also endorses and signs the certification.

Auditor General's Report

The Independent Auditor's Report provides an external opinion on the financial statements. The opinion covers statutory and professional requirements as well as addressing the fairness aspects of the financial statements.



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of Colac Otway Shire Council

Opinion	<p>I have audited the financial report of Colac Otway Shire Council (the council) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance sheet as at 30 June 2023 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies • certification of the financial statements. <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2023 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020</i> and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
Basis for Opinion	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report	<p>The Councillors of the council are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020</i>, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

MELBOURNE
18 October 2023


Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Colac Otway Shire Council
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

**Colac Otway Shire Council
Financial Report
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Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.




Xavier Flanagan CPA
Principal Accounting Officer

16 October 2023
Colac

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Colac Otway Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2023 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify the financial statements in their final form.



Cr Kate Hanson
Councillor

16 October 2023
Colac



Cr Margaret White
Councillor

16 October 2023
Colac



Anne Howard
Chief Executive Officer

16 October 2023
Colac

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Income/revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	33,815	33,000
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	1,083	1,040
User fees	3.3	7,007	6,144
Grants - operating	3.4	16,472	15,952
Grants - capital	3.4	4,928	4,958
Contributions - monetary	3.5	518	204
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	1,680	2,016
Net gain / (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	867	(617)
Share of net profits of associates and joint ventures	6.3	1	147
Other income	3.7	1,531	989
Total income/revenue		67,902	63,833
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	24,469	21,989
Materials and services	4.2	21,685	23,210
Depreciation	4.3	13,633	10,754
Amortisation - right of use assets	4.4	101	108
Bad and doubtful debts - allowance for impairment losses	4.5	(31)	(12)
Borrowing costs	4.6	32	39
Finance costs - leases	4.7	1	40
Other expenses	4.8	1,453	1,958
Total expenses		61,343	58,086
Surplus for the year		6,559	5,747
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation increment	6.2	43,008	66,530
Total other comprehensive income		43,008	66,530
Total comprehensive result		49,567	72,277

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2023**

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	21,069	13,807
Other financial assets	5.1	13,000	12,000
Trade and other receivables	5.1	4,053	3,091
Inventories	5.2	167	156
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	6.1	570	1,920
Prepayments	5.2	91	143
Other assets	5.2	626	266
Total current assets		39,576	31,383
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1	39	43
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.2	478,402	437,591
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	6.3	148	147
Right-of-use assets	5.8	2,983	3,084
Total non-current assets		481,572	440,865
Total assets		521,148	472,248
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3	2,540	558
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	1,121	1,131
Unearned income	5.3	8,157	10,258
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	-	596
Provisions	5.5	4,335	4,226
Lease liabilities	5.8	8	24
Total current liabilities		16,161	16,793
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.5	4,857	4,881
Lease liabilities	5.8	9	18
Total non-current liabilities		4,866	4,899
Total liabilities		21,027	21,692
Net assets		500,121	450,556
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		136,495	133,368
Reserves	9.1	363,626	317,188
Total Equity		500,121	450,556

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2023					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		450,556	133,368	291,114	26,074
Surplus for the year		6,559	6,559	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	6.2	43,008	-	43,008	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(24,755)	-	24,755
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	21,324	-	(21,324)
Balance at end of the financial year		500,121	136,496	334,121	29,505
2022					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		378,279	130,794	224,584	22,901
Surplus for the year		5,747	5,747	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment	6.2	66,530	-	66,530	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(21,498)	-	21,498
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	18,325	-	(18,325)
Balance at end of the financial year		450,556	133,368	291,114	26,074

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

		2023 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000	2022 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000
	Note		
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		33,709	33,079
Statutory fees and fines		1,083	1,040
User fees		5,881	4,458
Grants - operating		14,346	20,225
Grants - capital		4,027	5,588
Contributions - monetary		518	204
Interest received		661	50
Trust funds and deposits taken/(paid)		(10)	390
Other receipts		870	18
Net GST refund		7	414
Employee costs		(24,383)	(22,537)
Materials and services		(20,255)	(25,719)
Net cash provided by operating activities	9.2	16,454	17,210
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.2	(10,337)	(12,787)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	2,798	377
Payments for investments		(2,000)	(7,000)
Proceeds from sale of investments		1,000	1,000
Net cash used in investing activities		(8,539)	(18,410)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(32)	(39)
Repayment of borrowings		(596)	(142)
Interest paid - lease liability		(1)	(40)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(25)	(731)
Net cash used in financing activities		(654)	(952)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		7,261	(2,152)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		13,806	15,958
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		21,067	13,806
Restrictions on cash assets	5.1		
Financing arrangements	5.6		

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

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Statement of Capital Works
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Property			
Land		245	123
Total land		245	123
Buildings		669	541
Total buildings		669	541
Total property		914	664
 Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		684	1,440
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		3	3
Computers and telecommunications		338	29
Total plant and equipment		1,025	1,472
 Infrastructure			
Roads		4,043	6,646
Bridges		1,329	858
Footpaths and cycleways		574	885
Drainage		214	642
Other infrastructure		2,239	1,710
Total infrastructure		8,399	10,741
 Total capital works expenditure	6.2	10,338	12,877
 Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		245	1,556
Asset renewal expenditure		7,045	10,266
Asset upgrade expenditure		3,048	1,055
Total capital works expenditure		10,338	12,877

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Note 1 Overview**Introduction**

The Colac Otway Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 23 September 1994 and is a body corporate. The Council's main office is located at 2-6 Rae Street Colac Victoria 3250.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The Council is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Significant accounting policies**(a) Basis of accounting**

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.2)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.2)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers or AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 Leases, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- other areas requiring judgements

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

Note 2 Analysis of our results**2.1 Performance against budget**

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of the lower of 10 percent or \$500,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

The budget figures detailed below are those adopted by Council on 29 June 2022. The budget was based on assumptions that were relevant at the time of adoption of the budget. Council sets guidelines and parameters for income and expense targets in this budget in order to meet Council's planning and financial performance targets for both the short and long-term. The budget did not reflect any changes to equity resulting from asset revaluations, as their impacts were not considered predictable.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

2.1.1 Income/revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2023 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance \$'000	Variance %	Ref
Income/revenue					
Rates and charges	33,726	33,815	89	0	
Statutory fees and charges	866	1,083	218	25	1
User fees and charges	7,526	7,007	(519)	(7)	
Grants - Operating	9,030	16,472	7,442	82	2
Grants - Capital	4,928	4,928	(0)	(0)	
Contributions - monetary	25	518	493	1,972	3
Contributions - non-monetary	-	1,680	1,680	100	4
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	25	867	842	3,368	5
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	(68)	1	69	(101)	6
Other income	365	1,531	1,166	319	7
Total income/revenue	56,423	67,902	11,479		
Expenses					
Employee costs	23,911	24,469	(558)	(2)	
Materials and services	19,354	21,685	(2,331)	(12)	8
Bad and doubtful debts - allowance for impairment losses	20	(31)	51	255	9
Depreciation and amortisation	11,076	13,633	(2,557)	(23)	10
Amortisation - right of use assets	24	101	(77)	(321)	11
Borrowing costs	32	32	0	1	
Finance costs - leases	25	1	24	96	12
Other expenses	1,509	1,453	56	4	
Total expenses	55,952	61,343	(5,391)		
Surplus for the year	472	6,559	6,087	1,290	

Colac Otway Shire Council
2022/2023 Financial Report

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 2 Analysis of our results

2.1 Performance against budget (cont'd)

2.1.1 Income/revenue and expenditure (cont'd)

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Statutory fees and charges	A higher than expected amount of fees were recovered from planning department in relation to town planning fees.
2	Grants - Operating	\$7.44m increased operating grants includes \$0.74m City Deal project funding received and expended for Apollo Bay harbour redevelopment (\$0.92m). There was a \$5.44m increase in the Financial Assistance Grant allocation due mainly to an increase from 50% to 75% of the allocation from the Commonwealth to Council in advance. Council was also successful in attracting funding for the Forrest Mountain Bike Trail project (\$0.34m).
3	Contributions - monetary	Council received contributions from developers for public open space contribution \$0.44m
4	Contributions - non-monetary	Developer contributed assets were received relating to new subdivision infrastructure roads, drainage and footpath assets, not budgeted due to the difficulty in estimating the quantity and value of contributed assets Council may receive during the year.
5	Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	A favourable variance mainly relates to the sale of council land and council vehicles however unfavourable variance relates to the written down value of buildings that were removed from Council's register during the review of assets as part of the revaluation process.
6	Share of net profits of associates and joint ventures	Council's share of the net profit of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation for the financial year. It was budgeted to make a loss but was able to turn a small profit for the year.
7	Other income	Additional income received by council above budgeted is mainly due to the increase in interest rates during the year (\$0.66m) and rates legal costs recovered (\$0.20m)

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 2 Analysis of our results

2.1 Performance against budget (cont'd)

2.1.1 Income/revenue and expenditure (cont'd)

(i) Explanation of material variations (cont'd)

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
8	Materials and services	The unfavourable variance mainly relates the Apollo Bay Harbour Redevelopment \$0.91m, Forrest Mount Trial Bike Revitalisation \$0.78m and City Deals \$0.26.
9	Bad and doubtful debts	A favourable variance resulting from the reduction in the allowance for losses as additional work has been undertaken to collect long term debts.
10	Depreciation and Amortisation	Actual depreciation and amortisation was \$2.56 million unfavourable to budget, driven in the most part by asset revaluations conducted predominately on Infrastructure assets, where assessments of replacement value and condition of assets, resulted in higher asset values, leading to higher depreciation amounts.
11	Fair value adjustments for right of use assets	The Colac Regional Library facility was reclassified at 1 July 2021 from land and buildings to a right-of-use asset and amortised following a review of the joint user agreement between Council and the Minister for Education.
12	Finance costs - leases	A favourable variance in finance costs resulted from the paid out of a loan during 2022-23 year.

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Notes to the Financial Report
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Note 2 Analysis of our results

2.1 Performance against budget (cont'd)

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2023 \$'000	Actual 2023 \$'000	Variance \$'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	-	245	245	100	1
Buildings	984	669	(315)	(32)	2
Total property	984	914	(70)	(7)	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,537	684	(853)	(55)	3
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	3	3	100	4
Computers and telecommunications	455	338	(117)	(26)	5
Total plant and equipment	1,992	1,025	(967)	(49)	
Infrastructure					
Roads	4,235	4,043	(192)	(5)	
Bridges	984	1,329	345	35	6
Footpaths and cycleways	191	574	383	201	7
Drainage	140	214	74	53	8
Other infrastructure	3,808	2,239	(1,569)	(41)	9
Total infrastructure	9,358	8,399	(959)		
Total capital works expenditure	12,334	10,338	(1,996)		
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	158	245	87		
Asset renewal expenditure	8,690	7,045	(1,645)		
Asset upgrade expenditure	3,486	3,048	(438)		
Total capital works expenditure	12,334	10,338	(1,996)		

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Land	Land purchased that was not originally budgeted for due to its uncertainty on progressing from negotiations to occurrence.
2	Buildings	Various building works were programmed, the majority of which will be completed in the 2023-2024 financial year due to stakeholder expectations and delays in the commencement of works.
3	Plant, machinery and equipment	Due to supply issues/waiting times, there are a number of items which are on order and due for delivery in the 2023-2024 financial year.
4	Fixtures, fittings and furniture	Minor expenditure not budgeted for.
5	Computers and telecommunications	Majority of programmed projects practically completed. One upgrade project was transferred to the Operating Project category due to the resources utilised during the implementation.
6	Bridges	Programmed works completed and some additional works delivered during the 2022-2023 year.
7	Footpaths and cycleways	The original footpath programme was completed as scheduled. There was additional unbudgeted funding received under the Federal Government LRCI programme relating to additional works undertaken.
8	Drainage	The planned drainage program and some additional works were delivered during the 2022-2023 year.
9	Other Infrastructure	There are a number of projects that were not completed within the 2022-2023 year which have been carried forward, including the Elliminyt Wetlands Development project.

Note 2 Analysis of our results**2.2 Analysis of Council results by program**

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

2.2.1 Chief Executive Office

Chief Executive Office provides efficient, effective and proactive support services to include the Mayor and Councillors. Chief Executive Office provides effective governance oversight of the organisation. Service areas include risk management, legal services, business improvement, communications, planning and strategic focus.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides efficient, effective and proactive support services across council to enable the delivery of policy commitments, council vision and mission. The provision of these services includes finance services, digital information and technology, property, procurement and contract management, strategy and program delivery and program integration and development. People and culture management provides support to the organisation and ensures council's customer focus.

Community and Economy

Community and Economy provides high quality community focused programs, service delivery and communication to residents. Community and Economy is comprised of community care, connected communities, family services, healthy and active communities and is responsible for community engagement processes. Economy services includes business enterprise management, supports local festivals and events and advocates on behalf of the community for major events, tourism, cultural opportunities and leisure management.

Infrastructure and Operations

Infrastructure and Operations is responsible for constructing new infrastructure and maintaining existing infrastructure across a very diverse range of assets that underpin the wellbeing of the community. These assets include capital works engineering services, waste, parks and gardens, emergency management and municipal resources. Infrastructure and Operations is responsible for Port of Apollo Bay, local laws and services and operations of council assets. The planning services area includes the assessment of town development, health, planning strategy and urban growth.

2.2.2 Summary of income/revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

	Income/ revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income/ revenue	Total assets
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2023					
Chief Executive Office	978	5,435	(4,457)	-	1,889
Corporate Services	50,150	21,120	29,030	10,707	49,695
Community and Economy	8,953	13,666	(4,713)	2,395	17,471
Infrastructure and Operations	7,821	21,122	(13,301)	8,298	452,093
	67,902	61,343	6,559	21,400	521,149
	Income/ revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income/ revenue	Total assets
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2022					
Chief Executive Office	545	3,857	(3,312)	-	1,445
Corporate Services	47,435	19,549	27,886	9,222	42,989
Community and Economy	8,372	13,530	(5,158)	3,076	16,847
Infrastructure and Operations	7,481	21,150	(13,669)	8,612	410,967
	63,833	58,086	5,747	20,910	472,248

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services	2023	2022
3.1 Rates and charges	\$'000	\$'000

Council uses Capital Improved Value as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The Capital Improved Value of a property is its value of the land plus buildings and other improvements.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2022/23 was \$10,342 million (2021/22 \$7,964 million).

General rates residential	17,964	17,253
General rates farm / rural	6,263	6,061
General rates commercial / industrial	2,792	3,092
Municipal charge	2,981	2,898
Garbage charge	3,371	3,219
Interest on rates and charges	183	226
Special rates and charges	22	22
Revenue in lieu of rates	239	229
Total rates and charges	33,815	33,000

The date of the latest general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2023, and the valuation will be first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2023.

Annual rates and charges are recognised as revenues when Council issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Town planning fees	490	453
Health regulations	245	249
Building permits	125	124
Infringements and costs	92	69
Engineering fees	97	101
Land information certificates	34	43
Freedom of information	-	1
Total statutory fees and fines	1,083	1,040

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

3.3 User fees

Aged services fees	3,647	3,201
Leisure centre fees	1,213	897
Colac livestock selling centre fees	471	511
Parking, animal control and local laws fees	288	258
Visitor information centre fees	196	132
Colac Otway performing arts & cultural centre fees	25	39
Waste disposal fees	319	289
Council properties fees and rental	272	237
Other fees and charges	463	231
Apollo bay harbour fees	61	275
Childrens programs	52	67
Town planning and building services fees	-	7
Total user fees	7,007	6,144

User fees by timing of revenue recognition

User fees recognised over time	25	39
User fees recognised at a point in time	6,982	6,105
Total user fees	7,007	6,144

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services	2023	2022
3.4 Funding from other levels of government	\$'000	\$'000
Grants were received in respect of the following :		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	14,968	15,485
State funded grants	6,432	5,379
Total grants received	21,400	20,864
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial assistance grant - untied base grant	6,638	5,451
Financial assistance grant - local roads	4,068	3,683
Family and community services	188	289
Aged and disability services	83	62
Public health	4	1
Diesel rebate scheme	-	89
Recurrent - State Government		
Aged and disability services	1,243	1,236
Port management	878	878
Maternal and child health	446	455
School crossing supervisors	66	56
Public health	30	19
Environment and protection services	21	-
Recreation and culture	11	14
Total recurrent operating grants	13,676	12,233
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
City Deal	744	2,269
Family and community services	34	9
Recreation and culture	10	2
Economic development	-	46
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Port management	919	184
Project delivery	613	-
Family and community services	156	122
Strategic planning	157	71
Emergency management	26	20
Public Health	25	-
Recreation and culture	8	52
Economic development	-	673
Waste management	104	229
Environment	-	42
Total non-recurrent operating grants	2,796	3,719
Total operating grants	16,472	15,952

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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services	2023	2022
3.4 Funding from other levels of government (cont'd)	\$'000	\$'000
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	1,288	1,836
Total recurrent capital grants	1,288	1,836
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads	1,791	1,081
Bridges	75	360
Aerodromes	45	11
Recreation and culture	-	342
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Recreation and culture	1,724	770
Roads	5	534
Family and community services	-	24
Total non-recurrent capital grants	3,640	3,122
Total capital grants	4,928	4,958

(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue the Council assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. When both these conditions are satisfied, the Council:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
 - determines the transaction price
 - recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
 - recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the time or over time when services are rendered.
- Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Council applies *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*.

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed. The following table provides a summary of the accounting framework under which grants are recognised.

Income recognised under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

General purpose	11,994	10,970
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	3,640	3,122
Other specific purpose grants	2,970	3,099

Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

Specific purpose grants	2,796	3,673
	21,400	20,864

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services	2023	2022
3.4 Funding from other levels of government (cont'd)	\$'000	\$'000

(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner

Operating

Balance at start of year	5,675	1,666
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	4,475	5,675
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(5,675)	(1,666)
Balance at year end	<u>4,475</u>	<u>5,675</u>

Capital

Balance at start of year	4,583	3,804
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	3,682	4,583
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(4,583)	(3,804)
Balance at year end	<u>3,682</u>	<u>4,583</u>

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

3.5 Contributions

Monetary	518	204
Non-monetary	1,680	2,016
Total contributions	<u>2,198</u>	<u>2,220</u>

Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.

Drainage	856	642
Roads	675	1,108
Footpath	149	266
Total non-monetary contributions	<u>1,680</u>	<u>2,016</u>

Contributions of non monetary assets represent assets constructed by developers that have been transferred to Council ownership.

Monetary and non monetary contributions are recognised as revenue at their fair value when Council obtains control over the contributed asset.

3.6 Net gain / (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	2,798	377
Written down value of assets disposed	(1,931)	(994)
Total net / gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	<u>867</u>	<u>(617)</u>

The gain or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

Interest	659	48
Other income	560	(81)
Reimbursements	108	96
Rates legal costs recovered	202	3
Scheme interest received	2	2
Landfill rehabilitation provision movement (Note 5.5)	-	921
Total other income	<u>1,531</u>	<u>989</u>

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when Council gains control over the right to receive the income.

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Notes to the Financial Report
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Note 4 The cost of delivering services	2023	2022
4.1 (a) Employee costs	\$'000	\$'000
Wages and salaries	17,234	16,256
Employee leave	2,093	1,598
Superannuation	2,166	1,958
Casual staff	1,520	745
Sick leave	622	645
WorkCover	533	490
Fringe benefits tax	153	180
Other employee benefits	148	116
Total employee costs	24,469	21,988

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	102	107
	102	107
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	12	6

Accumulation funds

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	1,004	887
Employer contributions - other funds	1,217	964
	2,221	1,851
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	188	268

Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Contract Payments	9,995	8,861
Materials	4,176	4,566
Subscriptions and memberships	2,449	2,090
Consultants	1,029	2,727
Utilities	974	1,080
Agency staff	1,569	2,343
Plant and equipment maintenance	403	365
Insurances	661	742
Legal costs	154	177
Training costs	283	256
Other	3	7
Hire costs	(12)	(9)
Permits	1	5
Total materials and services	21,685	23,210

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 4 The cost of delivering services	2023	2022
4.3 Depreciation	\$'000	\$'000
Property	1,676	1,354
Plant and equipment	1,560	1,720
Infrastructure	10,397	7,682
Total depreciation	13,633	10,755

Refer to note 6.2 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation charges and accounting policy.

4.4 Amortisation - Right of use assets

Land and Buildings	83	75
Plant and Equipment	18	33
Total Amortisation - Right of use assets	101	108

Refer to note 5.8 for further information relating to amortisation - right of use assets.

4.5 Bad and doubtful debts - allowance for impairment losses

Other debtors	(31)	(12)
Total Bad and doubtful debts - allowance for impairment losses	(31)	(12)

Movement in allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors

Balance at the beginning of the year	71	83
New provisions recognised during the year	30	65
Amounts already provided for and written off as uncollectible	(65)	(77)
Amounts provided for but recovered during the year	-	-
Balance at end of year	36	71

An allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historic and forward looking information in determining the level of impairment.

4.6 Borrowing costs

Interest - Borrowings	32	39
Total borrowing costs	32	39

Borrowing costs are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred, except where they are capitalised as part of a qualifying asset constructed by Council.

4.7 Finance Costs - Leases

Interest - Lease Liabilities	1	40
Total finance costs	1	40

Refer to note 5.8 for further information relating to finance costs - leases.

4.8 Other expenses

Community grants and donations	622	653
Councillors' allowances	288	277
Landfill rehabilitation provision movement (Note 5.5)	229	-
Other	118	859
Rates and charges written off	47	49
Fire services levy	66	62
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	52	31
Animal registration levy	23	23
Royalties and commissions	8	4
Total other expenses	1,453	1,958

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
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Note 5 Our financial position	2023	2022
5.1 Financial assets	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	5	5
Cash at bank	17,600	10,344
At Call Deposit	3,464	3,458
Total cash and cash equivalents	21,069	13,807
(b) Other financial assets		
Current		
Term deposits - current	13,000	12,000
Total other financial assets	13,000	12,000
Total financial assets	34,069	25,807

Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use.
These include:

- Trust funds and deposits	1,121	1,131
- Statutory reserves	1,408	1,160
- Conditional grants unspent (excludes Port of Apollo Bay)	4,577	6,359
- Port of Apollo Bay reserve cash held	3,889	4,137
Total restricted funds	10,995	12,787
Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	23,074	13,021

Intended allocations

Although not externally restricted the following amounts have been allocated for specific future purposes by Council:

- Other reserve funds allocated for specific future purposes.	20,585	15,500
- Carried forward works committed	3,623	5,270
Total funds subject to intended allocations	24,208	20,770

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of 90 days or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of three to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 5 Our financial position	2023	2022
5.1 Financial assets (cont'd)	\$'000	\$'000
(c) Trade and other receivables		
Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates Debtor	2,260	2,154
Government operating grants	1,275	349
Net GST receivable	(302)	(295)
Parking infringement debtor	91	78
Other infringements	152	139
Provision for doubtful debts - infringements	(16)	(16)
<i>Non-statutory receivables</i>		
Other debtors	613	737
Provision for doubtful debts - other debtors	(20)	(55)
Total current trade and other receivables	4,053	3,091
Non-current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Special Charge Scheme Debtor	39	43
Total non-current trade and other receivables	39	43
Total trade and other receivables	4,092	3,134

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. A provision for doubtful debts is recognised when there is objective evidence that an impairment has occurred. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(d) Ageing of Receivables

The ageing of the Council's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:

Current (not yet due)	176	574
Past due by up to 30 days	101	15
Past due between 31 and 180 days	259	46
Past due between 181 and 365 days	29	10
Past due by more than 1 year	28	37
Total trade and other receivables	593	682

(e) Ageing of individually impaired Receivables

At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of \$20,177 (2022: \$54,688) were impaired. The amount of the provision raised against these debtors was \$20,177 (2022: \$54,688). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection. Many of the long outstanding past due amounts have been lodged with Council's debt collectors or are on payment arrangements.

The ageing of receivables that have been individually determined as impaired at reporting date was:

Current (not yet due)	-	-
Past due by up to 30 days	-	-
Past due between 31 and 180 days	-	-
Past due between 181 and 365 days	-	-
Past due by more than 1 year	20	55
Total trade & other receivables	20	55

Note 5 Our financial position**5.2 Non-financial assets****(a) Inventories**

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Inventories held for distribution	16	10
Inventories held for sale	151	146
Total inventories	167	156

Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential. All other inventories, including land held for sale, are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Where inventories are acquired for no cost or nominal consideration, they are measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

(b) Other assets

Prepayments	91	143
Accrued income	626	266
Total other assets	717	409

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and unearned income/revenue**(a) Trade and other payables****Current***Non-statutory payables*

Trade payables	1,898	(12)
Accrued expenses	641	570
Total current trade and other payables	2,539	558

(b) Trust funds and deposits**Current**

Refundable deposits	674	533
Fire services levy	376	397
Retention amounts	71	201
Total current trust funds and deposits	1,121	1,131

(c) Unearned income**Current**

Grants received in advance - operating	4,475	5,675
Grants received in advance - capital	3,682	4,583
Total current unearned income/revenue	8,157	10,258

Unearned income/revenue represents contract liabilities and reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of specific purpose government grants and user fees received in advance. Unearned income/revenue are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.4.

Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Purpose and nature of items

Refundable deposits - Deposits are taken by council as a form of surety in a number of circumstances, including in relation to building works, tender deposits, contract deposits and the use of civic facilities.

Fire Service Levy - Council is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a quarterly basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the state government in line with that process.

Retention Amounts - Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

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Note 5 Our financial position

5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Current		
Borrowings - secured	-	596
	-	596
Non-current		
Borrowings - secured	-	-
	-	-
Total	-	596

Borrowings are secured by council rates and charges

(a) The maturity profile for Council's borrowings is:

Not later than one year	-	596
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	-
	-	596

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities at initial recognition. At present, Council's borrowings are classified at amortised cost.

5.5 Provisions

	Employee \$ '000	Landfill restoration \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2023			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	4,545	4,561	9,106
Change in provisions	1,572	156	1,728
Amounts used	(1,530)	(181)	(1,711)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(7)	73	66
Balance at the end of the financial year	4,581	4,609	9,190
<i>Provisions - current</i>	4,183	150	4,333
<i>Provisions - non-current</i>	397	4,460	4,857
2022			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	5,129	5,638	10,767
Change in provisions	1,657	(123)	1,534
Amounts used	(1,699)	(156)	(1,855)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(542)	(798)	(1,340)
Balance at the end of the financial year	4,545	4,561	9,106
<i>Provisions - current</i>	4,126	100	4,226
<i>Provisions - non-current</i>	420	4,461	4,881

Note 5 Our financial position

5.5 Provisions (cont'd)

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Employee provisions		
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	1,287	1,259
Long service leave	215	207
Time in lieu	98	91
	1,600	1,557
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	422	452
Long service leave	2,161	2,117
	2,583	2,569
Total current employee provisions	4,183	4,126
Non-current		
Long service leave	397	420
Total non-current employee provisions	397	420
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	4,183	4,126
Non-current	397	420
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	4,580	4,546

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if the Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months.
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	4.37%	3.33%
- index rate	2.75%	2.75%

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
(b) Landfill restoration		
Current	150	100
Non-current	4,460	4,461
	4,610	4,561

Council is obligated to restore various landfill sites to a particular standard, including Alvie, Birregurra, Barwon Downs, Forrest, Gellibrand, Colac (Wilson Street and Bruce Street), Beeac, Cressy and Marengo. The forecast life of the sites are based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the site to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs.

Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	5.16%	3.61%
- index rate	6.25%	2.50%

Note 5 Our financial position**5.6 Financing arrangements**

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2023.		
Business Card Facility (balance cleared monthly)	50	50
Total facilities	50	50
Used facilities	-	-
Unused facilities	50	50

5.7 Commitments

The Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

(a) Commitments for expenditure

	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
2023	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating					
Garbage collection	4,733	4,880	1,298	-	10,911
Consultancies	67	-	-	-	67
Total	4,800	4,880	1,298	-	10,978
Capital					
Civil works	189	-	-	-	189
Total	189	-	-	-	189
2022	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating					
Garbage collection	4,457	4,733	6,154	-	15,345
Civil works	150	-	-	-	150
Consultancies	809	-	-	-	809
Information technology	106	-	-	-	106
Total	5,522	4,733	6,154	-	16,409
Capital					
Civil Works	1,588	-	-	-	1,588
Total	1,588	-	-	-	1,588

5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, all entities would assess whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- Council has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- Council has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

Note 5 Our financial position**5.8 Leases (cont'd)**

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under AASB 16 Leases, Council as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Right-of-Use Assets	Land and Buildings	Plant and Equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at 1 July 2021	-	165	165
Additions	3,076	45	3,121
Amortisation charge	(75)	(33)	(108)
Transfer to property, plant and equipment	-	(94)	(94)
Balance at 30 June 2022	3,001	83	3,084
Balance at 1 July 2022	3,001	83	3,084
Additions	-	-	-
Amortisation charge	(83)	(18)	(101)
Balance at 30 June 2023	2,918	65	2,983

The Colac Regional Library facility was reclassified at 1 July 2021 from land and buildings to a right-of-use asset and amortised following a review of the joint user agreement between Council and the Minister for Education.

Lease Liabilities	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash		
Less than one year	9	26
One to five years	9	18
More than five years	-	-
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:	18	44

Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June:

Current	8	24
Non-current	9	18
Total lease liabilities	17	42

Short-term and low value leases

Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than existing capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of AUD\$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Expenses relating to:	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Short-term leases	1	40
Total	1	40

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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 6 Assets we manage	2023	2022
6.1 Non-current assets classified as held for sale	\$'000	\$'000
Land acquisition	570	1,920
Total Non-current assets classified as held for sale	570	1,920

Non-current assets classified as held for sale (including disposal groups) are measured at the lower of its carrying amount and fair value less costs of disposal, and are not subject to depreciation. Non-current assets, disposal groups and related liabilities and assets are treated as current and classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. This condition is regarded as met only when the sale is highly probable and the asset's sale (or disposal group sale) is expected to be completed within 12 months from the date of classification.

Note 6 Assets we manage

6.2 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2022 \$'000	Additions \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Revaluation \$'000	Depreciation \$'000	Disposal \$'000	Write-off \$'000	Transfers \$'000	Carrying amount 30 June 2023 \$'000
Property	92,913	530	-	(30)	(1,676)	(130)	-	-	91,607
Plant and equipment	7,105	1,863	-	-	(1,560)	(40)	-	-	7,367
Infrastructure	329,754	7,558	1,680	43,038	(10,397)	(411)	-	-	371,222
Work in progress	7,819	387	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,206
	437,591	10,338	1,680	43,008	(13,633)	(581)	-	-	478,403

Summary of Work in Progress

	Opening WIP \$'000	Additions \$'000	Write-off \$'000	Transfers \$'000	Closing WIP \$'000
Property	516	283	-	-	799
Plant and equipment	85	-	-	1,863	1,948
Infrastructure	7,218	104	-	(1,863)	5,459
Total	7,819	387	-	-	8,206

(a) Property

	Land - specialised \$'000	Land - non-specialised \$'000	Land under roads \$'000	Total Land & Land Improvements \$'000	Buildings - specialised \$'000	Buildings - non-specialised \$'000	Total Buildings \$'000	Work In Progress \$'000	Total Property \$'000
At fair value 1 July 2022	6,109	44,189	423	50,721	72,077	19,389	91,465	516	142,703
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2022	-	-	-	-	(41,782)	(7,492)	(49,274)	-	(49,274)
	6,109	44,189	423	50,721	30,295	11,897	42,192	516	93,429
Movements in fair value									
Additions	-	253	-	253	194	83	277	283	813
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	(31)	(30)	-	(30)
Disposal	-	(130)	-	(130)	-	-	-	-	(130)
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	123	-	123	194	52	247	283	653
Movements in accumulated depreciation									
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	-	(1,315)	(361)	(1,676)	-	(1,676)
	-	-	-	-	(1,315)	(361)	(1,676)	-	(1,676)
At fair value 30 June 2023	6,109	44,312	423	50,844	72,271	19,440	91,711	799	143,355
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2023	-	-	-	-	(43,097)	(7,852)	(50,949)	-	(50,949)
Carrying amount	6,109	44,312	423	50,844	29,174	11,588	40,762	799	92,406

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant machinery and equipment \$'000	Fixtures fittings and furniture \$'000	Computers and telecomms \$'000	Work in Progress \$'000	Total plant and equipment \$'000
At fair value 1 July 2022	12,961	10,766	1,810	85	25,622
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2022	(8,062)	(8,900)	(1,471)	-	(18,433)
	4,899	1,867	339	85	7,189
Movements in fair value					
Additions	902	768	193	-	1,863
Disposal	(40)	-	-	-	(40)
Transfers	-	-	-	1,863	1,863
	862	768	193	1,863	3,686
Movements in accumulated depreciation					
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,080)	(338)	(142)	-	(1,560)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	-	-
	(1,080)	(338)	(142)	-	(1,560)
At fair value 30 June 2023	13,823	11,534	2,003	1,948	29,308
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2023	(9,142)	(9,237)	(1,613)	-	(19,992)
Carrying amount	4,681	2,296	390	1,948	9,315

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads \$'000	Bridges \$'000	Footpaths and cycleways \$'000	Drainage \$'000	Other Infrastructure \$'000	Work In Progress \$'000	Total Infrastructure \$'000
At fair value 1 July 2022	297,844	55,561	32,007	71,324	11,366	7,218	475,319
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2022	(78,839)	(28,091)	(10,677)	(15,874)	(4,866)	-	(138,347)
	219,005	27,470	21,330	55,450	6,500	7,218	336,972
Movements in fair value							
Additions	4,859	2,197	190	121	190	104	7,662
Contributions	675	-	149	856	-	-	1,680
Revaluation	39,078	-	11,756	(3,550)	-	-	47,283
Disposal	-	(411)	-	-	-	-	(411)
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	(1,863)	(1,863)
	44,612	1,786	12,095	(2,573)	190	(1,759)	54,351
Movements in accumulated depreciation							
Depreciation and amortisation	(6,934)	(1,226)	(563)	(786)	(889)	-	(10,397)
Revaluation	4,768	-	399	(9,412)	-	-	(4,245)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(2,166)	(1,226)	(164)	(10,198)	(889)	-	(14,642)
At fair value 30 June 2023	342,456	57,347	44,102	68,751	11,556	8,022	532,233
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2023	(81,005)	(29,317)	(10,841)	(26,072)	(5,755)	-	(152,989)
Carrying amount	261,451	28,031	33,261	42,679	5,800	8,022	379,244

Note 6 Assets we manage**6.2 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont'd)***Acquisition*

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

	Depreciation Period	Threshold Limit
		\$'000
<i>Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods</i>		
Land		
land	-	-
land under roads	-	-
land improvements	-	5
Buildings		
heritage buildings	90 - 180 years	5
buildings	10 - 120 years	5
shelters	10 - 90 years	5
building improvements	10 - 180 years	5
leasehold improvements	10 - 180 years	5
<u>Plant and Equipment</u>		
Furniture		
art work	0 - 100 years	4
indoor furniture	5 - 30 years	4
playground equipment	10 - 40 years	4
Plant		
heritage plant and equipment	-	10
fixed plant, machinery and equipment	3 - 50 years	10
fleet (vehicles)	3 - 30 years	10
major plant	3 - 50 years	10
minor plant	3 - 10 years	4
Equipment		
appliances	3 - 60 years	4
fixed equipment / fixtures and fittings	5 - 55 years	4
computers and telecommunications	3 - 21 years	4
leased plant and equipment	-	4
<u>Infrastructure</u>		
Roads		
road and tarmac formation and earthworks	-	10
road and tarmac pavements	10 - 100 years	10
road and tarmac seals	10 - 80 years	10
road and tarmac kerb, channel and minor culverts	45 - 80 years	2.5
footpaths and cycleways	15 - 50 years	2.5
Bridges		
bridges deck	10 - 90 years	10
bridges substructure	10 - 90 years	10
bridges major culverts	50 - 90 years	10
Drainage		
open drainage network	10 - 100 years	10
pit and pipe network	40 - 100 years	10
water retention structures	80 - 100 years	10
Other Infrastructure		
gardens and landscaping	5 - 25 years	10
playing surfaces	10 - 70 years	10
retaining structures	10 - 45 years	10
off street car parks	25 - 100 years	10
aerodromes	25 - 100 years	10
<u>Intangible assets</u>		
software	5 years	4

Note 6 Assets we manage**6.2 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont'd)****Land under roads**

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken 2021-2022 by a qualified independent valuer Mr Callum Mann – Certified Practising Valuer – API Member No. 107462 of Preston Paterson Rowe. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

A valuation of land under roads was undertaken as at 30 June 2022 utilising an average indexation in line with the land asset class be applied from the revaluation process from that year consider to be a reasonable basis for its fair value.

Specialised land is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2023 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Revaluation Date	Type of Valuation
Land	-	44,312	-	30/06/2022	Full
Specialised land / land under roads	-	-	6,532	30/06/2022	Index
Buildings	-	11,588	29,174	30/06/2022	Full
Total	-	55,901	35,706		

Note 6 Assets we manage**6.2 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont'd)****Valuation of infrastructure**

Valuation of all infrastructure assets for 2022/23 has been determined in accordance with an independent review and valuation undertaken by Robert Uebergang, Registered Professional Engineer Victoria (BE (Civil)). The fair value of bridges and other infrastructure assets were not adjusted due to the immaterial changes in values during the financial year.

The valuation of infrastructure assets is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2023 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Revaluation Date	Type of Valuation
Roads	-	-	269,473	30/06/2023	Full
Bridges	-	-	28,031	30/06/2021	Full
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	33,261	30/06/2023	Full
Drainage	-	-	42,679	30/06/2023	Full
Other infrastructure	-	-	5,800	30/06/2022	Index
Total	-	-	379,244		

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land and land under roads is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 5% and 95%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions.

Specialised buildings are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs is calculated on a square metre basis and ranges from \$200 to \$2,650 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 10 years to 180 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the current replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets have not been determined during this indexation process. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

	2023	2022
	\$'000	\$'000
Reconciliation of specialised land		
Land under roads	423	423
Parks and reserves	6,109	6,109
Total specialised land	6,532	6,532

Note 6 Assets we manage	2023	2022
6.3. Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	\$'000	\$'000

(a) Investments in associates

Investments in associates accounted for by the equity method are:

- Geelong Regional Library Corporation

Geelong Regional Library Corporation*Background*

At the 1 July 2021 the Council transitioned to the Geelong Regional Library Corporation by agreement with five (5) member councils, the results of this are shown below.

The Geelong Regional Library Corporation is a corporation owned by five (5) councils: Borough of Queenscliff, City of Greater Geelong, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire and Surf Coast Shire. Colac Otway Shire has a 1.36% equity interest.

Fair value of Council's investment in Geelong Regional Library Corporation	147	-
Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit)		
Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit) at start of year	(1)	-
Reported surplus/(deficit) for year	-	(1)
Transfers (to) from reserves	-	-
Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit) at end of year	(1)	(1)
Council's share of reserves		
Council's share of reserves at start of year	-	-
Transfers (to) from reserves	-	-
Council's share of reserves at end of year (based on population)	-	-
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	147	-
Share of surplus/(deficit) for year	-	(1)
Share of asset adjustment	-	148
Change in equity share due to population change	1	-
Carrying value of investment at end of year	147	147

Significant restrictions

The associate is not required to repay dividends, loans or advances to Council.

(b) Investments in joint ventures**Colac Community Library and Learning Centre***Background*

The Colac Community Library and Learning Centre is a joint venture between the Colac Otway Shire and Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Colac Secondary College, which results in Colac Otway Shire legally contributing 50% of the assets.

The venture's purpose is to construct and operate a joint use library facility.

Council's commitment to the venture is limited to providing a contribution to the construction and fitout costs. Council's share is 50% of costs.

Council accounts for its interests in the joint venture by applying the proportionate consolidation method and by combining Council's share of each of the assets, liabilities, incomes and expenses of the jointly controlled entity with similar items line by line in council's financial statements.

Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit)

Council is not entitled to a share of any accumulated surplus or deficit.

Council's share of reserves

Council is not entitled to a share of any reserves

Movement in carrying value of specific investment

Carrying value of investment at start of year	2,685	2,760
Depreciation/Amortisation	(75)	(75)
Carrying value of investment at end of year	2,610	2,685

Council's share of expenditure commitments

Council is not exposed to any further expenditure commitments.

Council's share of contingent liabilities and contingent assets

There are no known contingencies outstanding as at 30 June 2023.

Significant restrictions

The joint venture is not required to repay dividends, loans or advances to Council.

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Note 7 People and relationships		
7.1 Council and key management remuneration		
(a) Related Parties		
<i>Parent entity</i>		
Colac Otway Shire Council is the parent entity.		
<i>Associates</i>		
Interests in associates are detailed in Note 6.3.		
(b) Key Management Personnel		
Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Colac Otway Shire Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and General Managers are deemed KMP.		
Details of persons holding the position of Councillor or other members of key management personnel at any time during the year are:		
Councillors		
Councillor Kate Hanson (01/07/22 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Chris Potter (01/07/22 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Stephen Hart (01/07/22 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Joe McCracken (01/07/22 to 16/12/22)		
Councillor Graham Costin (01/07/22 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Margaret White (01/07/22 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Jamie Bell (01/07/22 to 25/01/23)		
Councillor Max Arnott (01/03/23 to 30/06/23)		
Councillor Tosh-Jake Finnigan (18/01/23 to 30/06/23)		
Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel		
Chief Executive Officer - Anne Howard		
General Manager Corporate Services - Andrew Tenni		
General Manager Infrastructure and Operations - Heath Chasemore		
General Manager Community and Economy - Ian Seuren		
Total Number of Councillors	9	7
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	4	4
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	13	11

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Total remuneration of Key Management Personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,162	1,077
Other long-term employee benefits	53	(10)
Post-employment benefits	124	110
Termination benefits	32	-
Total	1,370	1,177
The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:		
\$0 - \$9,999	1	-
\$10,000 - \$19,999	3	-
\$20,000 - \$29,999	-	4
\$30,000 - \$39,999	1	1
\$40,000 - \$49,999	3	1
\$50,000 - \$59,999	1	-
\$60,000 - \$69,999	-	1
\$70,000 - \$79,999	-	1
\$80,000 - \$89,999	-	1
\$90,000 - \$99,999	2	2
\$100,000 - \$109,999	1	-
\$110,000 - \$119,999	-	1
\$120,000 - \$129,999	1	-
Total	13	11

Note 7 People and relationships**7.1 Council and key management remuneration (cont'd)****(d) Remuneration of other senior staff**

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds \$160,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP. *

	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,130	1,553
Other long-term employee benefits	20	23
Post-employment benefits	113	145
Total	<u>1,263</u>	<u>1,721</u>

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:	2023 No.	2022 No.
\$150,000 - \$159,999	-	1
\$160,000 - \$169,999	1	4
\$170,000 - \$179,999	3	4
\$180,000 - \$189,999	1	-
\$190,000 - \$199,999	2	1
	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>

	\$'000	\$'000
Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:	1,263	1,721

* Due to a definitional change the comparative figures in this note may not align with the previous year's annual report, which included disclosure of senior officers as defined in the Local Government Act 1989.

7.2 Related party disclosure**(a) Transactions with related parties**

During the period Council entered into no transactions with related parties.

The following is the aggregate amount of transactions with **Investments in associates**.

Payments made to Geelong Regional Library Corporation	829	842
Payments received from Geelong Regional Library Corporation	-	-

All transactions Council enter into with related parties are undertaken on commercial terms, within Council Policy.

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

At end of the period Council had no outstanding balances with related parties.

(c) Loans to/from related parties

There are no loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to any related parties.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

There are no commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties**8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities**

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
 - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined in Note 9.3. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Older Persons & Ability Support Services

In September of 2021 the method by which the Federal government funds Council's Older Persons & Ability Support Services (OPASS) changed from an instalment in advance model to that of monthly reimbursement of individual plans. At the time of change to the funding method, several OPASS accounts were in surplus. This surplus is reported to the Federal Government on a monthly basis and has reduced over time as participating members draw down on their funds or leave the scheme. At balance date, these unspent funds were \$621,000.

Kerbside waste

Council is currently in negotiations with its kerbside waste provider regarding contracted rates of service provision. These negotiations, while yet to be settled, involved a payment from Council to the service provider to account of increases in rates over the negotiation period. While the terms of contract were not settled at balance date, this amount was estimated to be \$200,000.

Landfill

Council is obligated under Section 194 (2A) and 21 of the Environment Protection Act 1970 to provide financial assurance for any remedial action, rehabilitation and site aftercare costs in relation to the Alvie tip site. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that Council does not impose any undue burden on Council's ratepayers to address any of these costs during the operation or after the closure of its operating landfill sites. The amount of the financial assurance provided to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is \$322,500.

(b) Guarantees for loans to other entities

Council has no guarantees in place for loans to other entities.

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2023 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2023 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2024 that are expected to impact Council.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties**8.3 Financial instruments****(a) Objectives and policies**

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank borrowings. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes Council to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the Council's year end result.

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- council have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities council deal with;
- council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- council only invest surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when council provide a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties**8.3 Financial instruments (cont'd)****(d) Liquidity risk**

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of + 2.50% and -2.50% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 3.27%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

8.4 Fair value measurement*Fair value hierarchy*

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities

Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and

Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties**8.4 Fair value measurement (cont'd)**

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 3 to 5 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced Council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Asset class	Revaluation frequency
Land	1 to 3 years
Buildings	1 to 3 years
Roads	1 to 3 years
Footpaths and cycleways	1 to 3 years
Bridges	1 to 3 years
Drainage	1 to 3 years
Other infrastructure	1 to 3 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increments are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increment reverses a prior year decrement for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increment is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decrements are recognised as an expense except where prior increments are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrement is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increments. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increments and decrements within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No other matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Colac Otway Shire Council
2022/2023 Financial Report

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves

(a) Asset revaluation reserves

2023

Property

Land

43,261

-

43,261

Buildings

13,375

(30)

13,345

56,636

(30)

56,606

Plant and Equipment

Fixed plant, furniture and equipment

293

-

293

293

-

293

Infrastructure

Roads

155,386

43,846

199,232

Bridges

21,649

-

21,649

Footpaths and cycleways

8,903

12,155

21,058

Kerb and channelling

11,619

-

11,619

Other Infrastructure

1,000

-

1,000

Drainage

35,627

(12,963)

22,664

234,184

43,038

277,223

Total asset revaluation reserves

291,114

43,008

334,121

2022

Property

Land

18,695

24,566

43,261

Buildings

8,570

4,806

13,375

27,265

29,372

56,637

Plant and Equipment

Fixed plant, furniture and equipment

293

-

293

293

-

293

Infrastructure

Roads

140,676

14,710

155,386

Bridges

21,649

-

21,649

Footpaths and cycleways

7,697

1,206

8,903

Kerb and channelling

11,619

-

11,619

Other Infrastructure

552

448

1,000

Drainage

14,833

20,794

35,627

197,026

37,158

234,184

Total asset revaluation reserves

224,585

66,530

291,114

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

Colac Otway Shire Council
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Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves (cont'd)

(b) Other reserves

2023

	Balance at beginning of reporting period	Transfer from accumulated surplus	Transfer to accumulated surplus	Balance at end of reporting period
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Carried Forward Projects	5,270	3,624	(5,271)	3,623
Port of Apollo Bay	4,137	2,102	(2,350)	3,889
Waste Management	2,748	3,389	(3,962)	2,175
Long Service Leave	2,983	3,013	(2,983)	3,013
Landfill rehabilitation (Alvie)	1,094	57	-	1,151
Recreational lands	1,160	438	(190)	1,408
Rehabilitation	1,112	143	(65)	1,190
Plant replacement	1,269	1,092	(678)	1,683
Tirrengower Drainage Scheme	55	45	(19)	81
Water Saving Urban Design	58	9	-	67
Strategic Projects	647	2,422	(265)	2,804
Financial Assistance Grants received in advance	5,535	8,421	(5,535)	8,421
Disaster Recovery	6	-	(6)	-
Total Other reserves	26,074	24,755	(21,324)	29,505

2022

Carried Forward Projects	6,717	3,376	(4,823)	5,270
Port of Apollo Bay	555	4,820	(1,238)	4,137
Waste Management	2,532	3,246	(3,030)	2,748
Long Service Leave	2,941	2,983	(2,941)	2,983
Landfill rehabilitation (Alvie)	1,037	57	-	1,094
Recreational lands	1,042	118	-	1,160
Colac livestock selling centre	(121)	121	-	-
Rehabilitation	1,040	143	(71)	1,112
Plant replacement	2,435	1,040	(2,206)	1,269
Tirrengower Drainage Scheme	23	45	(13)	55
Unallocated Surplus	163	-	(163)	-
Water Saving Urban Design	44	14	-	58
Strategic Projects	682	-	(35)	647
Financial Assistance Grants received in advance	3,805	5,535	(3,805)	5,535
Disaster Recovery	6	-	-	6
Total Other reserves	22,901	21,498	(18,325)	26,074

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves (cont'd)

Purposes for Reserves**Carried forward projects reserve**

This reserve is to recognise the funds allocated and received in prior financial periods that are committed to unfinished projects. This includes grants received in advance for specific projects and funds allocated from prior financial years for projects that are still incomplete at the end of the current financial year.

Port of Apollo Bay reserve

These funds are bound by an agreement with the Department of Transport concerning the operations of the Port of Apollo Bay and are the value of cash assets owed.

Waste Management reserve

This reserve was set up as a source of funding the replacement of kerbside bins. All funds in this reserve are collected from the waste collection service charge and are to be used only in connection with the waste collection service.

Long service leave reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to ensure that the nominal long service leave balances owing to employees are maintained.

Landfill rehabilitation (Alvie) reserve

This reserve relates to the funds required to restore the Alvie Tip. The rehabilitation reserve will continue to grow until the Tip closes, at which time, the funds will be utilised to meet this obligation.

Recreational lands reserve

Statutory reserve to be used for the development of recreational reserves and public open space.

Colac livestock selling centre reserve

This reserve is for the purpose of funding works at the Colac Livestock Selling Centre and all funds are derived from any surplus made from the operations of the Colac Livestock Selling Centre.

Rehabilitation reserve

This reserve is to fund the rehabilitation of the various waste disposal sites across the Colac Otway Shire.

Plant replacement reserve

This reserve is to fund the replacement of council's plant at the end of their useful lives. Inflows to the reserve accrue out of any plant operating surplus with the funds then being used for the changeover of plant.

Tirrengower Drainage Scheme reserve

These funds are collected via a special rate and must be expended against the purpose of the drainage scheme at Tirrengower.

Unallocated Surplus reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside funds to match any unforeseen grant opportunities that arise post the setting of the budget.

Water Saving Urban Design reserve

The purpose of this reserve is for the construction of future water quality infrastructure.

Strategic Projects Reserve

The purpose of this reserve is for strategic projects and acquisitions of new or expanded assets that are of an intergenerational nature.

Financial Assistance Grants received in advance

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside any Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grant funding received in advance of its intended allocation.

Disaster Recovery reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside funds received in advance for use in the recovery of Disaster events. The reserve may only be used in accordance with the terms of the disaster relief funding agreements.

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 9 Other matters	2023	2022
9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	\$'000	\$'000
Surplus for the year	6,559	5,747
Landfill rehabilitation present value movement	229	(921)
Depreciation/amortisation	13,734	10,862
Finance costs	33	79
Share of net profits of associate	(1)	(147)
Net gain / (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(867)	617
Contributions - non monetary assets	(1,680)	(2,016)
<i>Change in assets and liabilities:</i>		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(958)	875
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	52	353
(Increase)/decrease in accrued income	(360)	(266)
(Decrease)/increase in trade and other payables	1,801	(2,559)
(Decrease)/increase in unearned income/revenue	(2,101)	4,781
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(11)	(1)
(Increase)/decrease in trust funds & deposits	(10)	390
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	34	(584)
Net cash provided by operating activities	16,454	17,210

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2023, this was 10.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2022: 10.5%)).

Defined Benefit

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Colac Otway Shire Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB

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Funding Arrangements

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary. A triennial actuarial investigation is currently underway for the Defined Benefit category which is expected to be completed by 31 December 2023. Council was notified of the 30 June 2023 VBI during August 2023 (2022: August 2022). The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2023 VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary inflation	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.8% pa

As at 30 June 2022, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer was 102.2%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.5% pa
Salary inflation	2.5% pa to 30 June 2023, and 3.5% pa thereafter
Price inflation (CPI)	3.0% pa

Council was notified of the 30 June 2022 VBI during August 2022 (2021: August 2021). Vision Super has advised that the estimated VBI at June 2023 was 104.1%.

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2022 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Note 9 Other matters

9.3 Superannuation (cont'd)

Employer Contributions**Regular Contributions**

On the basis of the results of the 2022 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2023, this rate was 10.5% of members' salaries (10.0% in 2021/22). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2022 interim valuation.

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

Funding Calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 97%.

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2022 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2022 and the last full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2020.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2022 (Interim) \$m	2021 (Interim) \$m
A VBI surplus	44.6	214.7
A total service liability surplus	105.8	270.3
A discounted accrued benefits surplus	111.9	285.2

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2022.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2022.

The discounted accrued benefits surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2022.

The 2023 triennial actuarial investigation

A triennial actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2023. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 December 2023. The financial assumptions for the purposes of this investigation are:

	2023 Triennial investigation	2020 Triennial investigation
Net investment returns	5.7% pa	5.6% pa
Salary inflation	3.5% pa	2.50% pa for the first two years and 2.75%pa thereafter
Price inflation	2.8% pa	2.0% pa

Colac Otway Shire Council
2022/2023 Financial Report

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

Note 9 Other matters

9.3 Superannuation (cont'd)

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2023 \$'000	2022 \$'000
Vision super	Defined benefits	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	102	107
Vision super	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	1,004	887
Australian Super	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	294	198
Aware Super	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	88	58
HOSTPLUS Superannuation Fund - Industry	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	84	67
HESTA	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	59	52
REST Industry Super	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	57	77
VicSuper FutureSaver	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	54	49
Cbus	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	47	54
UniSuper	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	16	33
Other	Accumulation	10.5% (2022:10.0%)	518	376
			2,323	1,958

In addition to the above contributions, Council had paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super totalling \$0 during the 2022/23 year (2021/22 \$0).

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2023.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2024 is \$102,000.

Note 10 Change in accounting policy

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2022/23 year.



Colac Otway
SHIRE

Contact us

PO Box 283, Colac 3250

Email: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 5232 9400

Colac Customer Service Centre

2-6 Rae Street, Colac

Open: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5pm

Apollo Bay Customer Service Centre

100 Great Ocean Road, Apollo Bay

Open: 7-days a week, 9am - 5pm

For callers who have a hearing, speech or communication impairment, and for text telephone or modem callers, use our National Relay Service on 133677

Item: 9.3

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2023/2024 - Returned funds delegation

OFFICER	Katrina Kehoe
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	1. Guidelines 2023-2024 - Colac Otway Shire Grants Program [9.3.1 - 29 pages]

1. PURPOSE

To seek Council's agreement that the Chief Executive Officer can distribute funds returned from recipients of Council's Grants Program to other eligible projects, in accordance with the program guidelines.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program 2023-2024 budget of \$311,500 was fully allocated by Council at its 28 June 2023 Council Meeting.

Occasionally a grant recipient may decline the offer of funding or be unable to proceed with their project or event, and in turn return the grant funding to Council.

This report requests Council agree to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) approving grant allocations of any returned funds during 2023-2024, in accordance with the program guidelines and at their discretion.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council agrees the Chief Executive Officer can redistribute funds returned from its Grants Program to other eligible activities in accordance with the Grants Guidelines, at their discretion.

4. KEY INFORMATION

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides funding across three streams – Community Grants, Events Grants and Business Grants.

Throughout 2023-2024 a grant recipient may decline the offer of funding or be unable to go ahead with their project or event, thereby returning their grant allocation to Council. Whilst this isn't expected to occur on many occasions, there may be some funds returned to the grants program and therefore available for redistribution to the community. It is anticipated that the amount of returned funds would be too small to open a new funding round, and therefore should be redistributed under approval by the CEO, in accordance with the program guidelines.

Application assessment process

An application would be assessed against the program criteria by an assessment panel and a recommendation provided to the CEO for consideration.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

Council's Grants Program assists not-for-profit community organisations in providing opportunities that benefit the wider Colac Otway Shire community and help in achieving goals and outcomes consistent with Council's objectives.

The program aims to provide an opportunity for a wide range of groups to obtain a share of the grant funds for a varied range of projects or events. The Grants Program also offers funding for eligible businesses located in the Colac Otway Shire to improve the building facades, support environmentally sustainable improvements and conduct events that provide economic and broad social benefits to our community.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Colac Otway Shire Grant Program Guidelines as attached to this report.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

The Grants Program includes environmental and sustainability projects as supported by the program's guidelines. This allows environmental, sustainability and Landcare groups to seek funding for their projects and events to improve the environment within the Shire.

Small businesses are eligible to apply for environmentally sustainable upgrades or projects that provide energy and water efficiency savings, as per the program activities listed in the Guidelines.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

A redistribution of a small amount of returned funds would be in accordance with the grants program guidelines by the CEO. Successful grants would be added to the grant recipient list on Council's website.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 2: Attract, retain and grow business in our Shire

Objective 3: Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability

Objective 4: Colac Otway Shire is a destination to visit

Theme 2 - Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Objective 1: We mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change

Objective 3: Protect and enhance the natural environment

Objective 5: Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 1: All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in our shire

Objective 2: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 2: We are a financially robust organisation

Financial Management (s101 *Local Government Act 2020*)

The Grants Program budget of \$311,500 was fully allocated at the 28 June 2023 Council meeting. The redistribution of any returned funds would remain within the overall Grants Program budget.

Service Performance (s106 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

An application would be submitted online using the Smartygrants program and administered in accordance with the program guidelines. Applicants would be notified of the outcome of their application and feedback offered if not recommended for funding.

Human Rights Charter

Not applicable.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest.

Options

Option 1 – Agree to the CEO allocating any returned funds from the Grants Program to new projects in accordance with the program guidelines.

This option is recommended by officers to provide the greatest benefit to the community through the Grants Program by redistributing returned funds. An application would be assessed against the guidelines by the Assessment Panel, and a recommendation provided to the CEO for consideration.

Option 2 – Not agree to the CEO allocating any returned funds from the Grants Program to other projects.

This option is not recommended by officers. If Council does not redistribute the funds returned to Council, it may affect the opportunity for the community to benefit from the intended purpose of the Grants Program and negatively affect community groups, services clubs, sports clubs, event organisers or small businesses who may not be able to go ahead with a worthwhile project.

GRANTS PROGRAM 2023/24

Guidelines

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program



Colac Otway
SHIRE

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1. Objective

The Colac Otway Shire Grants Program provides one-off financial assistance grants to assist community organisations, event organisers and businesses in delivering projects and programs that benefit the wider community and help in achieving outcomes consistent with the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

The Grants Program supports projects and programs that improve strong and resilient economies, natural and built environments and healthy and inclusive communities.

2. Funding Streams

Colac Otway Shire Grants Program offers three funding streams:

Funding Stream	Grant Name	Grant Details	Amount
Community Grants	Community Grants	<p>Assist community groups to fund a broad range of community development projects, services, activities, equipment or new initiatives across Colac Otway Shire.</p> <p>These may address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment • Arts & culture • Sport & recreation • Health & wellbeing, access, equity & Inclusive • Strategic Planning & Training • Community placemaking, Streetscape, Open Space infrastructure • Equipment • Facility upgrades 	<p>\$10,000 max</p> <p>\$500 minimum</p>
Events Grants	Community Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established community events • New one-off or start-up event 	<p>\$5,000 max</p> <p>\$2,000 max</p>
	Tourism Events	<p>Established tourism event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major community organised • Commercial event organiser • New event held by experienced major event organiser 	<p>\$10,000 max</p> <p>\$ 5,000 max</p> <p>\$ 5,000 max</p>
	COPACC Hire Assistance	50% standard room hire for eligible community groups/not-for-profit applicants.	\$5,000 max
Business Grants	Building Façade Improvement Grant	<p>Façade improvements may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Painting • Replace signage in poor condition • Replace hoardings • Cleaning the façade • Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements • Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents • Minor repairs to structural façade elements and awnings • New, repairs and replacements of verandahs 	\$3,000 max

	Environmentally Sustainable Business Grant	Projects may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business energy audit • Building Upgrades • Waste reduction and diversion initiatives • Emerging technology • Energy storage • Water re-use • Urban Greening • Transition from gas to electricity 	\$ 5,000 max
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3. Align with the Council Plan 2021-2025

Applications must align to at least one of the following themes in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

THEME 1 – STRONG & RESILIENT ECONOMY

- Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability

THEME 2 – VALUING THE NATURAL & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change
- Protect and enhance the natural environment
- Reduce waste going to landfill
- Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment

THEME 3 – HEALTHY & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

- All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in our shire
- People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places
- We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community

4. Important General Information	
One application can be submitted per organisation. Select the most relevant stream: 1. Community Grants 2. Event Grants 3. Business Grants	✓
The Grants Program is a competitive funding program. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding. Often more applications are received than the funding available.	✓
All applications require a dollar for dollar matching contribution of cash &/or in-kind.	✓
Applications that address gender equity are highly encouraged and prioritised through the assessment stage.	✓
Applicants are highly encouraged to use local trades and suppliers located in the Colac Otway Shire and will be prioritised in the assessment stage.	✓
Applications will only be received through Smartygrants – the online grant management program.	✓
Applications will not be considered for projects or events that have already received funding from Council.	✗
Applications received after the closing date/time will not be considered	✗

Requests for retrospective funding are not eligible. The project cannot commence or equipment be purchased prior to signing the funding agreement.	✗
Canvassing or lobbying of Councillors, Council employees or members of the Assessment Panel is strictly prohibited.	✗
Colac Otway Shire reserves the right to decline any application that does not meet the eligibility criteria.	✗
Grant funds are not released until funding conditions are met e.g. land owner consent conditions met &/or permits are obtained.	✗

5. To Apply

Funding round	Applications open	Applications close
2023-2024 financial year	3 March 2023 at 9.00am	14 April 2023 at 5.00pm

The application link to apply is available on Council's website when the round is open.

Prepare early for your application.

1. Read the Guidelines and check your eligibility
2. Start early and prepare for your application by making sure you have the required information on hand including documents.
 - **A quote** is required for ALL applications. The quote must be prepared within the past three (3) months, must be itemised and show GST if applicable.
 - **Land owner's consent** is required if you do not own the land or facility, and if applicable, the proposed works are outside of the conditions in the lease or land owner's management agreement.
 - **Public liability insurance** is required for all projects and events (excluding equipment purchases). A Certificate of Currency (CoC) must be submitted with your application.
 - **Letter(s) of support** from organisation(s) involved in the proposed project or event, if applicable, to demonstrate community support.
 - **Permits and approvals may be required** for proposed projects or events. Obtaining relevant permits and approvals is separate to the grant application process and may require additional time and budget to be allocated in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, however if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the relevant permits and approvals that may apply to your project or event. If you are unsure about permits, please contact the Grants Officer to discuss your project or the Events Officer to discuss your event requirements.

Online applications are accepted through Smartygrants only. Applicants will be required to register or log in to Smartygrants to start a submission. Attachments can be uploaded in acceptable formats (refer to Applicant's Help Guide) and recommended size is 5mb, however 25mb is the limit.

Smartygrants Help Guide for Applicants: <https://applicanthelp.smartygrants.com.au/help-guide-for-applicants/>

A Smartygrants acknowledgement email will be sent when the application has been submitted. Check emails delivered from 'noreply@smartygrants.com.au' are not blocked or directed to your junk/spam folder.

6. Timelines

Applications open: 3 March 2023

Applications close: 14 April 2023

Notification of outcome: Late June/early July 2023

Funding agreements signed: July 2023

Projects commence: July 2023 onwards

Project completed: June 2024 or earlier (as per timeframes indicated in the application)

Please note: dates are subject to change. We will provide applicants with notice of any changes as they arise.

7. How will applications be assessed?

The Grants Program is a competitive process and submitting an application does not guarantee funding. Eligible applications will be assessed by a panel of Council officers, based on the application responses against the relevant assessment criteria.

8. Budget

All applications require a matching eligible 1:1 in-kind or cash contribution. The budget must accurately reflect the project or event's income and expenditure. Provide details of all income sources and list all expenditure costs involved in the project. Check if any permits are required and include the permit fee/s in the budget.

The budget must include the matching contribution required for your project or event which may include cash and/or in-kind (if relevant). Any other source of funding provided by Colac Otway Shire towards your project cannot be used as a matching contribution.

Quote/s must be included in the application. The budget income and expenditure totals must balance.

Cash contributions

Cash contributions can be confirmed by providing a copy of a current Bank Statement or other evidence of bank balance for grant requests up to \$5,000. A Treasurer's report is also required for grant requests over \$5,000.

In-kind contributions

An in-kind contribution means support, other than cash, provided by your organisation towards the project. This can include voluntary labour or donated goods and services.

In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the project or event.

Eligible for In-kind contribution:

- Project management
- General maintenance or activities directly related to the project (E.g: painting, site preparation, landscaping etc.)
- Donated goods & services

Activities undertaken prior to the project are deemed ineligible for in-kind contribution including but not limited to:

- Research, planning and application writing (undertaken prior to the commencement of the project).
- Fundraising activities for a project. These should be completed prior to the application.
- Applicant's core operational maintenance (e.g. Recreation reserve or public hall grounds maintenance)
- Official project opening
- The use of equipment purchased is not considered as in-kind*
 - * Where an equipment purchase is part of a program or an element of a larger project, it may be considered for eligible in-kind.

An in-kind contribution will be:

- Recorded in the Budget table under income and under expenditure.
- Recorded in the in-kind table for labour, donated goods and services.
- Calculated at \$45 p/hour for volunteer professional/trade services
- Calculated at \$25 p/hour for general volunteer labour

In-kind contributions received

A record of the actual volunteer labour, donated goods and services contributed to the project or event delivery (calculated at the relevant provisional hourly rate) will be required in the Acquittal Report at the completion of the project or event. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep written records (e.g. letter of donations or receipts, volunteer hours) of the in-kind support committed or received.

9. Funding Details

- The grant recipient (or the Auspice organisation that will manage the funds) must enter into a funding agreement with Colac Otway Shire Council which sets out the conditions, payment details and reporting requirements.
- Depending on the proposal, specific funding conditions that relate to the project may be included in the Funding Agreement. For example: planning permit required, land owner's consent required, building permit required etc.
- The project must be completed within the financial year in which the grant is received. Any unspent funds must be returned to Colac Otway Shire Council.
- Funds must be spent on the activity as described in the application. Any variation to the approved activity must be submitted in a Variation Request form for approval prior to implementing changes.
- Grant recipients (or Auspice) without an Australian Business Number (ABN) must provide a completed Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.
- Registered for GST. Recipients (or Auspice) will have payments made inclusive of GST. A Tax Invoice must be provided to Colac Otway Shire.
- Not Registered for GST. Recipients (or Auspice) will have payments made exclusive of GST.
- For grants above \$5,000, payments will be made in two instalments:
 - 90% paid upfront on signing the Agreement or when specific funding conditions have been met. Specific funding conditions may apply to your project, and these must be met prior to the release of the grant funds.
 - 10% paid upon satisfactory completion of the acquittal report.

10. Acknowledging Council's support and promoting success

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the support from the *Colac Otway Shire Grants Program*.

Promotional guidelines form part of funding agreements and include the requirement that all activities acknowledge Colac Otway Shire Council's support through:

- Logo presentation on any activity-related publications
- Media releases
- Promotional material
- Social media
- Written or verbal acknowledgement at presentations or 'openings' and/or
- Installation of a Colac Otway Shire endorsed sign at the site of larger infrastructure activities.

Approval must be obtained to use Council's logo on any promotional material, website, social media etc. A proof of the promotional material should be sent along with the request to use the logo. Please contact Colac Otway Shire to obtain the current logo for use.

All grant recipients must provide an opportunity for a Councillor to attend the event/project for promotional purposes if requested. This may include handing out prizes after a sporting event, or a photo opportunity at the opening of a completed construction project. Before the end of July 2023, applicants will be informed if their event/project has been nominated for a Councillor visit.

11. Acquittal

At the completion of the project, an Acquittal Report must be submitted through Smartygrants. The report must include (where relevant):

- A summary of the project including comments on the things that went well and that you have learnt from the project.
- Project outcomes, achievements and how they align with Council Plan objectives.
- A project budget must be completed, including receipts or evidence of how the grant funds were expended.
- A record of In-kind labour &/or donated goods & service (if applicable).
- Details of local suppliers and contractors used.
- Copies of project promotional materials, social media posts, photographs or video if available.
- Photographs of new equipment or completed works.
- Evidence of acknowledgement of Council's support e.g. club newsletter, media articles, social media etc.

Applicants that have an outstanding acquittal from any previous grant round will not be eligible to apply for any future grant round. Contact the Grants Officer to discuss if your current project will not be completed prior to the application closing date.

12. Privacy

The Colac Otway Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. We collect and handle any personal information about you or a third party in your application, for the purpose of administering your grant application and informing the public of successful applications.

In order for us to administer your grant application effectively and efficiently, we may need to disclose your personal information with others for the purpose of assessment, consultation, and reporting. This can include Council staff or Councillors.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

The Colac Otway Shire Council's Privacy Policy can be found at www.colacotway.vic.gov.au Enter a search for Privacy Statement.

Council uses an online grant application program called Smartygrants.

[Click Here](#) to view Smartygrants Privacy Policy <https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/privacy>

13. Contact us

For queries relating to the grants program or assistance with the online application or further information, contact the Grants Officer between 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Grants & Development Officer

Colac Otway Shire, 2-6 Rae Street Colac

T: (03) 5232 9400

E: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au

Community Grants



The grants program supports community and recreation infrastructure improvements, community programs and activities, local community and tourism projects that contribute to community strengthening and bring a wide range of social and economic returns across the Shire.

Grants from \$500 up to \$10,000 maximum.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash and/or in-kind basis.

14.1 Who can apply?	
Applicant organisation located within the Colac Otway Shire boundary	✓
Any of the following applicant organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant organisation must meet the definition of a community group. A community group is defined as a group or organisation which works for the public benefit. Voluntary & Community Groups have the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Organised</u>. A voluntary and community group has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is called a 'governing document' or 'constitution'. ○ <u>Self-governing and independent</u> from any other organisation. Voluntary and Community groups are independent and are free to appoint their own management committee. ○ <u>Not for Profit</u>. No one from within the group will profit from the group. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work and any profits generated should be reinvested in the group. ○ <u>Voluntary</u>. Voluntary and Community Groups are governed by a voluntary management committee and rely on the support of volunteers to carry out their activities. ○ <u>Public/community benefit</u>. The group will carry out activities which benefit a particulate group of people within the community. • Community Asset Committee established by Council (formerly called a Section 86 Committee) for the purpose of managing a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire. E.g. Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall committee • Not-for-profit, non-government organisation. 	✓
Incorporated Organisations. If not incorporated, must arrange an eligible incorporated organisation to Auspice the grant, and include the Auspice's consent letter in the application.	✓
Applicants with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Or that have completed an Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a Supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.	✓

14.2 Who cannot apply?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Businesses • Event organisers • Schools or Parents & Friends or similar groups affiliated with schools • Churches or other religious organisations • Non-incorporated groups who do not have an Auspice • Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) <p>Note: Guidance and advice for grant applicants is available through Council's Grants Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any illegal activity ○ any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc. ○ tobacco ○ offensive or sexually explicit material ○ discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion ○ activities violating human rights ○ political parties ○ gambling 	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact Council's Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗

14.3 What will be funded?

Environmental projects – Natural or built	✓
Energy Audits Type 1 for community facilities	✓
Arts & cultural projects	✓
Sport & recreation programs & projects	✓
Community programs and projects that encourage physical activity, health and wellbeing, improve equity, access and inclusion	✓
Strategic Planning activities e.g. master plans, feasibility plans, action plans or business plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Committees of Council facilities/land/infrastructure • Other not-for-profit organisations on land /assets which are not owned or managed by Council, Government or other Authority may be considered. 	✓
Workshops, training, specialist skills programs, education or coaching courses for officials, administrators or general community members.	✓
Community infrastructure - Place making, streetscape and open space	✓
Equipment purchases that enhance the facility, are designed to remain part of a facility or which provide general benefit to the applicant organisation.	✓

Facilities upgrades - minor capital improvements of community and recreation facilities (up to \$20,000)	✓
Projects that address gender equity	✓
Minor repairs and works	✓
14.4 What will not be funded?	
Standard Council infrastructure e.g. footpaths, bins, drainage and road construction.	✗
Consumable items (e.g. sports balls, uniforms)	✗
Compliance related upgrades to Council owned buildings or requirements within the current lease or management agreement.	✗
Ongoing operational expenses and administrative costs e.g. rent, utility costs, salaries etc.	✗
Public liability or other insurance	✗
Capital expenditure projects over \$20,000	✗
Project management costs	✗
Projects undertaken outside of the funding period (financial year)	✗
Projects considered the responsibility of other Agencies	✗
Fundraising activities, prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship costs, such as trophies, medals, money and vouchers	✗
Requests for retrospective funding are not eligible. The project activity cannot commence or equipment cannot be purchased prior to approval.	✗
Equipment purchased to undertake the works (e.g. ladders, gurneys, scaffolding, and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when directly related to the project.	✗
Proposed works where land owner's consent or a permit has been refused.	✗
Strategic planning on land or assets owned by another Government entity or Authority	✗
Applications for projects that have already received funding from Council.	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including regular projects, programs and activities, administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits.)	✗
Contingency costs	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- Itemised quote(s) for the proposed works or equipment.
- Photographs of 'Before', if applicable. 'After' photos will be required in the Acquittal Report.
- **Permits and Approvals** Proposed projects may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any

grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the required permits and approvals if required for your project. If you are unsure about permits, please contact Council's Grants Officer to discuss your project.

- Planning Permit may be required for proposed works or use.
- Building Permit may be required if proposed works include any structural works.
- In-principle support from Council may be required for any project on Council owned or managed land.

14.5 Assessment Criteria – Community Grants

Assessment Criteria 1 – What benefits will the project provide to your organisation and the broader community and alignment to Council Plan objectives? (Weighting 50%)

In your response, please describe:

- Alignment to Council plan objectives
- How is the project supporting the local community?
- Who is the target market to benefit from the project?
- Details of short term and long term benefits.
- The expected number of people who will benefit from the project.

Assessment Criteria 2 – Why is this project needed? (Weighting 20%)

In your response, please describe:

- What demand exists that has created the idea for this project?
- The evidence to show why this approach will work?
- Provide support letters to demonstrate support from the community for your project and detail any discussions held with related groups in the area. (if applicable)
- Will the project be an innovative and creative response to the issue?
- Will the project address gender equity? Describe how. Priority will be given to projects that address gender equity.

Assessment Criteria 3 – How will the project be delivered? (Weighting 15%)

Applications must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project.

In your response, please describe:

- Who will manage the project?
- What planning has been undertaken to complete this project?
- Detail the stages involved in your project and how you will deliver it.
- Details if it involves knowledge and skills development.
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this project into the future.
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver and acquit the project within timeframes.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Who is involved? (Weighting 15%)

In your response, please describe:

- Are suppliers based in the Colac Otway shire? What percentage of suppliers or contractors are located in Colac Otway Shire? Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.
- Who are the partners?
- Will there be voluntary or in-kind contributions? Who is involved?
- How many people from your organisation will be involved?
- Does the project actively involve a range of stakeholders?

Events Grants



An event is any organised activity held on public or private land where an open area, facility, venue, road or temporary structure is to be used by more people than are usually found in that location.

Events can include but are not limited to:

- Cultural, Historical, Artistic (theatre, visual), Culinary, Sporting, Environmental
- Festivals, Live music events and performances
- Markets, Cinema in the park, Carnivals, Exhibitions, Community fair/shows

15.1 Community Events

Events must benefit Colac Otway Shire's residents and businesses, and have a strong community focus. Events should enhance the region's profile, develop community cooperation and cohesion, build local skills, provide social opportunities or in other ways have a positive impact on the local community.

- Grants up to \$5,000 to provide support for established events
- Grants up to \$2,000 to provide support for new or one-off events
- COPACC Hire Assistance grants available for up to 50% of the cost of standard room hire at COPACC for the provision of performing arts and cultural activities. Maximum \$5,000.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash and/or in-kind basis. In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the event.

15.2 Tourism Events

Major events which attract a significant number of out of area visitors, with major branding/promotional opportunities for the host town & Colac Otway Shire.

- Grants up to \$10,000 for major tourism events organised by local community
- Grants up to \$5,000 for major tourism events organised by commercial event organisers
- New tourism events maximum is \$5,000. Event organiser must demonstrate previous experience in major events.

Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash and/or in-kind basis. In-kind contributions should be calculated from activities that directly contribute to the delivery of the event.

15.3 Who can apply?	
<i>Event Organiser</i> - any individual, community group or entity who undertakes the planning, control, management and/or implementation of an event.	✓
Event organisers holding an event within the Colac Otway Shire.	✓
<p>Applicant organisation must be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Group Applicant organisation must meet the definition of a community group. A community group is defined as a group or organisation which works for the public benefit. Voluntary & Community Groups have the following characteristics: <u>Organised.</u> A voluntary and community group has a structure with rules about how the group is organised and run. This is called a 'governing document' or 'constitution'. 	✓ ✓

<p><u>Self-governing and independent</u> from any other organisation. Voluntary and Community groups are independent and are free to appoint their own management committee.</p> <p><u>Not for Profit.</u> No one from within the group will profit from the group. For example, committee members should not be paid for their work and any profits generated should be reinvested in the group.</p> <p><u>Voluntary.</u> Voluntary and Community Groups are governed by a voluntary management committee and rely on the support of volunteers to carry out their activities.</p> <p><u>Public/community benefit.</u> The group will carry out activities which benefit a particulate group of people within the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Asset Committee established by Council (formerly called a Section 86 Committee) for the purpose of managing a community asset in the Colac Otway Shire. E.g. Recreation Reserve Committee, Public Hall Committee • Not- for-profit, non-government organisations • Commercial Event Organiser who is a legal business entity holding an event with broad community benefit in the Colac Otway Shire. 	✓
Must be incorporated (<u>except</u> for Commercial Event Organiser legal business entity) If not incorporated, must arrange an eligible incorporated organisation to Auspice the grant, and include the Auspice's consent letter in the application.	✓
Applicants with an Australian Business Number (ABN). Or that have completed an Australian Tax Office form (Statement by a Supplier) so that no withholding tax is required from the grant payment.	✓
Schools may apply for COPACC Hire Assistance <u>only</u> .	✓
15.4 Who cannot apply?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) • Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ any illegal activity ○ any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc ○ tobacco ○ offensive or sexually explicit material ○ discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion ○ activities violating human rights ○ political parties ○ gambling 	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗

15.5 What will be funded?	
Community Events that benefit Colac Otway Shire's residents and businesses, and have a strong community focus.	✓
Tourism Events that attract significant numbers of out of area visitors, with major branding/promotional opportunities for the host town & Colac Otway Shire.	✓
Performing arts and cultural activities/events at COPACC	✓
Hire of entertainers & performers	✓

Traffic management plans and personnel for the event	✓
Promotional material for the event	✓
Event infrastructure and equipment hire costs (E.g. sound equipment, lighting, staging, portable toilets, fencing etc.). Use of local suppliers is encouraged	✓
Events that are inclusive and embrace, celebrate and promote diversity to connect our community.	✓
Commercial events (subject to substantial community benefit)	✓
<p>Events must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally sustainable initiatives to restrict use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water. • Waste management plans that demonstrate a level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling) • Consideration of the environmental impact on the site selected. <p>Events that include environmental waste initiatives to address waste reduction will be prioritised in the assessment stage.</p>	✓
Hire of Council's Events Trailer	✓
Venue Hire	✓
15.6 What will not be funded?	
Applications received after the closing date/time will not be considered	✗
Requests for retrospective funding. The event expenditure cannot have occurred prior to signing the funding agreement.	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits.)	✗
Public Liability or other Insurance	✗
Events conducted completely outside of the Colac Otway Shire boundary	✗
<p>Fundraising Events</p> <p>Events that are held primarily for the purpose of fundraising with the majority of profit generated distributed to a third-party organisation, agency or charity and that provide limited direct benefits to Colac Otway Shire residents/visitors, are not eligible for grant funding.</p> <p>Applications may be considered where fundraising is a secondary purpose and the proposed event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will attract substantial local/visitor attendance, • provides direct benefit to Colac Otway Shire residents and • aligns with the Council Plan. 	✗
A second or subsequent element of an Event or Festival will not be funded where the main Event or Festival is to receive funding	✗
Event management costs	✗
Events held outside of the funding (financial year) period	✗
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weddings • Private / Family events • Events not open to the general public 	✗

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prizes, gifts, awards or sponsorship costs, such as trophies, medals, money and vouchers 	
COPACC Hire Assistance does not include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning Box office fees Security Catering Piano Tuning Labour charges Specialised lighting 	✗
Events which are accepting sponsorship from companies that Council deem are not suitable or do not align with the Council Plan 2021-2025	✗
Contingency costs	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide Itemised quote(s) as part of your application.

15.7 Assessment Criteria - Community Events

Assessment Criteria 1 – Social opportunities (Weighting 50%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long term including:

In your response, please describe:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities;
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together;
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community;
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature;
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (no. of people and hours);
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.);
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local resident numbers within Colac Otway Shire
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire
- New events should comment on why the event is needed? What demand exists?
- Does the event actively involve a range of stakeholders?
- Demonstrate support from the community & detail any discussions held with related groups in the area. (Letters of support may assist)

Assessment Criteria 2 - Environmental Sustainability (Weighting 20%)

In your response, please describe:

- How you will manage and reduce waste generated by the event?
- How your waste management plan includes recycling options and waste mitigation strategies?
- How the event will restrict use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water?
- How the site will be returned to pre-event condition?

Assessment Criteria 3 – Event delivery (Weighting 15%)

Application must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Who will manage the event?
- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant to deliver and acquit the event within timeframes.
- What planning has been undertaken to deliver this event? Detail Land Owner Consent & Permits required?
- **Permits and Approvals** Events may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for your event.

If you are unsure what permits and other approvals your event may require, please contact Council's Events Officer on 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au to discuss your event.

Approvals required may include any of the following:

- [An Event in a Public Place Permit](#)
- [A Place of Public Entertainment \(POPE\) permit](#)
- [Consumption of Liquor in a Public Place permit](#)
- [Temporary Limited Liquor License](#)
- A Planning Permit for the event (or specific elements related to the event) that is held on private land
- Detail the elements involved in your event and how you will deliver it.
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Economic return and who is involved (Weighting 15%)

In your response, please describe:

- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders). Priority will be given to the use of local trades and suppliers.
- What other key stakeholders in the community are involved in the event? Describe their level of involvement. (Letters of support may assist)

15.8 Assessment Criteria - Tourism Events**Assessment Criteria 1 - Community Economic development opportunities** (Weighting 40%)

Describe how the event will stimulate the economy including:

- Boosting off peak visitation, overnight stays and expenditure;
- The amount of visitation/tourism from people attending from outside Colac Otway Shire and the length of stay during the event;
- The level of pre training or visitation that the event will generate in the lead up to the event;
- The level of expenditure these visitors will generate (or have generated historically);

- The opportunities where Colac Otway Shire or the host township can be promoted, the nature of this promotion and the marketing reach;
- The level of involvement of local businesses in the event both pre (supply chain expenditure in event set up) or during (stall holders);
- The ability of the event to trigger repeat visitation to Colac Otway Shire;
- Reinforce and/or strengthen the desired 'brand' of the host township or Colac Otway Shire in a positive way.

Assessment Criteria 2 - Social opportunities (Weighting 25%)

Detail the community benefits provided by the event – short and long term including:

- How the event will create social gathering opportunities;
- The level to which people of diverse groups and ages are brought together;
- Evidence of how the event will positively impact the host community;
- Identify if the social opportunities are short (event specific) or long term (ongoing spin offs) in nature;
- Level of involvement by local volunteers (No. of people and hours);
- How the event caters for needs of all abilities (accessibility etc.);
- How will the event address gender equity? Priority will be given to events that address gender equity.
- The expected number of people who will attend the event, estimating:
 - Local Colac Otway Shire resident numbers
 - Visitor numbers from outside of Colac Otway Shire (e.g. 2000 – 5000 attendees or above)

Assessment Criteria 3 - Environmental sustainability (Weighting 20%)

Does the event plan for and contribute to:

- Positive environmental sustainable outcomes in the short (event specific) or longer term;
- Provide an element of environmental education or awareness for attendees;
- A level of excellence in event management from an environmental aspect (includes rubbish removal, waste reduction, recycling, techniques that minimise the carbon footprint of the event);
- Restricted use or distribution of single use plastics or products, including but not limited to bags, straws, cups, cutlery, balloons, bottled water.

Assessment Criteria 4 – Event delivery? (Weighting 15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the event.

In your response, please describe:

- Detailed Event Program
- What planning has been undertaken e.g. meeting with Events officer, detail Land owner consent & what permits will be required?
- **Permits and Approvals** Events may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the event plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in the application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals required for your event.
- Detail the stages involved in your event and how you propose to deliver it.

- Demonstrated experience of the Applicant organisation to deliver and acquit the event within timeframes.
- Who will manage the event and relevant experience?
- Will it be sustainable? Explain how you intend to fund this event into the future.

All applicants should discuss their event with Council's Event Officer between Monday to Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm on (03) 5232 9400 or inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au.

Business Grants



Council supports local businesses through two business grants.

Building Façade Improvement Program to revitalise the shopping strips across the Shire.

Grants up to \$3,000 max.

Grants require a matching dollar for dollar cash contribution.

Environmentally Sustainable Business Grants supports businesses to reduce their environmental impact.

Grants up to \$5,000 max

Grants require a matching dollar for dollar cash contribution.

16.1 Building Façade Improvement Program

The Building Façade Improvement Program assists businesses to improve the appearance of their building facades and increase the overall attractiveness of the shopping strips in Colac, Apollo Bay and the small towns throughout the Shire.

Grants up to \$3,000 maximum. Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash contribution.

16.1.1 Who can apply?	
Businesses located in the commercial area of towns within the Colac Otway Shire	✓
Business must have street frontage	✓
Building owner or Lessee/Business owner	✓
16.1.2 Who cannot apply?	
Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) Note that guidance and advice for Applicants is available through Council's Grants Officer.	✗
Applicant organisation (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any illegal activity any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc. tobacco offensive or sexually explicit material discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion activities violating human rights political parties gambling 	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗
16.1.3 What will be funded?	
Commercial building façade improvements may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior painting of retail business building façade Cleaning the existing façade Removal or replacement of redundant signage, air conditioning units and hoardings Replacement of signage in disrepair 	✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor repairs, maintenance or reinstatement of missing elements • Minor repairs to existing façade tile or stone accents • Minor repairs to structural façade elements and awnings • New, repairs and replacements of verandahs 	
Proposed works must be visible from the street	✓
The use of local trades and suppliers is strongly encouraged & will be prioritised in the assessment stage.	✓
16.1.4 What will not be funded?	
Re-branding of existing signage that is in good condition	✗
Proposed works where a permit has been refused	✗
Requests for retrospective funding. The project cannot commence prior to approval.	✗
Equipment purchased to undertake the works (e.g. Ladders, gurneys, scaffolding, and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when directly related to the project.	✗
Internal works or works which are not visible from the street.	✗
Contingency costs	✗
Activities that could be considered core business i.e. those associated with the Applicant organisation's normal or day-to-day operation (including regular projects and activities, administration, staffing costs, insurances and permits).	✗
Residential based businesses, including Airbnb or similar type accommodation	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- An itemised quote for the proposed works.
- If proposing the painting of a building, the colour palette will need to be provided for approval by Council.
- Photographs of the building 'Before'. 'After' photos will be required in the Acquittal Report.
- **Permits and Approvals** Proposed projects may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them will be a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the required permits and approvals for your project. If you are unsure about permits, please contact the Grants Officer to discuss your project.
 - Planning Permit may be required for proposed building facade works e.g. signage, painting, verandahs and works on a heritage listed building or a building in an area covered by a heritage overlay.
 - Building Permit may be required if the proposed facade improvements include any structural works.
 - Public Protection (Hoarding) Permit may be required.

16.1.5 Assessment Criteria - Building Façade Improvement

Assessment Criteria 1 – Description of works (Weighting 75%)

Provide a detailed description of the proposed works and specify the area of the façade to be worked on.

- Are the works visible from the street? What street will the works be visible from?
 - works above the verandah e.g. painting, replacement signage, replace heritage elements, cleaning
 - works below the verandah? e.g. painting, tile repairs
 - Works along the verandah / awning fascia? E.g. replace rusted fascia & signage
 - Works on the shop window? E.g. replacement signage, replacement window frames
- Describe the level of visual impact expected as a result of the façade works?
- What percentage of the façade will be included in the improvement works?

Assessment Criteria 2 – Economic Return (Weighting 10%)

- Will local suppliers and contractors (within the Colac Otway Shire) be engaged to undertake the works?
- What percentage of the works will be procured locally?

Assessment Criteria 3 – Capacity to deliver (Weighting 15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project.

- Has the project been fully scoped and costed as part of the project plan?
- Applicant has researched and demonstrated awareness of permit requirements?
- Is the timeframe to complete the project within the funding period?

16.2 Environmentally Sustainable Business Grant

Council assists small businesses within the Colac Otway Shire to reduce their environmental impact.

Grants up to \$5,000 maximum. Grants are provided on a matching dollar for dollar cash contribution.

16.2.1 Who can apply?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Businesses located within the Colac Otway Shire • Businesses with an annual aggregated turnover of less than \$10 million • Businesses with less than 20 employees • Must have an Australian Business Number (ABN) • Must be a trading business entity 	✓
16.2.2 Who cannot apply?	
Residential based businesses, including Airbnb or similar type accommodation	✗
Applicants with an overdue Acquittal Report from a previous round. Contact the Grants Officer if you need to check.	✗
Elected members (Councillors), Council employees (staff) Note that guidance and advice for Applicants is available through Council's Grants Officer.	✗
Applicant organisations (or Auspice) that are associated with or promote activities deemed inappropriate (including but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any illegal activity • any activity not in accordance with relevant legislation; permitting; regulations etc. 	✗

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tobacco • offensive or sexually explicit material • discrimination on the grounds of race, gender or religion • activities violating human rights • political parties • gambling 	
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16.2.3 What will be funded?

Business energy audit Support businesses to undertake an energy audit of their business by an approved energy auditor (refer Sustainability Victoria for energy auditors)	✓
Building Upgrades Support upgrades that reduce energy consumption e.g. Insulation, draught proofing, double glazing etc.	✓
Waste reduction and diversion initiatives Support businesses to implement initiatives that reduce waste and divert business waste from landfill. Projects that encourage recycling, Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO), circular economy, environmentally friendly packing etc.	✓
Emerging technology Support innovation and emerging technology e.g. EV Chargers to encourage electric vehicle use	✓
Energy storage Support installation of battery storage or other proven technology, to allow businesses to maintain continuity.	✓
Water re-use Support initiatives to reduce the use of potable water	✓
Urban Greening Support planting shade trees along north or west facing walls for small to medium enterprises, including commercial businesses. Support green wall plantings on north or west facing walls of business	✓
Transition from gas to electricity Support businesses to transition from gas to electric equipment, particularly where a renewable energy source is used.	✓

16.2.4 What will not be funded?

Requests for retrospective funding	✗
Proposed works where a permit has been refused.	✗
Items which are eligible for subsidies from other Agencies or State/Federal Government e.g. solar panels. Check for current subsidies available at time of application.	✗
Equipment purchases to undertake the works (e.g. ladders, gurneys, scaffolding and safety barriers). Hiring of equipment is permitted when related directly to the project.	✗
Contingency costs	✗
Funding an organisation's core business activities	✗

Information you will need to provide as part of your application

You will need to provide the following documents as part of your application:

- An itemised quote for the proposed service, works or equipment.
- **Permits and Approvals** Proposed projects may require permits or approvals. These processes are separate to the grant application process and require additional time and budget in the project plan. You do not need to secure permits or approvals before applying, but if your funding application is successful, securing them is a condition of the grant. Council will not make any grant payments until the relevant permits and approvals are obtained. You must demonstrate in your application that you are aware of the necessary permits and approvals if required for your project. If you are unsure about permits, contact the Grants Officer to discuss your project.
 - Planning Permit may be required for proposed works
 - Building Permit may be required if proposed works include any structural works.
- Public Liability Insurance Certificate of Currency is required for all projects (except equipment purchases) and is not funded by the grant program
- Details of suppliers / contractors to be used to demonstrate the benefit to the local economy. Calculate the percentage of works &/or equipment to be procured locally.

16.2.5 Assessment Criteria - Environmentally Sustainable Business Grants

Assessment Criteria 1 - Why the project is needed and the environmental benefits? (Weighting 60%)

- Provide a detailed description of the proposed works, upgrade or equipment purchase?
- Provide a detailed description of the environmental impact/benefit of the project.
- What issue or problem are you trying to resolve or improve?
- How your project will address or improve this issue?
- Is your project receiving any subsidy from another agency, State or Federal Government?

Assessment Criteria 2 - Benefit to business (Weighting 15%)

- What anticipated benefits will this project provide to your energy consumption or business costs?
- How have you calculated the benefits?
- What is the estimated payback period or annual savings on the proposed energy efficient equipment, upgrade or environmental initiative?

Assessment Criteria 3 - Capacity to deliver (Weighting 15%)

Must clearly demonstrate the capacity of the applicant to deliver the project.

- Has the project been fully scoped and costed as part of the project plan?
- Applicant has researched and demonstrated awareness of permit requirements?
- Is the timeframe to complete the project within the funding period?
- Is the capability (skills and experience) and capacity (resources) demonstrated and available to deliver the project?

Assessment Criteria 4 - Economic return (Weighting 10%)

- Will local suppliers and contractors (within the Colac Otway Shire) be engaged to undertake the works?
- What percentage of contractors and suppliers will be procured locally in the Colac Otway Shire?
- The use of local suppliers/contractors is strongly encouraged and will be prioritised during the assessment.

Item: 9.4

Project Budget Adjustments and Cash Reserve Transfers - October 2023

OFFICER	Paula Gardiner
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the project budget adjustments and cash reserve transfers for Council ratification and approval. These budgets are for 2023-24 Capital Works and Operational projects.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project budget adjustments presented in this report relate to the 2023-24 financial year. It seeks formal approval to adjust project budgets, create new projects where needed, or recognise that some projects are complete and can be formally closed. The report demonstrates good governance and project management practice and provides improved transparency to the community about matters that occur outside of the annual budget cycle.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Approves the new project as presented in Table 1 of this report, at a total cost to Council of \$55,000 (exc. GST), funded from the Strategic Projects Reserve.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

The following project budget transfers are presented for Council consideration and transparency to the community. Amounts are presented as exclusive of GST as per Council's adopted budget and financial reporting as follows:

- Increases in the project expense budget are presented without brackets.
- Decreases in the project expense budget are presented with brackets.

Council allocates funding to projects through its annual budget or by specific resolution. Where matters arise that require urgent action to address compliance or safety concerns, and the service delivery cannot be reasonably stopped, the Chief Executive Officer may need to approve establishment of a project to address the issue. In these instances, the Chief Executive Officer will advise all Councillors as soon as possible, and the project will be ratified by Council at the next practical meeting through Table 1.

The opening balances, before any transfers recommended in this report are considered, are:

- Unallocated Renewal Funds: \$1,250,696
- Unallocated Discretionary Funds: \$107,025

Table 1 – New projects for Council ratification

Project name	Funding source	Basis for variation	Project allocation (exc. GST)
Bruce Street, Colac – LFG Bores	Strategic Projects Reserve	As a condition of the sale of 36-52 Bruce Street Colac, Council is required to move and install monitoring bores. It is proposed to use funds from the land sale proceeds which sit in the Strategic Projects Reserve.	\$55,000

Where an opportunity or need arises outside of the annual budget development process, it should be approved by Council before work on the project commences. This enables Council to confirm any financial commitment it makes to the project in a manner that is transparent to the community. Projects presented for Council approval are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 – Newly initiated projects for Council approval

Project name	Funding source	Basis for variation	Project allocation (exc. GST)
Nil to Report			

From time to time, situations arise whereby initial budgets need to be reconsidered to achieve their planned objectives and project scope. It is important that Council's decisions to adjust project budgets are open and transparent to the community. Therefore, any changes to project budgets or cash reserves are reported in Tables 3a and 3b of this report to demonstrate the diligence and transparency of the organisation's financial management principles.

Table 3a – Project budgets requiring adjustment (Capital Projects)

Project Name	Transfers <u>from</u> project account	Transfers <u>to</u> project account	Basis for variation	Project budget adjustment (exc. GST) Note increases are without brackets	
				Expenditure	Income
Nil to Report					

Table 3b – Project budgets requiring adjustment (Operational Projects)

Project name	Transfers <u>from</u> project account	Transfers <u>to</u> project account	Basis for variation	Project allocation (exc. GST)	
				Expenditure	Income
Nil to Report					

Closure of projects is another important process for maintaining a well-managed program and involves financial review, asset management, and project review activities. Closed projects are presented in Table 4 for Council's ratification and to provide transparency to the community that these projects are deemed to be complete.

Table 4 – Project closures for ratification

Project name	Funding source	Project Allocation (Expenditure)	Actual YTD
Nil to Report			

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report contributes to financial viability by ensuring Council approves and is well informed about the allocation and movement of project funds to achieve the best outcomes for the municipal community.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

This report contributes to public transparency by ensuring that the allocation and movement of project funds is made available to the community.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement

Objective 2: We are a financially robust organisation

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

This report contributes to financial management principles by recording the allocation and movement of project funds that may impact on the budget, current and future.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

This report contributes to service performance for project delivery by considering the allocation and movement of project funds for successful project outcomes.

Risk Assessment

There are no identified Workplace Health and Safety implications or identified risks associated with this report.

Communication/Implementation

Implementation of Council's decision will be undertaken by the responsible officers within Council. Project partners and stakeholders will be notified of Council's decision where relevant by the Project Sponsor or Project Manager.

Human Rights Charter

There are no matters identified with this report that impact on human rights as defined in the charter.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

OptionsOption 1 – Adopt officer recommendation.

This option is recommended by officers as the project budgets and cash reserve transfers supports implementation of Council's strategies.

Option 2 – Not approve transfers as recommended.

This option is not recommended by officers as transfers are necessary to allow ongoing delivery and closure of projects, which have been through a series of governance checks.

Item: 9.5

Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan - Consideration of Submissions and Adoption

OFFICER	Dora Novak
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 - Final [9.5.1 - 40 pages]2. Climate Change Action Plan - Final [9.5.2 - 41 pages]3. Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP [9.5.3 - 12 pages]4. Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations [9.5.4 - 22 pages]

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present submissions to the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and draft Climate Change Action Plan and present a final versions of these documents for adoption.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 (ESS) presents Council's roadmap for the next ten years to ensure that Council protects and enhances the environment and takes appropriate action to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate and create resilient and sustainable communities. The Climate Change Action Plan 2023-33 (CCAP) outlines proposed actions designed to mitigate the impacts of, and respond to, climate change, with an emphasis of preventing and ameliorating climate change impacts.

The draft ESS and draft CCAP have been developed in consultation with the community, businesses, stakeholders and agencies from across the municipality, and were publicly exhibited between 26 May and 7 July 2023. A total of 40 survey responses and 78 written submissions were received. A Submissions Committee meeting was held on 6 September 2023 to enable verbal presentations from submitters.

Council officers have considered at length the issues raised in submissions and following a series of briefings with Councillors, have recommended changes that modify the draft ESS and CCAP in

response. Details of the proposed modifications are outlined in the Response to Submissions Table attached to this report. Key issues are discussed further below. The recommended final documents to be adopted are attached, inclusive of the proposed changes.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receives and considers all submissions to the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 and draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033 (as summarised in Attachment 3).***
- 2. Expresses its appreciation to the community and stakeholders for their contribution to the development of the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 and draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033.***
- 3. Notes that amendments have been made as per the Response to Submissions table (Attachment 4) and are presented as final documents.***
- 4. Adopts the attached Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 (Attachment 1) and Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033 (Attachment 2).***
- 5. Notes that a Summary will be developed once the Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033 is adopted to help communicate the key focus areas and actions of the Plan.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Officers commenced development of an Environmental Sustainability Strategy in mid-2022 with an extensive community engagement phase that was completed in September 2022. The previous eight-year strategy expired in 2018 and there is a need for an updated strategy document that establishes guidance for Council in respect of its environmental priorities and actions.

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-33 presents Council's roadmap for the next ten years to ensure that Council protects and enhances its environment and takes appropriate action to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate and create resilient and sustainable communities.

The Climate Change Action Plan 2023-33 outlines proposed actions designed to mitigate the impacts of, and respond to, climate change, with an emphasis of preventing and ameliorating climate change impacts. The CCAP includes a range of measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including energy efficiency and renewable energy, waste reduction and recycling, and sustainable transport. The CCAP also includes initiatives aimed at building resilience to climate change impacts, such as emergency management planning, land use planning reforms, urban greening, and biodiversity conservation programs. Further, it outlines actions to support engagement and education aimed at raising awareness about climate change, promoting sustainable living, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging community action.

Implementation of the actions outlined in the CCAP will enable Council to continue to reduce its operational emissions; maintain its commitment to broad emissions reductions across the municipality; adapt its services and operations to a changing climate; and to provide support to communities and businesses to become more resilient to, mitigate the impacts of, and adapt to, a changing climate.

The proposed Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-33 (Attachment 1) and proposed Climate Change Action Plan 2023-33 (Attachment 2) have been developed through consultation with the community, businesses, stakeholders and agencies from across the municipality. Council officers and Councillors have also been consulted and their feedback has been considered in the development and finalisation of the two documents.

Council's ESS and CCAP will be important documents to support Council's advocacy efforts in future years should Council actions by others, changes in policy or funding for implementing Council or community plans.

The draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 and draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-33 were publicly exhibited between 26 May and 7 July 2023. During the six-week period community members were able to provide feedback by written submission and/or via an online survey. A total of 40 survey responses and 78 written submissions were received. A public hearing of submissions was held on 6 September 2023.

A complete copy of all submissions is appended to this report as a confidential attachment. The result of the survey responses is also attached to this report (Appendix 3).

Key messages emerging from submissions included:

- Many submitters commended Council for recognising a climate and biodiversity crisis, for creating the draft documents and circulating them for community feedback – highlighting the need for Council to take this feedback seriously.
- Timeframes, goals and targets were the subject of the most comments, in particular that more specific, measurable and time-defined goals and frameworks should be outlined in the documents.
- It was frequently stated that timeframes for actions should better reflect the urgency and time-critical nature of this work (e.g. 'ongoing' is inadequate and used too widely throughout the draft Climate Change Action Plan).
- There was a strong call for Council to engage and collaborate with the community on all aspects of the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and draft Climate Change Action Plan, and multiple requests for the establishment of a climate change committee involving representatives from community groups and other stakeholders.
- There was a preference for more committed language to ensure that undertakings made within the draft Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan are firm and can easily be accounted for (rather than aspirational and broad).
- More frequent reviews of the documents and monitoring of progress on actions were requested.
- Council's allocation of resources to environment, sustainability, and adaptation and resilience to a changing climate was the subject of many comments. These primarily suggested that:
 - Council's budget allocation for implementation of the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and draft Climate Change Action Plan be significantly increased; and

- Council employs more staff (potentially a team of people) to ‘lead’ implementation of the actions.
- There were many requests for Council to swiftly transition the Bluewater Leisure Centre from gas to renewable energy sources.

Other themes and requests that came through strongly were that:

- Council should focus on reducing its emissions and strongly investing in renewable energy generation.
- Council should play a direct role in supporting community transition away from gas and replacement with renewable energy sources (including through incentive programs and facilitation, particularly for vulnerable households).
- Council should lead by example in transitioning its fleet to electric vehicles and supporting community transition through installation of chargers across the region.
- There should be a strong focus on urban greening, increasing tree canopy cover in townships and supporting community efforts towards this, particularly in relation to nature strip plantings (including that Council should develop clear guidelines for this).
- Biodiversity protection and enhancement programs should be a focus.
- Council should advocate to all levels of government and other stakeholders to ensure wide-reaching collective action, and on behalf of the community on political matters of concern (such as ensuring there is no seismic testing in the Otway Basin).
- Council has a strong role to play in community environmental and sustainability education and helping to increase community resilience to a changing climate.
- Planning controls and measures should be strongly used as a mechanism to ensure sustainable building and design across the shire.
- Emergency management planning should be enhanced.
- Given agriculture accounts for 48% of shire’s emissions, Council should partner with/actively work with local agricultural industries and landowners to assist the sector in transitioning to more sustainable agricultural practices to lower emissions outputs in our shire.

There was also a small number of submissions in opposition to the draft Climate Change Action Plan and Council’s commitment of any resources to this area.

A response to all issues raised in submissions is provided in the Summary of Submissions Table attached to this report (Appendix 4).

Key issues are discussed below:

Community Net Zero Target

Council received a number of submissions asking for the Community Net Zero Emissions Target of 2040 to be brought forward to 2030 or 2035 to express the urgency of action required by the whole of the community to address climate change.

Officer Comment and Recommendation

The State Government has some of the most ambitious emissions reduction targets in the world, having set a target to reduce Victoria's emissions by 75-80% by 2035 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. In the context of community reduction target setting, it is unrealistic for Council to be substantially more ambitious than the State Government target given its operations account for less than 1% of municipal emissions and its lack of direct control over the major contributors to municipal emissions. Therefore, no change is recommended to the 2040 Net Zero Community Target. It is noted that these targets will be reassessed during future reviews of the Climate Change Action Plan.

Climate Change Action Plan Action Timelines

Submitters expressed that the CCAP actions are too generalised, and they should be written as SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable within budget, Realistic and Time-framed). It was also expressed that timelines for the achievement of the goals and actions are not adequately allocated and should be made firm and measurable.

Officer Comment and Recommendation

Given the limits of Council's remit, jurisdiction and resources, goals, objectives, targets and actions in the ESS and CCAP are aligned with appropriate levels of control and influence to deliver the desired outcomes. This will ensure the maximum efficacy of the ESS and CCAP in delivering meaningful, specific and attainable outcomes throughout the life of the documents.

Timeframes for action implementation are outlined in the draft CCAP as: 'short' (1-3 years); 'medium' (4-6 years); 'long' (5-10); and 'ongoing'. This provides stakeholders with an understanding of Council's plans and expectations. This doesn't preclude Council from considering new opportunities may emerge that can't be envisaged at this time, such as new technologies, legislation, partnerships. Council considers these opportunities, along with actions included in the CCAP, and confirm priorities each year as part of its budget and annual action planning cycles. This will allow Council to prioritise action while allowing for detailed project planning, and meaningful collaboration and input from other stakeholders. It also takes into account the need for external funding and annual Council budget allocations that cannot be pre-empted. Therefore, no change to the drafts is recommended.

Establishment of a Climate Action Advisory Committee

Submitters advocated for Council to establish a Climate Action Advisory Committee to ensure there is genuine collaboration between the community and council in implementing the CCAP. Submissions asked for more community engagement/involvement in planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the ESS and CCAP, with wide community representation and ongoing and clear communication about climate action, progress and achievements by Council.

Officer Comment and Recommendation

Contemporary ways of collaborating and engaging with all sectors of the community are moving away from issue and place based formal committees with limited and relatively static representation. Community engagement methods such as community meetings, focus groups, open forums, surveys and online engagement lead to increased and more representative stakeholder participation, and can be tailored to the needs, issues and/or sectors of the community at the core of what is being addressed at the time. Given that environmental and climate change challenges are so complex and wide-ranging, a singular model is unlikely to effectively address the broad spectrum of social, cultural, economic and technical issues. A flexible model of action and project-based regular collaboration and engagement is therefore preferred and will be utilised to engage with the community on climate change and environmental sustainability issues and programs. Engagement will be delivered across the whole of the Shire.

Council commenced regular meetings with the Shire's sustainability groups in May 2023 and will continue to support these. It should also be noted that Council has ongoing access to a great wealth of expertise and knowledge through organisations and groups of which it is currently a member, including the Barwon South West Climate Alliance, Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy, the local government Climate Emergency Councils Forum and the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.

While the exhibited draft CCAP actions 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11 already encompassed and expressed Council's commitment to ongoing and active community engagement, it is recommended by officers that the wording of Action 4.11 is changed to: *"Facilitate where appropriate active, wide-ranging and meaningful community engagement and participation across all areas of the Climate Change Action Plan including the hosting of bi-annual knowledge-sharing and engagement forums for local environment and sustainability groups"*. It is also recommended that a new ESS Outcome is added under Goal 5: *"Ongoing engagement with community-based environmental and sustainability groups."*

Transitioning to clean renewable energy from gas, especially Bluewater Leisure Centre

A large number of submissions called for Council to transition its facilities from gas to clean, renewable electricity, especially the Bluewater Leisure Centre, Council's largest gas user. Submitters also called for Council to assist the community with transitioning away from gas.

Officer Comment and Recommendation

Council will endeavour to transition its buildings that use gas to clean renewable electricity as soon as practicable and economically viable. This includes the transition of Bluewater Leisure Centre, Council's largest gas user. It is also important to note that the State government recently banned gas in new developments and subdivisions as well as providing a number of incentives and rebates for household and business electrification and transition to clean and renewable energy sources. Council also continues to partner in and promote community bulk-buy programs to assist the community with and accelerate this transition (e.g. Geelong Sustainability's Electric Homes Program).

It is recommended that a new CCAP action is included in the Sustainable Buildings section of the CCAP that states *"No new natural gas connections will be made for council facilities, and there will be a transition away from natural gas use at all existing facilities, including Bluewater Leisure Centre"*.

Maintaining Net Zero Council Operations by purchasing carbon offsets for residual emissions

Over the last ten years Council has prioritised the reduction of its emissions by 68% and successfully reached its 2020 carbon neutral target by purchasing Climate Active certified offsets for its residual emissions. The residual emissions currently requiring offsetting will be much harder to reduce quickly due to technical and economic constraints. To maintain Council's existing Net Zero Emissions target it will be necessary to purchase offsets until the residual emissions can be eliminated in the context of the urgency for action to combat climate change.

Purchasing offsets enables emissions reductions to be undertaken by others, contributing to the global effort to minimise climate change impacts. Support for offset purchase was reflected in the responses to the community survey that Council circulated as part of the public exhibition of the draft ESS and CCAP (see results to survey questions 8, 9 and 10). 58% of survey responses supported taking maintaining carbon neutrality despite relying on purchase of carbon offsets for residential emission to achieve this. Whilst in Question 9 74% of responses indicated a preference to forgo carbon neutrality if funds could instead be spent to reduce emissions, this reduced to 43% in Question 10 if it would take a number of years to remove these remaining emissions. Given the significant funds that will be required to remove gas from the Bluewater Leisure Centre and convert Council's light and heavy fleet to alternative fuels, and the time it will take to do this within Council's financial constraints, these results favour Council continuing to purchase offsets and maintain net zero emissions. The results are also consistent with the strong support for this position in the community engagement undertaken earlier in the project, and by the strong direction provided on this issue from the Council Plan 2021-2025.

Some submissions expressed concern about purchasing international offsets and others expressed a preference for purchase of nature based offsets, or those involving planting of trees, particularly in our local area. Whilst the purchase of Carbon Active accredited internationally based offsets in 2022 met Council's carbon neutral target within the allocated budget, there is no necessity for offsetting to be undertaken in this manner, and there is opportunity for Council to examine other offset programs which are nature based and would achieve the same objective, and for these to be local to Victoria, if not the south-west. The Barwon South West Climate Alliance (of which Council is a member) is currently developing a local offsetting program which would provide an option for Council to purchase offsets in future years that have multiple, local benefits to the Shire's environment and landowners.

Officer Comment and Recommendation

It is recommended based on the feedback received through community engagement that Council continues to support the ongoing commitment to net zero Council operations (Scope 1 & 2) and purchase of offsets with a preference for revegetation or nature-based offsets that are local where practical. This is in addition to commitments in the plan to street tree planting and urban greening programs. It is also recommended that the document wording be strengthened to emphasise the Council commitment to reducing emissions further, thereby minimising the need for offsets.

Officers recommend that Paragraph 2 on page 24 of the ESS is changed to reflect this: *"A Net Zero Emissions Target for Council was advocated for by our community, and after resolution by Council in the 2020-21 financial year was achieved and delivered. This was a significant milestone for Council and maintaining net zero greenhouse gas emissions (Scope 1 & 2) remains a key target and measure of*

success in this strategy. To achieve this Council will strongly focus on opportunities to reduce its residual emissions further so that the offsetting required will continue to be minimised going forward. Council will prioritise the purchase of revegetation and nature-based offsets that are local where practical.”

Reporting and Review

Submissions expressed that clear metrics need to be developed to measure progress on all actions of the CCAP and that clear and transparent reporting of CCAP implementation progress was very important.

The measures of progress, and success of actions and outcomes, will be both qualitative and quantitative. Officers intend to develop a ‘dashboard’-style progress tracking and reporting system (data visualisation of work achieved) to ensure that there is real-time data delivering simple and accessible progress on performance to our communities.

Officers recommend that Section 12 of the CCAP is amended to outline the inclusion of a ‘dashboard’ style reporting system accessible to all stakeholders and amend wording of the third outcome under ESS Goal 6 to include reference to reporting via Council’s Annual Report.

Submissions also called for more frequent review of the Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan. Climate change responses and actions outlined in the plan in many cases require careful planning and sustained efforts and resourcing over a number of years for successful outcomes.

A full, detailed annual review of the ESS and CCAP would be cost-prohibitive and resource intensive, and those resources could be better served in project delivery. Monitoring and annual reporting will ensure successful implementation and allow for re-prioritisation, if needed, to ensure balanced progress across all focus areas in the ESS and CCAP. The ESS will be reviewed at the end of its life in 2033. The review of the CCAP will be undertaken within 12 months of a new Council Plan being adopted to ensure relevance and alignment with Council priorities. Officers have recommended a change to the CCAP in Section 12 that reflects this intention.

Summary of Changes

Whilst the general content of the draft ESS and CCAP was broadly supported by the community, feedback received has assisted to strengthen the two documents, and a number of changes have been incorporated into the documents recommended for adoption by Council. The officer recommended changes can be summarised as follows:

Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy:

- 3 new Objectives;
- 1 new Outcome;
- 1 amended Outcome; and
- 8 changes to text and wording.

Draft CCAP:

- 8 new Actions;
- 3 amended Actions; and

- 6 changes to text and wording.

These changes are outlined in detail in the Summary of Submissions Table attached to this report (Appendix 4).

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The Strategy and Action Plan will strategically guide Council's efforts in allocation of funding and staff resources towards achieving environmental sustainability targets, delivering environmental management and climate change mitigation and adaptation projects, programs and initiatives and encourage environmentally sustainable and climate resilient development.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Council is required to work within a range of state and federal legislative requirements relating to environmental and climate change considerations and outcomes that extend from weed and native vegetation management through to energy and resource use. The Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan will assist Council in meeting these obligations.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

The development of a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan demonstrates Council's commitment to continuous improvement of its environmental protection, management and environmental sustainability of the municipality and will provide both an overarching strategic roadmap and specific actions for delivering environmental sustainability targets and climate change actions for the next ten years.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Extensive community engagement has been undertaken in the development of the draft Strategy and Action Plan, in accordance with the principles outlined in Council's Community Engagement Policy. Further ongoing engagement with the community will occur during the life and implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan once adopted by Council.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

The ESS and CCAP will transparently outline Council's strategic priorities in relation to environmental improvement and provide clear climate change actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate against future impacts of climate change and adapt to climate changes.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 3: Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability

Theme 2 - Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Objective 1: We mitigate impacts to people and property arising from climate change

Objective 2: We operate sustainably with a reduced carbon footprint

Objective 3: Protect and enhance the natural environment

Objective 4: We will satisfy our community's reasonable expectations to reduce waste going to landfill, increase resource recovery and minimise waste charges

Objective 5: Provide and maintain an attractive and safe built environment

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 2: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan will deliver key outcomes of the Council Plan and provide a platform for achievement of a range of other Council Plan objectives in future years by directing the allocation of resources and organisational activities.

Financial Management (*s101 Local Government Act 2020*)

The development of Council's new Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan has been resourced from the Environment Team's 2022-23 operational budget. Funding of specific actions and initiatives relating to the Strategy and Action Plan will be subject to future budget processes. The Strategy and Action Plan themselves do not commit resources to any specific initiative.

Service Performance (*s106 Local Government Act 2020*)

The development and implementation of the new Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan will ensure Council is continuously improving its service delivery to the community through environmental programs, projects and services and meets all environmental and climate change related regulatory and legislative requirements and obligations. The degree to which adopted actions and strategies are achieved will depend on future budget commitments to staff resources and funding of project specific initiatives.

Risk Assessment

There are significant reputational and financial risks to Council if it does not comply with its environmental legislative obligations or undertake actions within its remit to combat climate change. The Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan aim to assist Council in meeting these obligations and meeting community expectations.

Communication/Implementation

The development of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan has involved and will continue to include community and stakeholder consultation and once adopted it will be made publicly available on Council's website and progress of implementation will be reported to Council and the community on a regular basis.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

Doug McNeill, Manager Planning and Strategic Focus, has been involved in advising on and preparing this report and has declared a general conflict of interest under the Local Government Act 2020 in relation to this matter.

Options

Option 1 – Adopt the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan subject to modifications as recommended in the attached appendices.

This option is recommended by officers as these key documents will provide council with a clear roadmap for the next ten years to ensure that Council protects and enhances our environment; takes appropriate action to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate; and creates resilient and sustainable communities into the future. It is considered that proposed changes to the documents appropriately take into account issues and concerns raised by public submissions.

Option 2 – Adopt the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan as exhibited and without modification.

This option is not recommended by officers as it ignores issues and concerns raised by submissions received through the public exhibition process.

Option 3 – Defer the item and request that additional work be undertaken/changes made to the draft documents.

This option is not recommended by officers as significant work has gone into developing and making amendments to the draft Strategy and Action Plan that respond to submissions received. Further work on the document would result in unbudgeted expenditure. It is unlikely that further work would benefit the documents, and there is a clear desire by the community to adopt and formalise these documents and commence implementation as soon as possible and, provide opportunities for advocacy to other levels of government for funding to implement key objectives and actions.

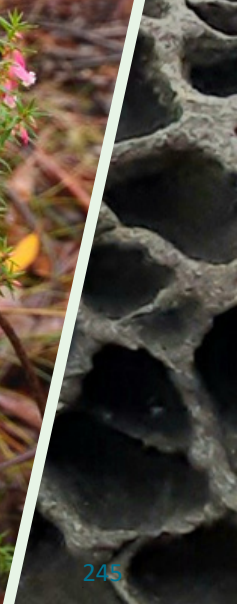
Notwithstanding it is open to Council to resolve to make changes to the documents when adopting them. It is important to consider however this may impact on Council's ability to resource delivery of any additional or amended commitments that may be included, depending on the nature of the changes.



Colac Otway
SHIRE

Environmental Sustainability Strategy

2023-2033



Acknowledgement

The Colac Otway Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway Region.

We acknowledge that the Colac Otway Shire is located and conducts business upon lands of the Gulidjan and Gadubanud people.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands, which continue to be important to them today and into the future.



Mayor's Message

As Mayor of Colac Otway Shire, I am delighted to be part of delivering the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033. This strategy outlines the ambitious environmental objectives that Council will strive to achieve over the next decade. It will guide our work as we contribute to the necessary efforts to address the environmental and sustainability challenges most prevalent at this time.

Colac Otway is a large and vibrant shire with invaluable natural assets. The Otway forests, volcanic plains and native grasslands, our spectacular coast line and waterways form part of who we are. Our shire is home to many thriving communities, which have long placed a high value on the environment, consistently identifying climate change and the environment as leading issues of concern. Council acknowledges its communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis, one that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

By continuing to implement improved environmental stewardship and sustainable management practices we recognise our environment as intrinsically valuable, as well as essential to our wellbeing.

Council has an impressive history of environmental work, particularly given its large geographic area and small rate base, including its strong support for the development of projects to enhance the environmental welfare of our shire, including: solar panel installations on all major Council facilities; biodiversity and species protection; supporting community uptake of solar; working towards integrated water management and improving water solutions for unserviced areas; stewardship for our communities; and ongoing reduction of carbon emissions.

Colac Otway Shire Council is delivering this strategy and associated Climate Change Action Plan in order to continue our leadership and strong advocacy in this space. Council greatly looks forward to working with communities across the shire to achieve success through the framework of this plan. I hope you will join us as we work towards our goals.



Executive Summary

Council acknowledges its communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis, one that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

Colac Otway Shire's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 will guide Council's environmental management over the next 10 years and provides a framework for Council to maintain a thriving, sustainable municipality, with healthy natural environments and communities.

The Strategy builds on the achievements of the Colac Otway Shire Environment Strategy 2010-2018, and is strongly aligned to the Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021-25, and Council's Environmental Sustainability Policy and Framework 2021. It also reflects extensive feedback from our community and stakeholders received throughout the strategy development engagement activities.

The Strategy has a clear vision, underpinned by the six themes of Council's Environmental Sustainability Framework 2021 and forms the long-term strategic policy position on environmental management and sustainability for Council. The findings of the community and stakeholder engagement that preceded the drafting of this strategy were at the core of its development and defined its structure, focus and emphasis. Engagement discussions centred around the following areas of concern: climate change; natural environment; built environment; water; waste and pollution; and partnership, leadership and advocacy.

Six key goals have been formulated to capture the breadth of environmental sustainability responsibilities and aspirations of Council for the next ten years. The goals are:

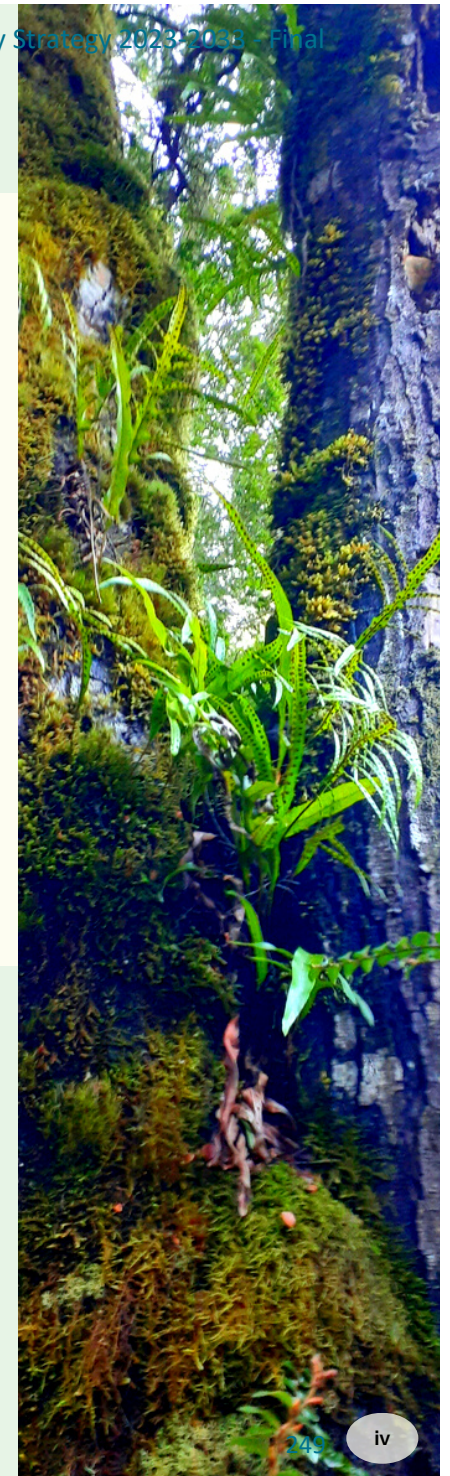
- Goal 1** Protected and thriving natural landscapes, ecosystems and habitats
- Goal 2** Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient public infrastructure, open spaces and urban settlements
- Goal 3** An adaptive and resilient Council and Shire moving towards a zero-emission future and limiting the impacts of climate change
- Goal 4** Green and sustainable local economies, industries and growth that protect intrinsic environmental values
- Goal 5** Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education
- Goal 6** Strong and inclusive environmental leadership, collaboration and advocacy



The strategy outlines each goal, followed by multiple objectives that will assist Council in delivering on its aims in a targeted and strategic fashion. Because local government is responsible for a vast range of infrastructure and land management, including parks, reserves, leisure centres, libraries, roads and bridges, sustainable management of Council resources is highly complex. In order to maximise efficacy of the strategy, Council has focused on areas directly within the control of the organisation, and matters it can effectively influence. Issues of major concern to the community over which Council has limited influence will continue to be acknowledged and addressed through targeted advocacy.

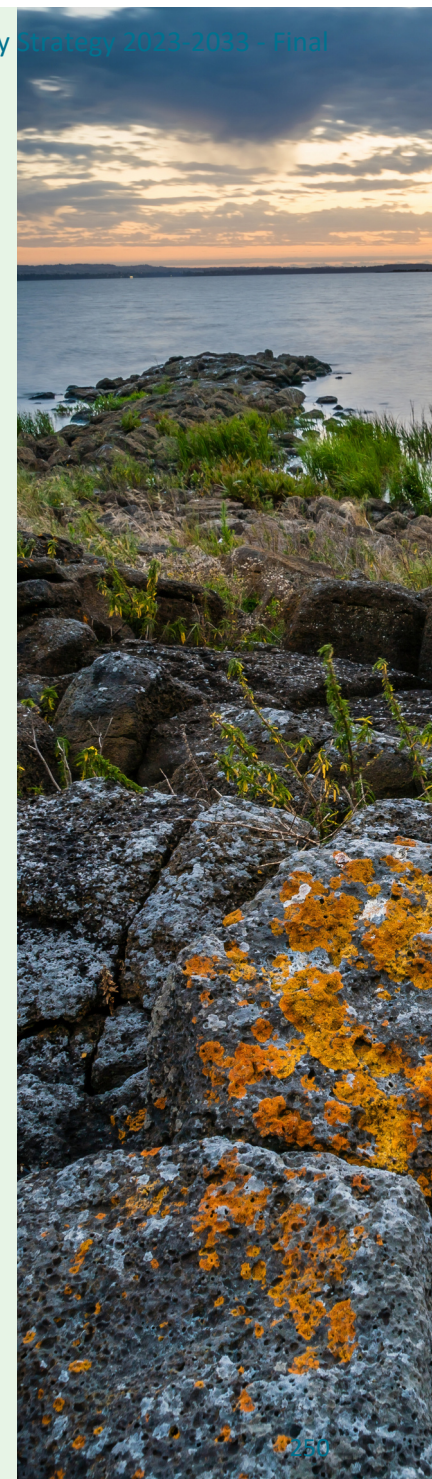
The strategy also sets key environmental sustainability targets that Council aims to achieve and maintain during the course of this strategy. These are: the use of 100 per cent renewable electricity; reduction in consumption and minimisation of waste sent to landfill; decreased reliance on potable water; increased uptake of sustainable technologies; and continuous improvement as responsible and adaptive land managers.

We hope that through the ten year implementation timeframe we will be able to raise greater awareness of, and concern about, the environment and its associated threats and challenges, as well as the sustainability opportunities we can all benefit from. We also aim to foster knowledge, skills, commitment and empowerment to work individually and collectively towards environmental and sustainability solutions to achieve a healthier and climate-safe future.



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Agenda - Council Meeting - 25 October 2023	



1. Vision



Colac Otway
SHIRE

Colac Otway Shire is a place of thriving, resilient, diverse and connected natural landscapes and ecosystems, where the environment and green spaces are intrinsically valued.

Our community has a deep connection to nature and places and is inspired to actively care for, protect and enhance both the natural and the built environments.

As an active, environmentally aware and inclusive community, we live and work sustainably and consider climate change in our daily activities and decisions to create a climate-safe Shire now and for future generations.

2. Introduction

Council acknowledges its communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis, one that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

Colac Otway Shire (the Shire) is regarded as one of the most environmentally diverse municipalities in Victoria. It comprises spectacular coastal areas, lush rain forested hinterlands and vast open plains with rare native grasslands.

The Shire is fortunate to have a very unique and precious natural environment that provides the basis for a healthy and thriving community.

The climatic conditions, the soils, the vegetation, the internationally recognised waterways and Great Ocean Road coastline all make our Shire a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Our environment is not only the physical and biological surroundings in which plants, animals and people live and interact, it also encompasses the conditions in which people live and work and the way those conditions influence people's health and wellbeing. It includes the natural environment, the built environment we create, and how we live and work in such environments.

Environmental sustainability describes the process where our patterns of living meet the needs of the present generations

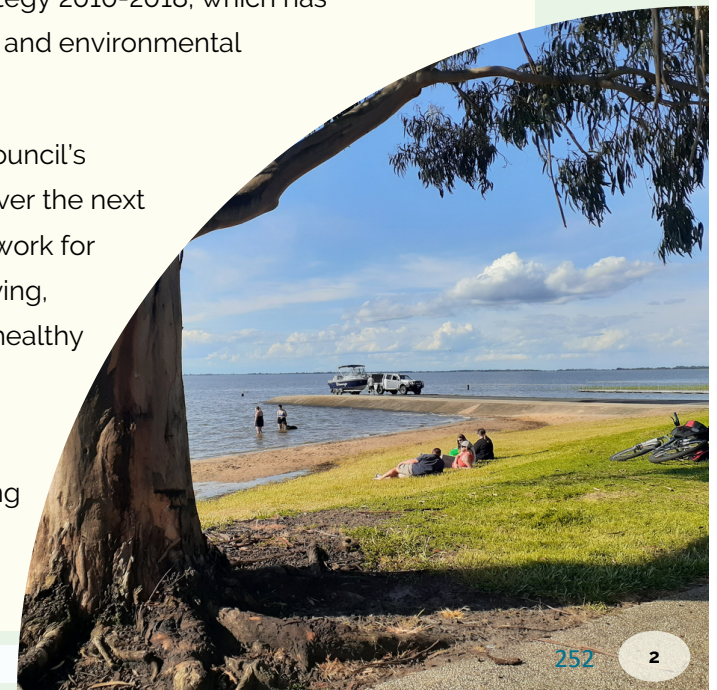
without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Environmental sustainability needs to be highly proactive to minimise the negative impacts of how we live, work, play and travel, as well as to maintain a balance between environmental protection, economic prosperity, social justice and cultural inclusion.

Colac Otway Shire's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 replaces the Environment Strategy 2010-2018, which has shaped Council's conservation and environmental activities up to this time.

This new strategy will guide Council's environmental management over the next 10 years and provides a framework for Council to work towards a thriving, sustainable municipality, with healthy natural environments and communities.

Council is committed to working with the community to create a vibrant, sustainable future.



Achieving this vision relies heavily on protecting, enhancing and where possible restoring environmental values.

All areas of Council have responsibility for environmental management and sustainability.

Environmental considerations need to be embedded in all aspects of Council governance.

The Colac Otway Shire Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 provides long-term strategic direction to shape the municipality and broader region by connecting the community to our environment, supporting environmentally sustainable development and economies, protecting and enhancing thriving ecosystems and providing well-designed built environments that support health and wellbeing of people as well as the environment that surrounds them.

The Strategy also identifies that through good leadership, governance, and strong partnerships Council can provide and support the transformational change required to maintain a healthy environment and liveable region.

Council hopes to take great strides towards achieving both the vision of this strategy and the Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision through direct action, advocacy and working in partnerships with our community, industry and other agencies.



3. Our Shire

3.1 Who we are

Located in Victoria's south west, the Shire is diverse, with volcanic lakes, craters and plains in the north; the hinterland forests of the Otway Ranges; and the spectacular Great Ocean Road coastline in the south. The Shire encompasses a total land area of 3,400 square kilometres of which a large proportion is National Park. The Shire has two main townships, with many small villages and localities.

Colac is the main residential, industrial and commercial service centre for the Shire and surrounding region with a population of 12,800 people. Colac is situated on the southern shoreline of Lake Colac, on the Princes Highway, 138 kilometres south west of Melbourne. Lake Colac is a significant natural feature in Colac, and is an important environmental, cultural heritage, aesthetic and recreational feature for the community and city.

Apollo Bay is our major tourism centre, along with the neighbouring hamlets of Marengo and Skenes Creek, with a permanent population of 2,400 that swells to over 20,000 people during the summer season. It is an iconic part of the heritage listed Great Ocean Road and a gateway to the spectacular natural attractions of the coastline and Otways hinterland. The current Shire population is approximately 22,400 people.

Much of the Shire's rural area is used for agriculture, with farming, cropping and dairying being the main agricultural pursuits. Agricultural activity is concentrated in the northern part of the Shire, although

timber and fishing are prevalent in the south. The Shire has a diverse range of other employment industries including: health care, social services, manufacturing, public administration, retail and tourism.

3.2 Environmental characteristics and values

Colac Otway Shire contains some of the most significant environmental assets in Australia, including 54 different native vegetation types and an extensive network of water bodies, some of which are Ramsar listed (i.e. of international significance), such as Lake Corangamite.

Bioregions reflect natural boundaries and relationships between biodiversity assets and natural resources. Four Bioregions are found in the Shire; Victorian Volcanic Plain (VVP), Warrnambool Plain, Otway Plain and the Otway Ranges (Figure 1):

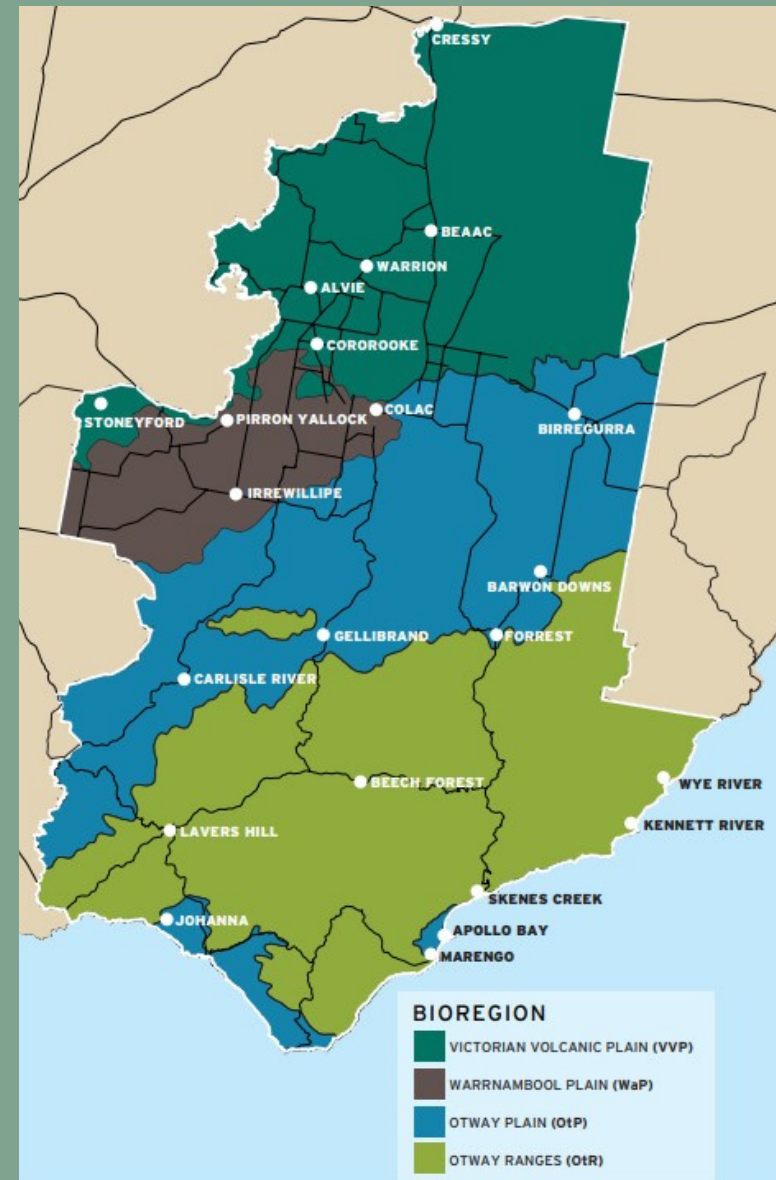
- **Victorian Volcanic Plain Bioregion:** Colac Otway Shire covers in excess of 900 square kilometres of the VVP that once supported large tracts of the Ecological Vegetation Community (EVC) Plains Native Grassland and Plains Grassy Woodland vegetation. These are now only found in limited areas along roadsides and saline lakes, with some small remnant patches on private land. The VVP also hosts internationally protected Ramsar Lakes supporting several rare and threatened waterbirds.



Photo: Corangamite Water Skink

Figure 1: Colac Otway Bioregions

- **Warrnambool Plain Bioregion:** The Warrnambool Plain extends into a relatively small area of the Shire from the west and is often referred to as the Coastal Plain. The identifying features of the Warrnambool Plain are nutrient deficient soils over low calcareous dune formations. Much of the limestone has been overlain by more recent sediments, and between the limestone dunes, areas of swamplands are characterised by highly fertile peats and seasonal inundation.
- **Otway Plain Bioregion:** Similar to the VVP, the Otway Plain covers over 900 square kilometres of the Shire. This bioregion includes coastal plains and dunes, foothills with river valleys and swamps in the lowlands. The upper terrain supports Lowland Forest and Heathy Woodland ecosystems, whereas the floodplains and swamps predominantly contain Grassy Woodland and Floodplain Riparian Woodland. Much of this vegetation remains intact on private land and protected in Crown land.
- **Otway Ranges Bioregion:** The largest, and most protected, bioregion within the Shire is the Otway Ranges. Consisting of moderately steep slopes and moist gullies, this bioregion supports Shrubby Wet Forest and Cool Temperate Rainforest ecosystems on the higher slopes; and Shrubby Foothill Forest on the lower slopes.



3.3 Environmental challenges and opportunities

Climate change

Climate change is a disruption of natural climate systems and weather patterns attributed directly or indirectly to human activity, predominantly caused by the burning of fossil fuels producing heat-trapping greenhouse gases. As a result, increased global temperatures, sea level rise and unprecedented extreme weather events and trends are already being experienced around the globe. Australia is especially vulnerable to these climate change impacts, demonstrated by drought, fire and flooding that are increasing in frequency and intensity.

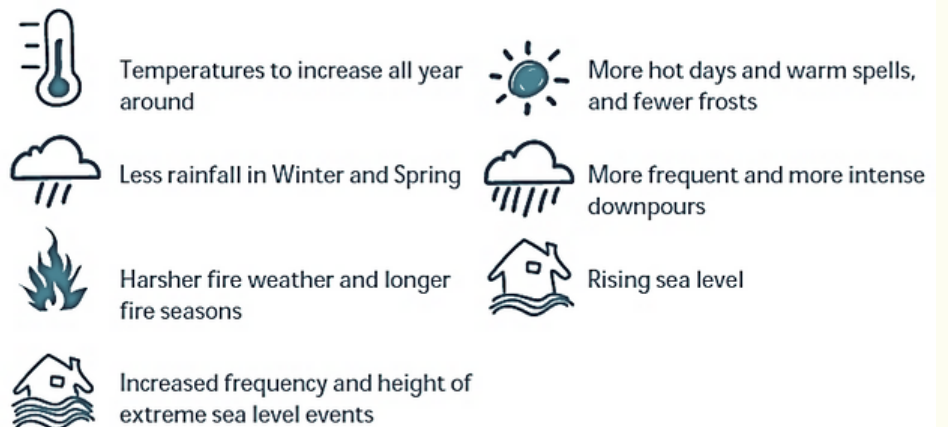
These events emphasise the need for both mitigation and adaptation to respond to the threat of climate change. Impacts are already evident in both the natural and human environment, demonstrated through accelerated species extinction, and increased heat stress posing a challenge for human health.

Australia's weather has already become more variable. More frequent extreme and cascading weather events are impacting communities and the economy, and threatening the environment. At the same time, summers are becoming steadily hotter and drier, leading to adverse health impacts; increased bushfire risks and ecological damage; and threatening agricultural production.

Victoria's climate has also changed in recent decades, becoming warmer and drier. These changes are expected to continue. Understanding the drivers and impacts of these changes, as well as what we can expect in the future, will help us to plan and adapt.

Projections for Victoria indicate the state is likely to become hotter and drier in the future, but the timing and extent of changes will vary across regions. Comparison of observations and projections in Victoria suggest that temperature has been tracking towards the upper limit of projections, while winter rainfall has been tracking towards the drier end of projections. By the 2050s, if the current global warming rate continues, regional Victoria could experience around double the number of very hot days each year compared to the 1986–2005 average.

Barwon South West has been getting warmer and drier. In the future the region can expect...



Source: www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/?a=392919

Population growth

The Shire's attractive landscape, featuring both coastal and hinterland environments, has also led to permanent resident population growth, which is slated to continue to increase into the future. Managing development to cater for both permanent population growth and visitation whilst protecting natural assets is therefore a key ongoing challenge.

There is an increasingly pressing need for Council to plan for land, services and infrastructure for a larger population, and to use that investment to make sure that the Shire is an even better place to live.

It is important that we make sure growth happens in a positive way that fits with the community's vision and aspirations by ensuring that developments, new and old, are low-emissions, sustainable, waste wise, and energy and water efficient.

Working with Traditional Owners

The Colac Otway Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway Region. Colac Otway Shire is located and conducts business upon the traditional lands of the Gadubanud and Gulidjan people. Aboriginal culture is the oldest living culture in the world. Reconciliation with First Nations peoples is a fundamental and pressing need if we are to become a truly thriving, inclusive, fair society.

The Native Title Act 1993 and Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, which recognise the rights and interests of Traditional Owners in land and water management, are evidence of progress, but the long history of injustice continues to impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Colac Otway Shire Council is seeking to build strong, ongoing relationships with Traditional Owners. Environmental management is a key avenue through which Council can enhance relationships with Traditional Owners, learn about traditional land practices, and support collective interests and goals for the future.

Council resources

In order to be able to provide services and facilities to the community, Council generates income through rates and government grants. Given the limited potential to increase rate revenue, Council will continue to be constrained in its capacity to fund changes to services and programs. A large proportion of the Shire's land is National Park, meaning despite the large geographical size of the municipality, rateable land and therefore income to Council is low. Council is also entering a period where a significant proportion of its public facilities and assets are becoming due for renewal or costly upgrades.

Seasonal tourism

Our Shire experiences a dramatic increase in demand during the peak holiday periods throughout the year, and particularly in summer. For example, Apollo Bay has a permanent population of 2400 that swells to approximately 22,000 during the busy tourist season.

The seasonal nature of the Shire's



population poses a significant challenge for Council. Pressures on reserves, local roads, parking and other Council facilities significantly increase during the warmer months, and allocating sufficient resources to fairly spread the cost of infrastructure to support non-rate paying visitors is a key challenge.

Tourism sometimes poses a burden on the Shire's natural assets if high visitation rates are not carefully managed, particularly in terms of sustainable use of resources, threats to native flora and fauna, and waste management. A key challenge is therefore balancing visitation to ensure both environmental and economic sustainability.

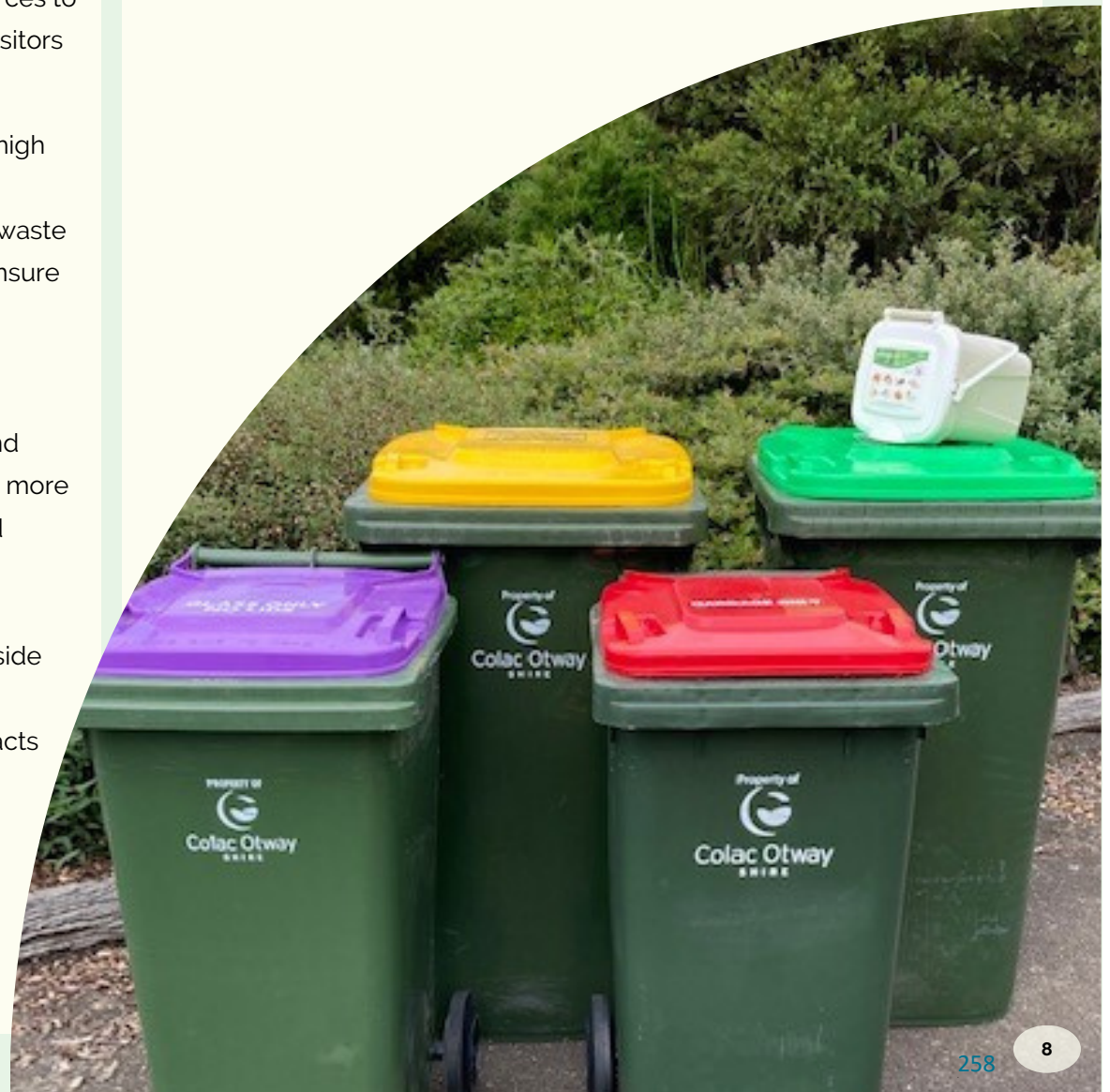
Waste management

Waste generation is growing in line with increasing consumption and population growth. The composition of waste is also changing, with more organic matter being sent to landfill in Victoria, leading to increased methane gas emissions.

Council's responsibilities include waste management through kerbside collection, and therefore these issues pose a significant challenge. Reducing the burden of waste and reducing its environmental impacts will require effective management of waste streams, as well as a broader cultural change through education that guides the community towards a circular economy.

Council adopted a Waste Management Strategy in 2021 to set strategic direction in this area and to guide Council's operations

over the next decade. In order not to duplicate this strategy, the Environmental Sustainability Strategy will encompass waste matters without making this a primary focus.



4. State of the Environment

Victoria naturally has a diverse climate and ecosystem due to its varied geography. However, the state's climate and biodiversity are threatened by human activities and climate change.

Victoria's climate is generally classified as temperate, with mild to cool temperatures in winter and warm temperatures in summer. However, the climate varies across the region, with some areas experiencing hot and dry conditions, while others - such as most of Colac Otway Shire - receive high rainfall. Climate change is expected to exacerbate these variations and increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves, droughts, and bushfires.

Victoria has a rich biodiversity, with over 3,000 plant species and many unique fauna species. However, this biodiversity is threatened by habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation due to human activities such as land clearing, urbanisation, and agriculture. Invasive species also pose a significant threat to Colac Otway's biodiversity, with many introduced species predating on and outcompeting native species for resources.

Australia is particularly vulnerable to climate change due to its unique biodiversity and delicate ecosystems. Climate change also has significant and far-reaching impacts on our threatened species, exacerbating existing threats and creating new challenges.

The Australian government published its latest State of the Environment Report in 2021 to assess the country's environmental condition and provide recommendations for environmental management. The latest report found that the country's environment is facing significant challenges, including climate change, land-use change, invasive species, and pollution.

The report notes that the impacts of climate change are already being felt across Australia. Land-use change, including deforestation and urbanisation, is also having a significant impact on the country's environment, as is the introduction of invasive species.

The report highlights the importance of protecting and restoring biodiversity, noting that many species are under threat of extinction, and the loss of biodiversity can have significant, often unrecognised, economic and social impacts. It also emphasises the need to improve the management of natural resources, including water and land, to ensure their sustainability for future generations.

To respond to this, we need to: strengthen policy and governance frameworks, invest in action, research and monitoring, and engage with communities and stakeholders to promote sustainable practices.



5. Background

5.1 Previous strategy and review

Council's previous Environment Strategy 2010-2018 has shaped Council's conservation and environmental activities for the past twelve years. A review of that strategy was released in January 2022, providing a summary of the highlights and challenges associated with previous goals and objectives. This review also informed the initial process of identifying ongoing challenges and opportunities that could be addressed in the new strategy.

5.2 Community and stakeholder consultation and strategy development

Community and stakeholder consultation was at the centre of developing the new Strategy. Council has liaised with local residents and visitors via an online survey and drop-in sessions held in locations across the Shire.

Council also held workshops with environmental related government agencies, environmental community groups, business groups, Council staff and Councillors to allow for more in-depth discussion and enhance consultation findings. Incorporating community and stakeholder views was a strong priority in the development of the strategy.

The engagement activities were guided by the themes and strategic directions based on Council's Environmental Sustainability Policy and Framework 2021. These themes are detailed in Figure 2.







5.3 What we heard

An analysis of the engagement – including the survey, drop-in sessions and workshops – revealed the key areas of concern to be:

- Habitat protection and enhancement (revegetation, weed & pest control)
- Climate change adaptation & mitigation
- Energy and water conservation, clean and green supply and security
- Land use planning reform and innovation for a safe climate and sustainable, low emissions communities and places
- Integrated water management, waterway health & water conservation
- More collaboration with other levels of government, business, community groups and Traditional Owners
- Risks, opportunities and benefits associated with fire in our landscape
- Strong support and advocacy for improved coastal management
- Impacts and opportunities associated with farming & agriculture
- greening and cooling
- Electrification of transport
- Council has a key role in advocacy, facilitation and leadership
- Environmental information, education and capacity building
- Waste reduction, reuse and recycling



Figure 2: Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 Engagement Themes

STRATEGIC THEMES		STRATEGIC DIRECTION
	Climate Change	Council and the Shire focus on energy efficiency, emissions reduction and moving towards a zero-carbon future whilst improving resilience to changes in short and long-term climatic conditions.
	Natural Environment	A healthy and connected natural environment that protects indigenous landscapes and enhances natural ecosystems, public health and livability.
	Built Environment	Built Environment - Sustainable, resilient and inclusive infrastructure and places.
	Water	A water sensitive shire with a focus on integrated water management, water sensitive design, healthy waterways and reduced reliance on potable water.
	Waste & Pollution	A clean and safe Council and shire that minimises waste generation and maximises reuse and recycling, working towards a sustainable circular economy.
	Partnership, Leadership & Advocacy	Council provides leadership, advocacy, brokering, communication and conduit roles to help achieve environmental outcomes. Leadership will also be shown through the development, strengthening and nurturing of partnerships.

6. Our Strategy

Colac Otway Shire's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 will guide Council's environmental management over the next 10 years and provides a framework for Council to work towards a thriving, sustainable municipality, with healthy natural environments and communities.

6.1 Scope

Local government is responsible for a vast range of infrastructure and land management, including parks, reserves, leisure centres, libraries, roads and bridges. Council also provides a multitude of services, such as emergency management, support services for vulnerable people and the elderly, youth engagement, waste collection and pet registration, and is responsible for development and enforcement of local laws.

Issues of major concern to the community over which Council has limited influence will continue to be acknowledged and addressed through targeted advocacy.

Council is required to work within legislation that guides a broad range of matters, from weed and native vegetation management through to energy and resource use. Council has a key role in implementing certain legislation, such as the Victorian Local Government Act 2020 and the Victorian Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Other acts listed below have significant implications for environmental management, and therefore are important for guiding objectives of the strategy:

- Australian Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

- Australian Climate Change Act 2022
- Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Victorian Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Victorian Environment Protection Act 2017
- Victorian Water Act 1989
- Victorian Climate Change Act 2017
- Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Victorian legislation has also made action on climate change a key responsibility of local government. For example, the Climate Change Act 2017 sets a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 for Victoria. Under this Act state and local governments must have regard to climate change in public health and wellbeing planning. The Local Government Act 2020 now also requires Councils to address climate change in their Council Plans. Every council must promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the area, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019–2023 for the first time also prioritises action to tackle climate change and its impact on our health and wellbeing. Councils are required to formally respond to this priority; this is reflected in the 2021-25 Council Plan.

Council has endeavoured to establish a progressive new strategy, within the restraints of resourcing and its sphere of control and influence. To maximise efficacy of the strategy, Council has focused on areas directly within the control of the organisation, and matters it can effectively influence.

6.2 Development of goals and objectives

The Strategy builds on the achievements of the Colac Otway Shire Environment Strategy 2010-2018, and is strongly aligned to the Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021-25, and Council's Environmental Sustainability Policy and Framework. It also reflects extensive feedback from our community and stakeholders received throughout the strategy development engagement activities.

The Strategy has a clear vision, underpinned by the six themes of Council's Environmental Sustainability Framework 2021 and forms the long-term strategic policy position on environmental management and sustainability for Council.

Utilising the findings of the community and stakeholder engagement that preceded the drafting of this strategy, and the overarching themes and strategic directions guiding the Strategy development, six key goals were formulated to capture the breadth of environmental sustainability responsibilities and aspirations of Council.

These goals are high-level, forward thinking and provide a flexible and adaptive framework for onground delivery and implementation. They are supported by objectives that have been developed to further detail how Council intends to achieve those goals during the next decade.

The links between the themes and strategic directions and the Strategy's goals and objectives are shown by the use of symbols in the following pages.

6.3 Implementation

The Strategy is a broad framework of values and priorities to inform the development of an action plan. This action plan will detail how Council will achieve its goals and objectives, as defined by the strategy, and will be formed in accordance with current knowledge and social, economic and environmental context.

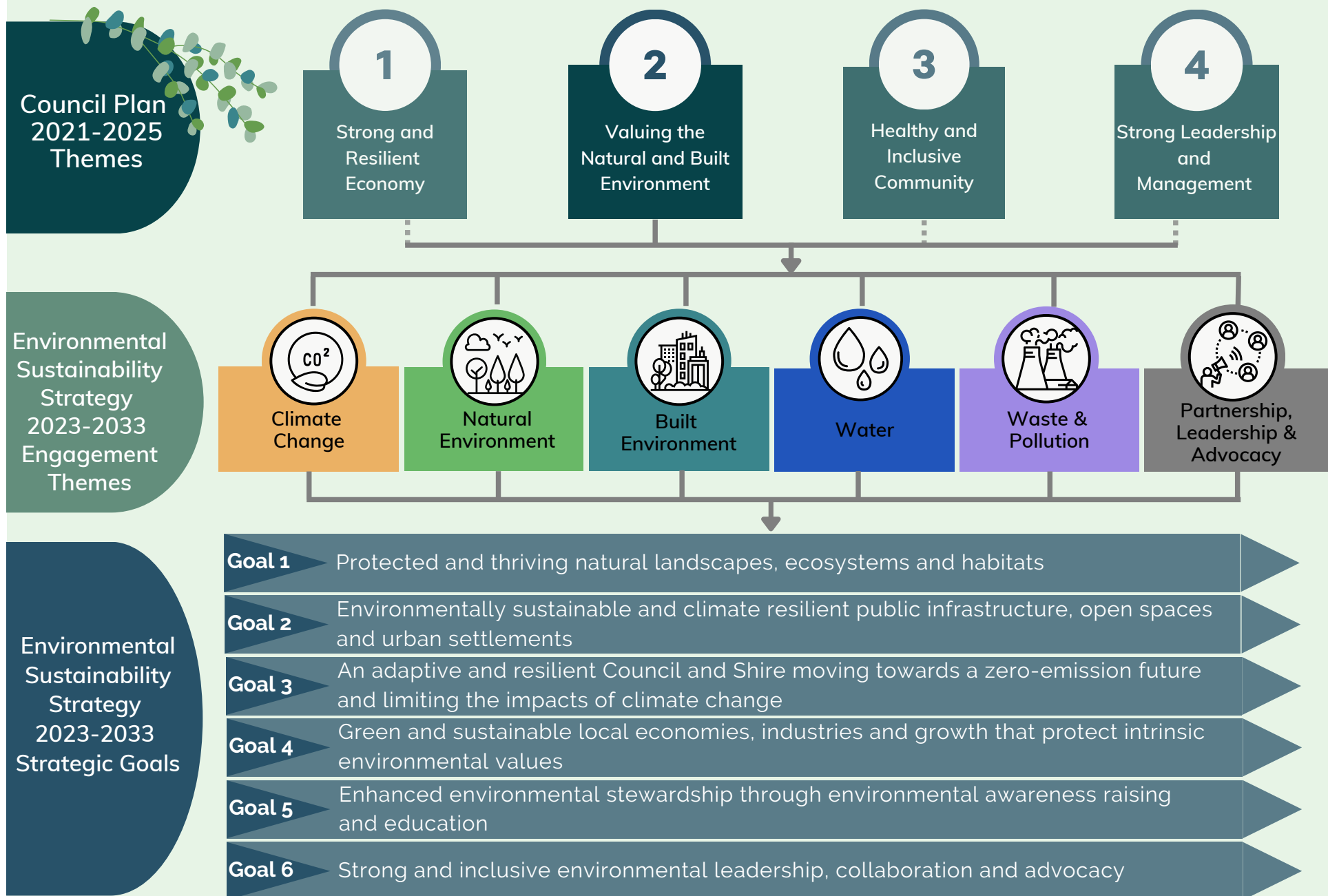
The specific actions to achieve the goals and implement the objectives will be captured and detailed in the accompanying action plan, providing the opportunity to review and realign implementation actions periodically to maintain their relevance.

The action plan will identify:





- Actions that align to the goals and objectives outlined in this Strategy;
- Timeframes for implementation of each action;
- Indicative high-level costing estimates;
- Resource requirements and availability; and
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.



Figure 3: Relationships between the Council Plan, Engagement Themes and Strategy Goals



7. Our Targets

TARGET AREA	KEY TARGET	SPECIFIC TARGETS	SUPPORTING STATEMENT
 <p>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</p>	Net zero greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions for Council's operations (Scope 1 & 2). • Net Zero Corporate Emissions (Scope 1, 2 & 3) by 2035. • Our community will have transitioned to a Zero Carbon Community by 2040. • Reduce Council's corporate emissions by 75% by 2030 and 85% by 2040 (Baseline year 2010-11). • Council's Light Fleet will comprise zero emissions vehicles by 2030 and its heavy plant and equipment by 2040. 	Council commits to reporting on corporate greenhouse gas emissions and implementing actions and delivering projects and programs to reach net zero emissions for Council operations.
 <p>Renewable Energy</p>	100% renewable electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will obtain 100% of its electricity from emissions free renewable energy sources. 	Council commits to obtain 100% of its electricity from emissions free renewable energy sources and increase its renewable energy generation capacity.
 <p>Waste</p>	Zero recoverable waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divert 80 per cent of waste from landfill by 2030.* • Cut total waste generation by 15 per cent per capita by 2030.* 	Council commits to report on and reduce waste sent to landfill.
 <p>Water</p>	Reduce potable water use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce Council's operational potable water consumption by 10% by 2030 and 20% by 2040. 	Council commits to reducing the overall volume of potable water through its operations used for non-potable purposes.
 <p>Biodiversity</p>	Responsible and adaptive land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase tree canopy cover in urban settlements by 5% by 2030 and 10% by 2040. 	Council commits to protecting and enhancing biodiversity on Council owned and managed land and increasing urban canopy cover.

8. Our Goals

Goal 1: Protected and thriving natural landscapes, ecosystems and habitats

The protection of healthy natural landscapes and ecosystems, and the minimisation of negative impacts on native flora and fauna was identified as the highest environmental priority for our communities, as expressed through the engagement processes for the Council Plan and this Strategy. Victoria is experiencing significant degradation of native species due to various human activities, such as land clearing, introduction of non-native species, hunting, and changes in fire regimes.

After colonisation, land clearing for agriculture, timber harvesting, and urbanisation resulted in the loss of habitat for many native species. This was particularly devastating for forest-dependent species. Hunting for fur, food, and sport also had a significant impact on many native species, many of which are now extinct or critically endangered.

The introduction of non-native species, such as rabbits, foxes, pigs, deer and cats has had a devastating impact on native species throughout the Otways due to competition for food, predation, and extreme alteration to the natural balance of ecosystems. This has had a particularly significant impact on small marsupials and ground-dwelling birds, many of which are now endangered or extinct. Also many native plant species require fire to regenerate, and the alteration of fire regimes has resulted in the loss of habitat and changes to the composition of plant communities.

Climate change also has significant impacts on our already vulnerable and threatened species, exacerbating existing threats and creating new challenges through habitat loss and fragmentation due to changes in weather patterns, wildfires and floods; altered breeding and reproduction due to changing flowering and availability of food resources; and increased disease risks and vectors. Some species may attempt to adapt by shifting their geographical ranges in response to changing climate conditions. One local example of this is the increasing local population of Grey-headed Flying Foxes seeking refuge in the Colac Botanic Gardens which requires careful and sensitive management by Council to coordinate threatened species protection with heritage protection and public amenity of the Botanic Gardens.

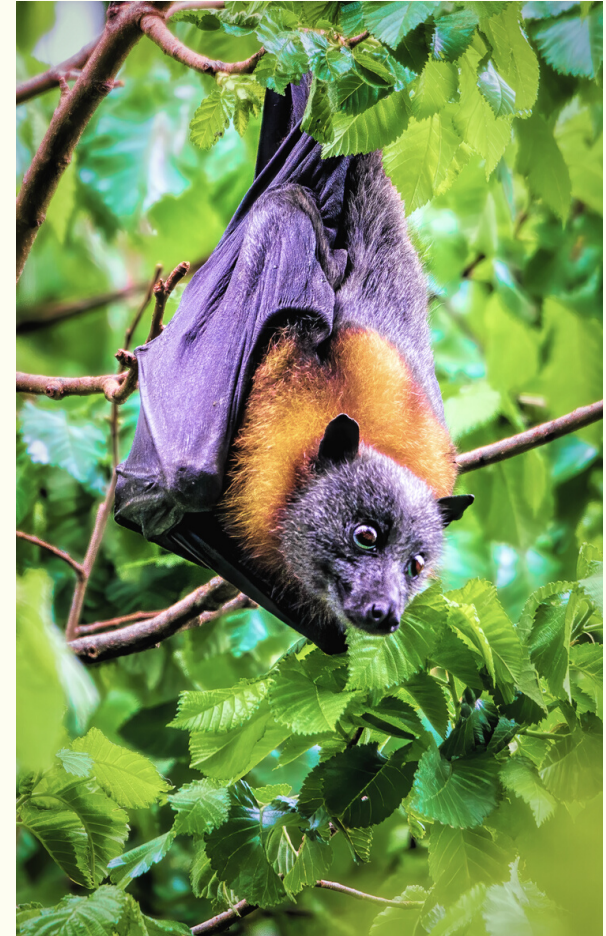


Photo: Grey-headed Flying Fox

Revegetation is essential to preserving and restoring biodiversity, habitats and ecological resilience. Returning plants into the landscape also fosters environmental and social wellbeing, captures carbon and preserves healthy waterways and water quality. Council will continue to undertake significant revegetation projects and encourage natural regeneration and species diversity in its environmental reserves, parklands and along Council managed habitat corridors, such as linear reserves. Council's natural resource protection initiatives will also focus on weed and pest control, and collaboration with agencies and stakeholders to ensure impactful cross-tenure projects are achieved.

Council's environmental management decisions will respect and integrate Traditional Owners' perspectives, culture and knowledge through meaningful engagement and collaboration. Council will proactively collaborate to integrate Traditional Owners' ecological knowledge and stewardship and other scientific knowledgebases to heal Country and restore environmental values, through meaningful recognition for Indigenous custodianship.

Underpinning Council's efforts to protect environmental values, restore ecosystems and enhance biodiversity is an appreciation that a healthy environment is a central element of a healthy and liveable community.



Goal 1: Protected and thriving natural landscapes, ecosystems and habitats

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans

Council Plan 2021-2025
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Colac 2050 Growth Plan
Weed Management Policy 2020

Lake Colac Foreshore Masterplan 2016
Draft Urban Forest Strategy 2015
Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2021

Objective 1.1 Enhance biodiversity values and habitat connectivity across the municipality



1.1.1 Increase biodiversity of remnant ecosystems through natural regeneration and revegetation programs to reduce habitat fragmentation and increase connectivity.

1.1.2 Protect indigenous biodiversity, habitat and natural landscapes in all council planning, decision making and operations.

1.1.3 Manage and control invasive species to reduce pest plant and animal impacts on indigenous biodiversity.

1.1.4 Collaborate with Traditional Owners and incorporate traditional knowledge of country to improve biodiversity planning and management practices and protect cultural heritage.

Objective 1.2 Build a strong knowledge base that improves understanding of local biodiversity to inform decision making and natural resource management programs



1.2.1 Continuously improve decision making tools (e.g. mapping, up-to-date scientific data), technologies and methods.

1.2.2 Embed and grow ecological and sustainability knowledge and understanding among Council staff for better design and delivery of Council services and operations.

Objective 1.3 Improve waterway health and water quality



1.3.1 Protect, restore and increase indigenous biodiversity and habitat that support healthy waterways, estuaries and wetlands.

1.3.2 Raise local awareness, knowledge and appreciation of water quality protection and healthy waterways.

1.3.3 Improve management of domestic onsite wastewater to protect waterways and human health ensuring compliance with council and EPA requirements.

1.3.4 Reduce pollution and litter entering waterways, wetlands, estuaries and the marine environment via Council's drainage and stormwater systems.

Our Goals

Goal 2: Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient public infrastructure, open spaces and urban settlements

Throughout recent community consultations for the Colac 2050 Growth Plan, Council Plan and this Strategy our community has voiced the urgent need to plan and respond to the challenges and impacts of a changing climate. Council also needs to manage the competing priorities of a growing population with maintaining the Shire's highly valued rural character and unique natural environment. This requires careful balancing of priorities and resources to meet community service and infrastructure needs now and as our community grows.

Collective investment by all levels of government and our community to facilitate this growth will provide opportunities to make the Shire an even better place to live and to create the sustainable future and communities we all aspire to by creating low carbon urban developments. Principles that must underpin successful new developments, public open space design and infrastructure renewal include universal design, functionality, resilience and low energy.

To achieve these things Council will improve land use planning instruments and controls to minimise the impacts of climate change on the environment, people and places, and to improve the efficiency, sustainability and resilience of housing, development and infrastructure. Council will also advocate and work with state government to ensure that our land use planning system and building regulations are contemporary, flexible and adaptive to deal with new challenges posed by climate change and the emerging low carbon and circular economies.

Council will also protect and continue to increase green public open spaces and tree canopy cover to create cooler urban settlements, protect biodiversity, reduce flood risks, and improve air quality and community health and wellbeing.



Goal 2: Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient public infrastructure, open spaces and urban settlements

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans
Colac 2050 Growth Plan
Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision

Council Plan 2021-2025
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Active Transport Strategy 2013-2023
COS Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2027

Colac Integrated Water Management Plan 2014
Draft Urban Forest Strategy 2015
Colac Stormwater Development Strategy 2020
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

Objective 2.1 Land use planning innovation and reform to protect the Shire's environment and improve the livability of its human settlements



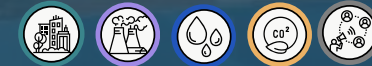
- 2.1.1 Ensure that land use planning policies and processes consider and implement best practice environmental protection and sustainability principles.
- 2.1.2 Protect and restore biodiversity in our parks, roadsides, reserves, waterways, streetscapes, coastal and rural landscapes through planning and design processes that prioritise regeneration and indigenous plants.
- 2.1.3 Establish a strategic approach to open space and landscape planning which promotes biodiversity, habitat connectivity and builds ecosystem resilience.
- 2.1.4 Encourage low emission, compact and walkable new neighbourhoods, and promote improved energy efficiency measures for existing housing.

Objective 2.2 Urban greening and cooling for biodiversity, climate change resilience and community health



- 2.2.1 Design and deliver urban cooling programs using canopy trees and other greening options to increase community resilience to the impacts of climate change and improve the livability and sustainability of our urban settlements.
- 2.2.2 Protect and increase canopy cover and shade in public open spaces, around community facilities and along urban commuting routes to improve amenity and enable active and public transport options.

Objective 2.3 Waste Reduction, Recycling and Circular Economy



2.3.1 Support community and business efforts to avoid and reduce waste through education, behaviour change, capacity-building and the provision of innovative services, such as public glass recycling collection.

2.3.2 Build Council's capacity to understand and implement the waste hierarchy, litter management, life cycle analysis and sustainable procurement principles to better support the acceleration of a circular economy.

Objective 2.4 Foster and promote better integrated water management through decision making, planning and design



2.4.1 Plan, design and implement best practice stormwater management, treatment and harvesting systems and infrastructure.

2.4.2 Develop partnerships with governments, water corporations, key agencies, organisations and our community to plan and achieve sustainable water management outcomes.

2.4.3 Reduce reliance and demand on potable water supplies by prioritising the use of alternative water supplies.

Goal 3: An adaptive and resilient Council and Shire moving towards a zero-emission future and limiting the impacts of climate change

The latest report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC Report No. 6 <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>) states that industrialised nations must halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and be carbon neutral by 2050 if they wish to prevent the most catastrophic harms of global warming. The report reveals that failure to slash emissions will mean average global temperatures will rise more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Past this threshold, the impacts will be severe, including species extinctions, irreversible melting of ice sheets and extreme sea level rise.

Accelerated climate action is needed to make the best possible transition to a zero-emissions future and to restore a safe climate pathway for future generations. This requires substantial commitment to both climate change mitigation and adaptation actions now and into the future by all levels of government and our communities.

Colac Otway Shire has demonstrated its commitment and leadership in energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction by significantly reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in all Council operations over the last decade, and leading and participating in many regional collaborative projects to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.



In 2022 Council also joined the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), the largest emissions reduction project ever undertaken by the local government sector in Australia. Fifty one Victorian Councils have pooled their electricity needs into one long-term contract which provides the VECO councils with clean renewable energy generated from wind farms in south-west Victoria to power Council-owned infrastructure, such as offices, sports grounds, community venues, leisure centres and streetlights.

A Net Zero Emissions Target for Council was advocated for by our community, and after resolution by Council in the 2020-21 financial year was achieved and delivered. This was a significant milestone for Council, and maintaining net zero greenhouse gas emissions (Scope 1 & 2) remains a key target and measure of success in this strategy. To achieve this Council will strongly focus on opportunities to reduce its residual emissions further so that the offsetting required will continue to be minimised going forward. Council will prioritise the purchase of revegetation and nature based offsets that are local where practical.

Council will work to ensure its services and operations become increasingly efficient. Council will also support households and businesses to take their own steps to be more sustainable. This will involve our organisation leading by example and supporting efforts to: reduce energy consumption; improve energy efficiency; and promote clean and renewable energy production, use and storage.



Goal 3: An adaptive and resilient Council and Shire moving towards a zero-emissions future and limiting the impacts of climate change

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans
Colac Integrated Water Management Plan 2014
Council Plan 2021-2025

Draft Urban Forest Strategy 2015
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

Colac Stormwater Strategy 2020
Colac 2050 Growth Plan
COS Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2027

Objective 3.1 Promote and increase clean energy production, energy efficiency and low-emission transport for Council and the community



- 3.1.1 Continue implementing energy efficiency and emissions reduction programs in Council-owned and operated facilities, services and operations and maintain Council's Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions status.
- 3.1.2 Encourage community efforts to transition to a zero-carbon environment, including the electrification of transport and enhanced public transport services across the region.
- 3.1.3 Promote renewable energy and improve energy efficiency of existing houses by education and support of community-based environmental/sustainability group programs with a focus on low-income households.

Objective 3.2 Embed climate change adaptation into decision making, planning and design



- 3.2.1 Design and build climate resilient community infrastructure and services.
- 3.2.2 Increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts and mitigation and adaptation responses across Council and the community.
- 3.2.3 Plan for climate change and related emergency management at the municipal level, provide relief and recovery services, and support emergency response operations.

Objective 3.3 Adaptive management and renewal of Council assets and infrastructure to build resilience to climate change



- 3.3.1 Prioritise innovative adaptation programs to reduce climate change induced extreme weather events impacts on people, infrastructure, places and the environment.
- 3.3.2 Promote and facilitate best practice integration of blue and green infrastructure within developments and urban settlements to improve climate resilience and health and wellbeing.

Our Goals

Goal 4: Green and sustainable local economies, industries and growth that protect intrinsic environmental values

Australia's population is expected to exceed 28 million by 2030. Population drivers lead to a range of pressures that directly affect the environment because of the spaces we take up and urbanise, the resources we use, our modes of travel, and the waste we produce. The production of goods and services to maintain our current and growing population also requires a large amount of energy and materials, all of which are sourced from the environment.

Ecosystem modification, resource extraction, production and consumption, and waste disposal all affect the health and resilience of natural capital, and the ecosystem services it provides. In order to create a global sustainable future, it is critical to recognise the relationships between economic activity, environmental degradation and social wellbeing.

Our region also has great opportunities to expand and grow, both for permanent populations and as a destination for domestic and international visitors. The growth seen in Colac and Apollo Bay and surrounds is a great example of the rapid expansion in our local communities. The Colac Otway region also supports a network of over 1,500 businesses and well over 800 farms and the Shire has a diverse range of industries including health care, social services, manufacturing, public administration, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, retail and tourism.

Given 48% of Colac Otway's 2020-21 community emissions were attributed to agriculture, Council will also need to explore opportunities to support the agricultural and farming sector to improve land management practices, better integrate environmental and biodiversity protection, and enhance resilience of these sectors to a changing climate.

Therefore, it is important to foster an environmentally sustainable economy by attracting new environmentally sustainable industries and encouraging existing businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations. Council is committed to developing green and circular economies within our region.



Photo: Aerial view of Apollo Bay and harbour

Goal 4: Green and sustainable local economies, industries and growth that protect intrinsic environmental values

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans

Council Plan 2021-2025
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

COS Destination Action Plans
Colac 2050 Growth Plan
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

Objective 4.1 Explore opportunities to work with the agricultural and farming sector to enhance land management practices, operate sustainably and adapt to a changing climate



4.1.1 Promote and support integrated environmental and biodiversity protection within the commercial, industrial and agricultural sectors.

4.1.2 Assist local commercial, industrial and agricultural sectors to combat the impacts and explore the opportunities of climate change both environmentally and economically through adaptation and mitigation.

Objective 4.2 Green economy, tourism and growth



4.2.1 Protect, enhance and promote environmental values, biodiversity and natural landscapes that draw visitors to and underpin the unique character, economy and prosperity of our Shire.

4.2.2 Advocate to state and federal governments for waste-minimising design, manufacturing and packaging policy and legislation toward a circular regional economy.

4.2.3 Foster and promote infrastructure that prioritises environmentally sustainable development and design principles that integrate and encourage amenity, accessibility, active and public transport and longer visitor stays.

4.2.4 Attract and support environmentally sound industry, such as recycling plants, commercial solar arrays and waste to energy, including all forms of associated manufacturing.

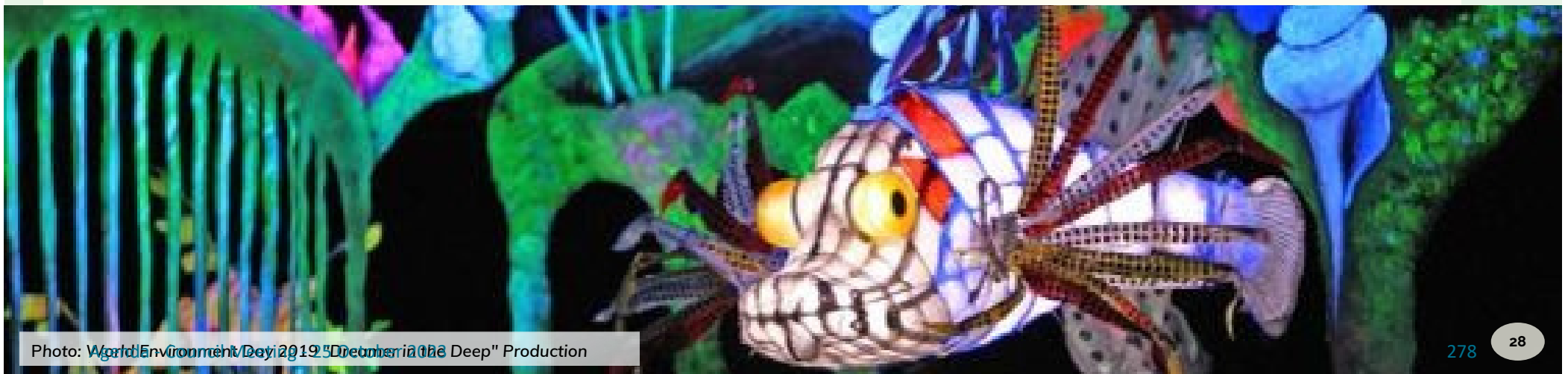
Goal 5: Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education

Colac Otway Shire has an important role to play as a level of government closely connected to local communities in which we live, work and conduct business. This creates powerful opportunities for Council to conduct meaningful and uniquely tailored education and stewardship initiatives in response to our community's expectations and requirements.

Council will provide opportunities for the community and Council staff to engage with nature, learn about the environment and its related challenges. These education and engagement initiatives and programs will enable residents and staff to be engaged and educated about environmental sustainability, build knowledge and capacity to use resources wisely, take positive steps and actions to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

Council will also provide broad and regular communication about the importance of caring for the environment and living sustainably, both in rural and urban settings across all media and local publications.

The Shire has a thriving community of people keenly interested in participating in sustainability action and wide-ranging areas of environmental awareness raising. Under this strategy, Council will take up these opportunities for enhanced engagement and collaboration with groups and individuals with skills and interest in this space to help foster and support the local environmental groups' aspirations, goals and actions.



Goal 5: Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans

Council Plan 2021-2025
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

COS Destination Action Plans
Colac 2050 Growth Plan
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

Objective 5.1 Council will help build the community's environmental literacy and knowledge to increase community understanding and involvement in biodiversity conservation activities and foster sustainable behaviour, including wise resource use.



5.1.1 Council will provide broad and regular communication about the importance of caring for the environment and living sustainably both in rural and urban settings across multiple platforms.

5.1.2 Improved communication and engagement with local environmental groups to support their aspirations, goals and activities.

5.1.3 Support, develop and deliver education and engagement opportunities and resources for our community to engage with nature and live more sustainably.

5.1.4 Council will build internal capacity to understand and implement the carbon emissions hierarchy (e.g. reduction of emissions prioritised over offsetting), increased corporate knowledge and data capture of emissions.



Agenda - Council Meeting - 25 October 2023



Our Goals

Goal 6: Strong and inclusive environmental leadership, collaboration and advocacy

Council has a strong history of effective collaboration with community groups, stakeholders and other levels of government. To achieve Council's environmental sustainability objectives, strong leadership will also be shown through the strengthening and nurturing of these partnerships and relationships that will provide and deliver improved environmental sustainability outcomes for our community. Council aims to foster strong partnerships to achieve successful landscape and ecosystem scale protection and improvements that often require action and cooperation across land management boundaries with other government agencies and authorities; businesses and industry; community groups and landowners.

Integrating environmental sustainability across the organisation is also key to strong and consistent commitment from all staff. Leadership, cross-department collaboration and ongoing support is required to ensure staff have the awareness, information, capacity and confidence to deliver appropriate environmental outcomes through their daily work functions.

Under this strategy, Council will strive to be a leader, conduit and facilitator of collaboration, innovation and capacity building to increase and build environmental stewardship. In 2022 Council formally joined the Barwon South West Climate Change Alliance to collaborate with other Councils, water authorities and research institutions and to amplify advocacy and adaptive outcomes for the region. Council will also work to assist the community and private sector to better understand and appreciate the impacts and opportunities that climate change adaptation and mitigation will have both environmentally and economically.

Council will continue to advocate for new projects and initiatives, as well as in relation to environmental issues that are important to our communities.



Photo: Climate Resilient Communities BSW, Climate Change Conference, Geelong

Goal 6: Strong and inclusive environmental leadership, collaboration and advocacy

Supporting Policies, Strategies and Plans

Council Plan 2021-2025
Environmental Sustainability Policy 2021
Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

Colac 2050 Growth Plan
Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision
Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

Objective 6.1 Lead and facilitate collaboration, innovation and advocacy to increase and build environmental stewardship of individuals, community and businesses.



6.1.1 Establish stronger relationships and partner with key stakeholders to achieve regional biodiversity protection and improvements.

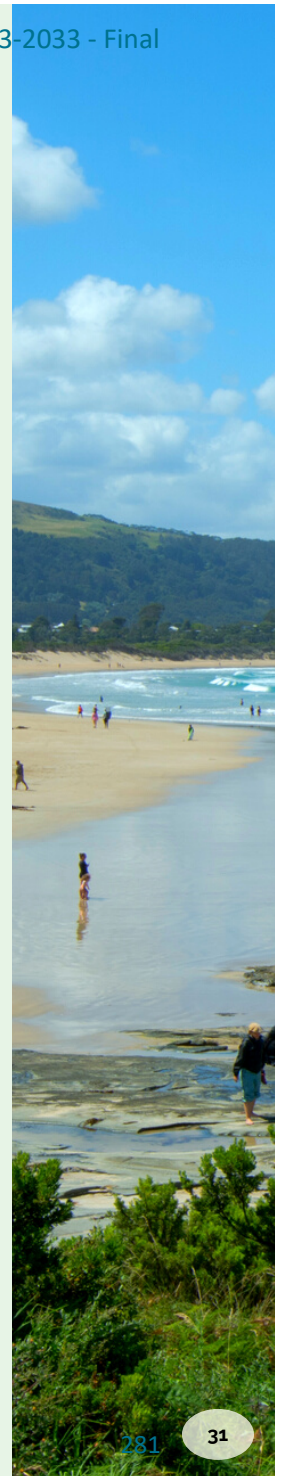
6.1.2 Establish stronger relationships and partner with key stakeholders to improve knowledge of, plan and implement responses to limit regional climate change impacts.

6.1.3 Participate in and support collaborative community led advocacy, projects and programs relating to biodiversity protection and environmental sustainability.

6.1.4 Strongly advocate for robust evidence-based climate action, policies and legislation at all levels of government to accelerate transition of our communities and economy to a clean, climate-safe future.



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9. What Success Looks Like

The Outcomes we seek by 2033:

Goal 1 Protected and thriving natural landscapes, ecosystems and habitats

Biodiversity and connectivity of remnant ecosystems is increased through natural regeneration and revegetation programs.

Reduction in the coverage of invasive species across the Shire.

Increased number of water quality treatment systems installed to manage stormwater to support healthy and diverse aquatic ecosystems.

Goal 2 Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient public infrastructure, open spaces and urban settlements

Improved land use planning instruments and controls to minimise the impacts of climate change on the environment, people and places and improve the efficiency and sustainability of housing, development and infrastructure.

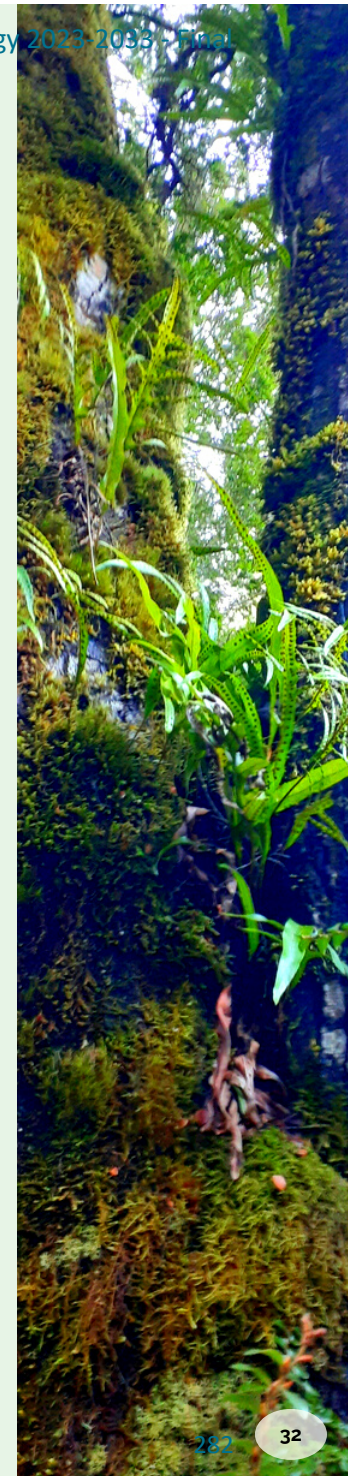
Green open space and tree canopy cover is increased across the Shire.

Increased diversion of household and commercial waste from landfill.

Goal 3 An adaptive and resilient Council and Shire moving towards a zero-emission future and limiting the impacts of climate change

Council's corporate greenhouse gas emission reductions are prioritised and residual emissions are offset to achieve net zero emissions.

New developments in the Shire incorporate best practice water conservation and stormwater management measures through integrated water management and water sensitive urban design.



Goal 4**Green and sustainable local economies, industries and growth that protect intrinsic environmental values**

There is an increase of green businesses and industries in the Shire.

Increased adoption of more environmentally sustainable practices and active protection of biodiversity and landscapes by businesses in the agriculture sector.

Goal 5**Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education**

Increased community participation in environmental events and activities.

Ongoing engagement with community-based environmental and sustainability groups.

Goal 6**Strong and inclusive environmental leadership, collaboration and advocacy**

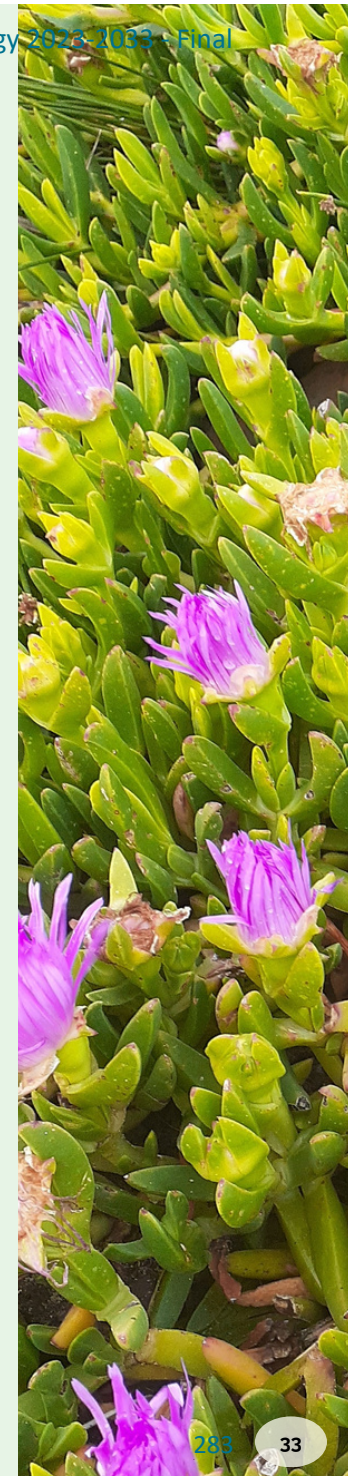
Traditional Owner perspectives, culture and knowledge and their land management and environmental stewardship goals being reflected in Council's environmental management decisions.

Increased community satisfaction rating for overall performance in environmental sustainability (Annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey) and exceed the Victorian Council average.

Leadership will be shown by measuring and reporting progress of implementing the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan (e.g. in Council's Annual Report).



Agenda - Council Meeting - 25 October 2023





Climate Change Action Plan



Colac Otway
SHIRE

2023-2033

Acknowledgement of Country

The Colac Otway Shire proudly acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples of the Eastern Maar Nation as the traditional custodians of the Colac Otway Region.

We acknowledge that the Colac Otway Shire is located and conducts business upon lands of the Gulidjan and Gadubanud people.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

We recognise and respect their unique cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship to their traditional lands and waters, which continue to be important to them today and into the future.



Executive Summary

Council acknowledges its communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis, one that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

Council recognises the need for more urgent and extensive action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and respond to climate change impacts.

Colac Otway Shire Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2033 articulates our vision for our organization, community and environment to thrive in a safe climate and outlines our key focus areas for climate action:

1. Sustainable Built Environments
 - Renewable Energy
 - Sustainable Buildings
 - Sustainable Transport
 - Urban Greening
 - Integrated Water Management
2. Resource Consumption, Waste Reduction & Circular Economy
3. Biodiversity Protection & Regeneration
4. Leadership, Partnerships & Advocacy
5. Adaptation & Resilience

It provides an overview of Council's progress so far on responding to the impacts of climate change and highlights some of the climate actions we have undertaken over the past 12 years.

The Action Plan also explains the challenges we face that make our collective climate action response so important. Adapting to the impacts of climate change and mitigating further impacts will require a collective effort by our whole community including governments, industry, service providers, the emergency management and health sectors, communities, households and individuals.

Council also recognises that our community is skilled and well placed to take, lead and mobilise local action on climate change and Council will ensure that we inspire, enable and work with our community to take action on climate change.

Therefore, the Plan also outlines the ways we will collaborate and work together in partnership with: governments and their agencies; our community; environmental and climate groups; local businesses and key industries.

The 10-year Plan identifies 50 actions we will undertake as an organisation to adapt to a changing climate and urgently mitigate against further impacts. To ensure that the Action Plan remains agile and adaptive, its implementation will be monitored and reported to Council and the community, with formal reviews within twelve months of the adoption of a new Council Plan.

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1. Introduction

Council acknowledges its communities are facing a global climate change and biodiversity crisis, one that requires urgent action by all levels of government, including local councils.

The Colac Otway Shire, like many regions around the world, is increasingly experiencing the impacts of climate change. The region's natural environment is under threat, with changing weather patterns, rising temperatures and extreme weather events all having significant impacts on our natural landscapes, local community and economy.

One of the most visible impacts of climate change in the Colac Otway Shire is the change in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including droughts, floods, storm surge that exacerbates coastal erosion, and bushfires. These events have caused significant damage to the region's infrastructure, homes, and natural environment, as well as having significant economic consequences for the region.



Wye River Christmas Day Bushfire 2015



Colac CBD flooded



Coastal erosion at Apollo Bay

Climate projections highlight the likelihood that the impacts of climate change will significantly worsen over the coming decades and the urgency of the need for strong action if we are to prevent the most catastrophic harms of global warming.

Climate change impacts us at national, state, regional and local levels, down to households and individuals. Climate action must therefore be collectively undertaken through strategic planning, shared responsibility, partnerships and collaboration.

This Action Plan has been developed to provide the Shire with a pathway of clear and achievable climate change targets and actions to be undertaken over the coming decade. Our response centres around actions that Council and our community can take together for climate change mitigation, adaptation and building climate change resilience. Colac Otway Shire Council recognises the important role it can play in working with, supporting and empowering our communities in their efforts to respond to a changing climate, to reduce emissions, to make sustainable choices, and to build resilience for the future.

2. State of the Climate

The demonstrable and impending impacts of a changing climate are recognised as a significant global challenge, requiring a concerted and unified response.

The latest report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC Report No. 6 <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>) reveals that industrialised nations must re-evaluate their climate change targets to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and be carbon neutral by the early 2050s if they wish to prevent the most catastrophic harms of global warming. The report states that failure to slash emissions will mean average global temperatures will rise more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-

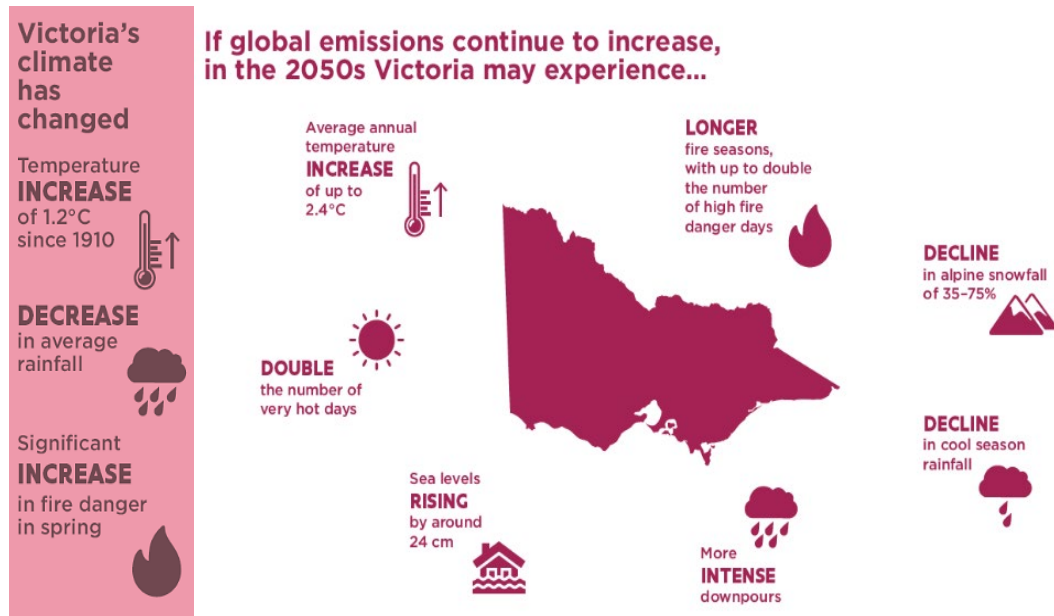
industrial levels. Past this threshold, the impacts will be severe, including species extinctions, irreversible melting of ice sheets and extreme sea level rise.

Australia is already feeling the effects of climate change. Our weather is becoming increasingly variable. More frequent extreme and cascading weather events are impacting communities and the economy, and threatening the environment. At the same time, summers are becoming steadily hotter and drier, leading to adverse health impacts, increased bushfire risks and ecological damage, and threatening agricultural production.

Victoria's climate has also changed in recent decades, becoming warmer and drier. These changes are expected to continue. Understanding the drivers and impacts of these changes, as well as what we can expect in the future, will help us to plan and adapt.

Projections for Victoria indicate the state is likely to become hotter and drier in the future, but the timing and extent of changes will vary across regions.

Comparison of observations and projections in Victoria suggest that temperature has been tracking towards the upper limit of projections while winter rainfall has been tracking towards the drier end of projections. By the 2050s, if the current global warming rate continues, Victorian towns could experience around double the number of very hot days each year compared to the 1986–2005 average.










Source: <https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/victorias-changing-climate>



Current climate change trends mean hotter and drier conditions for the future of South West Victoria, less rain in winter, more intense rainfall events, biodiversity loss and sea level rise.

**Barwon South West has been getting warmer and drier.
In the future the region can expect...**

	Temperatures to increase all year around		More hot days and warm spells, and fewer frosts
	Less rainfall in Winter and Spring		More frequent and more intense downpours
	Harsher fire weather and longer fire seasons		Rising sea level
	Increased frequency and height of extreme sea level events	Source link	

Source: [Regional Adaptation Snapshot Barwon South West](#)

Current predictions suggest that by 2030 we can expect the Barwon South West to experience:

- An average temperature rise of almost 1 degree C;
- An increase in the number of hot days (over 30 degrees C);
- A decrease in rainfall over spring of 7% and a decrease in the annual average rainfall of 4%.

Unless emissions are drastically reduced in the short to medium term, by 2070 the region can expect to see:

- An average temperature increase of 2.4 degrees C
- Significant biodiversity losses
- More hot days over 30 degrees C
- Total rainfall decline
- Higher evaporation rates, reducing available water
- Run off decline into catchments by as much as 50%.



3. Impacts and Risks for our Region

The changing weather patterns we are experiencing, including rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns, have significant impacts on the region's natural environment, including the health of forests and water resources. For example, rising temperatures and reduced rainfall can lead to increased stress on plant life, resulting in drought, wildfires, and other environmental hazards.

Climate change is one of the most significant threats to biodiversity. Our unique and diverse flora and fauna face multiple impacts, including changing temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and more frequent extreme weather events.

Climate change also has the potential to cause significant economic consequences for the region. Agriculture, forestry, and tourism are all vulnerable to climate change impacts, with changes in weather patterns and extreme weather events having significant impacts on these industries. For example, droughts and bushfires can lead to significant crop, stock and farm infrastructure losses, while changes in rainfall patterns can impact the growth of forests and impact the availability of water resources for agriculture and tourism.

[Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23](#) states that "Climate change also affects health in many ways – directly by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as prolonged heatwaves, floods and bushfires, and indirectly through worsening air quality, changes in the spread of infectious diseases, risks to food safety and drinking water quality, and effects on mental health." Climate change also has consequences for growing health inequalities, with population groups such as the elderly, young children, people with a chronic disease and low-income households disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change.

Climate change impacts will increasingly impact on Council services. High fire danger days and extreme rainfall events are already impacting when it is safe for Council officers to work outdoors or travel to different parts of the Shire to deliver services. Maintaining and growing green open spaces is challenging in a hotter and drier climate, and drainage infrastructure has difficulty coping with more flooding and higher intensity rain events.

The demand on Council services will change and increase because of climate impacts. Climate change increases community vulnerability and will significantly impact on vulnerable cohorts such as low-income households, people with disabilities, as well as infants and the elderly.

Climate change also creates risks for Council. It poses financial risks through the cost of retrofitting infrastructure and rebuilding in cases of damage to property and assets from impacts such as extreme weather events, flooding and landslides. Insurers are beginning to factor climate change into premiums and are limiting their coverage of significant risks. Governments are also increasingly exposed to legal action for failing to proactively adapt to climate change.

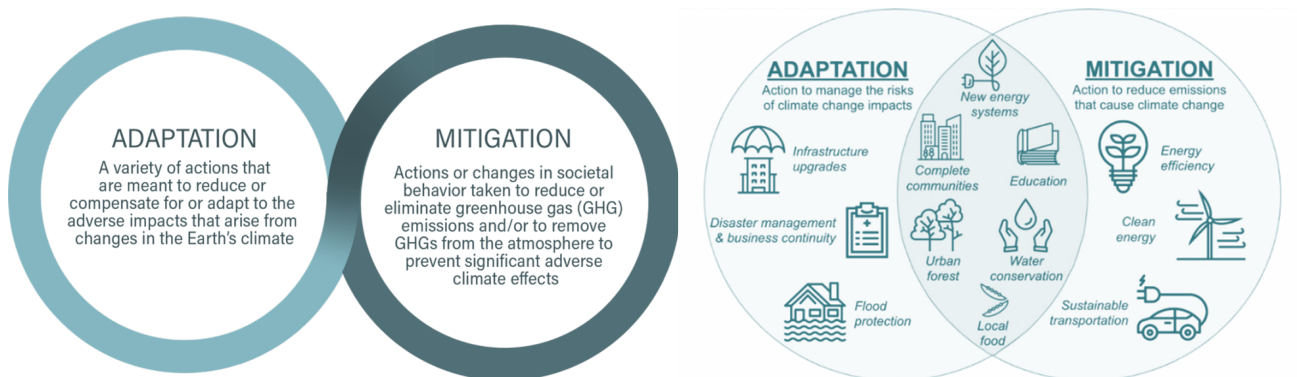
Planned, well-informed and coordinated action is needed to manage climate change impacts and continue providing quality public services and minimise negative outcomes for human or ecological systems due to climate impacts.

Early action also has significant financial and social benefits. Proactive climate change adaptation and mitigation saves money by avoiding larger risks and future impacts, rather than bearing the cost of remediating impacts and retrofitting adaptation responses. It also supports social cohesion, equity, and wellbeing and resilience by reducing vulnerability and harnessing opportunity. Many of the actions we can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change bring with them environmental, economic, social and health co-benefits.

4. Approaches to Addressing the Challenges of Climate Change

Climate change adaptation and mitigation are two complementary approaches to addressing the challenges of climate change. At the core of effective climate change action are the dual approaches of minimising the factors contributing to further anthropogenic changes to global climate and adapting to those consequences that can no longer be avoided. Adaptation measures are necessary to reduce the negative impacts of climate change that are already being felt (manage the unavoidable), while mitigation measures are important for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preventing further climate change (avoid the potentially unmanageable).

Mitigation involves reducing the flow of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, either by minimising sources of these gases (for example, reducing the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heat or transport) or enhancing the systems that accumulate and store these gases, such as oceans, forests and soil. Mitigation strategies include transitioning to renewable energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and implementing carbon capture and storage solutions.



Adaptation (adapting to life in a changing climate) involves adjusting to actual or expected future climate. Adaptation measures are typically designed to help communities and ecosystems adjust to the impacts of climate change that are already occurring or are expected to occur in the future. The goal is to reduce our vulnerability to the harmful effects of climate change (such as sea level encroachment, more intense and extreme weather events or food insecurity). These actions also encompass opportunities capitalizing on changes in future agricultural production by diversifying to build resilience and sustainability (e.g. growing warmer climate crops).

A comprehensive approach that incorporates both adaptation and mitigation measures will be necessary to ensure a sustainable future by building resilience and reducing the impacts of climate change on communities and ecosystems.

Adaptation and resilience actions also offer opportunities to maximise environmental and social benefits such as improved quality of urban biodiversity and waterways, carbon storage potential, positive health outcomes, and increased community safety.

5. Current National, State and Local Strategic and Legislative Context

The Federal *Climate Change Act 2022* was introduced at a national level to create ambitious new targets for Australia's greenhouse gas emissions reductions and to establish a framework for strong action on climate change, recognising the urgent need for this.

Through this legislation Australia has pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43% below 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. It recognises that we must: anticipate, prepare for and

adapt to the impacts from a warming climate; and that we must mitigate catastrophic climate change by reducing our emissions and playing a leadership role in supporting other nations to reduce theirs.

This will require an economic transformation on a large scale. Despite the significant challenges, it is also recognised that this transformation will provide great opportunity for regional Australia. As industries emerge, adapt and grow, they will create demand for workers in electricity generation, manufacturing and many other sectors. Decarbonised and emerging industries will provide a sustainable future for regional economies and communities.

Victoria adopted a *Climate Change Act 2017* that committed to net-zero emissions by 2050, establishing a 5-yearly framework to reduce emissions and ensure that state-wide systems are prepared to adapt to the impacts of climate change. In recent years the government established more ambitious new targets to cut emissions: 28–33% by 2025 below 2005 levels, 50% by 2030 below 2005 levels, with a commitment to reduce emissions by 75% to 80% (on 2005 levels) by 2035 and net zero by 2045. The Victorian government has also committed to a 95% renewable energy target by 2035 and has also adopted Climate Adaptation Action Plans for seven sectors, namely: agriculture; energy; industrial processes and product use; land use, land use change and forestry; transport; waste; and whole of government. It has also supported the development of community-led Regional Climate Adaptation Strategies, including the Barwon South West Regional Climate Adaptation Strategy.

Through the adoption of the Colac Otway Shire Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 and this Action Plan, Council will continue to strive to achieve best outcomes for our climate and the greatest opportunities for our communities.

Over the life of this plan, we will make significant progress in adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change across the five focus areas outlined in this plan. We will achieve this by completing or facilitating the forty eight individual actions identified in this plan. Many actions involve partnerships and collaboration, with community action and stakeholders playing a key role in achieving the targets.

6. Colac Otway Community Emissions Profile

Like all regions, Colac Otway Shire and its community and economy contributes to greenhouse gas emissions through various activities such as agriculture, transportation, and energy use.

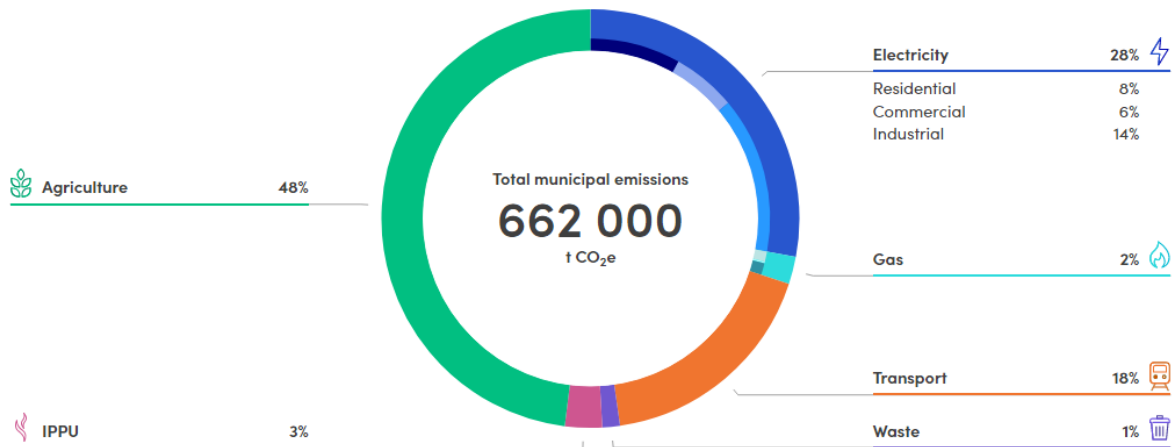
Colac Otway Shire as a municipality produced 662 kilotons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) emissions in 2020/2021, accounting for 0.76% of the state's total emissions. The largest source of emissions in the shire was from agriculture, which accounted for 48% of the total, followed by energy use (30%) and transportation (18%).

The Snapshot Community Emissions Profile (<https://snapshotclimate.com.au/> below outlines the major sources of carbon emissions for the entire municipality. It has been developed to be consistent with the Global Protocol of Carbon Emissions reporting (GPC Protocol) BASIC+, the international standard for cities and local government areas.

Due to the approximate nature of the profile, the emission values are represented as rounded numbers. This profile includes the following sources:

- Stationary energy - grid supplied electricity/gas
- Transport - on-road use and domestic passenger air travel
- Waste - landfill and wastewater
- Agriculture – methane produced by livestock digestive processes, manure management and synthetic fertilizer use
- Land Use Change - land clearance and reforestation
- Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU) - industrial processes, refrigerant use.

Colac Otway Community Emissions Profile (2020/21)



Source: <https://snapshotclimate.com.au/locality/municipality/australia/victoria/colac-otway/>

7. Our Climate Active Community in Colac Otway Shire

Colac Otway Shire Council communities are passionate and committed to protecting the environment and undertaking action on climate change. Communities across the shire have urged Council to lead in this space and to work collaboratively to support local efforts to reduce environmental impacts. Many community members are already undertaking significant steps towards this, including by installing renewable energy and increasing home energy efficiency, reducing consumption, reusing and recycling, and composting organic waste.

Colac Otway is home to an impressive range of local businesses and community-led grassroots action. Businesses and community groups alike are resilient, organised and self-driven. Many businesses within Colac Otway have implemented energy efficiency and waste reduction programs, leading the way in their own sectors. These businesses have realised many added benefits, including a reduction in operating costs whilst building sustainable brands.

Local community sustainability and climate action groups create and deliver targeted programs and offer support in areas such as waste minimization, energy efficiency, renewables, food security and community gardens, while also advocating for urgent climate change action by all levels of government. Local conservation organisations are also delivering on sustainability outcomes through land management and biodiversity improvements.

Council is committed to leadership, advocacy and partnership to support our communities' and businesses' aspirations for a climate-safe future and to help amplify their climate change action advocacy priorities.

Solar power generation system at the Australian Lamb Company, Colac



8. About this Plan

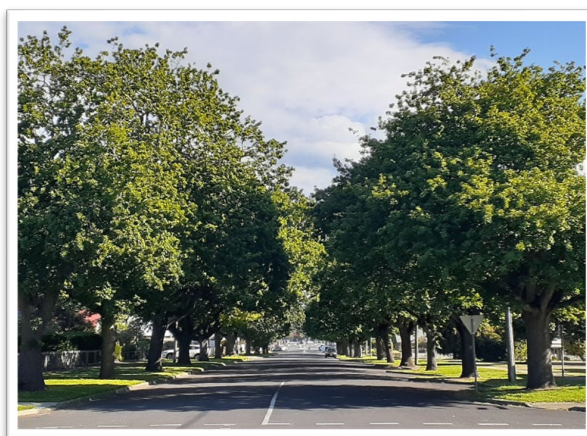
Climate change is a critical issue that requires urgent action at all levels of government, including local government. In Victoria, local governments have developed climate change action plans to address the impacts of climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These plans are designed to guide local communities in taking action on climate change and provide a framework for sustainable development and adaptation to climate change impacts.

The City of Melbourne was the first local government in Victoria to develop a climate change action plan in 2002. Since then, many other local governments across the state have followed suit, with more than 30 local councils in Victoria now having climate change action plans in place. These plans vary in scope, scale, and content, but all aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resilience to climate change impacts, and promote sustainable development.

The objective of Colac Otway Shire Council's Climate Change Action Plan is to provide a pathway of clear and achievable climate change actions for Council to undertake over the coming decade. Embedded in forming this Action Plan is the imperative to prevent and ameliorate climate change impacts. Our response centres around actions that Council and our community can take for climate change mitigation, adaptation and building climate change resilience.

The Action Plan includes a range of measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including energy efficiency and renewable energy, waste reduction and recycling, and sustainable transport. The Plan also includes initiatives aimed at building resilience to climate change impacts, such as emergency management planning, land use planning, urban greening, and biodiversity conservation programs. Further, it outlines actions to support community engagement and education aimed at raising awareness about climate change, promoting sustainable living, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and encouraging community action.

Council's work through this process will enable Council to continue to reduce its operational emissions; maintain its commitment to broad emissions reductions and net zero emissions; and to provide support to communities and businesses to become more resilient to, mitigate the impacts of, and adapt to, a changing climate.



Mature street trees providing shade and urban cooling in Hesse Street, Colac

How we developed this plan

We undertook a range of activities to inform the development of this document.

These included:

- [Review of Council's Environment Strategy 2010-2018](#) and its targets.
- review of Council's greenhouse gas emission reduction and other climate change mitigation and adaptation actions and achievements since 2010;
- staff workshops to inform and gather ideas and climate change action opportunities;
- research and review of literature such as other council's climate change action and/or response plans and climate science articles/reports;

- community survey and 10 community drop-in sessions to inform the development of Council's overarching Environmental Sustainability Strategy and climate change related themes;
- targeted stakeholder workshops to inform the development of Council's overarching Environmental Sustainability Strategy and climate change related themes and suggested implementation actions;
- discussions with Council staff, community members, other councils, climate change networks and government agencies;
- development of environmental sustainability targets;
- development of Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy and its strategic goals;
- prioritisation of climate change actions based on level of Council control and with consideration given to resourcing limitations.

Colac Otway Shire is committed to supporting building adaptive capacity to climate change in all areas of Council's control and influence, with the support and collaboration of all levels of government and our passionate local communities.

We hope with leadership, collaboration and advocacy this will support our communities, the wider region and the world towards a sustainable and climate-safe future.

This plan has been developed in consultation with community groups, businesses and agencies from across the municipality.

We would like to extend our gratitude to many individuals and organisations whose enthusiasm, commitment and contributions helped shape the plan, and with whom we will continue to work closely to deliver it:

COMMUNITY GROUPS & NON-GOVERNMENT

ORGANISATIONS

- Otway Climate Emergency Action Network
- Climate Action Team
- Southern Otway Sustainability
- Central Otway Landcare Network
- Upper Barwon Landcare Network
- Southern Otway Landcare Network
- Birregurra Community Group
- Friend of the Barwon
- Colac Sustainability Group
- Otway Agroforestry Network

BUSINESS & TOURISM PEAK BODIES

- Colac Chamber of Commerce
- Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce
- Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism
- Colac Large Employers Group

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Sustainability Victoria (SV)
- Great Ocean Road Coast & Park Authority (GORCAPA)
- Parks Victoria (PV)
- Wannon Water
- Barwon Water
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
- Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA)



Strategic Alignment

Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy outlines a number of key strategic directions and goals that this plan, and the implementation of the actions outlined within it, directly addresses and will help council work toward achieving:

STRATEGIC THEMES	STRATEGIC DIRECTION
Climate Change	Council and the Shire focus on energy efficiency and rapidly moving towards a zero-carbon future whilst improving resilience to changes in short and long-term climatic conditions.
Natural Environment	A healthy and connected natural environment that protects indigenous landscapes and enhances natural ecosystems, public health and liveability.
Built Environment	Sustainable, resilient and accessible infrastructure and places.
Water	A water sensitive shire with a focus on integrated water management, water sensitive urban design, healthy waterways and reduced reliance on potable water.
Waste & Pollution	A clean and safe Council and shire that minimises waste generation and maximises reuse and recycling, working towards a sustainable circular economy.
Partnership, Leadership & Advocacy	Council provides leadership, advocacy, brokering, communication and conduit roles to help achieve environmental outcomes. Leadership will also be shown through the development, strengthening and nurturing of partnerships.

Strategic goals of the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033:

Goal 1	Protected and thriving natural landscapes, ecosystems and habitats
Goal 2	Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient public infrastructure, open spaces and urban settlements
Goal 3	An adaptive and resilient Council and Shire moving towards a zero-emission future and limiting the impacts of climate change
Goal 4	Green and sustainable local economies, industries and growth that protect intrinsic environmental values
Goal 5	Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education
Goal 6	Strong and inclusive environmental leadership, collaboration and advocacy

The action tables in Section 11 of this plan indicate which strategic goal of Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy each action relates to.

Council's Climate Change Action Plan strongly aligns with Council's other key strategic plans and strategies that include goals, objectives or targets relating to climate change:

- Council Plan 2021-2025
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033
- Environmental Sustainability Policy and Framework 2021
- Colac Otway Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Colac Otway 2050 Community Vision
- Colac 2050 Growth Plan
- Colac Otway Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2027

- Active Transport Strategy 2013-2023
- Colac Stormwater Development Strategy 2020
- Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030
- Lake Colac Foreshore Masterplan 2016
- Draft Urban Forest Strategy 2015
- Colac Integrated Water Management Plan 2014

9. What has Colac Otway Shire achieved so Far

Climate Change Mitigation

In 2010, Council set an ambitious target to achieve carbon neutrality by 2020. Council has worked towards this goal over many years and through a range of initiatives reductions of 68 per cent have been achieved by the end of 2021-22.

Council formally became Carbon Neutral for the 2020-21 financial year by purchasing Climate Active certified carbon offsets for its remaining residual emissions (Scope 1 & 2).

We will continue to maintain our Carbon Neutral status moving forward and will endeavour to expand our operational emissions boundary to include more Scope 3 emissions as the Council's and its supply chains' associated data capture mechanisms improve over time.

Council invested \$1.46 million in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation projects with an average payback period of 4.8 years. \$456,000 (30%) of this has been received from grants by State and Federal Governments and \$1 million has been contributed by Council.

Council's investment was paid back by the savings generated (avoided electricity costs relating to solar PVs and reduced electricity consumption) by the end of 2020.

Council has 4 small (<6kW), 2 medium (30kW) and 2 large (100kW) solar PV systems installed on council facilities with a total of 275 kW generation capacity. This provides Council with approximately 350,000 kWh of clean, emissions free electricity generated per annum, saving approximately \$70,000 per annum in avoided electricity costs.

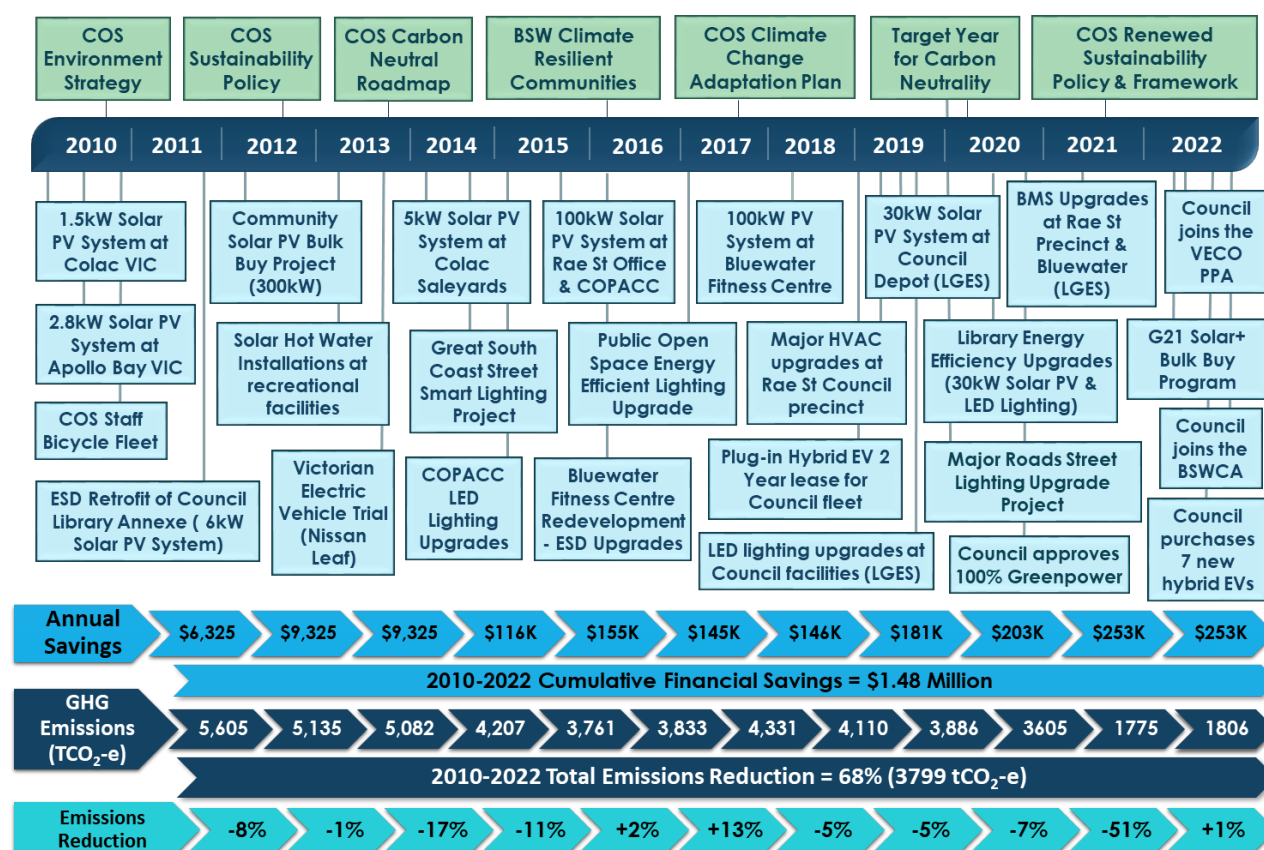
ORGANISATIONAL EMISSIONS FOR 2021-22

Total COS Greenhouse Emissions (CO2-e tonnes)					
Year	Buildings	Gas	Street/ Public Lighting	Fleet	Total
2010-11	1,999	311	1,181	2,114	5,605
2011-12	1,916	290	1,202	1,727	5,135
2012-13	1,879	323	1,182	1,698	5,082
2013-14	1,484	186	1,014	1,523	4,207
2014-15	1,356	3	872	1,530	3,761
2015-16	1,846	282	436	1,269	3,833
2016-17	1,881	478	412	1,560	4,331
2017-18	1,887	488	406	1,329	4,110
2018-19	1,747	470	406	1,263	3,886
2019-20	1,389	466	417	1,333	3,605
2020-21	0* (1,199)	451	0* (379)	1,324	1,775 (3,353)
2021-22	0* (1,341)	464	0* (334)	1,342	1,806 (3,481)

*Numbers in brackets show emissions avoided by purchasing 100% Greenpower.



Colac Otway Emissions Reduction Timeline 2010-2022



* Increase in emissions in 2022 is primarily due to COVID19 restrictions lifting and Council operations returning to pre-COVID levels

Climate Change Adaptation

In 2012 Colac Otway Shire commenced a collaborative project called Climate Resilient Communities of the Barwon South West (CRC BSW). The project involved 10 Councils within the Barwon South West region and a range of partners, including Catchment Management Authorities and water authorities. Its aim was to help communities throughout the region to understand what risks and opportunities might be presented by future extreme weather events.

The project built municipal preparedness to extreme climate events through a wide range of planning and embedding projects ensuring that all 10 BSW Councils developed a Climate Change Adaptation Plan. With the support of regional partners, Colac Otway Shire Council applied for and received funding to create a regional climate change alliance to build on the strong community of practice that was established through the project. In October 2021 this resulted in the formal incorporation of the Barwon South West Climate Alliance, of which Council is a committed member.






In 2017 Colac Otway Shire adopted a ten-year Climate Change Adaptation Plan, which has guided Council's significant adaptive achievements to date. Many of actions identified are well underway or have been successfully completed. These include:

- Western District Lakes Adaptation Pathways Project (led by the CCMA);

- Colac Stormwater Strategy was developed in 2019 and considered impacts of higher intensity rainfall in Colac on its drainage system and impact on flood potential;
- State Government funded 'Preparing Local Government for Climate Change and Emergency Management' program, to assist in building council's capacity to prepare and respond to emergency events. Projects delivered were focused on the development of a better understanding of where natural hazards, triggered by extreme weather events, have the potential to cause serious damage and disruptions to communities, services and infrastructure to assist in planning for and to minimise the impacts of future emergency management events;
- capacity building training to local communities relating to community leadership of bushfire preparedness and recovery;
- C90 Planning Scheme amendment that implements changes to the Floodway Overlay (FO) and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) maps and schedules to improve the performance of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme in responding to flood events in Colac and surrounds;
- Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) Project – improved resilience of communications to provide resilient public internet access at buildings that may be used by communities during emergencies or natural disasters in Barwon Downs, Forrest, Carlisle River, Gellibrand, Beech Forest, Lavers Hill, Wye River and Apollo Bay;
- G21/Geelong+ Solar Bulk Buy program that was run by Geelong Sustainability (240 kW of Solar and 167 kWh of Battery Storage installed in Colac Otway - 292.4 Tonnes of CO2 Emissions abated per annum);
- Supporting community groups that are delivering projects that address the impacts of climate change and improve community and environmental resilience (e.g. Apollo Bay 100% Renewable Roadmap; Apollo Bay Neighbourhood Battery Feasibility Study; Residential Energy Audits and Educational Videos);
- Birregurra Flood Study which incorporated climate change scenarios; and
- Urban Street Tree Planting Program.



10. Our Targets

TARGET AREA	SPECIFIC TARGETS	SUPPORTING STATEMENT
 Net zero greenhouse gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions for Council's operations (Scope 1 & 2). • Net Zero Corporate Emissions (Scope 1, 2 & 3) by 2040. • Our community will have transitioned to a Net Zero Carbon Community by 2040. • Reduce Council's Corporate Emissions by 75% by 2030 and 85% by 2040 (Baseline year 2010-11). • Council's Light Fleet will comprise zero emissions vehicles by 2030 and its heavy plant and equipment by 2040. 	Council commits to reporting on corporate greenhouse gas emissions and implementing actions and delivering projects and programs to reach net zero emissions for Council operations.
 100% Renewable Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will obtain 100% of its electricity from emissions free renewable energy sources. 	Council commits to obtain 100% of its electricity from emissions free renewable energy sources and increase its renewable energy generation capacity.
 Zero recoverable waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divert 80 per cent of waste from landfill by 2030.* • Cut total waste generation by 15 per cent per capita by 2030.* 	Council commits to report on and reduce waste sent to landfill.
 Reduce potable water use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce Council's operational potable water consumption by 10% by 2030 and 20% by 2040. 	Council commits to reducing the overall volume of potable water through its operations used for non-potable purposes.
 Adaptive biodiversity protection and land management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase tree canopy cover in urban settlements by 5% by 2030 and 10% by 2040. 	Council commits to protecting and enhancing biodiversity on Council owned and managed land and increasing urban canopy cover.

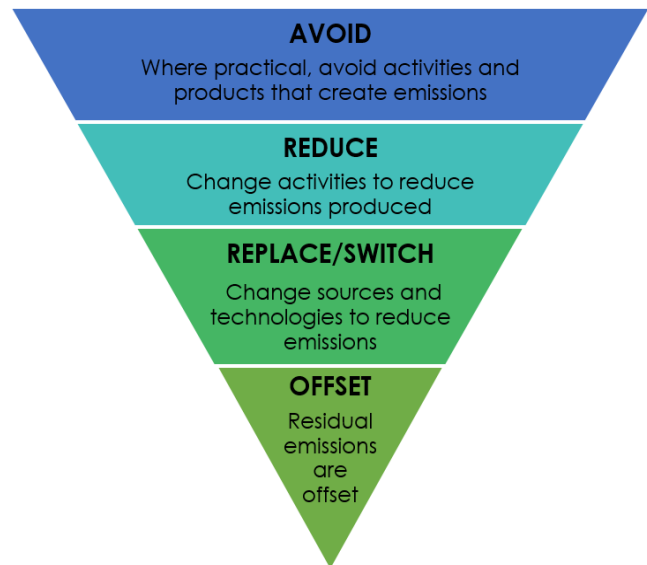
* [Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030](#)

This plan prioritises actions related to greenhouse gas emissions reduction and zero emissions renewable energy use and transition as they offer Council significant opportunities to have the most direct impact on mitigating climate change.

Council's commitment to maintain its Net Zero Emissions status will be underpinned by the principles of the Emissions Reduction Hierarchy, to ensure that emissions reduction is the key focus of our work so that Council can reduce its reliance on offsets in the future. Actions in the top section of the hierarchy are preferable and should be prioritised to those towards the bottom because they are more transformative, long-lasting and are more sustainable over the long term.

Carbon emission offsets acquired by Council to compensate for its residual emissions that cannot be avoided or reduced at present will be fossil fuel avoiding offsets.

Emissions Reduction Hierarchy



11. Climate Action Focus Areas

This plan will support Council's ambition to deliver on the first key strategic direction of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2023-2033 that Council and the Shire will 'focus on energy efficiency and rapidly moving towards a zero-carbon future whilst improving resilience to changes in short and long-term climatic conditions'. The five focus areas that underpin this action plan are:

Sustainable Built Environments

From renewable energy to urban greening and integrated water management, this focus area will help Council to implement effective measures to improve existing infrastructure, and to design and construct buildings that prioritise sustainability. Through the actions of this focus area Council will also support our residents to reduce their carbon footprints, preserve natural resources, and build communities that are functional, sustainable and aesthetically pleasing.

Delivering sustainable design outcomes in our built environments and transitioning to renewable energy will help develop greater resilience to our changing climate. Actions implemented through this focus area will also support the development of Integrated Water Management and sustainable transport.



Rainwater Garden in Elliminyt



Council's Kerbside Waste Collection Bins

Resource Consumption, Waste Reduction & Circular Economy

Resource consumption and waste reduction are critical components of addressing climate change, and there has been a growing focus on circular economy principles to achieve this. The circular economy concept aims to create a model that will minimise waste and resource consumption by keeping materials and products in use for as long as possible.

This focus area relates in particular to consumption of fuel, electricity, water and materials, and covers how both individuals and Council can contribute to positive change by taking a more considered approach to what we consume and our waste outputs. It also includes measures to help our communities transition to a circular economy, in which we seize opportunities to extensively reuse, recycle and repurpose.

Resource consumption and waste are significant contributors to carbon emissions that drive climate change through emissions associated with landfills and production and transport of materials and goods.

Biodiversity Protection & Regeneration

This focus area aims to ensure Colac Otway's diverse and invaluable natural landscapes are protected and enhanced now and into the future. Healthy local ecosystems are vital for a sustainable future for our region and beyond. Only by fostering resilience in local environments will we – and native flora and fauna – be able to thrive in changing climate conditions.

Work in this area will include strategic and adaptive management, stewardship, on-ground works and collaboration to: enhance habitat for native flora and fauna; extensively replant and regenerate degraded areas; reduce the coverage of and impacts caused by invasive species; protect waterways; and sequester and drawdown carbon that is already present in the environment.



Barongarook Creek revegetation



Climate Resilient Communities of the BSW Project Team

Leadership, Partnerships & Advocacy

The leadership, partnerships and advocacy focus area empowers Council to lead in areas of governance within its sphere of control and influence, as well as to undertake meaningful collaboration with, and support mobilisation and empowerment of, our communities.

Through this focus area, Council will develop and foster partnerships with leaders, stakeholders and communities across the region. Actions in this area will also foster grassroots community action, empowering our communities to take strong collective action and implement climate solutions. Council will advocate for ongoing adaptive and flexible approaches to managing and join with others to respond to our changing climate.

Adaptation & Resilience

Adaptation and resilience are key pillars in Council's response to a changing climate. As the changes in our environment accelerate, we can expect to see ever increasing incidence of disasters and extreme weather events.

The actions in this focus area will help Council to effectively respond to these challenges and to build both Council and community preparedness for them.

It will help us to deliver and foster the practices necessary to create resilience in communities and individuals and protect our way of life. At the forefront of Council's targeted actions in this area are: human health, resilience to extreme weather events, emergency and disaster preparedness, and education.



Hydration Station in the Colac Botanic

The Action Tables on the following pages provide more context and detail about each focus area and include the related climate change actions, their timeframe for implementation and resourcing requirements.

As you read ahead, you'll find some coding within the Action Tables relating to the estimated cost of implementation, current resourcing status and timeframes:

- Cost: Low (\$0–\$50,000), Med (\$50,000–\$150,000), High (150,000+)
- Resourcing: F = Funded within existing resources or S = Subject to external funding and/or funding by Council as part of an Annual Budget process in the applicable years
- Timeframe: Short (1–3 years), Medium (4–6 years), Long (7–10 years), or Ongoing

Sustainable Built Environments

Buildings and infrastructure account for a significant proportion of global greenhouse gas emissions. To address this, sustainable design and construction are essential to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, while improving indoor air quality and occupant comfort. Examples of sustainable building practices include the use of energy-efficient lighting and appliances, passive solar design, and the use of sustainable materials such as recycled steel and timber.

Renewable energy is an extremely important part of sustainable built environments. This includes the use of solar, wind, and geothermal energy to power homes and buildings. The implementation of renewable energy can help to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Transport is another key component of sustainable built environments. Electric and hybrid vehicles, cycling and walking infrastructure, and public transport systems all contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This can help to reduce air pollution, improve public health, and enhance the liveability of urban areas.

Urban greening, including parks and street trees, can help to mitigate the effects of climate change by providing shade, improving air quality, reducing the urban heat island effect, and increasing biodiversity. Initiatives such as this will also create many opportunities for recreation and social interaction.

Finally, integrated water management is critical for sustainable built environments. This includes the capture and reuse of stormwater, the use of water-efficient fixtures and appliances, and the implementation of water-sensitive urban design. Integrated water management can help to reduce water consumption and protect water resources, while also providing opportunities for enhanced urban amenity.

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	RESOURCING	TIMEFRAME	RELATED COS ESS GOAL
Renewable Energy							
1.1	Pursue new opportunities and clean technologies to reduce Council's operational emissions: a. Determine the achievable renewable energy generation capacity for Council and identify assets suitable for alternative energy infrastructure, including the analysis of lifecycle costs and benefits. b. Maximise solar energy and battery storage on all Council buildings and facilities. c. Council will build internal capacity through staff education and training to understand and implement the carbon emissions hierarchy (i.e. reduction of emissions prioritised over offsetting).	Mitigation	Council	Medium	S	Short	Goal 2 Goal 3

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	RESOURCING	TIMEFRAME	RELATED COS ESS GOAL
1.2	Actively participate and support education, investigation, feasibility and development of community energy innovation and initiatives, led by the community.	Mitigation Adaptation	Community	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 5 Goal 6
Sustainable Buildings							
1.3	Review Council's processes for the design of new Council buildings, as well as maintenance and renewal programs, and develop an Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy to ensure resource efficiency measures are consistently delivered and to improve environmental sustainability and climate change resilience.	Mitigation	Council	Low	F	Medium	Goal 3
1.4	No new natural gas connections will be made for Council facilities, and there will be a transition away from natural gas use at all existing facilities, including Bluewater Leisure Centre.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	High	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3
1.5	Support Environmentally Sustainable Design outcomes through planning controls, policy and education and the National Construction Code.	Adaptation	Council	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3
1.6	Support and facilitate/partner with other organisations in bulk-buy programs for energy efficient technologies, including but not limited to solar panels, batteries, solar-boosted hot water systems and heat-pumps to increase uptake in the community.	Mitigation	Other Stakeholders	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 6
Sustainable Transport							
1.7	Develop a Fleet Transition Plan and transition Council's operational fleet and equipment to zero emissions vehicles: in accord with the plan.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	High	S	Short (Fleet Transition Plan) & Long	Goal 3 Goal 6
1.8	Encourage and support the installation of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure powered by renewables throughout the shire.	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	RESOURCING	TIMEFRAME	RELATED COS ESS GOAL
1.9	Support and encourage increased use of sustainable and active transport within the community by: a. Advocating for public transport providers to improve quality, connectivity, frequency and reach of current and future public transport services (including increased rail service frequency between Colac and Geelong). b. Increasing the interconnectivity of pathways in urban environments and activity corridors across the shire. c. Council's Planning to ensure well-connected cycling and walking paths are delivered in all new greenfield developments.	Adaptation Influence	Council	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6
Urban Greening							
1.10	Encourage and foster urban greening: a. Undertake canopy cover and heat vulnerability mapping to set a canopy cover baseline and help prioritise locations for urban greening initiatives. b. Adopt minimum greening requirements and methodologies for the development of sustainable and biodiverse streetscapes, infrastructure and open space areas in new developments. c. Support measures to green and mitigate urban heat in new developments. d. Utilise climate resilient flora species that support biodiversity outcomes in community spaces.	Adaptation Mitigation	Council	Medium	S	Short to Medium	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6
1.11	Develop Nature Strip Planting Guidelines to encourage neighbourhood and street-scale urban greening and urban gardening.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	Low	F	Short	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3
1.12	Accelerate Council's Tree Planting Program (road reserves, nature strips and public open spaces) to increase urban cooling and carbon drawdown/sequestration.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	RESOURCIN G	TIMEFRAME	RELATED COS ESS GOAL
Integrated Water Management							
1.13	<p>Increase the application of Integrated Water Management principles and practices to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Embed them in all strategic decision making and town planning, especially relating to alternative water use and waterway, wetland and coastal health. b. Use adaptation programs to reduce stormwater flooding impacts on people, infrastructure, places and the environment. c. Integrate stormwater reuse into natural and built environments to create multifunctional community spaces. 	Adaptation	Council	High	F & S	Short to Medium	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3
1.14	<p>Increase adoption of nature-based, green-blue infrastructure solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Prioritise the use of nature-based solutions and infrastructure to adapt to climate change impacts such as coastal erosion, sea level rise, urban heat, stormwater management and bushfire resilience. b. Explore alternative water supplies suitable for use in the irrigation of public open spaces to reduce Council's reliance on potable water. c. Encourage passive irrigation techniques for urban landscapes. d. Adopt Water Sensitive Urban Design practices to increase stormwater infiltration, promote evapotranspiration, mitigate flooding and remove pollutants from stormwater runoff. e. Implement best practice stormwater treatment and harvesting infrastructure and practices. 	Adaptation	Council & Other Stakeholders	High	S	Long	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6



Resource Consumption, Waste Reduction & Circular Economy

Electricity production is one of the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing electricity consumption is an important component of climate change mitigation by the use of renewable energy sources, energy-efficient appliances and buildings, and the adoption of smart grid technologies.

The use of fossil fuels is another major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing fuel consumption is critical for addressing climate change. This includes initiatives such as promoting public transportation, the use of electric vehicles, and the development of alternative fuels such as biofuels and hydrogen.

The production and consumption of materials is another major contributor to emissions, and the circular economy seeks to reduce waste and resource consumption by reducing the use of virgin materials, promoting the use of recycled materials, and designing products for durability and reuse.

Waste reduction is another critical component of the circular economy. Examples of this are promoting and enabling recycling and composting, reducing food waste, and designing products for easy disassembly and recycling.

Water is a critical resource, and reducing water consumption in our everyday lives is a key component of sustainable resource management. This includes initiatives such as water conservation, the use of recycled water, and the promotion of sustainable water management practices in agriculture, industry and our communities.

By reducing water and electricity consumption, promoting alternative fuels, reducing material consumption, and implementing waste reduction initiatives, we can create a more sustainable future and reduce our emissions and impact on the environment.

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
2.1	Reduce Council's waste and environmental impacts by integrating the waste and emissions reduction hierarchy, life cycle analysis and sustainable procurement within Council projects, contracts and tenders.	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council	Medium to High	F & S	Medium	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 5 Goal 6
2.2	Protect the environment from waste impacts: a. Protect the environment from litter pollution in public open spaces through enforcement, education and control measures. b. Monitor, review and improve litter reduction measures for wetlands and waterways. c. Partner with key agencies to better educate the community about illegal dumping and litter prevention. d. Include a mechanism for refrigerant capture and recycle in	Mitigation Influence	Council	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 4 Goal 5 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
	<p>future Council waste contracts.</p> <p>e. Promote programs and businesses that reduce the impact of waste on the environment.</p> <p>f. Advocate for increased enforcement, technical advice and support from the Victorian Environment Protection Authority.</p>						
2.3	<p>Avoid creating waste and recover and reuse more resources in all points of the circular economy:</p> <p>a. Continue to deliver and improve a sustainable kerbside recycling system.</p> <p>b. Support new and existing markets for recovered resources (e.g. recycled content products).</p> <p>c. Review and improve waste data capture and reporting processes for landfill, kerbside collection and resource recovery.</p> <p>d. Partner with other agencies to promote research and the development of clean technologies that increase reuse, recovery and recycling.</p> <p>e. Encourage events to minimise waste production.</p>	Mitigation Influence	Council & Other Stakeholders	Low to Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 4 Goal 6
2.4	Increase public recycling infrastructure, including glass only public recycling bins.	Mitigation	Council	Medium	S	Short	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 4 Goal 5
2.5	Increase use of recycled materials in Council's road, building and other infrastructure constructions.	Mitigation	Council	Medium to High	S	Medium	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4
2.6	Improve management and efficiency of Council-operated facilities by actively monitoring and managing energy and water consumption through data capture, smart technology and accurate reporting.	Mitigation	Council	Low	F	Short	Goal 2 Goal 3
2.7	Reduce potable water usage in existing and future Council owned facilities, assets and operations.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	Medium	S	Short to Medium	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
2.8	Continue implementing energy efficiency and emissions reduction programs in Council-owned and operated facilities, services and operations where practicable.	Mitigation Adaptation	Council	High	\$	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3
2.9	Foster a thriving green business economy: a. Attract new sustainable industries. b. Encourage existing businesses to reduce the environmental impact of their operations. c. Support and promote regional/State/Federal programs that encourage and promote environmentally sustainable business practices.	Adaptation Influence	Council & Other Stakeholders	Medium	\$	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4



Biodiversity Protection & Regeneration

Climate change is one of the most significant threats to biodiversity in Victoria. Our unique flora and fauna face multiple impacts, including habitat loss, changes in species distribution, increased extinction risk, and increased fire risk. Effective conservation planning, habitat restoration, and carbon sequestration are essential strategies to mitigate these impacts and protect Victoria's biodiversity for ecological health and future generations.

One of the most effective ways to mitigate the impacts of climate change on biodiversity is through habitat restoration. Restoring degraded habitats can provide critical refuges for many species and help maintain ecosystem services such as carbon storage, water purification, and erosion control. This includes reducing the impacts of invasive species, increasing habitat connectivity, and implementing fire management strategies that promote biodiversity.

Adaptive conservation planning is also essential to protect Victoria's and our Shire's biodiversity from the impacts of climate change by identifying key areas for conservation, developing management plans, and monitoring species and ecosystems to track changes and identify new threats.

Species may be able to adapt to some of the impacts of climate change, but only if they have enough time and suitable habitats to do so. Providing suitable habitats and reducing other stressors, such as pollution, invasive species and habitat loss, can help increase the resilience of ecosystems and species to the impacts of climate change.

Increasing the amount of carbon stored in vegetation and soils can help mitigate the impacts of climate change and provide multiple benefits for biodiversity. This can be achieved through carbon sequestration and drawdown actions such as reforestation, land management practices that promote carbon storage, and restoration of wetlands.

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
3.1	Reduce the impact of invasive species on natural systems, agriculture, and the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Manage invasive species and their impacts on Council owned and managed land. b. Prioritise invasive species control activities in areas of high biodiversity values and environmental reserves. c. Manage invasive species and their impacts on private land through effective land use planning where appropriate. d. Establish and support partnerships with other agencies, community groups and education providers to facilitate cross-boundary invasive species management. e. Advocate for increased funding, programs and enforcement relating to invasive species control on public and private land. 	Adaptation Influence	Council	Medium	F	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
3.2	Investigate and implement where possible suitable techniques and approaches to reduce domestic and feral animal impacts on native wildlife.	Adaptation	Council & Other Stakeholders	Low	F	Short	Goal 1 Goal 6
3.3	Partner with Barwon Water, Wannon Water, the CCMA, GORCAPA and our community to improve land stewardship, biodiversity values and ecological health.	Adaptation	Other Stakeholders	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 6
3.4	Support the restoration of indigenous biodiversity and ecological processes in rural and coastal landscapes through planning controls, education and incentives.	Adaptation	Other Stakeholders	Low	F	Medium	Goal 1 Goal 5 Goal 6
3.5	Support native flora and fauna to adapt to climate change: a. Prioritise the protection of existing remnants and habitats b. Establish biolinks and native vegetation corridors to reduce habitat fragmentation and increase biodiversity and connectivity. c. Accommodate shifts in species distribution (e.g. Grey-headed Flying Fox). d. Educate the community on learning to live with threatened species and how to help them recover and thrive.	Adaptation	Council & Other Stakeholders	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 5 Goal 6
3.6	Engage and partner with and learn from Traditional Owners to: a. Promote knowledge exchange and cultural education. b. Support and advocate for greater access to country to facilitate stronger cultural connections. c. Investigate the potential to conduct ecological burns in primarily Council managed landscapes and ecosystems that benefit from or need fire to thrive.	Adaptation	Council & Other stakeholders	Medium	F & S	Long	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 5 Goal 6
3.7	Foster and support environmentally sustainable agriculture and local food production by working in partnership with local business, government and community: a. Promote sustainable agriculture practices through planning controls, policy, education and incentives. b. Support local farming industries and community groups to learn	Mitigation Adaptation	Other stakeholders	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 5 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
	<p>about and implement environmentally sustainable practices in the agriculture sector.</p> <p>c. Support programs that engage our community in local sustainable food production.</p> <p>d. Promote adaptive farming opportunities to remain competitive in a changing climate and achieve optimised food and fibre production while ensuring long-term sustainability.</p> <p>e. Investigate and support local drawdown and carbon offset opportunities to sequester carbon in our local landscape e.g. regenerative farming, revegetation, seaweed farming, blue carbon.</p>						



Leadership, Partnerships & Advocacy

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges facing the world today, and addressing it requires strong leadership, partnerships, and advocacy. This involves collaboration, governance, and mobilization actions to empower people to implement climate solutions at work, support communities to take action, advocate for change, and join with others in responding to the climate challenges. Effective governance is also critical for addressing climate change, and it involves developing policies, regulations, and strategies that support climate action.

Joining with others is an important climate change action that involves collaborating with other organizations, governments, businesses and the community to share knowledge and resources, to develop and implement climate change solutions and to amplify the impact of climate solutions. This includes engaging with communities and stakeholders to ensure that their perspectives are taken into account in decision-making processes and participating in collaborative climate action opportunities and programs and engaging in regional and local climate change networks to share best practices and coordinate action to achieve shared goals.

Empowering people to take action on climate change via initiatives like training programs, educational campaigns, and community engagement is important to help them implement climate solutions and create opportunities for participation and strong partnerships.

Advocacy involves promoting and advancing climate change solutions by communicating the importance of action to decision-makers and the public. This includes advocating for policies and programs that support climate action, engaging with stakeholders and communities to build support, and using media and other communication channels to raise awareness about the need for concerted climate action now.

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	
4.1	Continue to partner across the region and government sector to deliver on climate change initiatives through a collaborative approach; e.g. Barwon South West Climate Alliance, Sustainability Victoria programs and energy efficiency and partnership opportunities.	Adaptation Mitigation Influence	Other Stakeholders	Low to High	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 5 Goal 6
4.2	Strongly advocate for Environmentally Sustainable Design and climate change adaptation and mitigation principles and policies to be incorporated within the Planning Scheme by the State government.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.3	Advocate to State and Federal government for urgent and impactful action on climate change that benefits our local community, including households, local businesses, and the agricultural sector.	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	
4.4	Encourage and foster the uptake of electric vehicles throughout the region through partnerships, advocacy and strategic support.	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.5	Advocate with and on behalf of coastal and small rural communities for programs and funding that address energy security and independence; and vulnerability to secondary impacts of climate change due to location, terrain or vegetation type (e.g. landslips, trees over roads and power lines, erosion and inundation).	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.6	Work with other levels of government and community partners to apply Integrated Water Management across the municipality and region to retain water in the landscape to improve water security, protect against drought, bushfire and heat.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.7	Engage with Traditional Owners, local growers, peak bodies and land managers to promote resilient land management and regenerative agriculture practices, including indigenous land management techniques such as the sensitive use of fire to regenerate habitat.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.8	Advocate for support and equitable access for vulnerable community members to renewable energy and emissions reduction opportunities.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.9	Support community groups and networks including 'Friends of' groups, Landcare and sustainability groups to undertake direct action and community led knowledge sharing and advocacy (e.g. climate change leadership, grant writing, volunteer management and recruitment).	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
4.10	Identify, amplify and act upon shared advocacy goals between the Shire and the community (groups and businesses), by facilitating networking opportunities.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	
4.11	Facilitate where appropriate active, wide-ranging and meaningful community engagement and participation across all areas of the Climate Change Action Plan including the hosting of bi-annual knowledge-sharing and engagement forums for local environment and sustainability groups.	Adaptation Influence	Council in partnership with others	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6



Adaptation & Resilience

In recent years there has been a growing recognition of the importance of adaptation measures and the need for resilience building. This can involve measures such as increasing the resilience of infrastructure and ecosystems, improving water management and planning, and developing heatwave and extreme weather plans.

Adaptation measures are critical in reducing the vulnerability of communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change. Adaptation actions include improved and adaptive infrastructure and building design and construction, natural resource management, emergency management and community engagement, as well as research and innovation. By continuing to invest in these actions, we can build a more resilient future and protect our communities and natural resources from the impacts of climate change.

By understanding the risks we face, adapting the way Council operates, supporting community resilience and building plans for effective emergency responses, Council will support a thriving future for our region. Actions in this area will also help Council to seize the positive opportunities that are likely to arise from a changing environment.

Adaptation measures are important because even if we are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to zero today the impacts of climate change will still be felt for decades to come.

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
5.1	Update Council's key policies, strategies and plans to promote economic, social and environmental sustainability, while mitigating and planning for climate change risks.	Mitigation, Adaptation Influence	Council Community Other Stakeholders	Medium	F & S	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6
5.2	Identify areas and ecosystems vulnerable to flooding, inundation, erosion and landslips and investigate monitoring and adaptation options: a. Identify vulnerable, priority sites at risk of environmental degradation and damage to infrastructure. b. Incorporate current research and data and advocate for and participate in detailed Local Hazard Assessments to build knowledge base and assist decision making. c. Work with relevant partners and stakeholders to protect priority vulnerable ecosystems. d. Work with GORCAPA and other agencies in the preparation of a coastal resilience plan that identifies adaptation pathways for impacted coastal assets and communities.	Mitigation, Adaptation Influence	Council Community Other Stakeholders	High	S	Medium to Long	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
	e. Advocate for greater protection for vulnerable ecosystems within the Planning Scheme by the State Government.						
5.3	Support local communities to overcome barriers to investing in climate resilience measures, including energy efficiency, water harvesting, renewables and energy storage.	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council Community Other Stakeholders	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6
5.4	Pursue financial divestment away from fossil-fuel-aligned investments.	Influence	Council	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 6
5.5	Support the reduction of non-energy carbon emissions and increase carbon storage: a. Support business and community efforts to reduce non-energy emissions. b. Advocate for and support community efforts in relation to carbon sequestration through revegetation, soil carbon capture, and seaweed cultivation.	Adaptation Influence	Council Community Other Stakeholders	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 1 Goal 3 Goal 6
5.6	Monitor and adapt public health programs as required to respond to a changing climate and its impacts on human health and wellbeing, in line with the related priorities outlined in the Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023 and Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Adaptation Influence	Council Other Stakeholders	Low	S	Ongoing	Goal 3 Goal 6
5.7	Build on our existing bushfire prevention, relief and recovery programs by developing a Bushfire Prevention Action Plan in line with the Barwon South West Regional Strategic Bushfire Management Plan.	Adaptation Influence	Council Other Stakeholders	Low	S	Short	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 6

#	ACTION	TYPE OF RESPONSE	LEAD	COST	FUNDING	TIMEFRAME	Related COS ESS Goal
5.8	Advocate to the Department of Transport and Planning, DEECA and key emergency management organisations to evaluate and improve road networks and communications infrastructure that facilitate emergency management coordination and access.	Adaptation Influence	Other Stakeholders Council	Low	S	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 6
5.9	Strategic planning for future growth (e.g. structure plans, development plans) to consider and integrate key environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation and mitigation principles and standards (Integrated Water Management, urban greening, Environmentally Sustainable Design, Water Sensitive Urban Design, low emission neighbourhoods).	Mitigation Adaptation Influence	Council	Low	F	Ongoing	Goal 2 Goal 3





12. Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting

The Action Plan's implementation and the impact of the actions delivered will be monitored and evaluated in three key ways:

1. Quantitative measurement and analysis of environmental outcomes such as emissions reductions;
2. Assessment of the effectiveness of changes to organisational processes and procedures; and
3. Community recognition and approval of Council's efforts in taking climate change action.

The Action Plan and its implementation will be reviewed within 12 months of a new Council Plan being adopted, and the Action Plan will be updated based on the findings of the review. This approach will ensure that the Action Plan aligns with future Council Plans and priorities. It will also enable us to respond to the evolution of climate change science, information, technology, legislation and available solutions, and to the impacts being experienced locally.

Council's Environment Team will develop a 'dash-board' style progress tracking and reporting system to ensure all stakeholders have access to data measuring the progress and success of actions and outcomes under the plan. We will also provide annual reporting to Council's Executive Management Team, Councillors and the community about the progress of the Action Plan's implementation and progress towards Council's Environmental Sustainability Targets.

Council acknowledges the strong and ongoing interest and contributions from the community in its efforts to progress environmental sustainability outcomes and climate change action. Environmental, sustainability and climate action groups will continue to be informed about Council's progress in climate change action. Additionally, broad scale media like Council's social media pages, used to promote the development and exhibition of the draft Climate Change Action Plan, will continue to be utilised.

13. Appendix A: References and Useful Resources

The following resources have underpinned and heavily informed the development of this plan:

- [Climate Change Act 2022](#)
- [Climate Change Act 2017](#)
- [AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023](#)
- [Climate Action - Victoria's path to a net-zero emissions and climate resilient future](#)
- [Victoria's Climate Science Report 2019](#)
- [Victorian Climate Projections data](#)
- [Snapshot Climate - Australian Emissions Profiles](#)
- [Barwon Climate Change Projections 2019](#)
- [Barwon South West Regional Climate Adaptation Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- Colac Otway Shire Environmental Sustainability Strategy [link to be inserted]

14. Appendix B: Glossary – Key Climate Terms to Understand

Active Transport Physical activity undertaken for transport purposes, rather than recreation e.g. cycling or walking.

Adaptation Preparedness and resilience to the impacts of climate change occurring now and into the future.

Alternative Water Non-drinking water from sustainable sources such as rainwater, stormwater, recycled and grey water.

Anthropogenic of, relating to, or resulting from the influence of human beings on nature. Environmental change caused or influenced by people and their activities, either directly or indirectly.

Blue Carbon / Blue-Green Carbon Carbon that is captured and stored by wetlands and coastal ocean ecosystems, typically in seagrass, mangrove and saltmarsh environments.

Biodiversity The variety of all life-forms and the ecosystems of which they are a part, including plants, animals, fungi, protists (including algae) and bacteria, and their encoded genes.

Carbon Neutral A state of net zero carbon emissions, commonly achieved through reducing emissions, as well as purchasing offsets.

Carbon Drawdown Drawing carbon down from existing levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to reverse global warming

Carbon Offset An exchange or reduction of emissions to compensate for emissions made elsewhere, commonly measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO₂-e).

Carbon Sequestration The removal of carbon from the atmosphere by capturing or storing it through biological, chemical and physical processes

Circular Economy A closed system in which reuse, recycling and disposal channels are in-built to consumer and industrial products, to eliminate waste.

Climate Change The long-term rise in global average temperature, caused by human influence, resulting in negative effects such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity and increase in human suffering.

Climate Change Impacts A wide range of current and future physical, environmental, social and financial effects.

Community The people or organisations that live, work, visit or are connected to the region.

Community Resilience The sustained ability of a community to respond to, withstand and recover from shocks and stressors. Acute shocks include disasters like fires, floods and terror events.

Decarbonisation The transition to a low or zero carbon economy to limit the effects of climate change.

Divestment Reducing and then eliminating connection to funds invested in fossil-fuel supporting industries, typically through banking, loans, shares and other financial portfolios.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) A school of design that seeks to improve building performance, reduce environmental impact, resource use and waste, and create healthy environments for occupants and users.

Extreme weather events Unseasonal or extreme weather events for the affected region.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and others that, when present in the atmosphere, increase the amount of solar radiation absorbed, leading to a rise in global average temperature. GHGs are primarily released by the combustion of fossil fuels.

Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. The panel provides regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) Assessing the total cost of an asset throughout its useful life taking account of the planning, design, construction, acquisition, operational, maintenance, rehabilitation and disposal costs.

Mitigation Limiting and avoiding the most harmful effects of climate change, primarily achieved through reducing global carbon emissions.

Natural disaster A sudden or violent event in nature (e.g. earthquakes, hurricane or flood) that kills a lot of people or causes a lot of damage.

Net Zero (emissions) Carbon emissions are produced, but balanced out with equivalent offsets. Carbon dioxide is captured and sequestered equivalent to the CO₂ emitted. Organic Living things or material from living things, such as food and garden waste or animal manure.

Non-energy emissions GHG emissions created through industrial and manufacturing processes, agriculture and livestock production, and waste management practices.

Recycled Products Products that are made from or contain recycled materials such as plastic, glass, rubber or any material that would otherwise be sent to landfill.

Regenerative Agriculture A conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, increasing biodiversity, improving the water cycle, enhancing ecosystem services and supporting biosequestration. Agroecology or Sustainable Agriculture are alternative terms.

Renewable Energy Energy generated from renewable sources such as solar, wind or geothermal, in contrast to the energy from fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas or oil.

Residual Emissions The emissions still being generated after reductions through avoidance, efficiency and renewable energy generation.

Resilience Ability to recover or adapt to changes in environmental and/or living conditions at a personal, community, economic and ecological level.

Shire/Corporate Emissions Greenhouse gas emissions from Shire projects and operations, included within the scope of the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.

Shire/Community Emissions All Greenhouse Gas emissions from within the Shire boundaries, including residential and commercial energy use, transport and waste.

Soil Carbon Carbon stored in the soil ecosystem in various forms.

Sustainable Agriculture Farming practices and research that replenish soil and improve crop yields and plant health while minimising the use of non-renewable resources. Also referred to as regenerative agriculture.

Urban Heating An increase in localised temperature due to the urban built environment, primarily due to high amounts of concrete and asphalt, and a reduction in vegetation. Increasing tree canopy cover is a key method to reduce these effects.

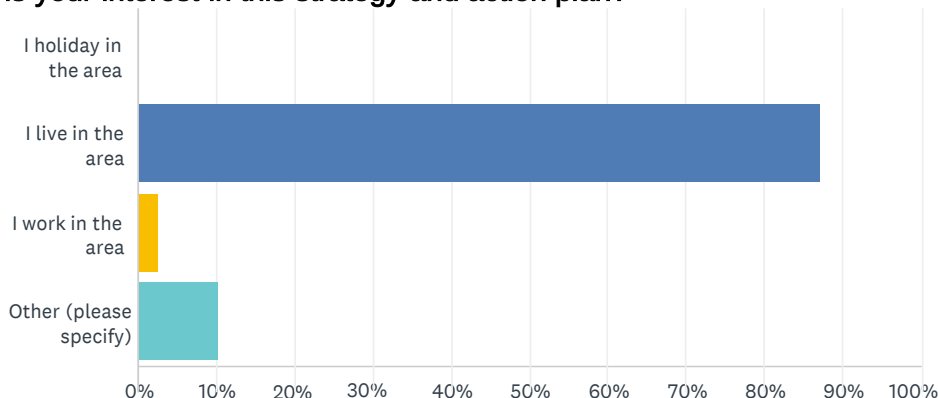
Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) A holistic approach to water management that integrates urban design and planning with social and physical sciences in order to deliver water services and protect aquatic environments in an urban setting.

Zero-emissions Vehicle A vehicle with no tailpipe emissions, typically powered by electricity from a battery or hydrogen.

Attachment 9.5.3 Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP

Colac Otway Shire Council Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan - Survey Results (40 responses received)

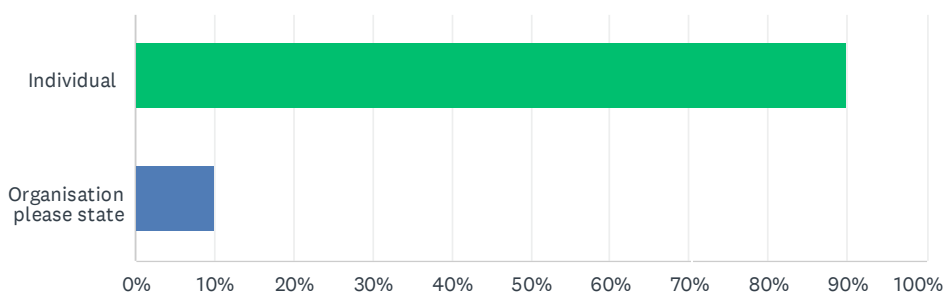
Q1 What is your interest in this strategy and action plan?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I holiday in the area	0
I live in the area	34
I work in the area	1
Other (please specify)	4
TOTAL	39

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)
1	I have children that will suffer from climate change
2	Semi Permanent resident
3	I regularly stay for extended periods with friends in the area with a view to residing permanently in the near future
4	member of COSG & I live here.

Q2 Are you responding as an individual or as part of an organisation?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Individual	36
Organisation please state	4
TOTAL	40

#	ORGANISATION PLEASE STATE
1	QSPACES Architecture and Construction
2	Otway Agroforestry Network
3	Wye to Wongarra Landcare
4	Climate Change

Q3 What works well in terms of the Draft Strategy and Action Plan (e.g. goals and objectives, targets, scope, readability)?

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy		28
Draft Climate Change Action Plan		32
#	DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY	
1	all agreed	
2	Calling it a Climate Crisis	
3	Key areas defined for action and improvement	
4	Presenting both documents at the same time with a short consultation period meant I had to prioritise and spend my time on the Climate Change Action Plan. So I cant add valuable comment here.	
5	It works well as a general framework	
6	Focus on addressing identifying areas for improvement in sustainability in the region and how this might happen	
7	It is very difficult to remember which is what so my answers may be a mix of what is in each.	
8	Useful strategy with measures for success	
9	that you have finally acknowledged there IS a climate crisis is commendable	
10	You have made a start.	
11	Nil	
12	Recognising need for more urgent and extensive action for environmental sustainability	
13	Clear targets, goals and objectives	
14	good overall understanding	
15	so 'wordy' and typical of governmental jargon. Just how accessible is this to the community? What percent of the community would actually read this and come away informed?	
16	The 6 focus areas.	
17	The vision,	
18	Identifies the issues	
19	Having a plan that acknowledges a climate crisis and the need for urgent action	
20	wording is positive and aspirational	
21	This is just a rewrite of the last strategy and not important as the Climate Change Action Plan	
22	It is good that it has been thought about	
23	That the council actually has an environmental strategy.	
24	The readability is adequate - it is a large document.	
25	Nothing, it is a load of rubbish that a small group of activists are ramming down our throats and wasting staff time at the shire.	
26	Not much	
27	comprehensive overview, references international research and the climate crises, breakdown of local emissions	
28	Well presented, good structure, comprehensive	

Attachment 9.5.3 Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP

#	DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN
1	all agreed
2	Being supportive of action
3	Acknowledgement of a climate and biodiversity emergency and the need to respond meaningfully to avert the worst consequences
4	Goals and objectives defined
5	No much, the document does not flow well, it does not convey an 'emergency' and it is aspirational only with not set targets.
6	Nothing works well because this is not really an 'Action Plan'
7	The draft is finally complied
8	Focus on addressing issues affected by climate change and how this might happen
9	I'm really happy that the council has done this. Emission reduction aims are good and that the council is happy for public input. I like the idea of the building codes being updated to ensure more houses and buildings are built with emission reduction features. Love emission reduction vehicles for the shire. Love the increase in town greening canopy. I am really please to see a target of diverting waste to landfill.
10	As above
11	It is good that the process to become adaptive and responsible has begun.
12	You have made a start.
13	Selecting 5 key action focus areas
14	Clear table of actions
15	good overall understanding
16	great to see the COS about turn but one wonders how much of these grand words will translate into noticeable ACTION
17	That we have a Climate Change Action Plan. That the plan will be reported on yearly to the community by the Environment Department.
18	Recognises community role and willingness to work with community
19	The plan includes some actions
20	I have provided a detailed submission
21	The first part of the draft outlining why there is a need to address climate change is comprehensive.
22	As above
23	this plan has some specific actions
24	This plan is totally inadequate - there are no goals, targets, timelines or costings. It does not differentiate between mitigation actions and adaptation. It fails in outling how and when emissions are going to be reduced to zero. Please pay for consultants to write a proper plan.
25	It is good that it has been thought about
26	That there is a Climate Change Action Plan.
27	The action plan sounds good but needs firmer detail. The strategy is appropriate but 'when'?
28	Council alread does enough. Tell the climate pests to leave council alone and stop bothering people. Save trees and don't print this crap.
29	Hardly anything
30	absolute waste of time and money worrying about a thing that A. isnt happening and B. what ever the whole of Australia does wont change the atmosphere one bit let alone the great south west of Victoria given that Carbo Dioxide is 0.4% of the worlds atmosphere and china emits in 16 day what Australia emits in a year
31	28 actions, aiming to reduce land fill by 80% which is something that COS can directly impact
32	Well presented, good structure, comprehensive

Q4 Is there anything you think should be included that is not already part of either document?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy	25
Draft Climate Change Action Plan	32

#	DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
1	no
2	Real numbers on carbon reductions and zero emissions targets with dates
3	Strategies for change, timelines, review periods, actual targets, ongoing community consultation
4	No comment. Unfortunately presenting both documents at the same time with a short consultation period meant I had to prioritise and spend my time on the Climate Change Action Plan. So I cant add valuable comment here.
5	inclusion of the coastal environment as a bioregion; annual reviews of performance; a real sense of urgency; inclusion of focus on more local renewable electricity generation, proper targets with baselines and timeframes; much more attention to reduction of agricultural emissions
6	Timeframes and names of those accountable
7	More specific goals, targets, outline of HOW these goals will be achieved and how the council will measure their progress in meeting these3
8	I'm going to put all my answers to these questions under the action plan part.
9	Management of feral cats within townships; education re legal responsibility of dog owners to prevent dogs chasing wild life, minimising ambient light from houses and esp new houses as pqrt of permot process, policing tree removal (often occurs before a planning permit is lodged). ensuring that where large trees are removed on private land owners are required to created artificial nesting hollows
10	Indigenous leadership defined by indigenous people.
11	None
12	The importance of Agroforestry in facilitating many of the goals and objectives listed in the document, including increasing biodiversity and water values, ecosystem resilience, carbon zero farms etc. Forest thinning is also important to increase resilience of our native forests in the face of climate change.
13	Tight, measurable and accountable actions
14	ACTUAL engagement with the Shire's First Nation peoples, not mere acknowledgments. Employ a representative on COS
15	Habitat for Grey-Headed Flying foxes - an endangered animal that the shire treats like a feral pest because they are roosting in the Botanic gardens.
16	Clear timelines and who is responsible for meeting the goals
17	waterways management in rural areas
18	NA
19	Yes, there is MUCH that is not in this document
20	We need greater action right now!!
21	How both strategy and action plan link into oither projects. There appears to be significant crossover with the Colac Colac Civic Health and Rail Precinct plans.
22	Put a line in that says; "It is not councils business to interfere in people lives and tell them what they must do".
23	Better details on how it links to the CCAP
24	Acknowledgement that overseas carbon credits may not be as desirable as it first appeared.
25	No

Attachment 9.5.3 Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP

#	DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN
1	an "energy expo" to showcase future energy sources to regional farmers, businesses, and households
2	How you're actually going to achieve the targets and respond to the crisis. Too much 'support of others' and not enough responsibility taken yourself to lead and actually physically reduce emissions and restore the land.
3	More ambitious, specific, measurable, time-limited targets, with lines of accountability attached to each.
4	Strategies, timelines for targets, reviews, community input to be captured in a climate change committee
5	Rising sea level, coastal erosion, resilience, incorporating climate change into every single action and policy within council.
6	Specific actions, specific timeframes, resources required to achieve targets, identification of who will be responsible for delivery of the actions, annual monitoring and review against the targets.
7	Timeframes and names of those accountable
8	More specific goals, targets, outline of HOW these goals will be achieved and how the council will measure their progress in meeting these
9	With all the work that the shire has identified that it wants to do, including the targets, I think the shire needs to employ a sustainability officer who can drive these initiatives. Otherwise who is responsible to make these things happen?
10	Increased green waste collections in preparation for the bushfire season to decrease material being burnt as part of preparation. This is more than green bins - it is roadside greenwaste collection from driveways in Sept, Oct, Nov
11	More accountability in terms of who in particular is responsible, details of measuring, timelines.
12	consultation with Traditional Owners must happen FIRST and immediately so their knowledge and wishes are embedded in the response from the outset
13	Indigenous leadership defined by indigenous people.
14	No Action
15	Include start dates, whether funded or low-cost, and if action is in progress or has met goal by 2024.
16	The importance of Agroforestry in facilitating many of the goals and objectives listed in the document, including increasing biodiversity and water values, ecosystem resilience, carbon zero farms etc. Forest thinning is also important to increase resilience of our native forests in the face of climate change. This has not been mentioned.
17	Tight, measurable and accountable actions
18	ditto above
19	Collection and recycling of refrigerants from dumped fridges and air-con units. Fluorocarbons are a GHG that is much more destructive gas than Co2. 2
20	More focus on emissions mitigation both council and community, more targets needed
21	Specific targets and timeframes for all identified issues. Accountable person/role for all actions and measurable and reportable outcomes. Interim targets. Stronger partnership with the community and other organisations to make use of existing knowledge.
22	See my submission
23	a strong focus on actions to reduce CO2 admissions due to Agriculture. (not just weeds and feral animals)
24	Most timeframes are "ongoing" with no urgency apparent.
25	specific dates and timeframes for actions
26	As above
27	Yes, there is MUCH that is not in this document
28	It need to be way more ambitious. Net zero by 2040 is not good enough. We need net zero emissions ASAP!
29	Add a line that says; "The Climate Action Nutters must remember that Council needs to spend time on the 97% of the community that don't force their ideologies upon others and terms like, climate emergencies, are just words that achieve nothing".
30	Targets, timelines, budgets, evaluation methods and most of all community engagement
31	more specific target & timelines, attempting to get a grant to convert Bluewater to electricity, the progress the shire has made in reducing their emissions.
32	Address gas use - transitioning away from from gas

Q5 Are there any aspects of either document that you do not agree with or do not like?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy	21
Draft Climate Change Action Plan	32

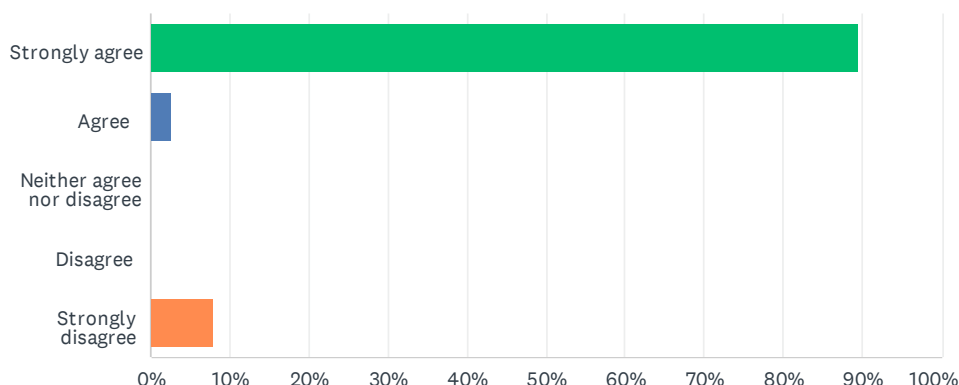
#	DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY
1	no
2	Lack of real numbers on targets and no dates
3	Not enough action, details, ongoing use of chemicals
4	No Comment
5	The Strategy does not adequately address the real and urgent threats and challenges of climate change.
6	I wish the goals were more proactive and aspirational (specifically, to match the vision described), with specific timelines and plans for accountability and review
7	See below
8	No specific goals that have a plan or people to do the action now
9	All
10	Looks fine
11	lack of tight, measurable and accountable actions
12	This document is very wordy and doesn't seem practical - there doesn't seem to be any targets or goals. It's difficult to remember what it's about - I've read it twice and can't remember what's in it.
13	Seems confused overall with little relationship between policy, themes, goals, objectives, actions
14	no real sense that Council can take a leader in changing community habits
15	NA
16	The soft, non-specific language
17	Not ambitious enough.
18	Lack of timelines for completion and minimal targets. A focus on Council actions which do not appear to translate into actions for residents or businesses in terms of their involvement in the drafts.
19	All of it seems like overkill and a vast waste of ratepayers money.
20	Lots - no real protection of biodiversity
21	No

#	DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN
1	no
2	No responsibility from council for their part in taking action. What action are you actually taking? What are your emissions targets? What are your carbon reductions and net zero targets? By what date will you do these? What's the step by step plan and process to get to these dates? ie what are you doing in 2023, 2024, until 2030, until 2040, until 2050.
3	Vague targets, many of which are worded in such a way that Council could get away with doing very little. Lack of clarity about whether renewable energy targets will be achieved within the Shire or by buying in 'green energy', lack of clarity and ambition in many areas such as biodiversity and electric vehicles.
4	Lack of detail and solid targets and outcomes
5	The plan lacks action, commitment, targets. I reeks of being a tick box exercise that has no ownership
6	This is NOT A PLAN! There is a total disconnect between the rhetoric about the climate change and a Plan which is so vague, so lacking in the basics of a workable response to addressing the urgent issues we face.
7	Yes lots

Attachment 9.5.3 Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP

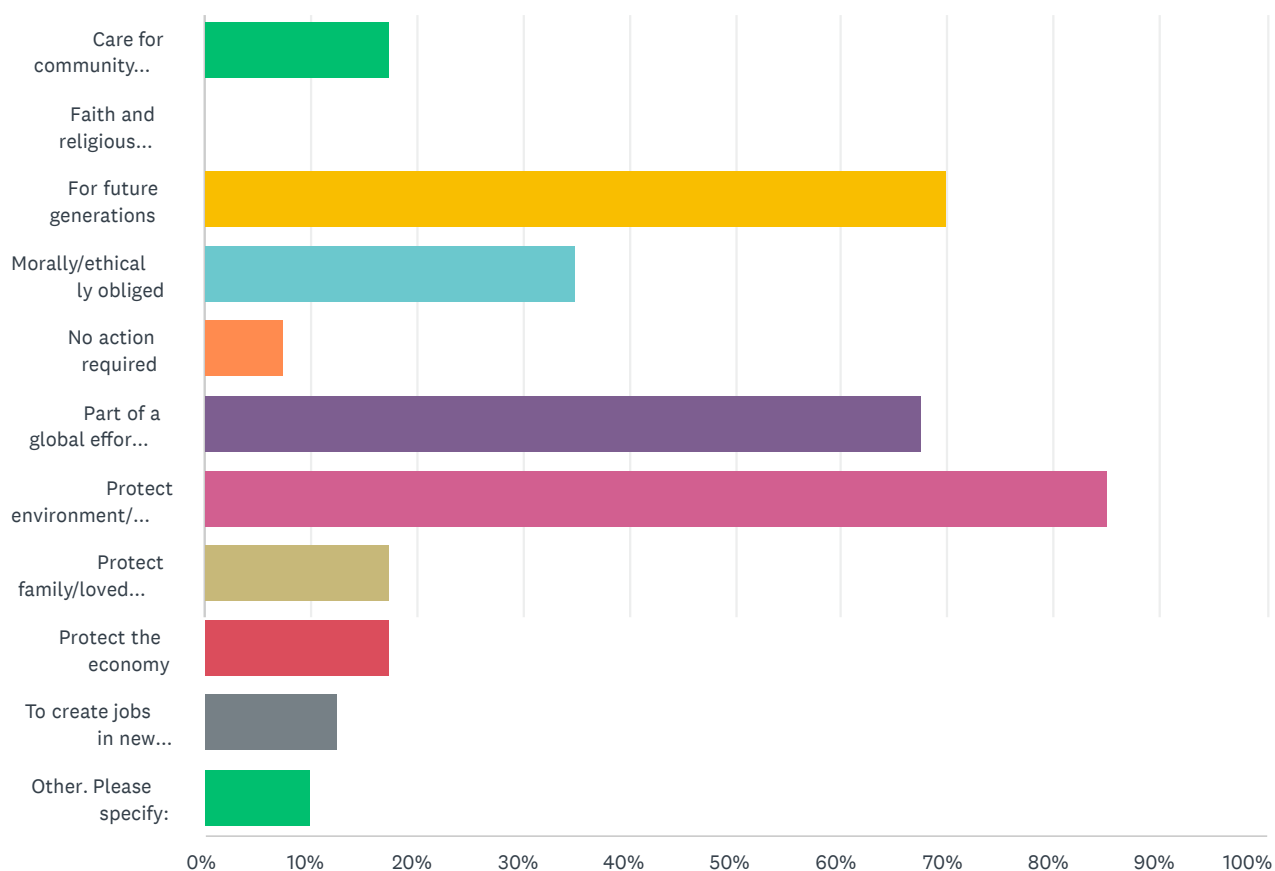
8	I wish the goals were more proactive and aspirational (specifically, to match the vision described), with specific timelines and plans for accountability and review
9	I think that the targets are a bit underwhelming, they are not really high enough. I think a lot of the so called targets are more like ideals or vague goals that aren't really supported by proper action. In short, a lot of the goals aren't SMART.
10	More emphasis on Council capacity to influence community by advocating for initiatives such as community batteries
11	It is not well laid out or easy for the layman to read and understand
12	extremely wordy and very difficult for the average person to follow, whilst 'actions' are not stated clearly / directly enough
13	Wordy nebulous language. No specific goals that can work now.
14	All
15	Actions should include whole community actions not be restricted to Council operations
16	Looks fine
17	lack of tight, measurable and accountable actions
18	The plan could be so much better if it had been written with more community input. It is lacking in ambition to tackle a crisis that is going to affect us all.
19	Doesn't follow Councils own Environment Sustainability Policy with a focus area on emissions mitigation.
20	Lack of urgency and specific, measurable targets with proper accountability
21	See my submission
22	lack of actions addressing Agricultural practices
23	Not well structured - wordy and difficult to follow
24	lack of target dates makes the document look limp
25	As above
26	The absence of specific, action-oriented language
27	It's not ambitious enough.
28	The whole thing is garbage. As if there will be any action anyway. Tell these climate alarmists (all 6 of them in the community and a couple of councillors) to just go away.
29	Emissions targets are poor and only relate to Council operations, no plan to "get off gas", Blue water not even mentioned, sustainable buildings section has some good points but doesn't go far enough - no targets, transport and converting to EVs is better and there are some targets but no clear way of how we are going to get there, water section has some good points but no plan to tackle coastal erosion, there is no community involvement or engagement in the operation of the plan and there has to be a community committee running this for the next 10 years (Council are just not up to doing it without outside help)
30	there should be no money or time wasted on the climate change fraud.
31	Reviewed in 2028 - seems too long off when progress need to be monitored more regularly.
32	No

Q6 Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the statement: “I accept that urgent action is required to respond to a changing climate and reduce carbon emissions by individuals, businesses and all levels of government”.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	34
Agree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	0
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	3
TOTAL	38

Q7 How important to you are the following reasons for taking action to address changes to the climate? Please nominate your top three:

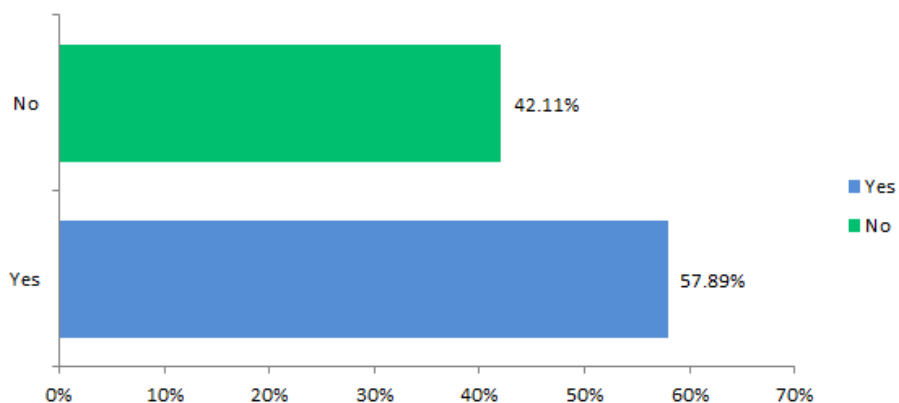


Total Respondents: 40

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Care for community members	7
Faith and religious beliefs	0
For future generations	28
Morally/ethically obliged	14
No action required	3
Part of a global effort to address climate change	27
Protect environment/natural assets	34
Protect family/loved ones	7
Protect the economy	7
To create jobs in new technology sectors	5
Other. Please specify:	4

#	OTHER. PLEASE SPECIFY:
1	Restore and revive unseeded land we have destroyed
2	All of these things are equally important and while I have to choose 3, they all are valid and equal.
3	Indigenous leadership please
4	Decrease the population. Start by neutering the Climate action team.

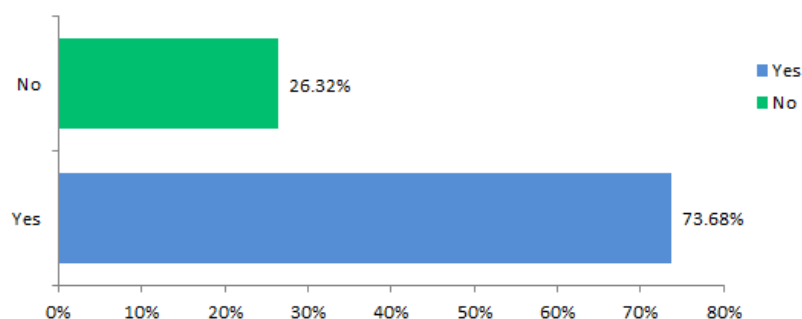
Q8 Until all carbon emissions can be eliminated, which will require significant investment and new technology, is it still important to maintain carbon neutrality even if this means Council remains reliant on purchasing carbon offsets?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No	8
Yes	11
Why?	18
TOTAL	19

#	WHY?
1	be careful of illusory offsets
2	Any investment should be locally based- eg rate reductions for tree planting
3	Council could plant sufficient trees within the shire as offset and ensure all ne developments have wetlands to enable blue carbon capture
4	Firstly carbon neutrality needs to go beyond just council activities, it must include the wider community. Secondly Council can also achieve carbon neutrality by investing in renewables and revegetation within the our own shire.
5	Purcased offsets cannot be trusted. Offsett unavoidable emissions by generating more local renewable energy, buying in pure green electricity, by reducing, reducing, reducing energy needs and fossil fuel use.
6	Purchase only local offsets if must
7	I don't think is a simple yes/no question and am curious why you are posing it as so, without context
8	This is green washing. We need to act and create our own offsets
9	I don't think that the council should be lazy and just rely of carbon offsets, especially when it has been shown that these are superdodgy and in effect probably make the situation worse. The council would probably be better off coming up with its own carbon offset program - we have lots of opportunities here to plant our own trees!
10	use the funds as suggested in question 9
11	It depends on what the nature of thge carbon offsets are. There is much greenwashing around.
12	neither: Council should NOT be at all reliant on purchasing carbon offsets, which are extremely problematic, AND Council must make those significant investments in new technology to reduce emissions - Council must face the fact that sweeping changes in the way we call go about things are required
13	CO2 is a false global warming gas
14	Council can works towards creating a carbon neutral shire by promoting agroforestry. If products from the land and land management activities in the COS are done in a way that reaches carbon neutral (or even carbon negative) then the COS would be successful. The money invested in short term credits could be better spent on creating long-term solutions. It would have to be weighed up.
15	I do not agree with Council purchasing offsets from overseas sources. I want council to actively pursue developing locally based offset initiatives for the short to medium term, potentially by partnering with the agricultural sector.
16	There are other ways of achieving benefits within the Shire including : overseas. Offsets can be better utilised within the Shire, some ideas being: allocate the funds to purchase heat pump hot water services or other electrical appliances for low income households, putting more solar panels on council properties
17	There are better ways to spend money than offsets - try reducing emissions
18	Taking responsibility for emissions until they can be completely eliminated.

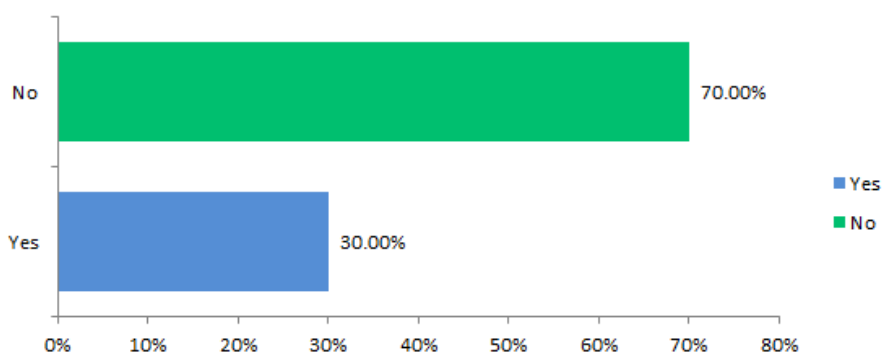
Q9 Would you support Council foregoing carbon neutrality if it enabled Council to instead direct these funds towards future projects that can reduce Council's carbon emissions?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	14
No	5
Why?	18
TOTAL	19

#	WHY?
1	No, you should be doing both. No actual projects listed so can't trust you will use the money for this. You need to be carbon neutral by end of 2024 by buying green energy and then put projects in place by end of 2023 with end dates to achieve zero emissions by end of 2030 as a maximum.
2	More transparent
3	Long-term big picture to be achieved within COS
4	Yes if you were committed and serious. Council would require expertise to achieve this.
5	Do both
6	I'm not sure - I would need to know more details and what the plan actually is.
7	There is no time to lose. We need ACTION now
8	I've answered this question above - I don't think that the council should be lazy and just rely of carbon offsets, especially when it has been shown that these are superdodgy and in effect probably make the situation worse. The council would probably be better off coming up with its own carbon offset program - we have lots of opportunities here to plant our own trees!
9	Once again, more details are needed for me to make an educated response. I would support projects that empower community responsibility and involvement with council projects.
10	Council must find a way to maintain carbon neutrality AND direct funds towards future projects
11	Just do it all now. With bushfires,floods,disaster,storms, you won't have a job. Do it now.
12	Everything should be geared towards emissions reduction. Offsets are a last resort - and should be developed locally AS emissions reductions. E.g. via help electrifying community homes and businesses. The whole community needs to head urgently towards carbon neutrality.
13	Because there are too many question about if offsets achieve anything
14	Up to a point, specifically if funds were directed to eliminating the highest emissions sources first - for example Bluewater heating
15	Should be able to do both
16	i dont accept that there's only one path to carbon neutrality
17	We need both. We don't need Christmas decorations - use those funds.
18	Both important

Q10 Would your response to question 9 be different if it takes a number of years to accumulate sufficient funds needed to undertake the next emission-reduction project?



Attachment 9.5.3 Survey Results from Community Engagement on Draft ESS & CCAP

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	6
No	14
Why?	17
TOTAL	20

#	WHY?
1	Gather funds and do what you need but it needs action now. Look to other councils such as Mornington Peninsula as a guide and support. Major funding needs to be put into emission reduction now. If it was done by end of 2023 you would pay it off in 5-10 years. Save money in the future by investing now.
2	It will take time to change but the incentive must be there rather than bought out
3	A combination of both perhaps. BUT the offset would need to be real and not just another scam.
4	Depends what that project is an how much emission reduction it would produce
5	Put millions into climate rather than sporting fields that are already fabulous.
6	I think this question is really hard to answer - I would need to look at specific detail of what the suggestion would be.
7	need more info - how many years?
8	Yes. Immediate action is needed
9	these survey fields don't allow me to respond either 'Yes' or 'No' and also answer 'Why?' so you will not capture meaningful responses to questions 8-10 which is a shame - although the way you have framed these questions is itself highly problematic; regardless of the cost, reducing carbon emissions is URGENT and IMPERATIVE, therefore it cannot matter the cost, funding MUST be prioritised for all efforts in this direction
10	Time is up. Get movingnow
11	Gosh, how many years. UN states action needed within next 8-10 years. Emissions reduction requires priority funding. This question suggests this is not an urgent issue, at odds with the statements in preambles to both draft docs.
12	Council should borrow the money to reduce emissions
13	I would rather the Council borrow funds over the medium term to achieve quick gains in reducing emissions - I do not accept the idea of kicking vital projects down the road on the premise of needing to accumulate funds.
14	There can be substantial savings in getting away from gas for example and potentially government incentives available to help with that as well.
	Urgent action is needed
15	once again, the premise limits the vision
16	Use what would be spent on offsets to borrow for emissions reduction projects
17	That's too far away.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN: SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS WITH OFFICER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TOPIC: STRUCTURE AND GENERAL COMMENTS ON ESS & CCAP	
48 submissions	Officer comments & recommendations
<p>Supportive comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council should be commended for releasing a draft ESS and CCAP and asking for community feedback • Great achievement – documents are impressive/there are some great actions • Clear that a power of work has gone into this – it shows • ESS is easy to read, well written and aesthetically pleasing • CCAP has a good description of the climate change problem for our region and sets some excellent objectives. This will help educate our community • Objectives laid out – particularly in relation to Goal 1 in ESS – are excellent and have my full support • Supportive of CCAP, it is necessary given climate predications • ESS and CCAP are the most important strategies for Council at this time • Appreciate consultation that has gone into the development of the CCAP and the direction that the plan is heading • Purpose of the ESS is clear – framework to guide Council’s management over the next ten years • Welcome the inclusion of adaptation measures. • ‘We are pleased to see the shire taking action themselves; engaging with other climate change leadership initiatives across the region; and recognising the role Council must plan in inspiring and supporting mitigation and adaptation initiatives across the whole community, including industry, business, community and households.’ [FLARE] • ‘We welcome your [Council’s] increased commitment to acting on the greatest global challenge of our generation, and encourage you to make the financial and resource commitments required to deliver these actions and beyond.’ [FLARE] • Plan needs to be finalised by end of 2023 so that funds for action can be allocated in next year’s budget and some action should be taken by end 2023 • Commendable to see the community and stakeholder engagement undertaken in the development of the documents 	<p>Supportive comments noted.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS has achieved a degree of cooperative engagement through its participation with BRACE (Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy) Hope Council continues to be a member of the Barwon South West Climate Alliance – it certainly could not claim to be or aspire to be a leader if it wasn't 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council needs to take community feedback on board in redrafting the CCAP 	<p>Consideration of community feedback of the draft documents is outlined in this table.</p> <p>CHANGES TO DRAFT ARE PENDING FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCAP is too wordy and hard to follow 	<p>Officers have given careful consideration to the content, readability and accessibility of the drafts during the development of the documents. However, the scope, nuance and complexity of many of the topics discussed require a level of detail that cannot be avoided.</p> <p>MODIFICATIONS OFFICERS RECOMMEND ARE OUTLINED IN THIS TABLE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make interrelationship between ESS and CCAP clearer so that the distinction between each plan's goal is clear 	<p>The relationship between the ESS & CCAP is outlined in Section 8 of the CCAP under 'Strategic Alignment'. In addition, each action in the CCAP indicates the ESS goals to which it contributes.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan lacks accountability, needs clarity on who is accountable for implementation of actions 	<p>Environmental sustainability and climate change considerations and responses require a multi-disciplinary, and often multi-agency, approach. The CCAP indicates who will lead each action, leaving opportunity for this to be further defined as projects develop. Many actions in the plan will involve a range of projects to be delivered and accountability for the implementation of individual projects will be allocated on a case-by-case basis depending on the expertise required.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCAP has an excellent outline of scientific evidence for climate change and need for urgent action – also some appropriate objectives, however it does not have all the characteristics for an effective plan CCAP does not have the key features of an action plan (i.e. is not a plan), such as actions that align with goals and objectives of the strategy, timeframes for implementation of each, resources required and availability, business units responsible for delivery, and Council's progress against identified actions 	<p>The draft CCAP includes clear targets, defined focus areas and specific actions that are clearly linked to the goals and objectives of the ESS. The plan also includes timeframes for implementation and resourcing requirements. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting is also outlined in section 12 of the plan. Officers believe that the draft plan provides an effective yet adaptable pathway for meaningful climate action.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Visible' impacts of climate change as discussed in CCAP should be broadened to all impacts 	<p>Global, national, regional and local climate change impacts are all outlined in sections 1, 2 and 3 of CCAP. The reference to 'visible' is part of contextualisation, allowing the reader to connect with the complexity of climate science outlined further in the document. In no way does this denote a limitation of the scope of the CCAP to what is immediately apparent or visible.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both documents demonstrate an immense amount of great work and would benefit from external, objective, professional writers to review and create the final documents 	<p>The development of the draft ESS and CCAP has been an iterative process that has involved both internal and external advice, input and review by many professional peers and stakeholders, in terms of content, structure and expression. It is not considered of benefit to Council that external review of the documents be undertaken prior to their endorsement.</p>

Attachment 9.5.4 Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations

	NO EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS REVIEW RECOMMENDED; MODIFICATIONS AND AMENDMENTS RECOMMENDED BY OFFICERS ARE OUTLINED IN THIS TABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years is too long for a plan of this nature, given the rapid changes occurring – will become redundant 	<p>Climate change responses and actions outlined in the plan in many cases require careful planning and sustained efforts and resourcing over a number of years for successful outcomes. The ten-year life of the plan aligns well with the targets proposed by Council, while monitoring, evaluation and review of the plan will ensure its relevance and adaptability.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many actions in CCAP for which Council is not responsible or only partially 	<p>Action on climate change requires a multi-disciplinary, and often multi-agency approach. The CCAP therefore includes a range of actions that involve external stakeholders. While it does focus on areas directly within Council's control and influence, it also identifies Council's role as a collaborator in the wider region in recognition of the importance of collective climate action that is outside the direct remit of Council.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to other Councils for examples of good plans (e.g. Mornington Peninsula) and best practice 	<p>The development of the draft ESS and CCAP has involved extensive literature review, including a large number of contemporary climate action plans, both that from local government and other organisations.</p> <p>NO FURTHER DOCUMENT REVIEW RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add simple, one page graphic at the start of the CCAP to capture the plan as a whole 	RECOMMEND THAT OFFICERS DEVELOP A CCAP SUMMARY AFTER FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE ESS AND CCAP BY COUNCIL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESS Goal 4 (4.2.3 and 4.2.5) are the same – please correct 	DUPLICATION ERROR: AMENDED IN FINAL DRAFT ESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add 'together' to the phrase 'Our response centres around actions that Council and our community can take together for climate change mitigation, adaption and building climate change resilience' 	RECOMMEND INCLUSION OF 'TOGETHER' IN CCAP P.1, PARAGRAPH 5

TOPIC: COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT/ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY	
45 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More community engagement/involvement in planning, monitoring, review and risk assessment for the life of the ESS & CCAP, with wide representation Genuine collaboration with the community and stakeholders should be prioritised and listed as urgent (and also be well funded) Provide community meetings to explain what is happening in this space CCAP does not propose serious actions for meaningful two-way communication with the Apollo Bay community – Council needs to visit AB community regularly to understand its needs/the impact of climate change Maintain clear lines of communication to the community about actions being undertaken under the CCAP Inputs and reviews of progress should include monitoring from the community to include qualitative as well as quantitative measures 	<p>Contemporary ways of collaborating and engaging with all sectors of the community such as community meetings, focus groups, open forums, surveys and online engagement lead to increased and more representative stakeholder participation, and can be tailored to the needs, issues and/or sectors of the community. Given that environmental and climate change challenges are so complex and wide-ranging, a singular model is unlikely to effectively address the broad spectrum of social, cultural, economic and technical issues. A flexible model of action and project-based regular collaboration and engagement will be utilised to engage with the community on climate change and environmental sustainability issues and programs. Engagement will be delivered across the whole of the shire.</p> <p>RECOMMEND THAT ACTION 4.11 OF CCAP IS AMENDED TO REMOVE REFERENCE TO EXPLORING FUTURE MODES OF ENGAGEMENT AND REWORDED WITH MORE ACTION FOCUSED LANGUAGE TO: “FACILITATE WHEREVER POSSIBLE ACTIVE, WIDE-RANGING AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL AREAS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN”</p> <p>AND</p> <p>RECOMMEND ADDITION OF NEW OUTCOME UNDER ESS GOAL 5: “ONGOING ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY GROUPS”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership, partnership and advocacy work of Council needs to increase – areas of advocacy are not robust enough and should be broadened Lack of clarity about what the priorities of advocacy will be 	<p>Council determines and reviews its advocacy priorities regularly. Officers believe that the advocacy actions outlined in the draft documents give Council sufficient scope for advocacy on behalf of the community in relation to environmental sustainability and climate change related issues and concerns now and into the future.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS should collaborate with local Landcare networks and CCMA's to establish ongoing programs that encourage local landowners to undertake better environmental stewardship of their land, including incentivising participation in these programs (including rate rebates) 	<p>This is directly addressed by CCAP Actions 3.3 and 4.9, which support staff working with community and agencies to advance these objectives, but it is not considered appropriate to provide rate incentives in this way.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED THAT CCAP ACTION 3.3 IS CHANGED TO:</p> <p>“PARTNER WITH BARWON WATER, WANNON WATER, THE CCMA AND OUR COMMUNITY TO IMPROVE LAND STEWARDSHIP, BIODIVERSITY VALUES AND ECOLOGICAL HEALTH”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is essential that Council collaborates with state & federal government and Landcare groups on invasive species control 	<p>This is directly addressed by CCAP Action 3.1</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please add Otway Agroforestry Network to list of community groups and NGOs in ESS and CCAP 	<p>The Otway Agroforestry Network will be added to the list of community groups and NON-Government Organisations in Section 8, p.9 of the CCAP (the ESS does not include a detailed list of groups and organisations).</p> <p>MODIFICATION TO THE CCAP RECOMMENDED AS PER ABOVE</p>

TOPIC: TARGETS, GOALS AND TIMEFRAMES	
44 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good overarching target for community to be net zero by 2040 but this should be brought forward to 2035 Shorten timeframes for actions – out as far as 2040 is far too long for a zero carbon community (CCAP) Should be transitioning to zero carbon emissions by 2030 rather than 2040 Targets in CCAP do not adequately address adaptation 	<p>The Victorian Government has some of the most ambitious emissions reduction targets in the world – having set a target to reduce Victoria's emissions by 75-80% by 2035 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. In the context of community reduction target setting, it is unrealistic for Council to be substantially more ambitious than the state government target proposed, given its operations account for less than 1% of municipal emissions and its lack of direct control over the major contributors to municipal emissions.</p> <p>NO CHANGE RECOMMENDED TO THE 2040 NET ZERO COMMUNITY TARGET; TARGETS WILL BE REASSESSED AS PART OF FUTURE REVIEWS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions are too generalised – they should be written as SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable within budget, Realistic and Time-framed) Timelines for the achievement of the goals and actions are not adequately allocated – must be made firm and measurable Shorter term, more concrete targets are required 	<p>Given the limits of Council's remit, jurisdiction and resources: goals, objectives, targets and actions in the ESS and CCAP are aligned with appropriate levels of control and influence to deliver the desired outcomes. This will ensure the maximum efficacy of the ESS and CCAP in delivering meaningful, specific and attainable outcomes throughout the life of the documents. Timeframes for action implementation are outlined in the draft CCAP as: 'short' (1-3 years); 'medium' (4-6 years); 'long' (5-10); and 'ongoing'. This will allow Council to prioritise action while allowing for detailed project planning, and meaningful collaboration and input from other stakeholders. It also takes into account the need for external funding and annual Council budget allocations that cannot be pre-empted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use more committal language – e.g. 'require' rather than 'encourage and foster'; 'provide' rather than 'advocate' 	<p>Council has carefully considered language used in the draft documents to clearly denote its position and ability to act upon or deliver desired outcomes in the context of its remit, jurisdiction and resources. Further, the development of the draft ESS and CCAP has been an iterative process that has involved both internal and external advice, input and review by many professional peers and stakeholders, in terms of content, structure and expression.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear metrics need to be developed to measure progress on all actions 	<p>The measures of progress, and success of actions and outcomes, will be both qualitative and quantitative. Officers intend to develop a 'dashboard'-style progress tracking and reporting system (data visualisation of work achieved) to ensure that there is real-time data delivering simple and accessible progress on performance to our communities.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED CHANGE IN SECTION 12 OF CCAP TO OUTLINE THE INCLUSION OF A 'DASHBOARD' STYLE REPORTING SYSTEM ACCESSIBLE TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS AND AMEND WORDING OF THIRD OUTCOME UNDER ESS GOAL 6 TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO REPORTING VIA COUNCIL'S ANNUAL REPORT</p>

Attachment 9.5.4 Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All targets must have baselines (e.g. there is no baseline year for potable water target and increased canopy cover) 	<p>Council's operational targets have established baselines (e.g. water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions). Municipal targets relating to waste and community greenhouse gas emissions rely on data provided by state government. Targets relating to urban greening and canopy cover will require the establishment of 2023-24 baseline, which will be the first step in implementation in relation to urban greening.</p> <p>RECOMMEND CHANGE TO INCLUDE A NEW ACTION UNDER FOCUS AREA 1 IN CCAP: "UNDERTAKE CANOPY COVER AND HEAT VULNERABILITY MAPPING TO SET A CANOPY COVER BASELINE AND HELP PRIORITISE LOCATIONS FOR URBAN GREENING INITIATIVES"</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESS and CCAP should be frequently reviewed (in tandem) and altered accordingly in the context of the crisis we are facing – currently proposed review at 2028 is dangerously inadequate, should be reviewed annually 	<p>Climate change responses and actions outlined in the plan in many cases require careful planning and sustained efforts and resourcing over a number of years for successful outcomes.</p> <p>A full, detailed annual review of the ESS and CCAP would be cost-prohibitive and resource intensive, where those resources could be better served in project delivery. Monitoring and annual reporting will ensure successful implementation and allow for re-prioritisation, if needed, to ensure balanced progress across all focus areas in the ESS and CCAP. The ESS will be reviewed at the end of its life in 2033. The review of the CCAP will be undertaken within 12 months of a new Council Plan being adopted to ensure relevance and alignment with Council priorities.</p> <p>RECOMMEND THAT THE CCAP IS REVIEWED WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF A NEW COUNCIL PLAN BEING ADOPTED TO ENSURE RELEVANCE AND ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND WORDING TO EXPRESS THIS IS ADDED IN SECTION 12 OF THE CCAP</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community targets are missing Council should focus on leading and supporting residents and businesses across the whole shire to become carbon neutral and set targets – rather than focusing solely on Council operations Support agriculture to set a local emission reduction target and help them achieve it Set targets to reduce potable water usage and provide education for households to do this 	<p>Community targets for net zero, as well as waste reduction, are included in the CCAP. The achievement of the 2040 net zero community emissions target proposed in the CCAP will require substantial action across residential, commercial and industrial sectors, including energy, transport, agriculture, manufacturing and construction. There are many actions within the CCAP that seek to influence and support community climate action. Council does not have a large influence on the achievement of targets at a broad community level. Council is therefore focused on the impacts it can directly control.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting on actions should occur annually 	<p>Annual reporting will occur to Council's Executive Management, Councillors and community.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: RENEWABLE ENERGY & EFFICIENCY MEASURES	
41 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and incentivise bulk buy programs, in particular solar and batteries and help fund them through no interest loans from Council and repayments through rates Support programs like 'All Electric Homes' Encourage the removal and replacement of gas appliances with efficient electric options Low income households should be given grants/incentives/concession rates to encourage uptake of solar systems and energy efficiency retrofits Provide access to programs, incentives and financial assistance for community, particularly vulnerable members of the community to make their homes more efficient Council could facilitate programs to help community to insulate and draught-proof pre-existing homes 	<p>Council has participated in, supported and strongly promoted a number of community bulk buy programs for solar generation systems, solar hot water, hot water heat pumps and batteries since 2011. Council is currently partnering with Geelong Sustainability to deliver the Electric Homes program across five municipalities in the Barwon South West region that includes bulk buy options for solar systems, solar batteries, heat pumps, split system air conditioners and residential EV chargers. Directly addressed by CCAP Action 1.5. State and federal governments provide financial incentives, rebates and no interest loans to support households, and they have better capacity than Council to do so.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of ultra-fast EV charging stations should be prioritised – the entire shire is lacking in this infrastructure 	<p>Council is currently working with providers to install and operate fast public EV chargers in Colac and Apollo Bay in Council's public carparks. Council will continue to advocate for EV charging infrastructure locally and regionally. Council is working with the Barwon South West Climate Alliance towards enabling faster transition to EVs. Directly addressed by ESS Objective 3.1.2 and CCAP Action 1.8 and 4.4.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS should install large scale solar or wind on all COS buildings, plus a mega battery, to ensure it is genuinely carbon zero – buying 'green' energy from mainstream sources is a furphy Install solar on Council's many owned and managed buildings Council's operations should be powered by 100% renewables by 2030 without relying on green power or offsets 	<p>Council currently has 275kW solar generation capacity installed across a number of facilities and will continue to install further solar panel systems on facilities that have compatible electricity demand and usage to maximise the benefits of solar generation. Council also joined the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) which is the largest emissions reduction project ever undertaken by the local government sector in Australia (51 Councils) saving 260,000 tonnes of carbon emissions from entering the atmosphere — the same as taking 90,000 cars off the road. Through VECO, Colac Otway's operations are powered by 100% renewable electricity generated by western Victorian windfarms, including street lights and all Council facilities.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community batteries 	<p>Council continues to support community efforts to investigate the feasibility and local installation of community batteries, such as the Neighbourhood Battery Feasibility Study undertaken by Southern Otway Sustainable. (CCAP Action 5.3)</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old tip sites should be used for solar and battery 	<p>Council in principle supports this concept, and there may be opportunities for this in the future. There are significant complexities in relation to Council-managed former landfill sites, and therefore it is not deemed appropriate to have specific actions relating to this in the ESS and CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

Attachment 9.5.4 Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should support Southern Otway Sustainable to get/create a community solar system for Apollo Bay – this can be used as model for other townships 	<p>Council continues to support community efforts to investigate the feasibility and local installation of community batteries, such as the Neighbourhood Battery Feasibility Study undertaken by Southern Otway Sustainable and 100% Renewable Apollo Bay Roadmap. (CCAP Action 5.3)</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture and recycle refrigerants from appliances that have been dumped at the tip 	<p>This will be investigated through future tender processes for Council's waste contracts.</p> <p>RECOMMEND CHANGE TO INCLUDE A NEW ACTION UNDER FOCUS AREA 2 IN CCAP TO INCLUDE A MECHANISM FOR REFRIGERANT CAPTURE AND RECYCLE IN FUTURE COUNCIL WASTE CONTRACTS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Powercor to address all barriers to solar generation and grid connections 	<p>The state government is trying to address the limitations of the electricity grid to support improved uptake of household and larger scale renewable energy. While this is not an area that Council can directly address, Council advocates on initiatives of this nature, including through the Barwon South West Climate Alliance and the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should transition its fleet to EVs – creating a detailed progressive changeover timetable (that includes heavy plant) 	<p>The development of a Fleet Transition Plan is identified as Action 1.6 in the CCAP, and is currently under development.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ESS AND CCAP	
34 Submissions	Officer comments & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should utilise knowledge and expertise of community members to help implement the CCAP 	<p>Council will maintain a strong focus on knowledge-sharing, community engagement and collaboration on a project-by-project basis throughout the life of the CCAP. This assurance is expressed in section 8 of the CCAP, p.9 and action 4.11.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council needs to adequately resource and fund the implementation of the ESS and CCAP by employing more staff and allocating dedicated funds for implementation in its budget annually. 	<p>The implementation of the ESS and CCAP will require a whole-of-Council approach. Funding of actions will require both Council investment and external funding and grants. When the strategy and plan are adopted by Council, actions and projects will be scoped and costed in more detail to determine funding requirements, including potentially project costs, and additional staffing requirements for project management and delivery. The request for increased funding is noted and will be considered by Council as part of its annual budget process.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS is limited by jurisdiction and resources 	<p>Given the limits of Council's remit, jurisdiction and resources: goals, objectives, targets and actions in the ESS and CCAP are aligned with appropriate levels of control and influence to deliver the desired outcomes. This will ensure the maximum efficacy of the ESS and CCAP in delivering meaningful, specific and attainable outcomes throughout the life of the documents.</p> <p>ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AS PART OF IMPLEMENTATION - NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions should be assigned to specific areas within Council for delivery 	<p>Environmental sustainability and climate change considerations and responses require a multi-disciplinary and in many cases a whole-of-Council approach. Many actions outlined will require not only physical changes to infrastructure but also significant changes to the way we operate (including policy, governance and procedural changes). They will often also require broad-reaching societal change (such as education, behavioural change etc). When the strategy and plan are adopted by Council, actions and projects will be scoped and planned in detail, and the Council unit best placed to 'lead' will be allocated.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a climate action advisory committee to assist with implementation of CCAP • Council needs to immediately establish a Stakeholder and Community Climate Change Committee to ensure there is genuine collaboration from the get-go in implementing the CCAP (this is low cost and effective broad community approach) • Different sectors interests in Apollo Bay should be represented on a Stakeholder and Community Climate Change Action Committee of Council 	<p>Contemporary ways of collaborating and engaging with all sectors of the community are moving away from issue and place based formal committees with limited and relatively static representation. Community engagement methods such as community meetings, focus groups, open forums, surveys and online engagement lead to increased and more representative stakeholder participation, and can be tailored to the needs, issues and/or sectors of the community at the core of what is being addressed at the time. Given that environmental and climate change challenges are so complex and wide-ranging, a singular model is unlikely to effectively address the broad spectrum of social, cultural, economic and technical issues. A flexible model of action- and project-based regular collaboration and engagement is therefore preferred.</p> <p>Council commenced regular meetings with the shire's sustainability groups in May 2023, has another one planned for October and will continue to support these. It should also be noted that Council has ongoing access to a great wealth of expertise and knowledge through organisations and groups of which it is currently a member, including: the Barwon South West Climate Alliance, Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy, the local government Climate Emergency Councils Forum and the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.</p> <p>RECOMMEND THAT ACTION 4.11 OF CCAP IS AMENDED TO REMOVE REFERENCE TO EXPLORING FUTURE MODES OF ENGAGEMENT AND REWORDED WITH MORE ACTION FOCUSED LANGUAGE TO: "FACILITATE WHEREVER POSSIBLE ACTIVE, WIDE-RANGING AND MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION ACROSS ALL AREAS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN"</p> <p>AND</p> <p>RECOMMEND ADDITION OF NEW OUTCOME UNDER ESS GOAL 5: "ONGOING ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY GROUPS"</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a distinct climate change action category for community grants, with an annual allocation of \$100,000 	<p>Council's community grants program already funds many environmental, sustainability and climate change related programs and projects under its three existing streams (events, environmentally sustainable business grants and general). These regularly include: solar installations; energy efficient appliance upgrades; environmental education, events and forums; invasive species reduction and biodiversity enhancement; and waste reduction and diversion initiatives. For the 2023-2024 financial year, Council has allocated approximately \$65,000 in this area on a 50:50 contribution basis, in order to maximise the impact of this allocation. Council reviews its grants program annually, which will allow the opportunity to consider consolidating grants in this area. This will help Council to highlight, report on and communicate initiatives taken by community for a safer climate.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED. COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THIS AS PART OF THE NEXT COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM REVIEW.</p>

TOPIC: BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION & REGENERATION	
21 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleased to see the inclusion of prevention of further loss to biodiversity in the plan's headline goals 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant habitat for grey-headed flying foxes 	<p>Can add more explicit statement re. threatened species such as the grey headed flying foxes to ESS Goal 1 Introduction section. Current nudging process to provide alternative habitat for the population that currently roosts for part of the year in the Colac Botanic Gardens does not require new tree planting.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED THAT REFERENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON THREATENED SPECIES IS ADDED IN ESS SECTION 4, PAGE 9 AND FURTHER DETAIL RE. GREY HEADED FLYING FOXES IN ESS GOAL 1 INTRODUCTION; AND</p> <p>ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT NEW CCAP ACTION IS ADDED IN FOCUS AREA 3 (ACTION 3.5C)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulate soil erosion from timber harvesting and recreational 4WD activities 	<p>Timber harvesting is governed by a state government code of practice, which addresses erosion. Council undertakes annual audits to ensure compliance with the code. The bulk of recreational 4WD activities that occur within the shire are on state-government managed and controlled land, with their own compliance mechanisms.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be more emphasis on biodiversity protection 	<p>Goal 1 in Council's draft ESS – 'Protected and thriving landscapes, ecosystems and habitats' – seeks to embed principles of biodiversity protection into the core framework of the strategy. Council has long been committed to biodiversity protection and enhancement, and this will continue to be an important focus of Council's operations during the life of this strategy.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should better fund invasive species control works 	<p>Noted. This will be considered in Council's budget deliberations for the 2024-25 financial year.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED THAT THIS IS CONSIDERED BY COUNCIL IN BUDGET DELIBERATIONS; NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to minimise chemical application to treat invasive species by Council, the logging industry and farmers 	<p>Council frequently reviews its weed and pest treatment programs, and seeks wherever possible to minimise chemical application, including through trialling innovative and emerging treatment techniques. Council will continue to pursue these in balance with what is effective and resource appropriate at the time.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest inclusion of statement about retention of species diversity in shire-managed bushland reserves 	<p>RECOMMENDED THAT WORDING IS AMENDED TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO SPECIES DIVERSITY IN INTRODUCTION TO GOAL 1 OF ESS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set targets for river and lake water quality and allocate responsibilities for management to relevant agency 	<p>Catchment management authorities are the statutory bodies responsible for water quality management of our lake and river systems. Council works with these authorities, particularly Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, for the protection and enhancement of these systems.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: AGRICULTURE	
21 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural emissions are not addressed in the plan – Council should partner with/actively work with/initiate with local agricultural industries to protect and restore the environment 	<p>Action 3.7 of the CCAP speaks expressly to Council's aims to support the agriculture sector by promoting and supporting sustainable practices, adaptive farming and carbon drawdown. These elements will all contribute to significant reductions in agricultural emissions.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulate toxic chemical usage through Otways water catchments, including use of hazardous pesticides and herbicides banned in other countries 	<p>The Victorian government is responsible for regulating the use of pesticides in our state. The supply and sale is governed by the national Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. Council acts in accordance with the direction of these bodies, and reports identified breaches to the Environment Protection Authority for investigation, but does not have a direct role in local chemical regulation.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More actions should relate to agriculture – the existing actions, referring mostly to 'foster' and 'support' are too weak and lack accountability. 	<p>Council has carefully considered language used in the draft documents to clearly denote its position and ability to act upon or deliver desired outcomes, in the context of its remit, jurisdiction and resources. The use of the terms 'foster' and 'support' in this context are appropriate to Council's remit and sphere of influence and in no way seek to diminish Council's intention to play a strong supportive role over the life of the documents to the agricultural sector.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support sustainable farm practices, including vegetation belts with fencing, carbon farming and regenerative agricultural practices 	<p>Action 3.7 of the CCAP speaks expressly to Council's aims to support the agriculture sector by promoting and supporting sustainable practices, adaptive farming and carbon drawdown.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large opportunity to support carbon sequestration among the farming community 	<p>Action 3.7 of the CCAP speaks expressly to Council's aims to support the agriculture sector by promoting and supporting sustainable practices, adaptive farming and carbon drawdown. Action 3.7 (e) directly addresses sequestration: 'Investigate and support local drawdown and carbon offset opportunities to sequester carbon in our local landscape e.g. regenerative farming, revegetation, seaweed farming, blue carbon.'</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with groups interested in promoting and educating on regenerative agriculture principles and practices (including soil biology, seasonal mix species, cover/fodder cropping trials, grazing strategies, biological fertilising and mentor support) Council should make concerted efforts to help the agriculture sector reduce its large impacts – including immediately establishing a bi-annual regenerative agriculture conference Partner with CCMA, Landcare and DEECA to fund regenerative agriculture conference 	<p>Council recognises that it has an important role to play in collaboration, leadership and advocacy for our communities. Council regularly partners with stakeholders and local groups to deliver supportive, educational programs, and will continue to do so under the auspice of the ESS and CCP. Action 4.7 of CCAP speaks expressly to this in relation to sustainable agricultural principles. Council can further support conferences and educational activities through its community grants streams and through event support and promotion.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING	
19 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building design mandatory standards should be increased – passive design, water and energy efficiency should be enforced utilising the star rating system (e.g. 7 star building rating) New developments should be required to have passive solar design, EV charging stations, solar panels on roofs, batteries, water tanks, heat pumps Need firm policy on using only light coloured/heat reflective building products – roofing, sheds to reduce heat absorption 	<p>Whilst building design standards largely fall under the remit of state government, Council has a level of control and influence and will seek a higher standard of new development in the Deans Creek growth area (Colac). Some other Councils are pursuing mandatory EV chargers, water tanks and solar panels for new houses in precinct structure plans.</p> <p>RECOMMEND AMENDMENT OF CCAP - ADD NEW CCAP ACTION 5.9:</p> <p>“STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH (E.G. STRUCTURE PLANS, DEVELOPMENT PLANS) TO CONSIDER AND INTEGRATE KEY ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS (IWM, URBAN GREENING, ESD, WSUD, LOW EMISSION NEIGHBOURHOODS)”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New houses and renovations should be mandated to have no gas installed and no new gas mains should be allowed 	<p>The state government has introduced restrictions for gas in new subdivision and all new buildings requiring a planning permit, which addresses this submission. Council does not have any mechanism to address gas usage beyond this.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predictions for sea level rise call for action to stop building close to the coast Change planning schemes to recognise the hazard of sea level rise 	<p>GORCAPA is currently undertaking a scoping study to undertake a coastal resilience assessment that will identify vulnerable areas and recommended planning controls to be implemented. CCAP action 5.2 also pertains to this.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footpaths should be constructed from permeable surfaces 	<p>It is not recommended that the strategy and plan address this matter. Construction of footpaths requires a balance of safety, accessibility and maintenance considerations.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deans Creek corridor should not be developed for residential given it is flood prone 	<p>Comprehensive stormwater/flood modelling, including up to date climate change projections, is being undertaken as part of the Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan to ensure that any land being rezoned for housing is flood-free and suitable for development.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new greenfield estates /factories should have stormwater treatment and storage facilities to allow treated stormwater to be reused onsite 	<p>State planning provisions require onsite storage to be considered at the planning permit stage for commercial development. Whilst building design standards largely fall under the remit of state government, Council has a level of control and influence and will seek a higher standard of new development in the Deans Creek growth area of Colac.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bigger blocks with more trees on them (e.g. Deans Creek corridor) 	<p>State government policy encourages smaller lot sizes to maximise efficient use of infrastructure, but there is an opportunity to maximise planting in public areas (e.g. parks, streets, reserves) and there are also minimum garden area requirements for residential blocks. Specific actions in the CCAP that refer to urban greening are: 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE	
19 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Plan Undertake a Shire-wide Climate Change Risk Assessment 	<p>Council has a current <i>Climate Change Adaptation Plan</i> 2017-2027, which was developed based on regional and municipal risk assessments. Council will review this plan in 2027-2028 which will align well with the review of the proposed 2028 review of the CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas vulnerable to erosion, inundation, landslip and undertake, both in terms of natural resource and infrastructure impacts – build knowledge base, participate in regional activities, work with relevant partners to action initiatives, advocate to state government for changes in the planning scheme to increase resilience 	<p>Council, in partnership with other key agencies, continues to build a knowledge base and participate in regional activities that identify areas vulnerable to climate change and its impacts with potential to cause damage and destruction to community services and infrastructure and advocate to state government for changes in the planning scheme to increase resilience.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition all Council buildings from gas Convert Bluewater from gas to more renewable energy sources 	<p>Council will transition all Council buildings that use gas to clean renewable electricity as soon as practicable and economically viable. This includes the transition of Bluewater Leisure Centre, Council's largest gas user.</p> <p>RECOMMEND NEW CCAP ACTION IN THE 'SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS' SECTION:</p> <p>"NO NEW NATURAL GAS CONNECTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR COUNCIL FACILITIES, AND THERE WILL BE A TRANSITION AWAY FROM NATURAL GAS USE AT ALL EXISTING FACILITIES, INCLUDING BLUEWATER LEISURE CENTRE"</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is not enough weighting for Adaptation. This is vital given the changes we are already experiencing – suggest that each section/area has an adaptation section within it, looking at practical and immediate things households, businesses and COS can do to prepare for what is coming 	<p>There are many actions included in the CCAP that contribute to climate change adaptation and they are denoted as such in the Action Tables under 'Type of Response'.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable potable water security via planning laws to support rain water harvesting and reuse, both private and business 	<p>This is already supported by the Victorian Planning Scheme and will be strengthened by Council in new growth areas.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: EMERGENCY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT	
19 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a new action relating to extreme/catastrophic code weather day preparedness to ensure welfare and resilience of local communities, in particular the elderly and vulnerable – Council should establish 'away from home' refuges for the community (as distinct from places of last resort), e.g. COPACC, library and civic hardware site Establish places for rural residents to go when they leave early on high fire danger days 	<p>As part of EM planning Council has identified a number of emergency relief centres located across the shire. Council has various trigger levels for all emergencies, however emergency relief centres (or heat refuges) cannot be opened unless requested by the incident controller (who is assigned by state government emergency services). Council is developing a new preparedness program that will include information on how residents can develop 'cool rooms'. Provisions in this area are already incorporated in the Emergency Management Plan.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>

Attachment 9.5.4 Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shelter in Council-operated building for people in rural towns and those in poor housing on days of high-fire danger – facilities should be comfortable and powered by solar 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please support my third attempt to get an EMV grant to make Apollo Bay Leisure Centre a fully independent emergency evacuation centre – it has been hard to get support from Council in the past. 	<p>Council's designated relief centre in Apollo Bay is the P-12 College, where the Apollo Bay Leisure Centre is located. A back-up power source is already installed at this location.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of fire management 	<p>Fire management has its own distinct multi-agencies plans – state, regional and distinct respectively. These are available on Council's website.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for, partner and act to ensure resilient communications during storm events, particularly in Apollo Bay area. Ensure security of internet and telecommunications during natural disaster events. 	<p>Council partnered with NBN Co. for the roll-out of the STAND program (as outlined in the CCAP), which sees Skylink satellite communications installed in high-risk communities across the municipality. Council will continue to advocate for resilient communications during emergency management events. This is captured in action 5.8.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should develop a Bushfire Prevention Action Plan in line with Barwon South West Regional Bushfire Strategic Management Plan (low cost and short timeframe action). Failure of this risk assessment must be addressed in the draft with immediate funding allocated. Work with state and federal agencies to develop a bushfire prevention and emergency recovery plan Welcome commitment to a Bushfire Prevention Action Plan 	<p>Council is a major stakeholder in the <i>Barwon South West Regional Strategic Management Plan</i> and has gone one step further and developed an <i>Otway District Bushfire Strategic Management Plan 2021-2024</i> in partnership with Surf Coast Shire, Corangamite Shire and supported by all fire agencies. This is covered in action 5.7 in the CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should utilise state and federal funding opportunities to implement local emergency management planning 	<p>Council regularly submits applications to both state and federal funding relating to local mitigation, response and recovery planning.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council's emergency action plans and ensure bushfire and flood plans are in place, with special attention given to isolated communities Strengthen disaster planning 	<p>Council is one agency of a multi-agency approach, as required under the Emergency Management Act 2013, and the <i>Municipal Emergency Management Plan</i> (MEMP) lists and interlinks with individual hazard plans, such as bushfire, floods, biosecurity etc. The MEMP is a living document and is regularly reviewed after all major emergencies and is reviewed every three years.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before summer 2023-24 Council should clearly communicate with the community areas they can safely go during days of high fire danger 	<p>The new Australian Fire Danger Rating System now includes actions for individuals, households, families and communities to undertake on different fire-danger rating days. Council will continue to promote this system and associated resources.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green firebreaks could be established across the region to create greater resilience to emergency events – COS should collaborate to support programs that encourage mixed cover/fodder cropping in a patchwork form across the Otways. 	<p>There is a network of strategic firebreaks designated and maintained across the region in partnership with many stakeholders, including landholders, primary producers and fire agencies. Council will continue to support sustainable, diversified and adaptive agricultural practices (as outlined in action 3.7 in the CCAP).</p>

Attachment 9.5.4 Summary of Submissions with Officer Comments and Recommendations

	NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council needs to undertake flood risk assessment in and around Apollo Bay – ensuring road access is maintained during floods and storms, as well as access to services 	<p>Council, with emergency services, recently undertook a flood exercise for Apollo Bay to update its risks and consequences, as well as mapping access to roads and services. This is part of an ongoing, annual assessment and exercise schedule.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards planning and development of alternative routes for the Great Ocean Road given erosion 	<p>While the Great Ocean Road is not a Council road, this action is covered by action 5.8 in the CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide places of last resort in all areas and ensure adequate signage as to where all these places are so community and visitors are aware of this 	<p>Council in partnership with CFA annually assesses and accredits locations that are suitable for Bushfire Place of Last Resort, and Council has not only signposted them but in partnership with Surf Coast and Corangamite Shires enhanced the state signage requirements for those locations. These signs have now been adopted for use across the state.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fire threat is front of mind for communities (Forrest) – and they will support any initiatives that support community safety in the context of carbon emissions reductions 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should lead community resilience in the region, such as by supporting well-provisioned evacuation centres 	<p>Council has a range of Emergency Relief Centres across the municipality and has developed, maintains and regularly tests its emergency relief trailer with those centres.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: URBAN GREENING/ NATURE STRIP PLANTING

17 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gratifying to see that urban greening is being considered in the CCAP 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines to encourage greening of nature strips 	<p>The development of these guidelines is already included in the CCAP (1.11).</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to expand urban tree planting 	<p>The expansion of tree planting is already included in the CCAP (1.12).</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baseline data should be established by a professional in order to obtain a scientifically significant canopy cover – why does Council start with a 5% figure and why is that enough? Work towards 20% canopy coverage in city and towns to prevent the heat island effect Incorporate rural greening programs, not simply urban ones - a comprehensive study of all townships should be undertaken to establish a meaningful urban greening program 	<p>The target relating to urban greening and canopy cover will require the establishment of a 2023-24 baseline, which will be the first step in implementation in relation to urban greening. Urban canopy and heat vulnerability mapping will be undertaken across the municipality for urban and rural townships. The 5% increase by 2030 and 10% increase by 2040 targets are based on the work of 32 metropolitan councils in Melbourne as part of the <i>Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Living Urban Forest</i> https://livingmelbourne.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Strategy_online.pdf</p> <p>RECOMMEND CHANGE TO INCLUDE A NEW ACTION TO 1.10 IN CCAP TO INCLUDE:</p> <p>“UNDERTAKE CANOPY COVER AND HEAT VULNERABILITY MAPPING TO SET A CANOPY COVER BASELINE AND HELP PRIORITISE LOCATIONS FOR URBAN GREENING INITIATIVES”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove cost for planting on nature strips 	<p>The Council fee associated with planting on nature strips has been removed in the 2023-24 budget to remove this barrier to urban greening.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies to involve the community to help undertake planting programs of nature strips, parks, open spaces, road reserves and private land 	<p>While Council already provides for planting programs on Council land for environmental groups such as Landcare, opportunities to broaden community participation to accelerate urban greening will be a high priority, short-term action to be implemented by Council once the ESS and CCAP are adopted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic planting to support vulnerable residents on extreme heat days 	<p>This will be addressed through the proposed heat vulnerability mapping, which will identify priority areas for planting, including: schools; health precincts; public transport hotspots; community facilities; aged care facilities; and community and respite housing.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gateway entrances to Colac should be planted out and avenues of trees established 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: EMBEDDING ESS & CCAP	
13 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require all areas of Council to promote and include the objectives of the CCAP in all they do – this will enhance messaging and leadership to the community, and assuage fears about lack of action 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCAP needs to be embedded in every Council planning document, policy, decision or action in all levels across Council – from planning to delivery 	<p>Noted. Addressed via 5.1</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine cost estimates to allow for the making of budget provisions and grant applications for each action 	<p>This will be undertaken once the draft ESS and CCAP are adopted by Council, on a project by project basis.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should ensure final versions of the ESS and CCAP are widely disseminated to communities across the shire 	<p>Council will ensure wide community awareness of the adopted documents, in accordance with Council's engagement strategies and in alignment with the approach taken throughout the consultation and development of the ESS and CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
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TOPIC: MARINE & COASTAL ENVIRONMENT

13 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate against offshore seismic testing and gas exploration 	<p>Council has been advocating against offshore seismic testing and exploration for a number of years and continues to do so.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of information in CCAP on the impacts and plans to address rising sea levels, storm surges and coastal erosion Sea level rise and coastal erosion is a huge omission from the plan - actions relating to this need to be included, such as risk assessment of COS coastline, undertaken urgently and immediately 	<p>Many actions within the CCAP has this focus, including Actions 1.14a, 4.5, 5.2.</p> <p>RECOMMEND CHANGE TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL POINT IN CCAP ACTION 5.2 THAT STATES: "WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH GORCAPA AND OTHER AGENCIES IN THE PREPARATION OF A COASTAL RESILIENCE PLAN THAT IDENTIFIES ADAPTATION PATHWAYS FOR IMPACTED COASTAL ASSETS AND COMMUNITIES"</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council's planning schemes and associated inundation mapping to consider the impacts of climate change 	<p>This already captured in CCAP action 5.2</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFT CCAP RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

13 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct community education programs to reduce consumption and waste 	<p>A key action of Council's <i>Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030</i> is to 'Deliver community education programs to support the reduction of kerbside bin contamination and increase resource recovery'. Council undertakes regular and ongoing community education programs aimed at reducing consumption and waste, and fostering more sustainable ways of living. Council has also released the 'Good Sort' App to provide advice and guidance to residents about correct disposal of their waste.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and support should be provided during this time of transition to a changing climate Build internal capacity of shire staff through education in regards to carbon emissions and then share this education to the whole community through regular communication Implement home energy efficiency education campaigns 	<p>A fundamental strategic goal of the ESS is 'Enhanced environmental stewardship through environmental awareness raising and education'. Education and capacity building are also a strong focus within the CCAP, and there are many targeted actions to facilitate this, including actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6 and 3.7. Council takes its leadership and community education roles seriously, and many varied educational opportunities and programs will be conducted throughout the life of the ESS and CCAP.</p> <p>RECOMMEND ADDITION OF 2 NEW ESS OBJECTIVES:</p>

	<p>GOAL 2 OBJECTIVE “ENCOURAGE COMPACT & WALKABLE NEW NEIGHBOURHOODS, MAXIMISE SOLAR ORIENTATION OF NEW LOTS AND PROMOTE IMPROVED ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES FOR EXISTING HOUSING.”; AND</p> <p>GOAL 3 OBJECTIVE “PROMOTE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING HOUSES BY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY GROUP PROGRAMS WITH A FOCUS ON LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS.”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the education of farmers and their networks (including collaborating with Landcare) to foster regenerative farming 	<p>Actions 3.7 and 4.9 in the CCAP directly address Council’s aims to support farmers and their networks – including working with ‘Friends of’ groups, Landcare and sustainability groups – to foster sustainable practices.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate six-monthly forums for community groups to knowledge share 	<p>Council commenced regular meetings with the shire’s sustainability groups in May 2023, has another one planned for October and will continue to support these. It should also be noted that Council has ongoing access to a great wealth of expertise and knowledge through organisations and groups of which it is currently a member, including: Barwon South West Climate Alliance, Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy, the local government Climate Emergency Councils Forum and the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS should offer climate change leadership training (as Darebin, Merribek and Yarra do) 	<p>This is captured in the CCAP in Action 4.9, however it can be clarified further.</p> <p>RECOMMEND AMENDMENT TO CCAP ACTION 4.9 TO INCLUDE EXAMPLES: ‘SUPPORT COMMUNITY GROUPS AND NETWORKS INCLUDING ‘FRIENDS OF’ GROUPS, LANDCARE AND SUSTAINABILITY GROUPS TO UNDERTAKE DIRECT ACTION AND COMMUNITY LED KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND ADVOCACY (E.G. CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERSHIP, GRANT WRITING, VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT AND RECRUITMENT).’</p>

TOPIC: EMISSIONS REDUCTION AND OFFSETS	
12 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase offsets (even if not within our shire) to ensure that action can happen now Any offsets purchased should be within shire boundaries Instead of purchasing carbon credits Council should invest this money in our shire to achieve the carbon offsets – plant trees in the Otways, along waterways, roads and verges Support local drawdown and carbon offset opportunities to sequester carbon in our shire Offer metro Councils the opportunity to purchase offsets in Colac Otway shire; develop a business unit in collaboration with other Councils/ Climate Alliance to attract carbon offset opportunities 	<p>Over the last ten years Council has prioritised the reduction of its emissions by 68% and successfully reached its 2020 carbon neutral target by purchasing Climate Active certified offsets for its residual emissions. The residual emissions currently requiring offsetting will be much harder to reduce quickly, due to technical and economic constraints. However, officers consider it important to acknowledge Council’s direct emissions footprint by purchasing offsets until the residual emissions can be eliminated in the context of the urgency for action to combat climate change.</p> <p>Purchasing offsets enables emissions reductions to be undertaken by others, contributing to the global effort to minimise climate change impacts. This view is also reflected in the responses to the community survey that Council circulated as part of the public exhibition of the draft ESS and CCAP (see results to survey question 9 and refer to further discussion in officer report to Council).</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offsets should be avoided/last resort, and if they have to be used they must be local Prioritise emission reduction over carbon offsets or buying green power 	<p>Officers are also working with the Barwon South West Climate Alliance to develop a local offsetting program, which would ensure that there are multiple, local benefits to our environment and landowners.</p> <p>Council continues to support the ongoing commitment to net zero Council operations (Scope 1 & 2) and purchase of offsets with a preference for revegetation or nature based offsets that are local where practical. This is in addition to commitments in the plan to street tree planting and urban greening programs.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED THAT PARAGRAPH 2 ON PAGE 24 OF THE ESS IS CHANGED TO REFLECT THIS</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Council-backed social enterprise to carry out residential energy efficiency audits and connect people to suitably qualified trades people for retro fitting of insulation, draught proofing, electric appliances 	<p>Council does not have the capacity to establish this enterprise, however it will support any local or regional climate action groups that seek to offer this.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COS should partner with relevant stakeholders and offer incentives to land holders to improve soil management and carbon storage practices on their land 	<p>Officers are working with the Barwon South West Climate Alliance to establish a local offsetting program, which would ensure that there are multiple, local benefits to our environment and landowners.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
TOPIC: INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT	
8 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the idea as stated in 1.13 of increasing green/blue infrastructure solutions 	<p>Noted.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Otways need protected water system – no mention in the plan of overall water and groundwater and catchment protection Not enough consideration of rural water quality 	<p>The responsibility for overall water, groundwater and catchment protection sits with other agencies. Officers believe that appropriate water quality and waterway protection considerations are included in the ESS and CCAP.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger consideration of domestic wastewater management needs to be reflected in the ESS and CCAP (Barwon Water): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add reference of the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2021 to supporting policies; add another sub-objective under either 1.3 or 2.1 to reference Council's responsibility for the management of all domestic onsite wastewater management across the shire (including inspection of existing systems and ensuring compliance with Council and EPA requirements through implementation of DWMP) 	<p>RECOMMEND AMENDMENT TO ESS - ADD REFERENCE OF THE DOMESTIC WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021 TO SUPPORTING POLICIES OF GOAL 1 AND ADD SUB-OBJECTIVE UNDER 1.3:</p> <p>"IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC ONSITE WASTEWATER TO PROTECT WATERWAYS AND HUMAN HEALTH ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH COUNCIL AND EPA REQUIREMENTS"</p>

TOPIC: WASTE REDUCTION	
8 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good targets in relation to waste reduction but no mention of leadership or education • Food waste is not adequately addressed – COS could be a leader in reducing this unnecessary and harmful waste • Waste should be processed within the shire • Waste to energy options should be further explored • Provide more education to the community on how to reduce waste and improve recycling • Council should establish more initiatives, enables or incentives for residents to reduce waste and enable behaviour change – Council could seek a report on practices elsewhere and follow pre-existing templates • Partner with agricultural community to reduce farm waste – e.g. silage wrap, twine and chemical drums • Encourage bulk foods in reusable containers (no packaging) • Barcode all bins and charge residents accordingly rather than blanket charge – this will save costs and have many benefits 	<p>Council adopted a comprehensive <i>Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy</i> in 2021 which has 76 actions specifically related to waste management and reduction, and we do not see the need to duplicate these in the ESS and CCAP. The waste objectives and actions that are proposed to be included in the ESS and CCAP are aimed to be complementary to and support the waste strategy.</p> <p>A key action of Council's <i>Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030</i> is to 'Deliver community education programs to support the reduction of kerbside bin contamination and increase resource recovery'. Council undertakes regular and ongoing community education programs aimed at reducing consumption and waste, and fostering more sustainable ways of living. Council has also released the 'Good Sort' App and other resources, such as the 'A-Z Waste Guide' to provide advice and guidance to residents about correct disposal of their waste.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: INDUSTRY & BUSINESS	
6 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vigorously pursue creative opportunities to foster a thriving green business economy • Local economy would benefit from employing local people to plant trees for carbon offsetting in the shire • Council should seek to influence social norms and outcomes by regularly celebrating businesses that demonstrate leadership in energy efficiency or renewable energy solutions • Give jobs to locals and local businesses to help get green energy projects up and running 	<p>Officers consider the actions relating to industry, business and green economy in the drafts appropriate and well aligned with the remit of Council.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: PROTECTION OF HUMAN HEALTH	
6 Submission	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESS, CCAP and <i>Health and Wellbeing Plan 2020</i> should have consistent actions CCAP needs greater focus on community survival, resilience and wellbeing under changing climate – health and wellbeing must be monitored to support all COS residents Mental health and social wellbeing consequences of climate change need to be more directly and seriously addressed in the CCAP Clear strategies need to be established to protect the health and the local environment of vulnerable residents most at risk from climate change (children, elderly, pregnant women, people with disabilities, those living in unsafe housing/without adequate heating, cooling etc.) 	<p>Council adopted its <i>Council Plan 2021-2025</i> and chose for the first time to incorporate the <i>Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan</i> (MHWBP) into this strategic document in order to recognise the need for health and wellbeing to be a central guiding principle of all Council actions and reinforcing Council's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our community. 'Tackling climate change and its impacts on health' is recognised as one of the most important priorities and is embedded across all areas of the plan. We therefore do not seek to duplicate these principles and actions in the ESS and CCAP. Objectives and actions that are proposed to be included in the ESS and CCAP are aimed to be complementary to and support the <i>Council Plan</i> and MHWBP. Implementation of all actions across the ESS and CCAP will include careful consideration of improved wellbeing, resilience, and mental and physical health outcomes.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: TRADITIONAL OWNERS	
5 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> References to First Nations perspectives and the role of TOs are too scant and scattered Traditional Owners should be at the centre of the plan Very good that there are statements in the plan about the First Nations people of the shire, however there should be a more comprehensive outline of how traditional owners can be involved in the oversight of the implementation of the plan Engage genuinely with First Nations People - listen to them about how the land was formed, how it was cared for, seek help in relation to this crisis; do not think you know better There should be a stronger commitment to meaningfully include Traditional Owners in land management decisions Would like to see truth telling, township name changes including first nations name changes for areas, renewing of languages, cooperative land and water management strategies led by first nations people 	<p>Council articulates its clear intentions through the ESS to: 'build strong, ongoing relations with Traditional Owners'. Environmental management is a key avenue through which Council can enhance relationships with Traditional Owners, learn about traditional land practices, and support collective interests and goals for the future'. Fostering greater meaningful engagement and collaboration with Traditional Owners is a core principle of all areas of the ESS and CCAP, and there is an undertaking to respect and integrate Traditional Owners' perspectives, culture and knowledge.</p> <p>CCAP actions 3.6 and 4.7 express how Council will achieve these aims in relation to land management and stewardship.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: TRANSPORT	
3 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make streets pedestrian, bike and mobility scooter friendly – encourage active transport • Support bike riding to school initiatives by ensuring safety for young bike riders • Electrify buses – and power from shire-generated renewable power • Promote greater use of the bus service to get people off the roads, saving fuel, emissions and the need for road repair and maintenance • Extend/increase connectivity for pedestrians and bike riders (e.g. from the lake precinct to Joseph Paatsch Reserve) • Widen roads to accommodate bike lanes • Encourage car pooling • Emissions could be saved by supporting public transport from larger centres to small rural towns (e.g weekly service to enable shopping, essential service visits) • Council should encourage walking and bicycle use by constructing better and safer pathways 	<p>Officers consider the actions relating to transport in the drafts appropriate and well aligned with the remit of Council.</p> <p>NO CHANGE TO THE DRAFTS RECOMMENDED</p>

TOPIC: DISAGREEMENT WITH COUNCIL ACTION	
6 Submissions	Officer comment & recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council elected representatives and public servants are spending our rates pushing a global narrative • Plan is simply satisfying a cult-like fringe of the community (CCAP) • No action required – climate change is a fallacy (CCAP) • Council does enough (CCAP) • These are fear mongering documents (CCAP & ESS) • CCAP is offensive – statement about Council being net zero is big-noting, occurred through rate-payer money and government grants • Perceptions of ‘greater good’ are swaying Council and government approaches and encroaching on individual freedoms • Council is pandering to false global narrative about climate change – these plans do nothing to support primary production and the sectors within the shire that are generating wealth 	<p>Council is guided by scientific evidence and consensus on climate change, and Council formally acknowledged a biodiversity and climate change crisis that requires urgent action. The Council Plan 2020-2024 includes actions that direct the development of the ESS and CCAP in response to strong community feedback to take meaningful and urgent action on climate change.</p> <p>NO CHANGES TO DRAFT RECOMMENDED</p>

Item: 9.6

Lake Colac Holiday Park Lease

OFFICER	James Myatt
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the final draft lease agreement for the Lake Colac Holiday Park for approval.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council considered the response to the 'Invitation for Expression of Interest' for the lease of the Lake Colac Holiday Park at its 23 August 2023 Council meeting. Council determined a preferred proponent and resolved to provide in-principle support for the Chief Executive Officer to finalise special conditions of the lease before presenting a final draft lease to Council for approval.

The key terms of the lease were endorsed by Council at its 11 October 2023 Unscheduled Council meeting and have informed the development of Site Specific Special Conditions for inclusion in the final lease.

Previous agendas for Council meetings have included for community information the proposed standard and special conditions of the lease, and Council has resolved the key terms at a meeting open to the public and therefore there has been considerable transparency to the community about the proposed lease. The draft lease agreement has been prepared for Council's final consideration through consultation with the proposed lessee, Council officers, lawyers and Crown representatives, and is ready for Council's consideration. The proposed lease is presented to Council as a confidential attachment to this report.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes that it determined a Preferred Lessee for the buildings and land known as “Lake Colac Holiday Park”, 51 Fyans Street Colac, at a Council meeting held on 23 August 2023.***
- 2. Notes that it resolved the key terms of the lease agreement for the Lake Colac Holiday Park at a Council meeting held on 11 October 2023.***
- 3. Agrees to enter a lease with the Preferred Lessee on the basis of the proposed lease agreement (confidential attachment) for the buildings and land known as “Lake Colac Holiday Park”, 51 Fyans Street Colac.***
- 4. Notes that the process of establishing a Crown Land lease includes some further steps following Council’s agreement made in point 3 above, including:***
 - a. A valuation is to be undertaken by the Office of the Valuer-General of Victoria***
 - b. Final administrative content will be populated including signing clauses, dates and contact details.***
 - c. The Minister’s delegate must sign off on the lease.***
- 5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute the final lease agreement on behalf of Council.***
- 6. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to extend the current management agreement for Lake Colac Holiday Park until 29 February 2024, should the lease agreement not be fully executed by 17 November 2023 while the process outlined in point 4 is concluded.***
- 7. Approves that the current fees and charges for Lake Colac Holiday Park shall apply until 29 February 2024, or earlier if a lease agreement is executed.***
- 8. Notes that the relevant details of the lease will be added to Council’s lease register and published on its website, after the lease is executed by the Minister’s delegate and the unsuccessful submitters are advised.***
- 9. Notes that section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 has been satisfied by previously undertaking a community consultation process seeking feedback from the community about its intention to lease the land.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Background

Council commenced an Expression of Interest (EOI) process on 24 March 2023 seeking a lessee for the Lake Colac Holiday Park, after resolving at its meeting on 22 February 2023 to make a capital investment of \$500,000. This investment recognised:

- The community and economic importance of the park, particularly in the context of the local and regional visitor accommodation shortage.
- Council's responsibility as the asset owner/manager of most of the fixed infrastructure at the park.
- The expectation that a lessee would carry the full financial burden of replacing and upgrading aged assets at the park undermined the viability of the park to a lessee, as had been identified through the unsuccessful EOI process in 2022.

Council considered submissions to the EOI process at its 23 August 2023 meeting and resolved:

That Council:

- 1. Notes the Expression of Interest process inviting submissions for the lease of the property located at 51 Fyans Street Colac, known as the Lake Colac Holiday Park.***
- 2. Notes the submissions received in response to the Expression of Interest invitation:***
 - a. are provided for Councillors' information as confidential attachments to this agenda; and***
 - b. have been assessed against the criteria included in the 'Invitation for Expression of Interest' document adopted by Council at its meeting on 27 July 2022.***
- 3. Determines that Submitter 1 is the preferred lessee for the Lake Colac Holiday Park as per the recommendation of the panel's Evaluation Report (confidential attachment).***
- 4. Provides in principle support for the Chief Executive Officer to finalise special conditions specific to the lease for the Lake Colac Holiday Park, which may include additional incentive-based opportunities that provide a benefit to both parties, but should not deviate from the underlying key lease terms included in the EOI documentation.***
- 5. Includes a special condition in the final draft lease developed through point 4 that ensures the lessee can only charge a rental amount for permanent residents of \$200 per week, or less, until at least 1 September 2025 and to not increase this rental amount by more than CPI per annum after that date.***
- 6. Receives the final draft lease for approval at a future Council meeting.***

Council considered key terms for the lease at its 11 October 2023 Council meeting and resolved:

That Council:

- 1. Notes that it determined a preferred lessee for the buildings and land known as "Lake Colac Holiday Park", 51 Fyans Street Colac, at its 23 August 2023 Council meeting.***
- 2. Notes that it provided in-principle support for the Chief Executive Officer to finalise special conditions specific to the lease for the Lake Colac Holiday Park.***
- 3. Endorses the following key terms to be included in the Lake Colac Holiday Park Lease:***
 - a. Commencement on 1 December 2023.***
 - b. Term of the lease is six (6) years, with a further three extensions of five (5) years each by agreement of both parties.***

c. Rent as follows:

Year 1	\$4,000
Year 2	\$4,120
Year 3	\$4,244
Year 4	\$4,371
Year 5	\$4,502
Year 6	\$4,637

- d. Rent from year 7 onwards is to be determined by rental review as per market valuation conditions contained in the lease agreement.**
- e. Tenant to pay all outgoings.**
- f. The net amount of annual rates and charges (including the Fire Services Levy) paid by the tenant shall not exceed \$5,000 (excluding GST) in year one of the lease, indexed to CPI annually.**
- g. In relation to its commitment of February 2023, to contribute up to \$500,000 (excluding GST) towards long-term infrastructure at the park, for which it has responsibility as delegated Crown Land Manager, Council:**
- i. Will contribute to infrastructure, including but not limited to new ablution block, ensuite removal, camp kitchen and other infrastructure; and**
 - ii. Agrees that the tenant may undertake delivery of the relevant capital works in accordance with an agreed Project Management Plan that includes hold points for Council approvals; and Unscheduled Council Meeting 11 October 2023**
 - iii. Will make progress payments towards the capital works on claims that align to relevant hold points.**
- h. The tenant to contribute a minimum of \$515,000 (excluding GST) towards capital works for infrastructure, including but not limited to various forms of accommodation.**
- i. Existing permanent residents at the Lake Colac Holiday Park may remain at the park subject to meeting conditions such as paying all site fees when they fall due and complying with relevant building laws and standards for essential safety measures.**
- j. The tenant may set fees and charges for permanent residents up to a cap of \$200 per week until 1 September 2025. From 2 September 2025 onwards, the fees and charges cap will increase by CPI annually.**
- k. The tenant may close the Lake Colac Holiday Park from 24 April 2024 to 20 September 2024 for works to be undertaken. During the closure period permanent residents will be able to remain residing at the park.**
- l. Council to be responsible for asset management consistent with obligations under the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.**
- m. The tenant to use 100% renewable energy at the premises from the commencement of the fourth year of the initial term of the lease.**
- n. The tenant must not remove any trees without Council's prior written consent.**
- o. Tenant to hold at least \$20 million public liability insurance.**

4. ***Notes that the final lease, inclusive of the key terms in point 3, will be presented to a future Council meeting for consideration in accordance with its resolution at the 23 August 2023 meeting.***
5. ***Notes that section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 has been satisfied by previously undertaking a community consultation process seeking feedback from the community about its intention to the lease the land.***

Following the above Council decisions, a final draft lease agreement has been prepared and has been provided as a confidential attachment to this report. The draft lease agreement follows the Cown Land Caravan Parks Lease standard template with additional site-specific special conditions as per Council's resolutions regarding this matter. The document has received in-principle support from the preferred proponent and the Victorian Government.

Prior to signing a Crown land lease, the Victorian Government is required to undertake a valuation by the Valuer-General Victoria, which is estimated to take two weeks. The process will not commence until Council has resolved to award the lease. To ensure continuous operation of the Lake Colac Holiday Park, it is recommended to endorse a three month extension to the current management agreement for the park if required (which expires on 30 November 2023) and Council's fees and charges for the park which are currently endorsed until 31 December 2023. These potential extensions provide a contingency should there be delays in the Victorian Government's valuation, or the lease's execution process which may be out of Council's control.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The overarching governance principles are:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.
- The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.
- The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Section 115 and 116 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides local governments with the authority to lease land. Council has complied with Section 115 by previously undertaking a community consultation process seeking feedback from the community about its intention to the lease the land. No submissions were received from the community.

The process undertaken is in accordance with Council's Lease and Licence Policy.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

The proposed lease includes the requirement for the tenant to purchase 100% renewable energy from year four onwards.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Community engagement on the future lease of the Lake Colac Holiday Park was undertaken in 2022 when Council advertised its intention to lease the land and invited submissions from the community. No submissions were received.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Council has undertaken a public EOI process seeking submissions from interested parties. When executed, key terms of the lease will be included in Council's lease and licence register, which is accessible on Council's website.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 3: Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability

Objective 4: Colac Otway Shire is a destination to visit

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

Council resolved to allocate \$500,000 towards capital upgrades at the Lake Colac Holiday Park at its 22 February 2023 meeting. The funds were sourced from the sale of 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac.

Should a lease be entered into, the lease will provide an annual financial return to Council. In addition, it would also result in capital investment by the lessee to at least match Council's contribution, in accordance with the resolution of Council at its 22 February 2023 meeting and the proposal by the preferred lessee.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Once a lease is entered into, Council will be required to actively manage the lease and the service requirements contained within.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

Following Council's consideration of this matter, the outcome will be communicated via a range of mediums including direct discussions and correspondence with key stakeholders and via local media outlets.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Approve the lease for the Lake Colac Holiday Park.

This option is recommended by officers. The preferred lessee submitted a thorough proposal which will result in significant investment in the park, providing a good accommodation option for Colac into the future. The preferred lessee is a reputable organisation with significant experience in the provision of visitor accommodation, and it is expected they will provide a quality service offering. The final draft lease as presented with this report is inclusive of the key terms that Council endorsed at its Unscheduled meeting on 11 October 2023.

Option 2 – Do not award the lease for Lake Colac Holiday Park.

This option is not recommended as it would potentially lead to the closure of the Lake Colac Holiday Park. The park is currently contract operated by BelgraviaPRO under a management agreement that is due to conclude at the end of November 2023. If Council determined not to award the lease, it would need to determine the future of the park including who and how it would be managed, and how the investment required in the park would be secured.

Item: 9.7

Contract 2404 - Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction

OFFICER	Sharyn Ryan
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To consider *Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction*.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council was successful in securing \$300,000 from the Victorian Government to redevelop the Winifred Nance Kindergarten playspace.

Contract 2404 is for the construction of a redeveloped educational outdoor playspace at Winifred Nance Kindergarten, Colac.

A request for tender for *Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction* was advertised in the Colac Herald, the Geelong Advertiser and via eProcure on 21 July 2023. Tenders closed on 23 August 2023.

The recommended Tenderer's submission was of a satisfactory quality, demonstrating good value for money, availability of suitable resources and previous experience in similar projects.

The Contract is a lump sum AS4000 contract. The start date will begin on the day of execution of the Contract.

The preferred contractor has carried out landscape works for Council in the past and demonstrated the capability and availability to undertake the works.

The Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) Report has been provided as a Confidential Attachment to this report.

The current budget for the project is \$300,000 which is not sufficient to complete the project. It is recommended that Council contribute funds to the project to ensure it can be delivered and meet the requirements of the funding agreement with the Victorian Government.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace project has undergone a detailed scope review and public tender process to determine the construction cost to deliver a contemporary and compliant playspace that meets the kindergarten's needs and funding body's expectations.***
- 2. Notes the estimated total project cost exceeds the current budget and this issue needs to be addressed to determine a way forward for the project.***
- 3. Approves the allocation of \$89,000 to the Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace project from Unallocated Renewal funds.***
- 4. Awards Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction to Tenderer 1 (as per the confidential attachment to this report) for the lump sum price of \$348,423.35 (including GST).***
- 5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute the contract documents on behalf of Council.***
- 6. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to perform all roles of the Principal.***
- 7. Nominates the General Manager Infrastructure and Operations to the role of Superintendent for Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction, including managing variations in accordance with the contract conditions.***
- 8. Notes that unsuccessful tenderers will be advised of the outcome of the tender process and the successful tenderer and contract price will be listed on Council's website.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Winifred Nance Kindergarten is located at 5 Gilmartin Street, Colac. It is one of three kindergarten buildings in Colac owned by Council and operated by an Early Years Management Service, Meli Kindergarten Services (formerly Barwon Child Youth and Family).

The Early Years Management Service and the supporting Parent Advisory Group has been working to redevelop the Winifred Nance playspace for several years. Following design work, Council considered the plans and resolved at its November 2021 Council meeting to submit an application to

the Victorian Government's Building Blocks Early Childhood Refurbishment and Minor Projects funding program for the redevelopment of the playspace at an estimated cost of \$300,000. Council was successful in obtaining the grant.

In the time between estimating the costs for the project as part of the funding application and being notified of Council's success in obtaining the projects funding, the market costs for construction projects have increased significantly and therefore the design of the playspace had to be descoped to meet the the budget.

After extensive consultation with the project's stakeholders over the last 12 months, namely with Meli Kindergarten Services and the staff at Winifred Nance Kindergarten, the current design is at a point that if it were reduced any further, it would not meet the initial funding application and the requirements of the funding agreement.

There are several funding requirements that focus on components such as:

- Developing a playspace that will improve or develop access for children as well as accommodate children of all abilities.
- Requirements around meeting universal design that encompass principles of equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort and size and space for approach.
- A focus on nature-based play and philosophies of the service.
- Timeframe in which the project must be carried out.

The kindergarten also operates an intergenerational playgroup in partnership with Colac Area Health's Miller House and so in the design considerations, there was a need to accommodate how older adults with mobility issues would navigate safely throughout the new playspace.

The recommended tenderer for the project has submitted a tender that is reflective of construction market costs and represents value for money as evidenced by a recent Quantity Surveyors cost estimate.

Furthermore, a comparison of the Apollo Bay Kindergarten's new outdoor playspace, which was constructed in 2022, cost approximately \$450,000 on a greenfield site of approximately 600m² which is smaller than Winifred Nance Kindergarten which is approximately 800m².

The construction is required to consider the kindergarten's operational requirements and therefore will need to be undertaken in two stages. This will allow the facility to always remain open and operational and ensure the minimum open space requirements for the number of children can be successfully achieved which is a requirement under the Education and Care National Regulations.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This project is consistent with the overarching principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and specifically:

- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The design for these works is in accordance with relevant Australian Standards, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2009 and Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) Guidelines.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

The successful tenderer is required to provide a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that addresses environmental and social considerations. The CEMP will be actively managed by Council staff throughout the contract term.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

This redevelopment of the playspace has been a long-held ambition for the staff and parents at the Winifred Nance Kindergarten. Concept plans for the playspace were developed in partnership with Meli Kindergarten Services and Winifred Nance Kindergarten staff (representing families) for input and feedback. The feedback from the consultation process was considered and amendments were made to the Concept Plans.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

This matter is transparent to the community through the decision being made in a meeting open to the public.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 3: Key infrastructure investment supports our economy and liveability

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 2: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The project is fully funded by an external contribution of \$300,000 from the Victorian School Building Authority's Building Blocks Grants – Minor improvements Category, with currently no contribution from Council.

The tendered price to complete the works is \$316,748 (excluding GST). The required project budget is \$389,000 (excluding GST) including Project Management costs, Project Contingency and Design fees, resulting in a budget shortfall of \$89,000. A contribution of \$89,000 is required from Council to enable the project to be delivered. It is recommended that a contribution from Council could be sourced from the Unallocated Renewal fund.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

The redevelopment of the Winifred Nance Kindergarten playspace will provide ongoing benefits to the children who attend the kindergarten. The current playspace is dated and is in need of renewal to adequately provide for the users of the service.

Risk Assessment

The successful tenderer is required to provide adequate documentation for occupational health and safety requirements including site specific potential hazard assessment and Safe Work Method Statements (SWMs). This documentation will be thoroughly checked by Council staff prior to commencement and measures put in place to ensure it is adhered to throughout the work.

The successful tenderer is required to have the necessary Insurances to comply with Council's requirements.

Communication/Implementation

Public notices of works will be circulated when a commencement date has been agreed. All stakeholders, particularly Meli and Winifred Nance Kindergarten staff will be kept informed of the project progress in line with the Communication Plan.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Adopt the recommendation to contribute financially to the Winifred Nance playspace project and award Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction

This option is recommended by officers to carry out necessary works associated with the construction of Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction. A contribution of \$89,000 will be required from Council to ensure the project can be delivered.

Option 2 – Do not adopt the recommendation to award Contract 2404 – Winifred Nance Kindergarten Playspace Construction

This option is not recommended by officers as the project would not be able to proceed and the funding amount secured for this project will be required to be returned to the Victorian Government. Council would then need to consider full funding of the project at some point in the near future as the current playground needs renewal and improvement.

Item: 9.8

Risk Management Framework

OFFICER	Marlo Emmitt
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Risk Management Framework for adoption by Council [9.8.1 - 24 pages]

To present the Risk Management Framework for adoption.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council currently has a number of documents to assist with the control and management of its enterprise risks, including a Risk Policy that is overdue for review.

Officers have benchmarked Council's risk documents against a number of other councils and the current Australian Standards. Officers have consolidated the relevant guidance and procedures into one overarching document which reflects a contemporary approach.

A draft Risk Management Framework was developed and endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting held on 16 August 2023. A number of workshops held with Councillors and feedback from the Committee has informed the final framework presented to Council for adoption.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Risk Management Framework (Attachment 1).***
- 2. Revokes Council Policy RM-04 Risk Management Policy, adopted on 24 October 2018.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Prior to developing the Framework, a desktop benchmarking exercise was undertaken with nine other local government organisations. The exercise highlighted that each Council has a different approach with regard to the type of documents they develop and make publicly available. Historically, it seems the approach followed by the sector was to have (a) a Risk Management Policy endorsed by Council, (b) a Risk Management Strategy – either endorsed by Council, Audit and Risk Committee or Executive and (c) Risk Management Framework – endorsed by Council, Audit and Risk Committee or Executive.

A number of Councils have recently moved to a consolidated version of these documents, which is a sensible approach that Colac Otway Shire has embraced in preparing its Risk Management Framework.

Workshop with Councillors

A workshop with Councillors was held on Wednesday 2 August 2023 to establish the amount and type of risk Council is willing to take to meet its strategic objectives. The outcome of the workshop was:

- Agreement on the following seven risk impact categories (for the Consequence Matrix):
 - Safety
 - Financial
 - Cyber Security
 - Reputation
 - Asset Management
 - Environmental Impact
 - Governance.
- The collective risk appetite across each of the key impact categories above.

Officers then collated the information and developed a comprehensive Risk Assessment Matrix, which included improvements to both the:

Likelihood Matrix

- Adding ranges for probability of the event occurring and time periods for frequency of the event occurring – which removes subjectivity.

Consequence Matrix

- Including a category description for each risk impact category to add context.
- Including an appetite statement for each risk impact category to add further context.
- Including one to three indicators for each category (from insignificant to catastrophic) to remove subjectivity.

The comprehensive Risk Assessment Matrix was then presented to Councillors on 9 August 2023 for final feedback.

The Risk Management Framework (Attachment 1) is a comprehensive document which outlines:

- A Statement of Commitment by Council

- The risk management principles
- How Council integrates risk into its activities
- The risk management process
- The revised Corporate Risk Assessment Matrix.

Following feedback from the Audit and Risk Committee on 16 August 2023, management is now seeking Council's endorsement of the Framework.

Consistent with the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) and Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC), this draft Framework is guided by the Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (August 2020) and is consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Australian Standards ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) *LGA 2020*)

This report contributes to ensuring innovation and continuous improvement is pursued.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) *LGA 2020*)

Local Government Act 2020

Australian Standards ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines

Victorian Government Risk Management Framework (August 2020)

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) *LGA 2020*)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 *LGA 2020* and *Council's Community Engagement Policy*)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 *LGA 2020*)

The Risk Management Framework consolidates a number of documents into one and will provide greater insight into how Colac Otway Shire manages risk. Once adopted by Council, the Framework will be made available on Council's website.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement

Objective 4: We support and invest in our people

Financial Management (s101 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Development and implementation of a new Risk Management Framework will be undertaken by officers at no additional cost to Council. The Framework is designed to mitigate both financial and non-financial risks faced by Council.

Service Performance (s106 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

The adopted Framework will be made available on Council's website.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options**Option 1 – Adopt the Risk Management Framework**

This option is recommended by officers. The purpose of this framework is to embed risk management into the culture and work practices of the organisation to improve decision making in order to maximise opportunities and better manage uncertainty. The framework also supports the requirement in the *Local Government Act 2020*, for Council to give effect to the overarching governance principles in performing its role.

Option – Do not adopt the Risk Management Framework

This option is not recommended by officers. The risk management process is not an isolated function and effective identification, analysis, evaluation and treatment of defined risks are critical to Council achieving its objectives.



RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Date of Adoption:

RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

Organisations of all types and sizes face external and internal factors and influences that make it uncertain whether they will achieve their objectives. Managing risk is an integral part of good governance and leadership and is fundamental to how an organisation is managed at all levels.

Importantly, risk management is an iterative process that supports organisations in setting strategy, achieving objectives and making informed decisions. It is part of all activities associated with an organisation and considers both the external and internal context of an organisation, including human behaviour and cultural factors.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Colac Otway Shire Council (Council) is committed to managing risks that challenge its ability to meet its strategic objectives and obligations to the community. Council will do this by logically and systematically identifying, minimising, managing, monitoring and communicating all risks that directly or indirectly influence Council's ability to achieve the vision and strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan.

Council will make informed decisions on activities that it undertakes by appropriately considering risk and will work in cooperation and consultation with employees (and others involved with our activities and facilities) to ensure the achievement of Council objectives.

Council will strive to ensure that it does not place the community, employees, visitors or contractors at risk of harm to their reputation.

PURPOSE

To formalise and document Council's commitment to an enterprise wide risk management program that identifies, manages and minimises Council's risks in the achievement of Council objectives.

SCOPE

This Framework:

- Applies to all Councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors and partners.
- Establishes the guidelines for Council to implement effective risk management.
- Outlines various roles and responsibilities required to manage risk.
- Outlines governance requirements to ensure the framework, procedures, and tools remain compliant and effective.

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OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The objectives of this Framework are to:

- Provide a structured, consistent and documented framework to guide Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers in undertaking risk management activities.
- Drive a proactive risk management culture where awareness, engagement, assessment and mitigation of risk is embedded in all decision-making processes.
- Clearly define Council's risk attitude and risk tolerance levels to ensure alignment with business objectives.
- Ensure accountability for risk management at all levels of the organisation through measurable KPI's based on quality data.
- Ensure continual improvement in relation to risk management through regular review of people, processes, and systems to achieve best practice and ensure measurement and evaluation.
- Ensure measurement and evaluation of risk management practices.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Key Terms and Definitions are listed in Appendix 1.

RISK MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Effective risk management creates and protects value, improves performance, encourages innovation and supports the achievement of objectives.

Council maximises the effectiveness of risk management through compliance with the following principles:

- **Risk Management creates and protects value:** demonstrable achievement of objectives and improvement in our risk performance.
- **Risk Management is an integral part of processes:** demonstrating that management responsibility includes the accountability for risk management and its integration with our processes.
- **Risk Management is part of decision-making:** demonstrating that risk management underpins our decision-making resulting in informed choices, prioritised actions and development of alternative courses of action.
- **Risk Management deals with uncertainty:** demonstrating that our processes, activities and decision-making address uncertainty.
- **Risk Management is systematic, structured and timely:** demonstrable consistent, comparable and reliable achievements in efficiency.

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- **Risk Management** is based on best available information: demonstrating that the process of managing risk is based on data, experience, feedback, forecasts and consider the possible limitations of these information sources.
- **Risk Management** is tailored: processes that take into account the consideration of our risk profile.
- **Human and Cultural Factors:** processes accounting for the capabilities, perceptions and intention of employees and the community that may enhance or hinder our objectives.
- **Transparent and Inclusive Processes:** involving our decision makers, internal and external stakeholders when appropriate to ensure that our risk management is relevant and up-to-date.
- **Dynamic and Responsive Processes:** risk management processes designed to monitor, sense and respond to change resulting from changes in internal and external events and knowledge.
- **Continued Improvement of our Organisation:** recognising the need to develop and implement strategies to improve our risk management performance.

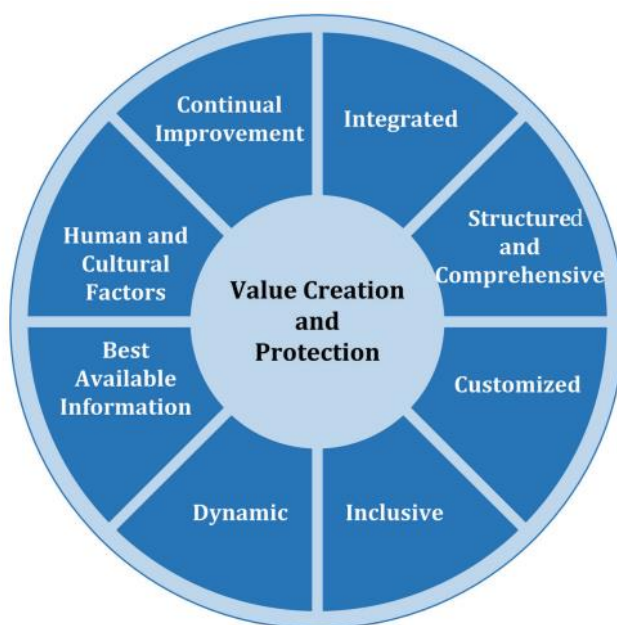


Figure 1 - Principles

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PART 2 – INTEGRATION OF RISK INTO COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

The Australian Standard ISO 31000:2018 provides that the components of an effective Framework are:

1. Leadership and commitment
2. Integration
3. Design
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation
6. Improvement.



These are explored in more detail in following sections.

LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT

The principal strategy for managing risk throughout the organisation is to apply and integrate the risk management framework across all operations, with a view to proactively identify and quantify risks in order to develop effective treatment/control measures.

By implementing the risk methodology into everyday practice, embedded in the culture and mindset rather than processes alone, then a mature organisation will have the confidence to accept certain risks.

Risk leadership, ethics and culture for Council will be fostered through the discussion and communication of risk across all levels. To facilitate this, a common understanding of Council's risk management practices will be developed by discussing risk during decision-making and the provision of risk training where it is required.

Council and the Executive Management Team will demonstrate leadership and commitment by:

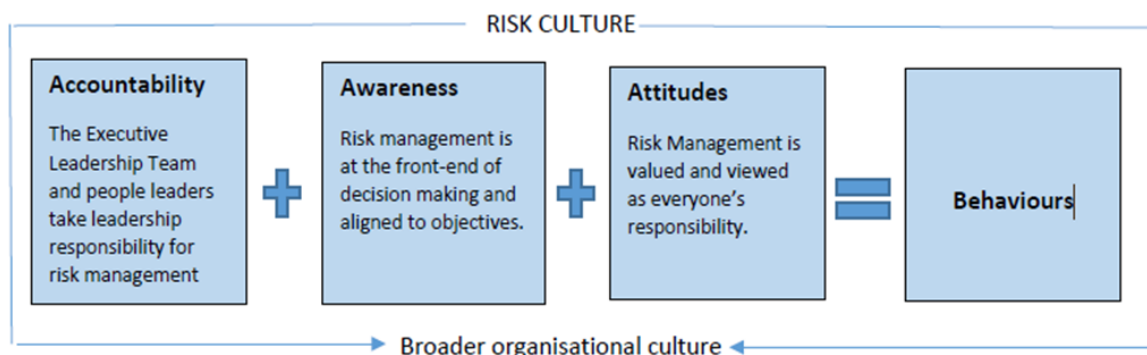
- Developing, implementing and monitoring the Risk Management Framework that establishes the risk management approach to be taken by the organisation.
- Ensuring that the necessary resources are allocated to managing risk.
- Emphasising that risk management is a core responsibility.
- Assigning authority, responsibility and accountability at appropriate levels within the organisation.

Risk Culture

Council's risk culture does not sit separately or alongside the organisational culture. It is a component of the organisational culture that illustrates how risk awareness, accountability and attitudes are applied at Colac Otway Shire.

Embedding risk behaviour into process mechanisms leads to a sustainable risk culture. It enables us to confidently perform daily operations and make informed decisions knowing that the risks impacting our work have been rigorously assessed and appropriately mitigated.

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Source: Victoria Government Risk Management Framework Practice Notes – Risk Culture

However, with changes in strategic direction, organisational priorities, funding availability and inevitable turnover of employees, risk values and capability can often be eroded. To mitigate this risk, Council's approach is to embed risk culture into the mechanisms of our operating environment to help ensure risk behaviours are repeated, sustained and positively impact our organisation and community.

Risk culture at Colac Otway Shire is evident through our:

- Councillor and Employee Codes of Conduct
- Officers' adherence to their delegated authorities
- Organisational values evidenced through behaviours
- Induction and training programs
- Position descriptions
- Regular performance reviews
- Risk profiling and participation
- Audit programs
- Risk recording and reporting.

INTEGRATION, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK

In an integrated risk management framework, risk management activities and practices are incorporated into the everyday business as usual activities. These practices work in conjunction with Council's policies, values and culture. The intention is not to "bolt on" risk considerations to existing processes, but to blend in risk considerations in a way that risk is part of the business as usual (BAU) processes, and is a value add or can assist to prevent value destruction.

There is an organisation-wide responsibility for managing risk, and integrating risk management into an organisation is a dynamic and iterative process. Risk management should be a part of Council's purpose, governance, leadership and commitment, strategy, objectives and operations.

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Organisational context

When designing a framework for managing risk, it is important to evaluate and understand the external and internal context. Colac Otway Shire's external context includes social, cultural, political, legal, regulatory, financial, technological, economic drivers and trends that impact objectives and relationships with, and perceptions and values of external stakeholders.

Council establishes internal communication and reporting mechanisms to support and encourage accountability and ownership of risk.

DESIGN

This Framework considers, amongst other things, Council's role in the community, its obligations, objectives and business processes, to create a Framework that is tailored to suit Council's needs and operating environment (it is fit for purpose). As demonstrated in this document, the Framework has assigned roles accountabilities and resources for risk management and the channels for risk consultation are described in separate Risk Procedures.

IMPLEMENTATION

The aim is to fully embed the risk management process in the organisation's critical processes and business processes so that it is as relevant, effective and sustainable as possible. This includes linking and integrating risk management with Council's business planning cycle and Improvement and Program Integration reviews and methodology.

Business Plans are four-year strategies for each work area that are revised annually and in line with the four-year Council Plan. Business planning involves formally reviewing and planning for services and ensures that work area activities are consistent with the strategic direction.

In order to have effective business planning, it is essential for departments to consider and review risks relating to their Business Plan. This maximises the chances that opportunities are realised and Business Plan actions will be completed as planned and on time. Stand-alone projects, events or activities that arise during a year should also be assessed for risks as they are planned. Setting the scope and boundaries of the risk management process involves:

- Defining the project or activity and establishing its goals and objectives.
- Defining the extent of the project.
- Identifying any studies needed.
- Defining the extent of the risk management activities to be carried out.

The Standards covering AS ISO 31000 Risk Management; OH&S Management Systems, AS4801 including Quality Management and AS/NZS 4804; Environmental Management, AS/NZS ISO14001 and AS/NZS 4581 Integrated Management Systems are some relevant references that assist in integrating risk management.

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EVALUATION

Risk management performance is assessed through feedback on:

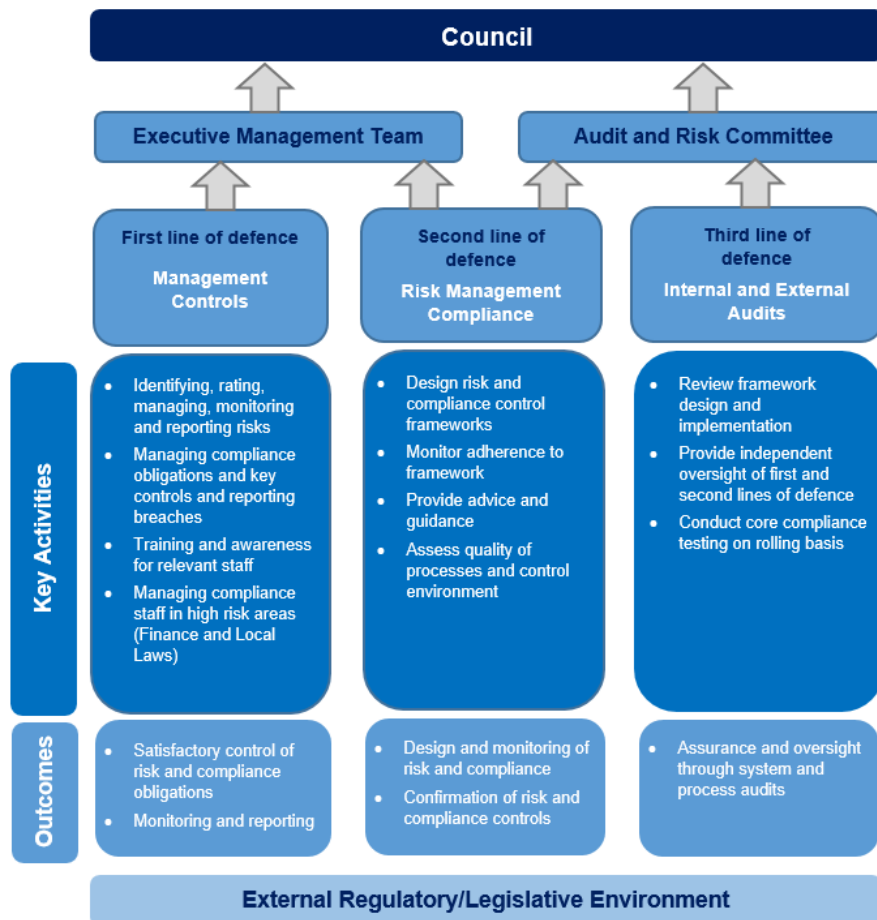
- The design, execution and outcomes of risk profiling and reporting activities.
- Implementation of risk tools into the business as usual activities.
- People and Culture performance management in accordance with Council's Risk Appetite.

IMPROVEMENT

The Framework and associated components are reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure they remain current, reflect better practices and are fit for purpose.

ASSURANCE

The three lines of defence assurance model represents Council's governance oversight for the risk management framework.

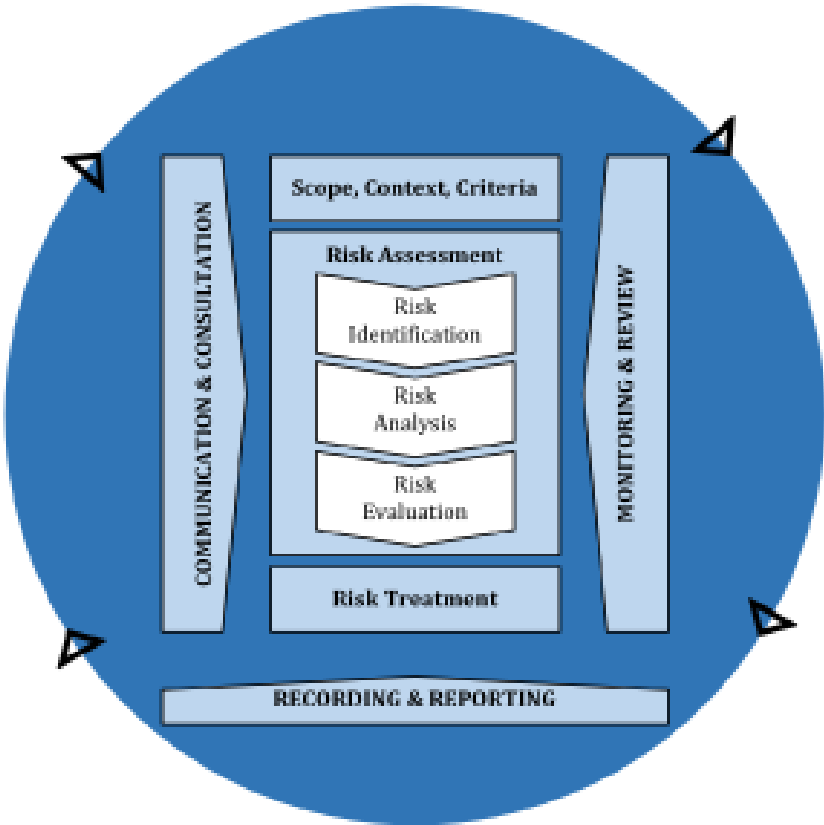


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PART 3 – RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The risk management process involves establishing the context, assessing, treating, monitoring, reviewing, recording and reporting risk. The risk management process methodology is consistent with Australian Standard ISO 31000:2018.

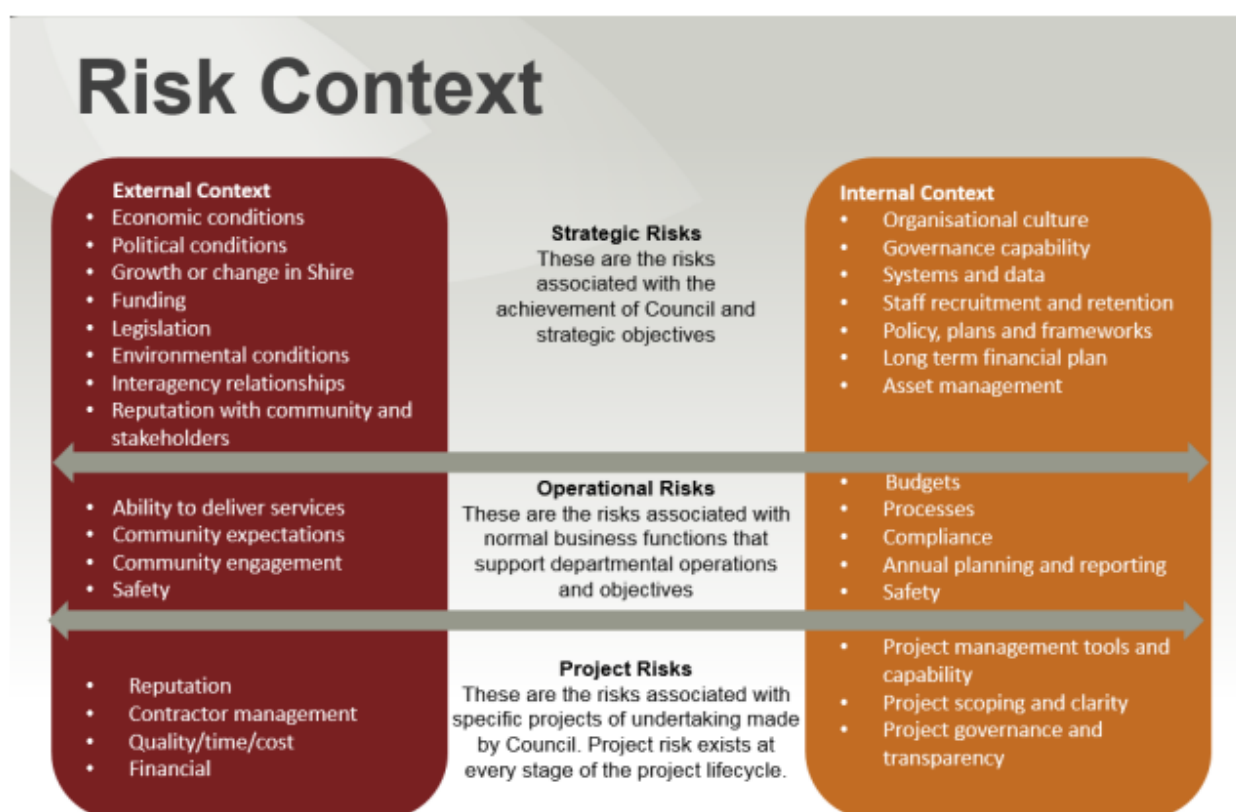
Figure 5 – Process



SCOPE, CONTEXT AND CRITERIA

The context in which the organisation assesses risk should be established prior to commencing a risk assessment. Establishing the context requires an examination of the external, organisational and risk management environment in which the risk identification, analysis and treatment options will be considered. This assists in establishing the assessment criteria for risk and the structure of the analysis.

Figure 6 – Risk Context



RISK APPETITE

Risk appetite represents how much risk Council is willing to take on to achieve its strategies and objectives. Risk appetite statements are a shared understanding of what is acceptable and unacceptable risk taking in each of the areas of Council's business. These statements help to avoid personal perceptions and biases that can adversely influence risk based decisions.

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The following risk appetite statements have been developed with Councillors.

Risk Category	Category Description	Appetite Statement
Safety	Risks relating to managing the physical and general work environment and Council controlled spaces and their impact on health and safety of employees, contractors, volunteers or members of the public.	Council has no appetite for work practices, actions or inactions that compromise the wellbeing and safety of people including employees, contractors, volunteers and community.
Financial	Risks associated with the financial management of Council and its ability to fund Council services now and into the future (including risks related to revenue, expenditure, budget management, investments and debt management and accuracy of financial information).	Council has a small to medium appetite for variation in financial performance as long as long-term financial sustainability is not threatened.
Cyber Security	Risks relating to the security of the network, applications and information security and disaster recovery.	Council has a no appetite for external and internal threats, misuse, modification and unintended damage to the security of its ICT systems/environment.
Reputation	Risks relating to negative stakeholder opinion or negative publicity regarding business practices, Council decisions or behaviour of officers and Councillors.	Council understands that negative publicity may occur where there is competing priorities and interests in the community. Council has a medium to large appetite for impacts on Council's reputation.
Asset Management	Risks arising from the potential deterioration, damage or destruction of Council assets and road infrastructure (including both financial costs of repair and/or replacement and the impact that loss of access to the asset has on service delivery).	Council has no appetite to compromise on standards that impact on public safety. Council has a small to medium appetite and will accept some level of risk over non-core or non-essential assets and infrastructure.
Environmental Impact	Risks associated with Council's operations that have potential or actual negative environmental, ecological or cultural heritage impacts, regardless of whether these are reversible or irreversible in nature.	Council has a small appetite for risks that cause significant and irreparable damage to the environment and seeks to preserve and enhance it for future generations.
Governance	Risks relating to regulatory obligations and expectations and good governance framework and principles.	Council has small appetite for breaches of legal obligations, good governance principles, policies or contractual agreements that result in fines, penalties or reputational damage. Council has zero tolerance for illegal activities including fraud and corruption.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Step 1 – Risk identification

Identification of risks is a systematic determination of what, how, where and when an event may happen that could affect Council's day-to-day operations.

Risks can be identified by looking at historical performance and trends, previous events, current challenges, and the needs of those who use our services, as well as thinking about future scenarios or potential outcomes that could prevent us from providing safe and sustainable services and hinder the delivery of our long-term strategic objectives.

Risks may be articulated using the following method to provide for clarity and brevity:

EVENT: what will happen?

CAUSE: why the event could happen?

IMPACT: how bad will it be if it did happen, what is the exposure to Council?

Step 2 – Risk analysis

Once a risk has been identified, the controls currently in place must also be identified. Controls are mechanisms or processes that eliminate or reduce the impact and/or likelihood of the risk, include but are not limited to:

- Policies
- Procedures
- Training schedules
- Manuals
- Guidelines
- Audit
- External reviews
- Business continuity plans.

Step 3 – Risk evaluation

Risks identified are rated according to the likelihood of them eventuating and the consequence(s) that might flow if they did eventuate. This rating determines the level of risk exposure, urgency and complexity of treatment, and escalation processes.

Likelihood (How Often)

- The first step in determining the rating of the identified risk is to evaluate the likelihood of it occurring.
- The Likelihood Matrix included in the Risk Assessment Matrix at Appendix 2 is used to assess how probable it is that a risk will occur on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating it will happen rarely, and 5 indicating that it is almost certain to occur.

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It is important to note that this score is arrived at using the expertise, knowledge and experience of the individual and/or group scoring it. This will often be the risk owner and/or risk champion.

Likelihood scoring may be challenged by the Risk and Insurance Officer, EMT, your direct supervisor or the Audit and Risk Committee reviewing the risk registers.

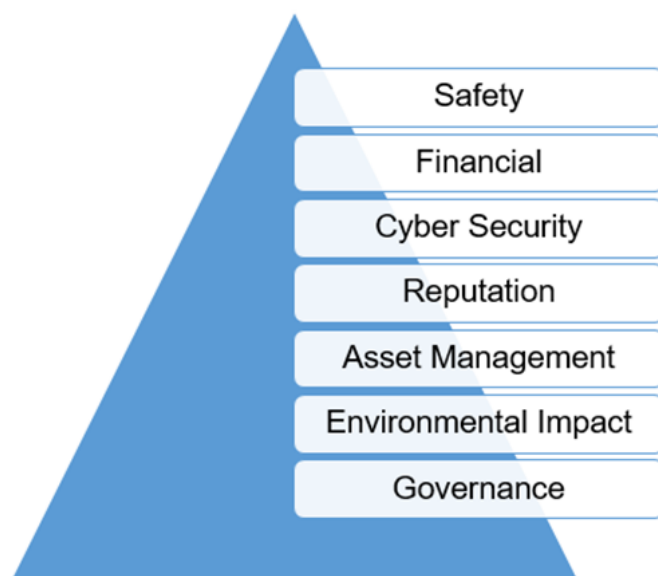
When adding a risk to the risk register, likelihood is determined during three stages:

- the first is the inherent rating without the current controls in place, or very weak controls in place;
- the second is the residual rating with the existing controls that are in place; and
- the third is when projecting the target risk rating.

Generally, the higher the degree of effective controls in place, the lower the likelihood score.

Consequence (How Bad)

Having assessed the likelihood, the second part of the evaluation identifies what the potential consequences or impact of the risk might be. The Risk Assessment Matrix at Appendix 2 categorises the areas of risk particular to Council's activities:



The consequence table rates the impact of a risk from 1 to 5, with 1 being insignificant or negligible impact and 5 being catastrophic.

Because the nature of risk is anticipating what may happen, the Consequence Table provides non-exhaustive examples of the impact of risk within a range. However, as with the scoring of the likelihood of a risk occurring, subject matter experts within that category of risk are evaluating the score and as such are able to anticipate an impact taking into account historical performance and trends, previous events and current challenges.



Risk Rating

Once the likelihood and consequence ratings have been arrived at they are multiplied to reach a risk rating, using the 5 x 5 matrix ("Risk Rating Matrix") at Appendix 3. This acts as a heat map to assess the severity of individual risks, determine Council's tolerance of it and drives the complexity and urgency of treatment approaches and escalations.

Where a rating is in the high to extreme end of the heat map, there is likely to be both more complex and urgent mitigations and action plans required, and it is escalated up the reporting line so that senior leaders are aware and are able to keep an eye on the way the risk is being managed. However, a medium risk will be treated at the local level i.e. Council is confident that there are processes and management structures in place to deal with the risk.

Council's risk registers require an evaluation of risk using the 5 x 5 matrix in 3 stages, without controls in place/weak controls in place (inherent rating), with the current controls in place (residual rating), and a target or projected rating.

RISK TREATMENT

If controls are not in place, or not working effectively, action plans may need to be developed to strengthen the control and manage the risk. Keeping in mind the balance between costs to implement the treatment versus the benefit to Council, the following treatment options may be considered:

- **Mitigate or reduce the risk:** This seeks to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of the risk by taking early action to reduce its occurrence to an acceptable level, and is the most common treatment action at Council.
- **Avoid the risk:** Decide not to proceed with the activity likely to generate the risk where this is practical.
- **Transfer the risk:** May be appropriate where another party can take on some or all of the risk more economically or more effectively i.e. a contractor or insurer, who may be better placed to manage the risk. Close review is required on transfer as it does not eliminate the risk altogether, but gives another party responsibility for its management.
- **Accept the risk:** By accepting a risk this does not imply it is insignificant. Acceptance may be an option where action is out of Council's control, or the risk is at an acceptable level within Council's risk appetite and tolerance levels.

Treatment plans may include the development or redesign of systems or policies and procedures; training and education; supervision; audits; and technical controls.

MONITOR AND REVIEW, COMMUNICATE AND CONSULT

The processes of monitor and review, and communicate and consult bookend the risk management process. They are dealt with together in this section as there is interplay between the two throughout the assessment process, as well as the framework generally.

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Review of Risk Registers

- A continual process of monitor, review and improvement of all components of the Risk Management process is required to ensure risk registers are effective and current. During these reviews the residual risk rating will be reviewed and assurance sought on the delivery of action plans, their effectiveness and impact on the risk rating.
- For operational risks, risk champions, along with the risk owners, are responsible for the periodic risk reviews and for facilitating risk discussions at team meetings, committees and the overall management of the operational risks for their department. Timing and responsibilities are dependent on the level of risk. The higher the risk rating the closer monitoring is required.
- Operational risk reports should be discussed with General Managers on a regular basis (dependant on residual risk rating) to determine whether escalation is required or further action is to be taken. Where further information or clarification is required it is the responsibility of the risk owner to facilitate this.
- Strategic risks are reviewed by EMT on a rotational basis and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee biannually.

RISK MATURITY

Risk maturity is not a static concept. Over time the working environment changes, and risk management also needs to evolve to ensure it continues to support Council in achieving its objectives.

Risk maturity goes beyond the structural elements of ensuring a framework is in place. An assessment of risk maturity enables Council to assess the performance of the Risk Management Framework and to determine whether it is meeting expectations. An assessment provides a roadmap for improvement through identifying opportunities to improve and mature the risk culture.

Council will carry out a self-assessment of risk maturity is based on the VMIA maturity model annually.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Risk management training and awareness is recognised as an important requirement for all employees. Training will be designed to increase the knowledge and awareness of employees in a number of risk management topics, which include general risk management, public liability, assessment of risks, fraud and corruption, work, health and safety, business planning and community safety.

In addition to formal training, internal and external specialist advice is available and includes help with identifying and assessing opportunities and risk exposures and the implementation of the principles around developing, implementing and monitoring sustainable control measures.

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REPORTING AND ESCALATION

The escalation and reporting process has been established to enable the organisation to:

- Have an understanding of Council's risk exposures as a whole.
- Identify risks that require extensive management attention.
- Provide risk information to the various stakeholders.
- Provide the necessary information for managers at all levels to make risk informed decisions.

Risk Escalation

Risk escalation criteria is the standard upon which risks must be notified in accordance with the materiality of the risk, as ranked in accordance with the risk rating table. It gives the people deemed accountable for the risk every opportunity to address the risk in a timely manner and reduce the likelihood of the risk becoming an event.

Risk Level	Action
Extreme	Must complete control evaluation. Executive Management review required.
High	Must complete control evaluation. General Manager review required and control issues and status reported to EMT.
Medium	Control evaluation where appropriate. Department Manager responsible for controls and reports control issues to General Manager.
Low	Examination of controls is not specifically required. Monitored by Business Unit.

Strategic Risks

Two strategic risks will be considered by the Executive Management Team on a monthly basis and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee biannually. The objectives of this approach are to:

- Ensure that EMT has regular discussion about risk management, and strategic risks in particular, with frequency that embeds risk management in to day to day operations.
- Ensure the Audit and Risk Committee sees regular commitment to risk management and can ask questions as needed.

Operational Risks

Risks with a residual risk rating of High or above, will be escalated to the General Manager monthly, and the serious risks are presented to the Executive Management Team on a quarterly basis where further mitigations and treatment plans are discussed. Operational Risks will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on an annual basis.

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ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Audit and Risk Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the risk management activities and review mechanisms in place to comply with the Risk Management Framework: process, resources and effective engagement. Consider the adequacy of actions taken to ensure that the risks have been dealt with in a timely manner to mitigate exposures to the Council. Review Council's high cost project risks to ensure adequacy of mitigation strategies are in place.
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the adoption of the Risk Management Framework. Responsible for setting the risk appetite for Council. Receives and notes reports from the Audit and Risk Committee on the progress of the risk implementation plan and reported risks.
Executive Management Team (EMT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate risk management into division/branch activities to drive a strong culture of risk awareness and practice – this involves continually and systematically identifying, analysing, evaluating and treating risks that may impact on objectives. Responsible for embedding risk management into decision-making and ensuring that risks are managed in accordance with the Risk Management Framework. Accountable for approval, ownership and management of strategic risks. Provide executive leadership in the management of strategic, operational and project risks and generally champion risk management within Council.
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all the requirements of Council's Risk Management Framework are implemented effectively across their areas of responsibility. Championing risk management within their department and appropriate risk management practice by employees, volunteers, contractors, and service providers. Accountable for risk assessments and completion of risk actions in their respective areas of responsibility. Responsible for ensuring controls in place are working effectively.
Manager Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for maturing Council's risk management culture through coaching, training and implementing the Risk Management Framework across the organisation. Ensure that Council's risk management culture is continuously evolving as Council matures. Provide strategic advice on risk management, resilience and guidance to the CEO, EMT and the Audit and Risk Committee. Prepare various risk management reports to the Audit and Risk Committee and EMT in accordance with the Risk Management Framework and Audit and Risk Committee Workplan. Liaise with the Internal Auditor and other stakeholders as required. Measure risk management maturity and report on the implementation of actions to achieve target maturity.
Risk and Insurance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for continuously improving the Risk Management Framework. Develop, maintain and quality assure enterprise risk registers and monitor implementation of controls and agreed treatment actions. Assist with the preparation of various risk management reports to the Audit and Risk Committee and EMT in accordance with the Risk Management Framework and Audit and Risk Committee Workplan. Provide risk management training, advice and support and conduct risk assessments as agreed with EMT or Senior Management.
All Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for applying risk management practices in their area of work and ensuring that management are aware of the risks associated with Council's operations including recommendation of suitable plans to manage risk. Seek guidance and support from Risk and Insurance Officer.



PART 4 – REFERENCE AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

AS/NZ ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines

Audit and Risk Committee Charter

Colac Otway Shire Risk Management Procedure

Councillor Code of Conduct

Employee Code of Conduct

Fraud and Corruption Framework

Local Government Act 2020

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017

Victorian Managed Insurance Authority

Other influencing legislation may include:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Protected Disclosure Act 2012*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Ombudsman Act 1973*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Building Act 1983*
- *Wrongs Act 1958*
- *Emergency Management Act 2013*
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011.*

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APPENDIX 1 – KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Communication and consultation	Continual and iterative processes that an organisation conducts to provide, share or obtain information and to engage in dialogue with stakeholders regarding the management of risk.
Consequences	Outcome of an event affecting the objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A consequence can be certain or uncertain and can have positive or negative direct or indirect effects on objectives.</i>
Control	Measure that maintains and or modifies risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Controls are not limited to, any process, policy, device, practice or other conditions and or actions which maintain and or modify risk.</i> <i>Controls may not always exert the intended or assumed modifying effect.</i>
Establishing the context	Defining the external and internal parameters to be considered when managing risk and setting the scope and risk criteria for the risk management policy.
Event	Occurrence or change of a set of circumstances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An event can have one or more occurrences and can have several causes and several consequences.</i>
External context	External environment in which the organisation seeks to achieve its objectives.
Internal context	Internal environment in which the organisation seeks to achieve its objectives.
Level of risk	Magnitude of a risk or combination of risks expressed in terms of the combination of consequences and their likelihood.
Likelihood	Chance of something happening.
Monitoring	Continual checking; supervising, critically observing or determining the status to identify change from the performance level required or expected.
Residual risk	Risk remaining after risk treatment.
Review	Activity undertaken to determine the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the subject to achieve established objectives.
Risk	Effect of uncertainty on objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>An effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative, or both and can address, create or result in opportunities or threats.</i>
Risk analysis	Process to comprehend the nature of risk and to determine the level of risk.
Risk assessment	Overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.
Risk attitude	Organisation's approach to assessing and eventually pursuing, retaining, taking or turning away from risk.
Risk criteria	Terms of reference against which the significance of a risk is evaluated.

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Risk evaluation	Process of comparing the results of risk analysis with the risk criteria to determine whether the risk and/or its magnitude are acceptable or tolerable.
Risk identification	Process of finding, recognising and describing risks.
Risk management	Coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation in relation to risk.
Risk management plan	Scheme within the risk management framework specifying the approach, components and resources to be applied to the management of risk.
Risk management process	Systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the activities of communicating, consulting, establishing the context, and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk.
Risk owner	Person or entity with the accountability and authority to manage a risk.
Risk profile	Description of any set of risks.
Risk source	Element which, either alone or in combination, has the potential to give rise to risk.
Risk treatment	Process to modify a risk.
Stakeholder	<p>Person or organisation that can affect, be affected by or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The term interested party can be used as an alternative to stakeholder.</i>
Reference: AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management–Principles and Guidelines	

APPENDIX 2 – CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

	Category Description	Appetite Statement	CONSEQUENCE				
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Safety	Risks relating to managing the physical and general work environment and Council controlled spaces and their impact on health and safety of staff, contractors, volunteers or members of the public.	Council has no appetite for work practices, actions or inactions that compromise the wellbeing and safety of people including staff, contractors, volunteers and community.	Near miss (no injury) OR Minor medical attention without restriction to work (eg Band-Aid or Panadol)	(Physical / mental) Lost Time Injury (LTI) < 30 days OR Injury to staff or public requiring medical treatment or intervention for up to 8 weeks	(Physical / mental) Lost Time Injury (LTI) 30 days to 6 months OR Injury to staff or public requiring medical treatment or intervention for up to 12 months	Permanent disabling injuries or illness where unable to return to the workforce (including serious psychological /mental injury) OR Prosecution for negligence under the Workplace Health and Safety legislation	Loss of life as a result of Council operations
Financial	Risks associated with the financial management of Council and its ability to fund Council services now and into the future (including risks related to revenue, expenditure, budget management, investments and debt management and accuracy of financial information).	Council has a small to medium appetite for variation in financial performance as long as long-term financial sustainability is not threatened.	Negative financial impact of up to \$50,000 etc	Negative financial impact of >\$50,000 to \$200,000	Negative financial impact of >\$200,000 to \$1,000,000	Negative financial impact of >\$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000	Negative financial impact of >\$5,000,000
Cyber Security	Risks relating to the security of the network, applications and information security and disaster recovery.	Council has a no appetite for external and internal threats, misuse, modification and unintended damage to the security of its ICT systems/environment.	A security event without system loss OR A security event without data loss	A security event that results in system loss for <1 day OR A data breach resulting in non-personal information disclosed	A security event that results in system loss for 1 day to 2 weeks OR A data breach resulting in personal information disclosed without further consequence	A security event that results in system loss for >2 weeks OR A data breach resulting in personal information disclosed, leading to identity theft	A security event that results in permanent system loss OR A data breach resulting in personal information of vulnerable people disclosed, leading to harm
Reputation	Risks relating to negative stakeholder opinion or negative publicity regarding business practices, Council decisions or behaviour of officers and Councillors.	Council understands that negative publicity may occur where there is competing priorities and interests in the community. Council has a medium to large appetite for impacts on Council's reputation.	Community satisfaction with decision making reduced by up to 5% compared to prior year OR General service complaint by one customer OR Less than five repeated negative stories in the local media about the issue	Community satisfaction with decision making reduced by 5-10% compared to prior year OR Complaint by a community group which is escalated in the public arena OR Five to 10 repeated negative stories in the local media about the issue	Community satisfaction with decision making reduced by 10-20% compared to prior year OR Complaints by up to 10 community groups on a single issue that necessitates a public response from Council OR Up to 20 repeated negative stories in regional media about the issue	Community satisfaction with decision making reduced by 20-30% compared to prior year OR Complaints from community groups across the municipality that that escalate to regional or State media OR Repeated negative stories across multiple channels that consumes >50% of executive time for >6 weeks	Community satisfaction with decision making reduced by >30% compared to prior year OR Be named in Parliament by and Integrity of reporting agencies OR Negative media commentary results in workforce resignations >10%
Asset Management	Risks arising from the potential deterioration, damage or destruction of Council assets and road infrastructure (including both financial costs of repair and/or replacement and the impact that loss of access to the asset has on service delivery).	Council has no appetite to compromise on standards that impact on public safety. Council has a small to medium appetite and will accept some level of risk over non-core or non-essential assets and infrastructure.	Localised damage to a single general asset which can be remedied within 6 months OR Widespread damage to a number of general assets that can be remedied within 2 months	Localised damage to a single general asset which can be remedied within 2 years OR Widespread damage to a number of general assets that can be remedied within 12 months	Localised damage to a single critical asset which can be remedied within 3 years OR Widespread damage to a number of general assets that can be remedied within 3 years	Localised damage to a single critical asset which can be remedied within 5 years OR Widespread damage to a number of general assets that can be remedied within 5 years	Widespread damage to a number of critical assets which takes >5 years to remedy OR Total or permanent destruction to one or more critical assets
Environmental Impact	Risks associated with Council's operations that have potential or actual negative environmental, ecological or cultural heritage impacts, regardless of whether these are reversible or irreversible in nature.	Council has a small appetite for risks that cause significant and irreparable damage to the environment and seeks to preserve and enhance it for future generations.	A single occurrence that causes temporary environmental harm that is not measurable (below detection limits) OR No change in Greenhouse emissions OR Verbal warning received from EPA	A single occurrence that causes temporary environmental harm OR Increase in Greenhouse emissions of >2% OR Written warning received from EPA	Single or repeated occurrences which causes environmental harm which is able to be remediated in <2 years. OR Increase in Greenhouse emissions of >10% OR Remedial notice received from EPA	Single or repeated occurrences which causes environmental harm which is able to be remediated in >2 years and <5 years OR Increase in Greenhouse emissions of >20% OR Infringement notice received from EPA	Single or repeated occurrences that cause ongoing environmental harm that cannot be repaired OR Increase in Greenhouse emissions of >30% OR Court proceedings initiated by EPA

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	Category Description	Appetite Statement	CONSEQUENCE				
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Governance	Risks relating to regulatory obligations, and expectations and good governance framework and principles.	Council has small appetite for breaches of legal obligations, good governance principles, policies or contractual agreements that result in fines, penalties or reputational damage. Council has zero tolerance for illegal activities including fraud and corruption.	Non-compliance requires reporting to Audit and Risk Committee OR Councillor or employee conduct matter requiring apology, discussion or training	Minor statutory breach that results in a non-material fine (ie infringement notice) OR Councillor or employee conduct matter requiring internal dispute resolution	Statutory breach that results in a material fine OR Repeated Councillor or employee conduct matters requiring external arbitration or investigation	Statutory breach that results in a significant fine OR Municipal Monitor imposed by Minister	Statutory breach that may result in imprisonment OR Council is sacked and Administrators appointed

Likelihood	Rare (E)	Unlikely (D)	Possible (C)	Likely (B)	Almost Certain (A)
Probability	The event may only occur in exceptional circumstances (0-5% chance)	The event could occur at some time (5-10% chance)	The event should occur at some time (10-30% chance)	The event will probably occur in most circumstances (30-90% chance)	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances (>90% chance)
Frequency	Less than once in 15 years	Once in 10 years	Once in 3 years	Once per year	More than once per year

APPENDIX 3 – RISK RATING MATRIX AND RISK ESCALATION MATRIX

Likelihood ↑	Almost Certain (A)	M	H	E	E	E
	Likely (B)	M	M	H	E	E
	Possible (C)	L	M	H	H	E
	Unlikely (D)	L	L	M	H	H
	Rare (E)	L	L	L	M	H
		Insignificant (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Catastrophic (5)
		→ Consequence				

Risk Level	Action
Extreme	Must complete control evaluation. Executive Management review required.
High	Must complete control evaluation. General Manager review required and control issues and status reported to EMT.
Medium	Control evaluation where appropriate. Department Manager responsible for controls and reports control issues to General Manager.
Low	Examination of controls is not specifically required. Monitored by Business Unit.

Item: 9.9

Fraud and Corruption Framework

OFFICER	Marlo Emmitt
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	1. Fraud and Corruption Control Framework - controlled version [9.9.1 - 33 pages]

To present the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework for adoption.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council currently has a number of documents to assist with the control and management of risks relating to fraud and corruption, including the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy that is overdue for review.

Officers have benchmarked Council's Fraud and Corruption control documents against a number of other councils and the current Australian Standards. As a result of this benchmarking and review, the controls outlined in current policy and procedure documents have been consolidated into one overarching document which reflects a contemporary approach.

A draft Fraud and Corruption Control Framework was developed and presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting held on 16 August 2023. The Committee endorsed the draft with some suggestions for minor amendments and clarifications. A further review has been undertaken by officers to add further clarity and guidance and a final version of the framework is attached for Council's consideration.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework (Attachment 1).***
- 2. Revokes Council Policy 16.2 Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.***

3. ***Notes that the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework (Attachment 1) supersedes the Fraud and Corruption Control Plan.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Council's current Fraud and Corruption Control documentation comprises a number of documents including:

- Council Policy 16.2 - Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (Adopted 27 May 2020)
- Fraud and Corruption Control Plan (approved 12 February 2020)
- Various templates developed for officers to implement policies and procedures.

Prior to developing the draft Framework, officers undertook a desktop benchmarking exercise with a number of other local government organisations. A number of councils have recently moved to a consolidated version of these documents, which is a sensible approach that Colac Otway Shire has embraced in preparing its Fraud and Corruption Framework.

Council's Fraud and Corruption Control documentation has been updated with a single framework that establishes Council's commitment, principles and procedures with respect to control and management of fraud and control matters. Accordingly, the proposed Fraud and Corruption Control Framework is guided by the *Local Government Act 2020* and Australian Standards ISO 8001:2021 Fraud and Corruption Control.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report contributes to ensure innovation and continuous improvement is pursued.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Council Policy 16.2 - Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (Adopted 27 May 2020)
Fraud and Corruption Control Plan (approved 12 February 2020)

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

This Fraud and corruption Control Framework will be considered at a public meeting. Once endorsed the document will be available to the public on Council's website.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement

Objective 4: We support and invest in our people

Financial Management (s101 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Development and implementation of a new Fraud and Control Framework will be undertaken by officers at no additional cost to Council. The framework proposes to support protection of Council's financial and non-financial assets.

Service Performance (s106 *Local Government Act 2020*)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Fraud and corruption control forms part of Council's risk management framework. It is a risk that the Council actively seeks to identify and limit its exposure to, by reducing the potential opportunity (risk likelihood) for fraud and corruption to occur.

Communication/Implementation

Not applicable.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

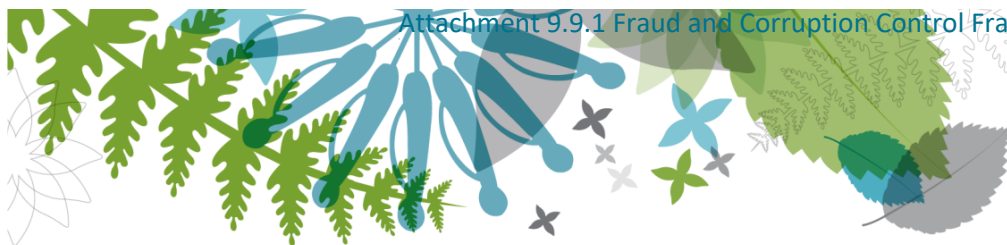
No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

OptionsOption 1 – Adopt the Fraud and Corruption Framework

This option is recommended by officers as the implementation of a comprehensive framework for preventing fraud and corruption is vital to maintaining the integrity, accountability, and public trust in local government.

Option 2 – Do not adopt the Fraud and Corruption Framework

This option is not recommended by officers as the consequences of not having a fraud and corruption prevention framework for a Council can be severe and far-reaching, potentially undermining the integrity of the council and causing harm to its operations, reputation, and the community it serves.



FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL FRAMEWORK

Date of adoption:



FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL FRAMEWORK

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PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Colac Otway Shire Council has zero tolerance for corrupt conduct or fraudulent activities. Council is committed to preventing, deterring, and detecting fraudulent and corrupt behaviour in the performance of Council activities.

PURPOSE

This Fraud and Corruption Control Framework details Council's approach to controlling fraud and corruption at both strategic and operational levels and is to be read in conjunction with Council's Risk Management Framework, Council policies and relevant legislation.

The framework:

1. Underpins Council's commitment to the minimisation and elimination of actual or perceived fraudulent and corrupt behaviours and acts throughout Council operations; and
2. Sets out Council's approach to the implementation and review of fraud and corruption prevention, detection, monitoring and reporting.

SCOPE

This framework applies to Councillors, employees, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, temporary employees, persons employed through a third party agency and volunteers of Council.

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The primary objective of Council's commitment and control framework is the elimination of fraud and corruption throughout Council operations both internally and externally.

Outcomes of this framework include:

- The community and Council's stakeholders can have confidence in the integrity and governance of Council's decision-making and processes.
- Employees may face disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Policy and restitution of money or property lost through fraudulent activity will be pursued through legislative means.
- Council may pursue the prosecution of people identified as committing fraud or undertaking corrupt behaviour.

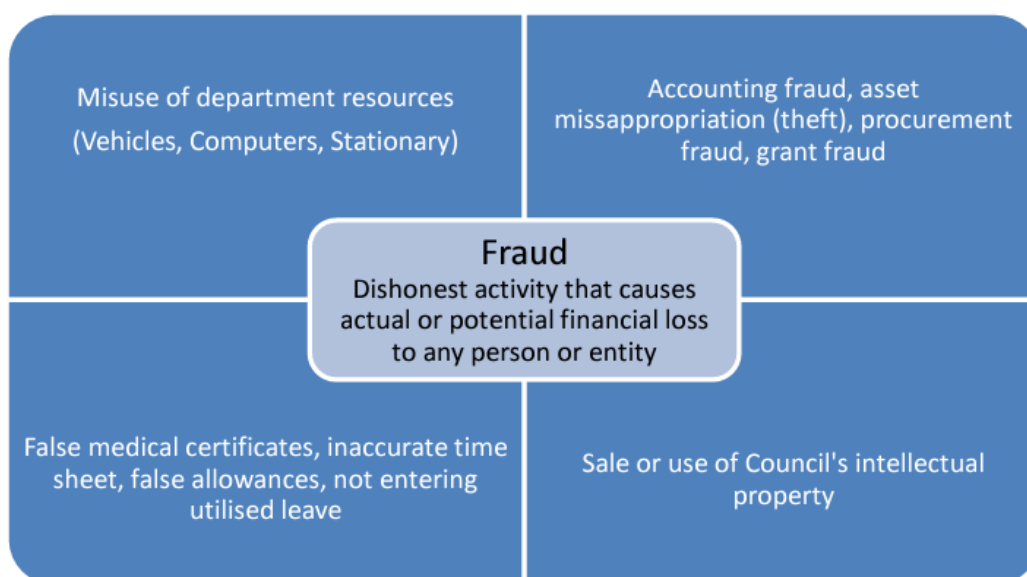
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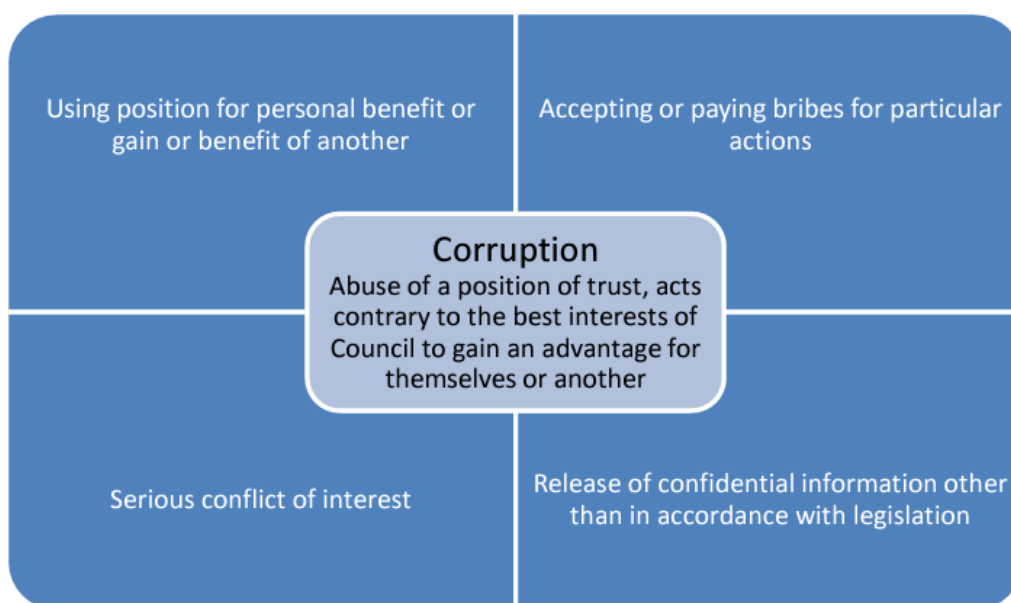
DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Australian Standard Fraud and Corruption Control (AS 8001-2021) provides the following definitions:

Fraud - is dishonest activity causing actual or potential loss to the Council (including theft of money or other property) and where deception is used at the time, immediately before or following the activity. This also includes the deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of (or intention to use) falsified documentation and the improper use of information or position for personal financial benefit.



Corruption - is dishonest activity in which a person to whom the framework applies acts contrary to the



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interests of Council and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve some personal gain or advantage for themselves or for another person or entity or to disadvantage Council.

Conflict of Interest - a conflict between the public duty and personal interests of a Councillor, Council employee, council volunteer or council contractor that may, or be perceived to, improperly influence the performance of their duties. A conflict can be actual, potential or perceived.

Disclosure – is a report, made by an individual or group, about improper conduct or detrimental action of Councillors, employees, contractors, sub-contractors, consultants, temporary employees, persons employed through a third party agency and volunteers . The conduct may have occurred in the past, is currently occurring or may happen in future. It is not a disclosure if the complaint or allegation is already in the public domain.

Fraud and Corruption Control Framework – the process of planning, organising leading and controlling activity, in order to direct and control the organisation with regard to the implementation of anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategies.

Improper Conduct – at its lowest threshold level, is either criminal or serious enough to result in a person's dismissal. It may include taking or offering bribes, dishonestly using influence, committing fraud, theft, misusing information or material acquired at work, conspiring or attempting to engage in the above corrupt activity. It can also arise from the inaction of an individual or group.

EXAMPLES OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

Examples of fraud include:

- theft of money or property
- falsely claiming to hold qualifications
- false invoicing for goods or services not delivered, or inflating the value of goods and services
- theft of intellectual property or confidential information
- falsifying an entity's financial statements to obtain an improper or financial benefit
- misuse of position to gain financial advantage.

Examples of corruption include:

- payment or receipt of bribes
- a serious conflict of interest that is not managed and may influence a decision
- nepotism, where a person is appointed to a role because of their existing relationships, rather than merit
- manipulation of procurement processes to favour one tenderer over others
- gifts or entertainment intended to achieve a specific outcome in breach of an agency's policies.

Further examples of fraud and corruption in a Local Government context are included in Appendix A.

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PART 2 - FRAMEWORK AND RESOURCING

Council is the custodian of significant public funds and assets. It is important that the community has assurance that these are adequately protected from fraud and corruption.

Council has developed a structured framework and approach to the implementation and review of fraud and corruption prevention, detection, monitoring and reporting. This framework is based on the *Australian Standard for Fraud and Corruption Control (AS8001-2021)* and has been endorsed by the Executive Management Team and the Audit and Risk Committee, and approved by Council

Fraud and corruption control forms part of Council's risk management framework. It is a risk that Council actively seeks to identify and limit its exposure to, by reducing the potential opportunity (risk likelihood) for fraud and corruption to occur.

COMMITMENT TO STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Adherence to the values and standards of behaviour upon which Council's reputation has been built and will continue to be based, is fundamental to further building on the partnership, trust and community pride between our Council and the community.

The Employee Code of Conduct requires that employees conduct themselves in accordance with clear principles that require that they:

1. Act in Colac Otway Shire Council's best interest and value our reputation
2. Act with honesty and integrity
3. Treat others with respect, value difference and maintain a safe working environment
4. Identify conflicts of interest and manage them responsibly
5. Respect and maintain privacy and confidentiality
6. Not make or receive improper payments, gifts or benefits.

The *Local Government Act 2020*, *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*, and the Councillor Code of Conduct provide the basis for expectations of conduct by Councillors. This includes the requirement that Councillors must:

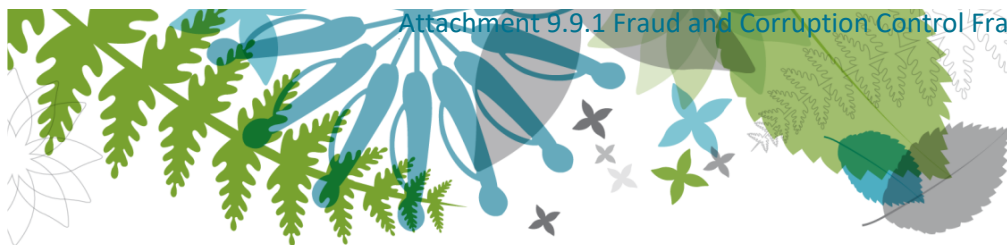
- Comply with good governance measures.
- Not discredit or mislead Council or public.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ORGANISATION'S OTHER RISK CONTROL DOCUMENTS

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Councillor Gift, Benefits and Hospitality Policy
- Risk Management Framework
- Procurement Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

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- Selection for Excellence Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Procedures
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Australian Standard AS 8001-2021 Fraud and Corruption Control
- AS/NZ ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines
- Employment screening (AS 4811-2006; HB 323-2007)
- Fraud Control in Australian Government Entities Better Practice Guide (Australian National Audit Office)
- Related Victorian legislation, including:
 - Local Government Act 2020
 - Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012
 - Public Interest Disclosure Regulations 2019
 - Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2011
 - Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
 - Crimes Act 1958
 - Ombudsman Act 1973
 - Audit Act 1994
 - Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.

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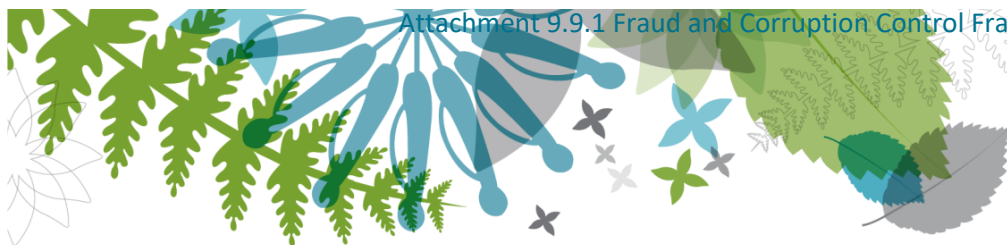
FOUNDATIONS FOR FRAUD AND CORRUPTION CONTROL

This Fraud and Corruption Control Framework operates within an existing legislative and strategic framework. The diagram below shows the interdependency of a good framework with complementary culture, programs and processes.



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ROLES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Council operates under a distributed assurance model in accordance with the Risk Management Framework. This model provides that the following groups are all involved in effective risk management.

The accountabilities and responsibilities for this Framework are detailed below:



Role	Accountabilities and responsibilities
Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that an appropriate Fraud and Corruption Control System (Framework) is adopted. Comply with the Code of Conduct for Councillors (including conflict of interest obligations). Facilitate accountability for fraud and corruption control at all levels within the Council by ensuring appropriate resources are provided to ensure suitable fraud and corruption information and reporting systems are maintained. Ensure the highest standards of integrity and ethical leadership are demonstrated.

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Role	Accountabilities and responsibilities
Audit and Risk Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the implementation of the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Fraud and Corruption Control Plan. • Direct and guide the internal audit function and approve, monitor and manage the annual internal audit plan. • Ensure appropriate internal audit coverage is given to fraud control issues. • Liaise closely with internal and external auditors and ensure issues and recommendations are appropriately actioned.
Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal responsibility for fraud and corruption control within Council, ensuring compliance with established policies and procedures and that appropriate governance structures are in place and are effective. • Promote a genuine commitment to fraud and corruption control within Council. • Expeditiously reporting to IBAC, relevant agencies and the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with this Framework.
Executive Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and implement the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework across Council. • Establish and maintain an effective internal control environment. • Coordinate Council's internal audit program. • Provide appropriate organisational focus and effort to ensure proper implementation of the Fraud and Corruptions Control Framework including the establishment of a fraud awareness program. • Maintain awareness of fraud and corruption risks.
Manager Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and related procedures. • Coordinate external investigations with the General Manager Corporate Services and make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer • Ensure Council maintains appropriate insurance cover. • Coordinate and provide fraud and corruption training and awareness across the organisation.
Manager Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure financial procedures (including payroll) adequately address fraud and corruption risk. • Coordinate access to financial information to audit authorities.
Manager Property, Procurement and Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure procurement procedures adequately address fraud and corruption risk. • Coordinate and provide procurement training and awareness that includes fraud and corruption risk in the context of procurement processes.

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Role	Accountabilities and responsibilities
Managers and People Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain effective management practices, systems, procedures and controls within their teams' functions and responsibilities. • Ensure that all employees, contractors and volunteers understand their responsibilities through adequate supervision, written procedures and awareness training. • Be aware of key fraud indicators and symptoms. • Respond positively to matters raised by Internal and External Audit. • Act upon all reports of fraud/corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework.
Employees, contractors and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain awareness of fraud and corruption risks and Council's control framework. • Report suspected instances of fraud/corruption or misuse of Council assets and resources. • Comply with the Employee Code of Conduct and all Council policies and procedures.

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PART 3 - FRAUD AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION

PROMOTING A ROBUST INTEGRITY FRAMEWORK

All management and employees are responsible for the development and maintenance of an ethical culture. To be successful in this goal, Councillors need to demonstrate their support for management's actions in this area, and also role-model an ethical culture in the way they go about their roles. The Councillor and Employee Codes of Conduct detail the ethical values and principles that are expected of Councillors and employees respectively.

Executive Management will not be complacent and will treat fraud and corruption risks as a serious threat to the organisation. Managers shall set the example with regard to exercising and demonstrating high levels of integrity in the execution of their roles and functions, as well as regularly reminding employees of the importance of complying with Council's Employee Code of Conduct and the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework.

Clear behavioural expectations, and clear consequences for fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, will be communicated at commencement of employment or engagement with Council.

Councillors' responsibilities are articulated in the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Councillors' Code of Conduct. Conduct and behaviour that consistently reflects the legislated responsibilities of Councillors reinforces their respect for their role and that of officers and can further reinforce good governance principles as well as a commitment to fraud and corruption controls.

AWARENESS RAISING OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION RISK

It is important that fraud and corruption is identified and reported at an early stage and that employees and Councillors have understanding of, and confidence in, the system.

Fraud Awareness Training is an integral part of Corporate Induction and is Council's initial method for ensuring that all employees, contractors and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities for fraud control and of the expectations for ethical behaviour in the workplace.

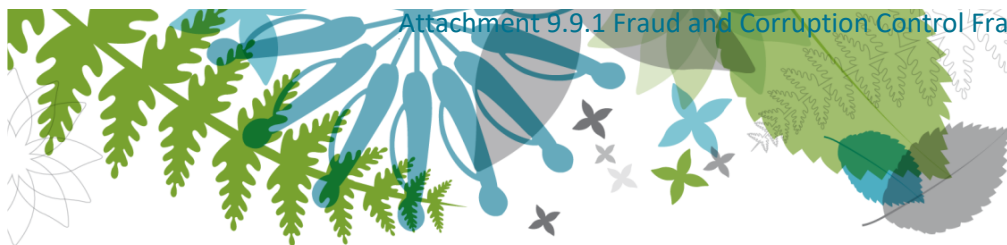
Managers and People Leaders will also receive Fraud Awareness Training designed to inform them of their specific role and additional responsibility as a Manager, with regards to fraud control. All employees will receive refresher training every two years or as deemed necessary.

A copy of the Fraud and Corruption Control Framework and procedures will be made available to all Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers. The awareness of Council's risk of fraud and corruption controls will be made available through the following means:

- Access to the Employee Code of Conduct and Fraud and Corruption Control Framework will be included in onboarding information provided to all new employee with a requirement that they formally acknowledge receipt and reading of the information.
- A dedicated page will be maintained on the Council intranet in regards to fraud and corruption, this will include links to all relevant documents in particular the process for reporting allegations.

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- Fraud and Corruption awareness training will be conducted in accordance with frequency identified through a risk assessment by way of the Learning and Development Program.
- Fraud and Corruption awareness will be conducted with Councillors at the beginning of their term with a refresher annually.
- Any substantive changes in the framework or procedure will be communicated to all employees, contractors, volunteers and Councillors.

INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY

Internal audit supports fraud prevention by ensuring employees conform to internal controls, and by deterring potential perpetrators with the increased prospect of being caught. It has a key role in detection of fraud and provides necessary inputs into the Council's responses to fraud.

The Manager Governance, in consultation with the General Manager Corporate Services, should ensure that internal audit schedules or plans adequately address Council's fraud risk exposures and adequately test Council's fraud risk controls. If deemed necessary the Council may utilise the role of the internal auditor in the investigation and reporting of any suspected fraud or corrupt activity.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT SCAN

Council receives regular updates from integrity agencies about fraud and corruption matters, including investigations into Local Government and other public agencies. The General Manager Corporate Services and Manager Governance will review these reports for relevance to Council and ensure the Senior Leadership Team reflects on recommendations and learnings that are relevant to the business of Council.

FRAUD AND CORRUPTION RISK MANAGEMENT

The Executive Management Team is responsible for the Council's overall management of risk and comprises the Chief Executive Officer, General Managers and Manager Governance. The Risk and Insurance Officer will attend meetings where fraud and corruption matters are on the agenda.

The Executive Management Team will schedule time dedicated to fraud and corruption control on a quarterly cycle to continually identify, review and manage the Council's risk exposure.

Fraud has been identified as an extreme risk to the Council. In order to ensure that all aspects of fraud risk exposure are clearly understood and to effectively implement control measures, the Executive Management Team will make recommendations on further treatments that can be implemented in order to control the risk of fraud.

Risk assessments will be undertaken for all identified fraud and corruption risks in accordance with Council's current Risk Management approach.

The Risk and Insurance Officer is responsible for coordination of fraud risk assessments, however each Manager is responsible for the identification of potential exposure of fraud and corruption in their work areas and the development, implementation and monitoring of internal controls (systems,

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processes and procedures) to minimise risks. The risks, treatments and controls identified through the risk assessment process will be recorded and reported through the Risk Register.

As a minimum, the following risks will be assessed:

- Theft of cash
- Theft/misuse of assets
- Misuse of confidential corporate information
- Conflict of Interest (including nepotism)
- Accounts payable
- Payroll practices
- Procurement
- Grant fraud
- Technology and information security, including cyber fraud
- Recruitment
- Misuse of credit cards.

MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Managing conflicts of interest is about transparency of relationships between people/issues and decision-makers and underpins the integrity of Council's decision-making processes. It is vital that the private interests of Councillors and employees do not affect decision-making at Colac Otway Shire Council.

Section 126 of the *Local Government Act 2020* defines conflicts of interest as being either 'general' or 'material' in nature:

- Councillors, employees and volunteers of Council may have a **general conflict of interest** in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that their private interests could result in them acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.
- Councillors, employees and volunteers of Council may have a **material conflict of interest** in a matter if it could result in a benefit of loss for the individual or people with specific relationships to the individual.

To mitigate the risk of fraud and corruption, Councillors, employees and volunteers are required to disclose any conflict of interest and exclude themselves from the decision-making process. This includes when employees or volunteers exercise a power of delegation or a statutory power, duty or function, including actions taken as an authorised officer.

Councillors, employees and volunteers are provided training and guidance with respect to managing conflicts of interest. Councillor and Employee Codes of Conduct provide guidance regarding conflicts of interest.

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MANAGING RISKS CONNECTED TO GIFTS, HOSPITALITY, DONATIONS AND SIMILAR BENEFITS

Councillors, employees and volunteers should not accept gifts, hospitality, donations and similar benefits if it is likely to be perceived by a 'reasonable person' as intended to influence them in the fair, impartial and efficient discharge of their duties as Councillors, employees and volunteers.

Council has adopted a Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy that applies Councillors, employees and any individuals or groups undertaking activity for, or on behalf of, Colac Otway Shire Council.

Councillors, employees and volunteers are provided training and guidance with respect to managing gifts, hospitality, donations and similar benefits. Under exceptional circumstances, where a gift, hospitality and token benefit is accepted, declarations are recorded.

A register of disclosed gifts, benefits and hospitality is maintained by the Governance Officer and records sufficient information to effectively monitor, assess and report on matters. This register is reported to the Executive Management Team and the Audit and Risk Committee at a frequency appropriate to manage any risks. A public register is also published to give the public confidence that the offering of gifts, benefits and hospitality is appropriately managed to avoid influence in decision making and prevent fraud and corruption occurring.

EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Employment screening will be undertaken for all new employees. This screening process will reduce the risk of a potential security breach and will provide a high level of assurance as to the integrity, identity and credentials of prospective employees.

The following screening shall be undertaken with the express consent of the individual concerned for all prospective employees:

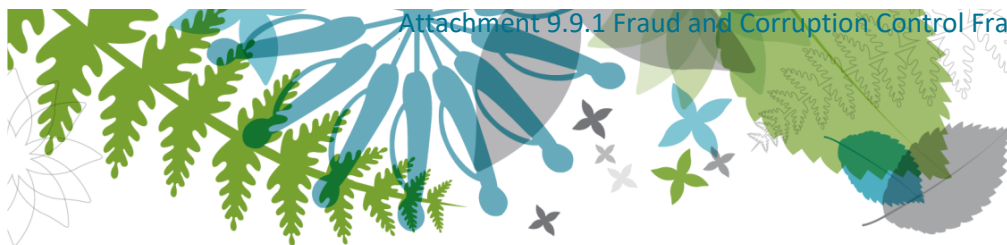
- Verification of identity requiring at least two forms of identity (passport, birth certificate, drivers licence, rate certificate, at least one must include photo identification)
- Police criminal history check for relevant positions
- Working with children check for relevant identified positions
- Reference checks with two most recent employers
- Consideration of any gaps on employment history and the reasons for the gaps
- Verification of formal qualifications claimed where required for the position.

JOB ROTATION AND EXCESS ANNUAL LEAVE

Individual business teams and units will regularly consider job rotation for positions where there are multiple officers undertaking the same or similar functions and the position is deemed a high risk from a fraud or corruption perspective, e.g. local law enforcement, parking enforcement, planning officers, contract management, cash handling.

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Excess annual leave will be monitored by the Executive Management Team on a quarterly basis to ensure excess leave is proactively managed.

SUPPLIER VETTING

Council will undertake supplier vetting for new and ongoing suppliers in accordance with existing practices.

Financial and/or performance assessments are to be undertaken where the contract poses a key financial risk to Council or where it is a new contractor that has never been used by Council before and the risk of poor performance or financial collapse is likely to adversely affect Council.

Financial and Performance assessment checks may also be undertaken where Council wishes to understand the financial and previous contract performance of the contractor or if no security is in place

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Community Asset Committee (CAC) members are volunteers of Council that perform similar functions to employees and have similar responsibilities with respect to Council's financial and physical assets. In addition to controls aimed at prevention covered elsewhere in this framework, CAC volunteers have conditions and limitations placed on their delegated functions and authorities that aim to minimise the risk of fraud and corruption. These conditions and limitations are documented in the Instrument of Delegation to CAC members.

PREVENTING 'TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED' FRAUD

Council acknowledges the emergence of cyber fraud as a significant fraud risk and particularly phishing campaigns. Phishing campaigns infiltrate corporate networks by sending authentic-looking fraudulent emails to users in an organisation and tricking them into performing actions such as downloading attachments or clicking on links.

Council uses Mimecast as our secure email gateway, which is the first line of defence, and in combination with Microsoft's Defender for O365 (Threat Protection) as a secondary and additional level is used to detect and filter out malicious emails and phishing.

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PART 4 - FRAUD AND CORRUPTION DETECTION

The Council's detection program includes the annual internal audit plan, annual financial statement external audit, Audit and Risk Committee oversight, review of risk strategies and various reporting avenues. Other detection activities are outlined in the following sections.

POST-TRANSACTIONAL REVIEW

A review of transactions will be conducted within two (2) months after they have been processed on a minimum sample size, and where there are 'red flags' as described in following sections. These reviews will seek to identify or uncover altered documents or missing documentation, falsified or altered authorisations or inadequate documentary support.

ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING REPORTS

Analysis of management accounting reports - using relatively straight forward techniques in analysing management accounting reports, trends can be examined and investigated which may be indicative of fraudulent or corrupt conduct.

EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES TO IDENTIFY EARLY WARNINGS

All employees should be aware of their responsibilities and are required to remain vigilant to identify and report any suspected fraudulent activity.

Employees will be provided fraud prevention training that includes learnings from case studies and how to detect early warning signs to enable them to detect potential fraud or corruption. This will include encouraging employees to 'question the unquestionable' and create appropriate pathways to do that. Information will be presented in everyday language that is relevant to their work environment, ensuring it is localised and meaningful.

Employees will be encouraged to identify early warning signs that can include:

- **Transactional Red Flags**
 - Transactions occurring at an unusual time
 - Frequency of transaction is unusual
 - Place of transaction is unusual
 - Amount of transaction is unusual
 - Relationship between persons is unusual (e.g. related parties)
 - Level of responsibility is unusual (e.g. management performing clerical).
- **Behavioural Red Flags**
 - Employee lifestyle changes
 - Significant personal debt problems
 - Creditors or collectors appearing at the workplace
 - Refusing vacations, sick leave or promotions

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- A strong desire to 'beat the system'
- Persistent or unnecessary control of records
- Lack of strong code of personal ethics
- Insistence on working unusual or non-standard hours when not required
- Avoidance or delay in provision of documentation or evidence e.g. to audit.

DATA ANALYTICS

The application of sophisticated (and sometimes unsophisticated) software applications and techniques where a series of suspect transactions can be identified and then investigated which can identify anomalies at an early stage.

EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ROLE IN THE DETECTION OF FRAUD

As required under the *Audit Act 1994* and the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) is local government's external auditor. VAGO is required to consider the risk of material misstatement in Council's financial statements, due to fraud when performing their audit (via appointed agent). The Audit and Risk Committee takes an active role in considering VAGO's Closing Report and Management Letter. VAGO ultimately issues its findings in an Independent Auditor's Report, published in Council's Annual Report.

REPORTING BY INTERNAL PARTIES

Council takes fraud and corruption very seriously and does not accept fraudulent or corrupt behaviour in any form or to any degree. It encourages all employees to maintain awareness and vigilance in regard to fraud and corruption.

All Councillors and employees are encouraged to assist Council to prevent fraud and corruption by:

- identifying suspected or potential fraudulent and corrupt activities; and
- reporting any such activities in order that those activities are investigated.

Council will ensure that people have multiple channels for reporting any suspicions of real or potential fraud and corruption. Internal reporting avenues include notifying:

- the Chief Executive Officer (for reporting by Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers or community members); or
- People Leaders or Managers or General Managers (for employee reporting only); or
- Manager Governance (for reporting by Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers or community members); or
- Public Interest Disclosure Officer or Coordinator (for reporting by Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers or community members).

All reports involving corrupt conduct reported to a manager, people leader, or employee must be forwarded to the Chief Executive Officer.

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Any report regarding the Chief Executive Officer should be reported directly to an external party and not disclosed to any Councillor or employee of Council.

External reporting avenues include notifying:

- the Local Government Inspectorate on 1800 469 359, or
- the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) on 1300 735 135, or
- the Victorian Ombudsman on (03) 9613 6222.

Other reporting avenues include notifying:

- the Internal Auditor; or
- the Audit and Risk Committee Chair.

The internal Auditor or Audit and Risk Committee Chair will refer the notification to an authorised external body and/or notify the Chief Executive Officer provided always that any request for non-identification of the discloser will be maintained.

Alleged criminal conduct will be reported to Victoria Police as appropriate, and serious improper conduct to IBAC as required by law.

REPORTING BY EXTERNAL PARTIES

From time to time employees of external parties such as suppliers may become aware, or suspicious, that Council employees are engaging in fraudulent or corrupt behaviour. Encouraging and enabling reporting of this behaviour is an important part of a fraud and corruption control program.

The Manager Financial Services should ensure that procurement procedures include:

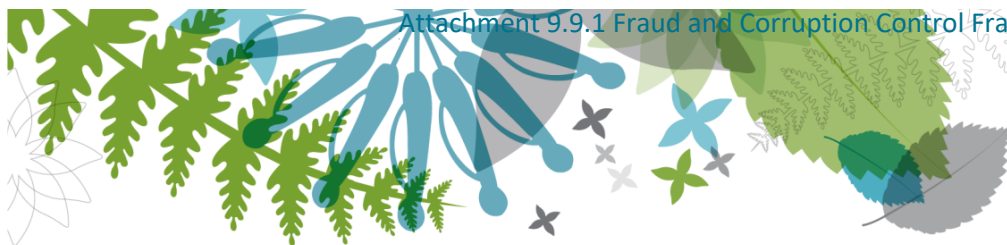
- making new suppliers aware of Council's fraud and corruption control program;
- encouraging them to report fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour; and
- providing them with the contact details of Council's Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator.

EXIT INTERVIEWS

Council will, by agreement with departing employees, undertake exit interviews with the objective, amongst other things, of eliciting relevant information about fraudulent or corruption events that the employee may have been involved in, aware of or have suspicions about. Any information received about these matters will be reported to the Manager Governance for action in accordance with Part 4 of this framework.

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PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE

Under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, persons can make disclosures to the Council and/or IBAC about improper conduct and detrimental action in relation to the activities and functions of Council. This is encouraged where any person wishes to access the protections afforded by the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*. The Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures will be available on the Council website.

Disclosures about improper conduct or detrimental action by Councillors should be made to the IBAC or to the Ombudsman. If Council receives a misdirected disclosure about a Councillor, such disclosures will be assessed by the Chief Executive Officer and managed in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedures.

A public interest disclosure can be made to:

- The Council's Public Interest Disclosure Officer or Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator
- IBAC
Level 1, North Tower
459 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
Postal address: GPO Box 24234, Melbourne VIC 3001
Telephone: 1300 735 135
Website: www.ibac.vic.gov.au

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PART 5 - RESPONDING TO FRAUD AND CORRUPTION INCIDENTS

This part provides direction with regard to procedures for dealing with suspected or detected fraud and corruption.

MANDATORY REPORTING

The Chief Executive Officer must notify IBAC of any matter they suspect on reasonable grounds to involve corrupt conduct occurring or having occurred, and suspected corrupt conduct occurring in other organisations where it is connected with the Chief Executive Officer's duties, functions and exercise of powers. This obligation cannot be delegated and exists regardless of the scale of the matter or people involved.

Where another person is acting as the Chief Executive Officer, the obligation applies to that person.

The notifications must be made as soon as practicable after the Chief Executive Officer has formed a reasonable suspicion that corrupt conduct may have occurred or may be occurring. An assessment as to whether a matter must be notified to IBAC should be made based on the material available to the Chief Executive Officer.

For all matters subject to Mandatory Reporting to IBAC, no action will be taken until IBAC has assessed the matter and informed the Chief Executive Officer of its decision. Exceptions apply where the action is:

- necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the life, health, safety or welfare of an individual or to public health or safety; or
- taken to comply with another legal obligation, such as a duty to report the matter under other legislation; or
- reporting the matter to Victoria Police.

INVESTIGATIONS

All reported fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, that is referred back to Council by IBAC will be investigated by the Council, an external investigator appointed by Council or Victoria Police. The purpose of an investigation is to:

- Determine if in fact fraudulent or corrupt behaviour has been committed.
- Identify the person(s) responsible for the fraudulent or corrupt behavior.
- Discover the extent of the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour and determine the action to be taken.
- Provide the basis of any insurance claim.

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- Identify how long the fraudulent or corrupt behaviour has been occurring and thereby the extent of the breakdown of internal controls.
- Identify any gaps or weaknesses in the controls and systems associated with the activity that is subject to the investigation

Upon advice that a report of fraudulent or corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, will not be investigated by IBAC, the General Manager Corporate Services, in consultation with the Manager Governance, will as soon as practicable ensure that an investigation is conducted into the alleged misconduct.

The Chief Executive Officer will be consulted and decide whether the Police or any external assistance will be employed. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the selection of the employees to be involved in the Investigation team, in consultation with the General Manager Corporate Services and the Manager Governance. This may include referring the investigation to Council's Internal Auditor for action.

Where Council determines that the matter should be investigated by Council, or an external investigator appointed by Council, it will:

1. Conduct an investigation into the matter; and
2. Determine a course of action once the findings of the investigation are available.

The Chief Executive Officer will remain impartial to any investigation and not be a member of any Investigation Team.

External Investigation

The Chief Executive Officer may decide that the investigation should be conducted by an external party or the matter referred directly to Victoria Police.

- Victoria Police

The trigger for direct referral to Victoria police being clear evidence of criminal activity or a suspicion of criminal activity based on reasonable grounds. Any referral direct to Victoria Police will be coordinated by the General Manager Corporate Services.

- External Party (auditor) engaged by Council

The trigger for external investigation will be any matter that cannot be adequately resourced internally either by way of complexity or drain on internal resources.

Further, an external investigation will be conducted where the matter potentially involves employees ordinarily in the key chain of internal investigation including the CEO, a General Manager, Manager Governance, Manager People and Culture, Manager Financial Services, or where it is suspected to be a systemic issue.

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The General Manager Corporate Services, in consultation with the Manager Governance, will consider the report from the external investigation and make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer as to the most appropriate course of action as soon as practicable.

Internal Investigation

The investigation should be conducted as quickly as practicable, including but not limited to the following steps:

- Develop the terms of reference, identifying:
 - Confirming who should conduct the investigation
 - Who should be interviewed
 - What records should be examined
 - Who should be kept informed, on a 'need to know' basis.
- Conduct the investigation (see checklist):
 - Collect witness statements
 - Examine records
 - Conduct the interviews, on an innocent until proven guilty basis;
 - persons against whom allegations are made should be made aware of the nature of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond within a reasonable timeframe;
 - they should be allowed a support person in the interviews, but that person may not represent them or provide comment
 - All parties to maintain confidentiality and propriety at all times.
- Compile a report
 - Conclusions as to the likely truth or otherwise of the allegations
 - Comment on the breadth and seriousness of the misconduct
 - Report on any detected gaps or weaknesses in the controls and systems associated with the alleged activity.
- Register the report in Records Management system using a highly restricted security classification.

The General Manager Corporate Services, in consultation with the Manager Governance will consider the report and make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer as to the most appropriate course of action as soon as practicable.

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RESPONSES TO INVESTIGATIONS

The Chief Executive Officer, upon receipt of recommendations from the external or internal investigation, should decide on the most appropriate course of action, and act or delegate actions accordingly, as soon as practicable.

The Council's responses to investigations may include disciplinary action, reporting to Victoria Police, and/or civil action to recover losses.

- **Disciplinary action**
The Manager People and Culture will coordinate disciplinary action in accordance with Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- **Reporting to Victoria Police**
The General Manager Corporate Services will coordinate the reporting of the investigation outcome to Victoria Police.
- **Civil action to recover losses**
The Council will pursue recovery of any losses due to fraud or corruption where there is clear evidence of fraud and corruption and where the likely benefits of such recovery will exceed the funds and resources required to be invested in the recovery action.

The General Manager Corporate Services will coordinate any civil action taken by Council to recover losses incurred as a result of the fraud or corruption.

CONFIDENTIAL RECORD KEEPING

The Manager Governance will maintain a confidential register to record reports of fraudulent and corrupt behaviour, or suspected behaviour, and investigation outcomes.

All investigative documentation will comply with relevant legislative provisions, will remain strictly confidential and will be retained in accordance with the Council's Information Privacy Policy and Records Management system controls.

Procedures for the investigation of detected or suspected incidents

The Colac Otway Shire Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure provides direction with regard to the procedures for dealing with suspected fraud or corruption.

The procedure provides:

- Appropriate measures for the comprehensive investigation of such matters based on the principles of independence, objectivity and fair due process (rules of natural justice);
- Systems for internal reporting of all detected incidents;
- Process for reporting the matters of suspected fraud and corruption to the appropriate enforcement agency.

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DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Any employee who has had fraud or corruption allegations substantiated will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Council's disciplinary procedures established and documented by the People and Culture Department.

Consequences for employees found to have committed, or attempted to commit, fraud and/or corruption may include, but are not limited to:

- dismissal
- warnings
- repayment of misappropriated funds and other costs
- referral to the IBAC or other integrity agencies.

Actions of fraud and corruption may result in criminal prosecution.

The Chief Executive will have ultimate discretion in this respect having regard to the specific circumstances of each individual case.

INTERNAL REPORTING AND ESCALATION

The Manager Governance is the custodial owner of the Incident and Near Miss Register and ensures all incidents or near misses are recorded in the register. Incident and Near Miss Summary Reports for high or above rated fraud and corruption related incidents will be tabled at an Executive Management Team meeting.

Pursuant to its Charter, the Audit and Risk Committee will receive reports regarding actual or suspected instances of fraud or corruption, serious misconduct, or breaches of ethical standards, including:

- Analysis of action taken to address such matters
- Actions taken to report such matters to the appropriate integrity bodies
- Any findings and examinations by regulatory or external agencies, and internal or external audit.

Reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee occurs through the Chief Executive Officer's report in the Committee's agenda, or directly and/or out-of-session if warranted.

Council receives copies of the Audit and Risk Committee's agenda and minutes which provides transparency of reported issues to Councillors, and the Audit and Risk Committee may make specific recommendations to Council if it deems this to be appropriate.

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EXTERNAL REPORTING

The Colac Otway Shire Council Fraud and Corruption Control Procedure provides direction in regard to reporting any suspected fraudulent or corrupt conduct to any external enforcement agencies including:

- Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) on 1300 735 135, or
- Local Government Inspectorate on 1800 469 359, or
- Victorian Ombudsman on (03) 9613 6222.
- Victoria Police – 131 444 (Police Assistance Line for non-urgent crimes or events)

Council is committed to ensuring that all allegations, breaches of the Code of Conduct or this policy which are considered to be prima facie cases supported by evidence of fraudulent or corrupt conduct are notified to the appropriate law enforcement or regulatory agency for investigation.

For the purposes of compliance with the relevant provisions of the *Independent Broad-Based Anti Corruption Commission Act 2011*, Council's Chief Executive Officer is a 'Relevant Principal Officer'. The Relevant Principal Officer must notify the IBAC of any matter which the person suspects on reasonable grounds involves corrupt conduct occurring or having occurred. (Section 57).

RECOVERY OF STOLEN FUNDS OR PROPERTY

Council will pursue recovery of any losses due to fraud or corruption where there is clear evidence of fraud and corruption and where the likely benefits of such recovery will exceed the funds and resources required to be invested in the recovery action.

INSURING AGAINST FRAUD EVENTS

The Council will maintain a fidelity guarantee insurance policy that insures the risk of loss arising from internal fraudulent conduct. The level of the policy will be determined as part of Council's annual insurance renewal program. This will be reported annually to the RMC alongside Council's other insurance policies.

Insurance for external fraud and corruption, in particular the theft of Council property, will also be maintained and reviewed annually by employee in conjunction with the normal annual reassessment of insurance policy cover and limits.

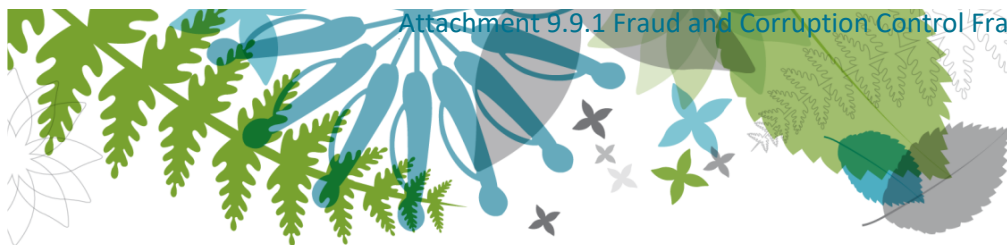
ASSESSING INTERNAL CONTROLS, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Where fraud or corruption is detected, the relevant service Manager, in consultation with the Manager Governance and/or the Coordinator Risk and Insurance, will review the findings and assess the adequacy of the relevant internal control environment and provide a report to the General Manager Corporate Services on any recommended improvements identified.

Where internal controls may be practicably improved, the Relevant Responsible Officer should ensure as soon as practicable that those improvements are developed, documented and implemented, and understood by those who have roles and responsibilities in them.

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APPENDIX A – EXAMPLES OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

EXAMPLES OF FRAUD

General

- Theft of funds, assets, plant, equipment or information
- Unauthorised use of Council equipment or materials for personal benefit
- Causing a loss or avoiding creating a liability by deception
- False invoicing (involving an employee member creating a fictitious invoice claiming payment for goods or services not delivered or exaggerating the value of goods delivered or services provided)
- Accounts receivable fraud (misappropriation or misdirection of remittances received from a debtor)
- Credit card fraud involving the unauthorized use of a credit card or credit card number issued to another person, including use of purchasing card to buy goods or services for personal use
- Providing false or misleading information
- Making false or misleading financial reports
- Release or use of misleading or inaccurate information for the purposes of deceiving or misleading, or to hide wrongdoing
- Misuse of position in order to gain some form of financial advantage
- Theft of intellectual property or other confidential information
- Bribery or kickbacks.

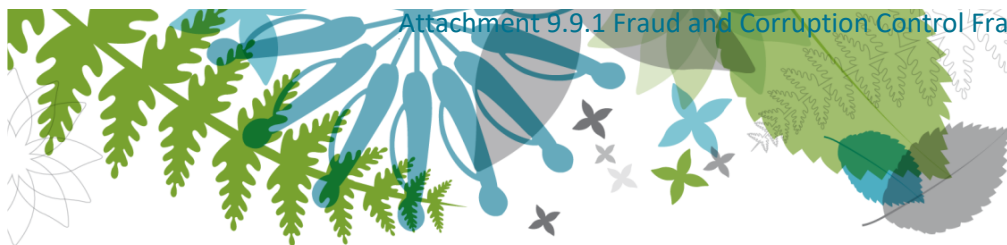
Payroll/timesheet fraud

- Time in lieu claimed but not worked
- Overtime claimed but not worked
- Not recording leave taken on timesheet
- Forgery of manager's signature
- Fraudulent medical certificates.

Unauthorised use of Council assets

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- Unauthorised private use of vehicles
- Taking supplies for private use
- Taking equipment for private use.

False claims for reimbursement

- Claiming for non-work related costs
- Claiming for costs not actually incurred.

Recruitment fraud

- Fake qualifications
- Fictitious former employers
- Fake references.

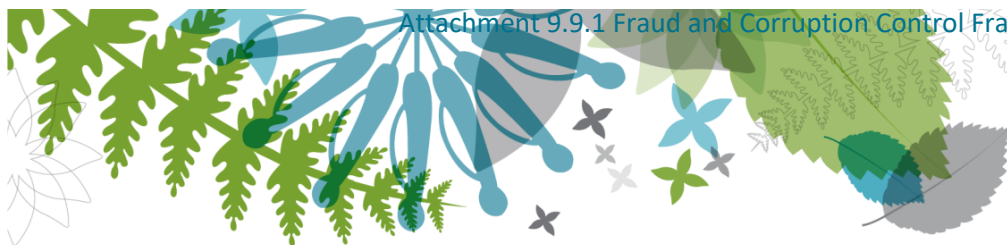
EXAMPLES OF CORRUPTION

Corruption includes Councillors, employees, volunteers and contractors:

- Being targeted by external parties seeking to gain an improper benefit
- Targeting external parties or other internal parties in seeking to gain an improper benefit.
- Payment or receipt of secret commissions (bribes), which may be paid in money or in some other form of value to the receiver (e.g. building projects completed at an employee's private residence)
- Release of confidential information for other than a proper business purpose in exchange for some form of non-financial benefit or advantage accruing to the employee releasing the information
- Solicitation of donations for an improper political purpose
- Senior employees acting in their own self-interest rather than the interests of Council (e.g. failing to declare a conflict of interest in a decision)
- Serious nepotism and cronyism where the appointee is inadequately qualified to perform the role to which he or she has been appointed
- Manipulation of the procurement process by favouring one tenderer over others or selectively providing information to some tenderers. This may involve allowing tenderers to resubmit a 'non-complying' tender after being provided with the details of other bids

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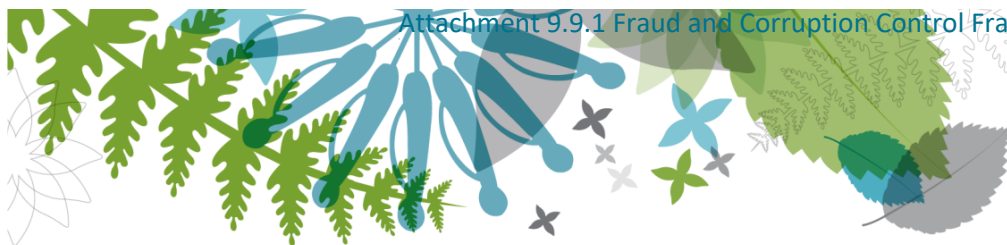
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- Gifts or entertainment intended to achieve a specific or generic commercial outcome in the short or long-term – in breach of Council's Gifts, Benefits and hospitality procedure.

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APPENDIX B – FRAUD INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST

Fraud investigations should be designed to be relevant and responsive to the particular circumstances. The following is provided as guidance to officers involved in investigations:

- ☐ A complete description of the allegations or suspected events
- ☐ The name and position of any public official/s alleged to be involved
- ☐ The name/s of the person/s who made the allegation/s
- ☐ The name and role of any other person/s relevant to the matter
- ☐ The dates and/or time frames in which the alleged conduct occurred
- ☐ A brief analysis of why the events in question may be corrupt conduct
- ☐ A brief analysis of the basis for forming a reasonable suspicion about the events in question
- ☐ An indication as to whether the conduct appears to be a one-off event or part of a wider pattern or scheme
- ☐ The date the allegation was made or the date you became aware of the conduct
- ☐ How you became aware of the conduct
- ☐ What your organisation has done about the suspected conduct, including notification to any other agency (e.g. the Police or the Victorian Ombudsman)
- ☐ What further action you propose
- ☐ The approximate amount of money or value of resources (if any) involved
- ☐ Any other indicators of seriousness
- ☐ Any other information deemed relevant to the matter
- ☐ Copies of any relevant documents
- ☐ The name of the relevant contact officer

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APPENDIX C – POINTS OF CONTACT FOR REPORTING

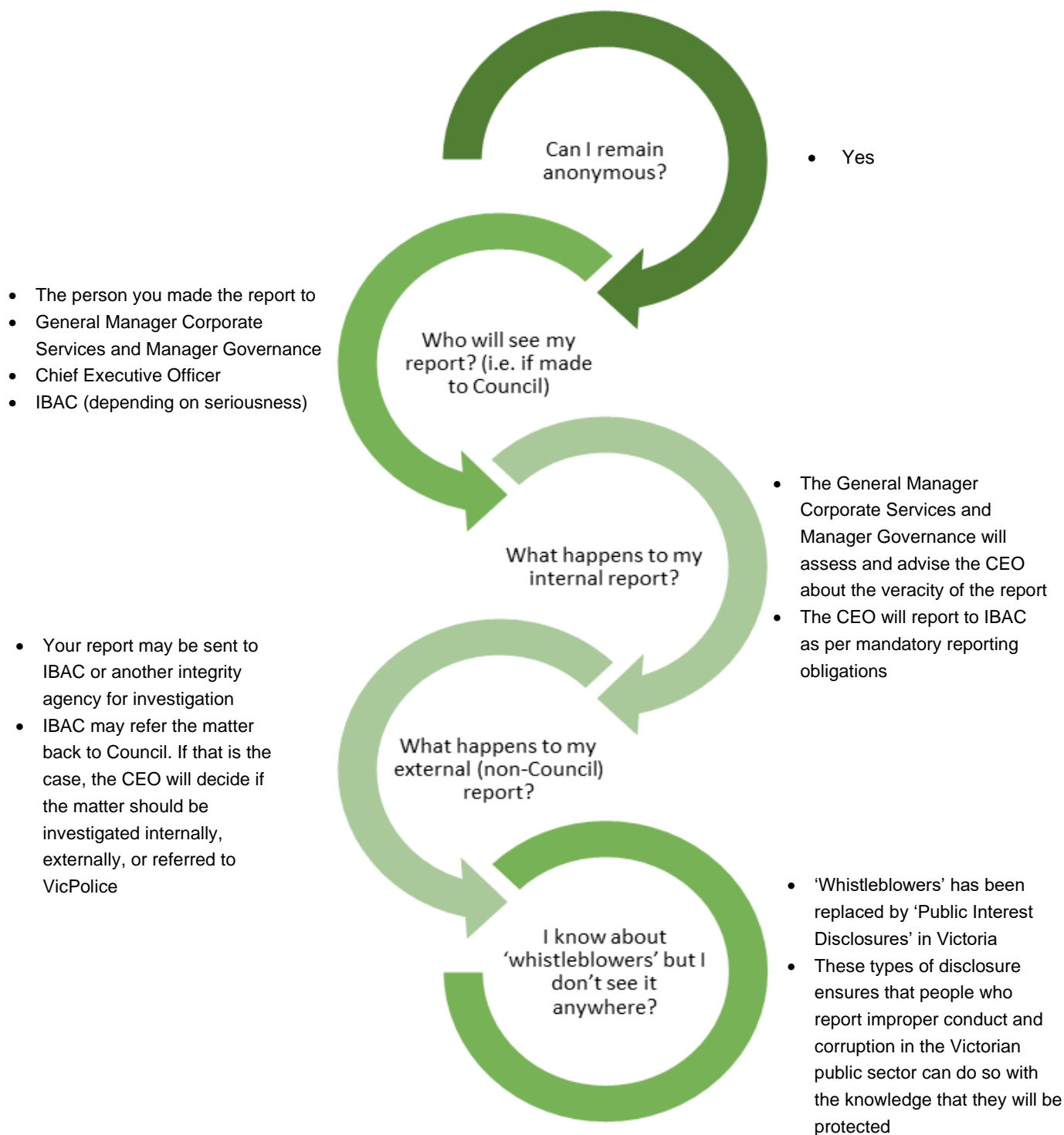
Reporting by employees of fraud and corruption is one of the main avenues through which fraud and/or corruption is uncovered. To assist with this, the Fraud and Corruption Control Employee Guide has been developed to provide employees with a broad understanding of what constitutes fraud or corruption and what 'red flags' to look out for.

Activity involving	Report to
A fellow employee, contractor or volunteer	Departmental Manager
	Manager Governance
	General Manager Corporate Services
	Chief Executive Officer
Manager	Chief Executive Officer
General Manager	Chief Executive Officer
Chief Executive Officer	Mayor
	Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)
	Local Government Inspectorate
Mayor or Councillor	Chief Executive Officer
	Independent Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee
	Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC)
Non-staff member	Departmental Manager
	Manager Governance
	General Manager Corporate Services
	Chief Executive Officer

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APPENDIX D – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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Item: 9.10

Cat Confinement Order No. 1 - Colac Otway Shire

OFFICER	Rhassel Mhasho
GENERAL MANAGER	Heath Chasemore
DIVISION	Infrastructure and Operations
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cat Confinement Order No.1 [9.10.1 - 1 page]2. Summary of comments Cat Confinement Order Submissions [9.10.2 - 2 pages]

1. PURPOSE

To present the proposed Colac Otway Shire – Cat Confinement Order No. 1 to Council for adoption.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its Council Meeting held on 23 August 2023, Colac Otway Shire Council resolved to make a Cat Confinement Order (the Order) under Section 25(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (“the Act”) after completing a public exhibition period to enable the community to be aware of, and make submission to, the proposed order.

The purpose of this Order is to keep cats securely confined to the owner’s property, between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

Public notice was provide to the community consultation, with key components of the proposed order, and submissions from the community were invited. The submissions were presented to the Submissions Committee meeting on 4 October 2023 and submitters wishing to make verbal presentation about their submission were able to be heard.

This report recommends Council adopts *the Cat Confinement order (Attachment 1)*, with one minor change to the exhibited order.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Expresses its appreciation to those who made submissions to the proposed Cat Confinement Order***
- 2. Adopts the Cat Confinement Order (Attachment 1), requiring all cats within the municipality to be securely confined to the owner's property, between the hours of sunset and sunrise.***
- 3. Notes that upon execution by the Chief Executive Officer, the Order will come into force on 1 November 2023.***
- 4. Places a notice in the Government Gazette and a local newspaper in accordance with legislative requirements.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

The introduction of the Cat Confinement Order is in response to community concerns raised during consultation to develop a new General Local Law public consultation. The community raised concerns about the negative environmental impact cats were causing on the native animals and neighbouring pets. At its Council Meeting held on 23 August 2023, Colac Otway Shire Council resolved to make the Cat Confinement Order under Section 25(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 ("the Act") subject to public consultation.

During consultation period, Council received 27 submissions and heard from one (1) submitter on the introduction of the Cat Confinement Order at a Submissions Committee meeting held on 4 October 2023.

The final version of the proposed Cat Confinement Order No. 1 (Attachment 1) has been amended to take into account comments raised during the submission period.

Background

In response to community input in the early phase of the review, the proposed Local Law included a new clause 11.5 below for the control cats within the Shire.

Clause 11.5 (a)

The owner of any cat must confine the cat to the owner's property either within the dwelling or within another escape-proof structure between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

A total of 8 submissions were received supporting the inclusion of the clause into the new Local Law with 3 submissions against the inclusion of the clause.

The legal advice received through the review of the proposed document recommended that Council delete the clause from the proposed Local Law and instead make an Order under Section 25 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

Following the Council decision, community consultation was undertaken on the proposed Cat Confinement Order from the 13 September to 27 September 2023 via Council's website, print media, social media, newsletters, mailing lists and Councillor Communications.

The list below presents a summary of key views from the submissions:

Submission for the Cat Confinement Order

- Detrimental impact of domestic cats on the delicate Australian ecosystem & pressing environment
- Frustration of cat faeces in garden, kids' sandpit and on lawn
- Cat fights in the middle of the night
- Impact on bird life, small mammals, reptiles
- Desexing of cats to stop the spread of feral cats
- Confinement should be 24/7
- What are the penalties for not following the order and who do you report the noncompliance to?
- Great idea – have caught around 25 feral cats – west of Beeac
- Dogs have to be confined 24/7 why not cats.

Submission against the Cat Confinement Order:

- Unwarranted & raises several legal and ethical issues
- Infringe upon the fundamental rights of cat owners
- There are less restrictive alternatives that can be pursued to address these concerns without unduly burdening cat owners
- Implementation of cat curfew in specific problem areas rather than a blanket restriction region wide
- Cats are more active during the dawn & dusk hours and confinement may lead to increased stress, behavioural issues and decreased quality of life.
- Ethical concerns about the humane treatment of animals
- Colac is largely rural farmland – farmers rely on cats to curb mouse plagues – rabbit plague brewing in Elliminyt
- There are no natural predators for rats and mice in this region
- Suggestion that living on or near farms to be excluded from the restrictions to curb rat and mouse plagues
- Cost imposed on cat owner- have to build areas and paying extra for kitty litter each week
- Impact on renters – landlords will no longer want tenants with cats
- 6pm too early – especially in the height of daylight savings – revisit times
- Needs to take into account different circumstances – not a one size fits all
- 6pm too early when working, out for the day, sporting commitments, Voluntary SES or emergency workers (callouts)
- Rare for wildlife to be attacked by a domestic cat

Based on the above submissions, officers recommend the Cat Confinement Order hours be amended from 6pm to 6am (as exhibited) to 7pm to 7am (recommended) to take it account concerns raised by submitters. It is recommended that Council adopts the Cat Confinement Order with the suggested

change and that officers follow the Council Compliance Policy to implement the Order, and to ensure that the community is fully aware of the new Order.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The overarching governance principles are:

- a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law
- b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations
- c) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Council has the power to make and enforce the Order under section 25 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

The proposed Cat Confinement Order was exhibited from the 13 September to 27 September 2023 via Council's website, print media, social media, newsletters, mailing lists and Councillor Communications. At the time of writing this officer's report a total of 27 submissions were received with one submitter requested to speak to their submission at the Submission Committee held on 4 October 2023. Attachment 2 presents the submission received.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 2 - Valuing the Natural and Built Environment

Objective 3: Protect and enhance the natural environment

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 3: We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The cost associated with the implementation of the Order can be covered in this year's budget.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

Council will need to communicate the new requirements to all registered cat owners and provide them with sufficient time to prepare for the cat curfew.

Human Rights Chart

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Adopt the Cat Confinement Order No. 1 (Attachment 1), requiring all cats within the municipality to be always confined to the owner's property from sunset to sunrise.

This option is recommended by officers as are this decision will be in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*

Option 2 – Not adopting the Cat Confinement Order No. 1

This option is not recommended by officers. If Council doesn't adopt a cat order it will affect Council's vision of achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

CAT CONFINEMENT ORDER NO. 1 OF COLAC OTWAY SHIRE COUNCIL

DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT 1994

Section 25(1)

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Order is to keep cats confined between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

2. Owner's Obligations

The owner of any cat kept in the municipal district must confine the cat to the boundaries of the owner's property between the hours of sunset and sunrise, by either confining the cat to:

- 2.1 the owner's dwelling or another building on the property; or
- 2.2 an escape-proof structure located outside any dwelling or other building on the property.

3. Meaning of Terms Used

In this Order:

"hours of sunset and sunrise" means from 7pm to 7am;

"municipal district" means the municipal district of Colac Otway Shire Council; and

"owner" has the same meaning as in the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

This Order is dated: November 1, 2023

This Order becomes effective November 1, 2023

Anne Howard CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Summary of Comments – Proposed Cat Confinement Order Submissions	
Comments For: - Submitters:- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 26 & 27	Officer Comment & Recommendation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detrimental impact of domestic cats on the delicate Australian ecosystem & pressing environment • Frustration of cat faeces in garden, kids sandpit, lawn • Cat fights in the middle of the night • Impact on bird life, small mammals, reptiles • Desexing of cats to stop the spread of feral cats • Confinement should be 24/7 • What are the penalties for not following the order and who do you report the noncompliance to? • Great idea – have caught around 25 feral cats – west of Beeac • Dogs have to be confined 24/7 why not cats 	
Comments Against: - Submitters:- 6, 11, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22, & 25	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwarranted & raises several legal and ethical issues • Infringe upon the fundamental rights of cat owners • There are less restrictive alternatives that can be pursued to address these concerns without unduly burdening cat owners • Implementation of cat curfew in specific problem areas rather than a blanket restriction region wide • Cats are more active during the dawn & dusk hours and confinement may lead to increased stress, behavioural issues and decreased quality of life. • Ethical concerns about the humane treatment of animals • Colac is largely rural farmland – farmers rely on cats to curb mouse plagues – rabbit plague brewing in Elliminyt • There are no natural predators for rats and mice in this region • Suggestion that living on or near farms to be excluded from the restrictions to curb rat and mouse plagues • Cost imposed on cat owner- have to build areas and paying extra for kitty litter each week • Impact on renters – landlords will no longer want tenants with cats • 6pm too early – especially in the height of daylight savings – revisit times • Needs to take into account different circumstances – not a one size fits all 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6pm too early when working, out for the day, sporting commitments, Voluntary SES or emergency workers (callouts)• Rare for wildlife to be attacked by a domestic cat	
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Item: 9.11

Use of Lake Colac for events

OFFICER	Ian Seuren
GENERAL MANAGER	Ian Seuren
DIVISION	Community and Economy
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To enable Council to consider a proactive approach to assessing the suitability of using Lake Colac for recreational activities and water-based events.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The largest natural freshwater lake in Victoria, Lake Colac is a popular location for fishing, water activities and recreation.

Over the years, water levels at Lake Colac have fluctuated according to environmental conditions. In 2018, after several years of low water levels, increased rainfall enabled the return of recreational water users, prompting Council to commence water testing to determine the quality of the water. Council currently conducts monthly tests from October-March at the Lake Colac beach area and the boat ramp at Meredith Park, Colac.

Recent requests from event organisers that wish to use the lake for primary use activities including swimming and skiing, have prompted further consideration on the data and risk management process required to consider and determine event applications and ensure any risks to participants have been adequately considered.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Acknowledges the opportunities for recreational and other events to be held on Lake Colac, which could provide a range of social and economic benefits to the region.*
- 1. Notes that there is emerging interest in conducting events on Lake Colac, which are difficult to assess and approve due to the volatile water quality conditions recorded at the lake.*
- 2. Provides in-principle support for the development of a risk management framework (including a quantitative and qualitative assessment of public health and safety hazards) prepared by a subject matter expert, based on a robust testing regime to inform event planning and approvals.*
- 3. Supports officers to seek proposals from appropriate consultants for the assessment of environmental risks and development of a risk management framework, and requests officers to present the proposal for funding before any financial commitments are made for this work.*
- 4. Commences additional water testing at Lake Colac on a weekly basis at two locations to start data collection as soon as possible, noting that the consultant engaged to prepare the risk management framework will need to consider the adequacy of these results for the purpose of developing an overarching risk management framework.*

4. KEY INFORMATION

Lake Colac is an asset that is much loved by residents and visitors alike who experience social and health benefits from utilising the lake and its foreshore.

While Lake Colac had experienced low water levels and a lack of activity over a number of years, higher rainfall in recent years and Council's work to improve the foreshore area has encouraged more visitors to the foreshore and enabled recreational water use to occur.

The responsibility for managing the water quality of Lake Colac falls to a number of agencies and organisations such as Parks Victoria, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Environment Protection Authority, Barwon Water and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Council has a public health responsibility when it comes to providing advice to members of the public on the suitability of Lake Colac for swimming/recreational activity.

According to the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) guidelines for water-based recreation, the median enterococci organisms per 100mL over the season should not exceed **35 org/100mL** for primary contact.

Primary contact is defined as recreation where you are in direct contact with the water, can be fully immersed and could swallow water; this includes swimming.

Similarly, for secondary contact the median enterococci organisms per 100mL over the season should not exceed **230 org/100mL**. Secondary contact includes activities such as boating.

ANZECC advises that until 100 samples have been gathered, analysis is difficult, and therefore water users should consider the results of water testing currently undertaken as a “snapshot”, and swimming in Lake Colac and estuaries is at the swimmer’s risk. Furthermore, since testing commenced, the testing requirements also require qualitative data to accompany quantitative analysis.

As the lake has experienced higher water levels over recent years, there has been greater interest in using the lake for recreational activities. In addition, Council is aware that there is growing interest in utilising the lake’s water body for events.

Council has been undertaking basic water testing of Lake Colac at the main boat ramp and Meredith Park for a number of years, and the results dating back to 2018 indicate that the lake is not suitable for primary contact, which includes swimming. Council has communicated this advice to our community over several years.

To better understand the public health issues and consider if events can be conducted in a manner that mitigates potential risks, it is recommended that the development of a risk management framework, which would assess both the quantitative and qualitative public health and safety hazards. This would need to be prepared by a subject matter expert and based on a robust testing regime to inform event planning and approvals, specifying what risk mitigation measures are needed for an event to safely proceed.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report considers the following governance principles:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes of the municipal community, including future generations.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

There is a range of legislation and regulations that would need to be considered in the development of a risk management framework by a subject matter expert.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Any potential events held on Lake Colac would need to consider environmental factors in the event planning and approval process.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council’s Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable to this report.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Considering this matter in a public Council meeting ensures that any decisions by Council is readily accessible by the community.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 4: Colac Otway Shire is a destination to visit

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 2: People are active and socially connected through engaging quality spaces and places

Objective 3: We are a safe, equitable and inclusive community

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

The development of a quantitative risk management framework prepared by a subject matter expert will come at a cost to Council however the level of funding required is not yet understood. Should Council support the officer's recommendation, proposals will be sought from relevant consultants before requesting a financial commitment from Council.

In the shorter term, the additional water testing would come at a cost to Council and would be met through its operational budget.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable to this report.

Risk Assessment

Event organisers are required to provide a Risk Management Plan as part of any event application. The work recommended would provide benefits to proposed event organisers through the preparation of a risk management framework to determine the suitability of using Lake Colac for water based events, and if suitable, potential mitigations of any risks.

Communication/Implementation

Should the recommendation be supported, officers will seek quotes from appropriate consultants to undertake the works, and then discussing the potential costs with Council.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Support officers to seek proposals for the development of a Risk Management Framework.

This option is recommended by officers as it would provide an understanding of the costs associated with the development of risk management framework. This piece of work would provide guidance to the suitability, or not, of allowing events on Lake Colac and assist with assessing event applications.

Option 2 – Not support officers seeking proposals for the development of a Risk Management Framework.

This option is not recommended by officers. At this stage, it is difficult to support events on Lake Colac due to the public health risks associated with the water quality. Seeking proposals and understanding the risk to users through the development of a risk management framework is an important step in considering future event applications.

Item: 9.12

Social Housing at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac

OFFICER	Doug McNeill
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To seek Council endorsement of the proposal by TW Projects, purchaser of the former Council owned land at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac for the establishment of social housing in accordance with their contract obligations with Council.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, Council sold land at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac to developer TW Projects. Apart from realising a financial benefit from the sale, Council sought to achieve the provision of social housing within the development to advance objectives of its Social Housing Plan. The contract of sale requires the developer to transfer three lots to Council for social housing, or to directly enter into a partnership with a suitable housing provider for construction of three social housing dwellings within eighteen months of the subdivision being completed.

TW Projects has proposed that they enter into an agreement with Disability Housing Limited (DHL), a subsidiary of Housing Choices Australia (HCA), to construct the housing without further Council involvement. This proposal is considered to meet the intent of Council when selling the land and suitably meet the contract of sale conditions. This method of social housing provision will have least cost to Council by avoiding a future process for securing agreements directly with social housing providers.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Recognises Disability Housing Limited is a subsidiary of a registered housing provider.***
- 2. Endorses the proposal by TW Projects that it partners with Disability Housing Limited to develop social housing on three lots resulting from the subdivision of land at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac.***
- 3. Agrees that the proposed social housing development will satisfy the special conditions in the contract of sale between TW Projects and Council.***

4. KEY INFORMATION

Council sold land at 36-52 Bruce Street, Colac to developer TW Projects in 2022. A key outcome of the sale was that the Contract of Sale include obligations for the purchaser to (amongst other things):

- Transfer three lots to Council for social housing (minimum size of 500sqm each); or
- Purchaser to develop three social housing dwellings in partnership with a Registered Housing Agency within eighteen months of Statement of Compliance being issued for the subdivision.

TW Projects has received a planning permit for subdivision of the land into 54 lots and is currently undertaking a range of tasks in preparation for construction of the subdivision including the preparation of design plans for construction of roads, drainage and other infrastructure (including the landfill gas ventilation system) and relocation of landfill gas monitoring bores on the land. They have applied for a minor variation to the approved plan which is under consideration.

To meet its contractual commitments with Council to provide social housing, TW Projects has advised Council that its intent is to enter into a partnership with Housing Choices Australia (HCA) to develop social housing on three lots within the subdivision. TW Projects has advised that:

- HCA is an independent, national, not-for-profit housing provider that delivers high quality, accessible and affordable housing for people on lower incomes and people with disability. It has an existing portfolio of properties in the Shire and is seeking to expand its presence.
- It is intended for the sites to be purchased by Disability Housing Limited (DHL), an entity within the Housing Choices group specifically dedicated to the provision of disability housing. Whilst DHL is not regulated by the Housing Registrar, the company is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Provider and is regulated by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission.
- DHL intends to use the sites for the provision of new Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), designed and built to meet the needs of people who have extreme functional impairment or very high support needs. Housing Choices has advised that similar to traditional social housing, SDA provides subsidised rental housing to people who cannot afford to rent in the private market, and whose needs are not met by the private market. The maximum rent for SDA residents is calculated at 25% of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) plus Commonwealth Rental Assistance (CRA).

- Housing Choices needs to undertake a further needs analysis and engagement process with prospective residents, however it is intended that the land would be used to construct a minimum of three dwellings, each providing housing for 2-3 SDA residents, with an additional bedroom space to allow for the provision of onsite overnight support. The onsite support is delivered by a third-party support provider and is staffed by residents of the region.
- Two of the lots would be adjacent to one another fronting McGonigal Street, providing flexibility for how they might be developed. There is potential they could be consolidated into a single title. The third lot would be within the new court accessed from Bruce Street. It is understood this strategy is to ensure that the housing is located close enough to each other to obtain the benefits of shared service provision between sites, whilst still allowing for a level of integration within the local community.
- The dwellings would be built to comply with Housing Choices Australia Design Guidelines, which contributes to a high quality of design though ensuring homes are attractive and appropriate for their location; integrate environmentally sustainable design principles; maximise natural light and ventilation; are robust, durable and require minimal maintenance; and promote resident security, offering adequate visual and acoustic privacy.

It is understood that if this proposal is acceptable to Council, HCA would seek to enter into an agreement to purchase the nominated lots at the earliest opportunity. Preliminary design works would commence post-settlement, with detailed planning submissions to follow.

This arrangement would result in the developer facilitating provision of the required social housing in partnership with HCA. It has a significant advantage to Council in that it would negate the need for Council to accept ownership of the three lots intended for social housing and to then oversee a process of seeking a partnership with a suitable housing provider to develop the land. This will result in a significant cost saving to the community in staff time and consultant cost.

The contract of sale requires that the housing be provided by a Registered Housing Agency. As noted above, whilst HCA is a registered provider, its subsidiary Disability Housing Limited (DHL) is not. It is however specifically dedicated to the provision of disability housing, and whilst not regulated by the Housing Registrar, the company is a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Provider and is regulated by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. It is also within the HCA company structure.

TW Projects has advised that HCA could achieve all of the contractual obligations and that whilst purchasing and developing the land under the DHL entity is HCA's preferred procurement strategy, it is accepted that if required the properties could sit within the HCA entity which is the registered housing association and then effectively lease it back to DHL. HCA has indicated a preference for development of the properties under the DHL entity as they will be housing social housing tenants and are governed by all the obligations of a registered housing association.

Officers are satisfied that the TW Projects proposal would achieve the outcome sought by the sale of land contract, and whilst Council could require the land to be held in the name of HCA instead of its DHL entity, all of the future residents of the housing to be established would be social housing tenants and the DHL entity is governed by all the obligations of a registered housing association.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

This report seeks to transparently outline for Council consideration the option presented by TW Projects for provision of social housing on the Bruce Street land. The outcome will be of significant social benefit to Colac, providing high quality social housing for local residents which require specialised accommodation.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

The social housing to result from the TW Projects proposal would be managed consistent with all of the obligations of a registered housing association. Officers consider that the proposal would meet the requirements of the contract of sale.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

The proposed housing meets an identified social housing need in Colac.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

There is no community engagement required for this decision. The community is aware of the requirement for social housing to be established within the subdivision.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Presenting this information for a Council decision seeks to ensure there is transparency concerning the manner in which the contractual obligations for social housing are met.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 1 - Strong and Resilient Community

Objective 1: Affordable and available housing will support our growing community and economy

Theme 3 – Healthy and Inclusive Community

Objective 1: All people have the opportunity to achieve and thrive in our shire

The provision of social housing on this site achieves outcomes sought by Council's adopted Social Housing Plan which identifies a significant need for additional dwellings for those on low and very low household incomes.

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

As noted in the report above, there will be financial savings to Council of the developer entering into a direct partnership with Housing Choices Australia's subsidiary, Disability Housing Limited, for provision of the required social housing.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

The proposal will result in savings of staff time that would otherwise be required to support a process of selecting a suitable registered housing provider to develop the land being provided for social housing.

Risk Assessment

There is no risk identified arising from this report.

Communication/Implementation

Council's decision will be promoted in the media and TW Projects will be advised of the decision.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Endorse the proposal of TW Projects

This option is recommended by officers as it will most efficiently result in social housing being developed on the land being subdivided, minimising the resource impacts to Council of this process. Housing Choices Australia is a well-respected social housing provider and Council can have confidence that its subsidiary DHL will operate and manage the new housing for persons who qualify for social housing in Colac.

Option 2 – Endorse the proposal but require HCA to be the legal entity owning the land

This is a valid option for Council consideration but is not recommended by officers as there is confidence that the housing, once constructed, will be suitably managed on an on-going basis for social housing tenants with special needs, complying with all of the obligations of a registered housing association.

Option 3 – Do not endorse the proposal

This option is not recommended by officers as the alternative approach to provision of social housing on the site would be for direct Council involvement in the process which would require the allocation of staff time and resources.

Item: 9.13

Commencement time for 8 November 2023 Council meeting - Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor

OFFICER	Lyndal McLean
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	Nil

1. PURPOSE

To fix the commencement time for the Council meeting scheduled for 8 November 2023 to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 23 November 2022 Council meeting, the date and location for the Council meeting to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor was scheduled. However, the time for this meeting was not set.

It is recommended that the 8 November 2023 Council meeting commence at 4pm.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council determines its meeting scheduled to be held on Wednesday 8 November 2023, for the sole purpose of electing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, will commence at 4pm.

4. KEY INFORMATION

At the 9 November 2022 Council meeting, Cr Chris Potter was elected Mayor for a one-year term. At this meeting Council also resolved not to establish the office of Deputy Mayor.

Section 26(3) of the Local Government Act 2020 provides *“If the Mayor is elected for a 1 year term, the next election of the Mayor must be held on a day to be determined by Council that is as close to the end of the 1 year term as is reasonably practicable.”*

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The overarching Governance Principles related to this report include:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Local Government Act 2020

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

The election of the Mayor must be held at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement.

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable

Risk Assessment

Not applicable

Communication/Implementation

The date, time and location of the 8 November 2023 Council meeting will be published in the local media and on Colac Otway Shire Council's website.

Human Rights Charter

No impact

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Approve the commencement time of 4pm for the 8 November 2023 Council meeting

This option is recommended by officers as meeting dates, times and locations for scheduled Council meetings are required to be set by Council resolution.

Option 2 – Adopt another time for the commencement of the 8 November 2023 Council meeting

This option is not recommended by officers as 4pm has been the typical time that Council meetings have been scheduled to commence.

Item: 9.14

Revocation of Authorised Officers under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

OFFICER	Janine Johnstone
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Signed Authorisation - Julia Repusic - Planning & Environment Act - 2019 [9.14.1 - 1 page]2. Signed Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - Tristan Crews - Planning & Environment Act - 26 [9.14.2 - 1 page]

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to revoke the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation for Julia Repusic and Tristan Crews who are no longer employed by Council.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation to Council officers under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* are required to be signed under resolution of Council. When an employee resigns, Council is required to revoke the Instrument.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council revokes the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 for Julia Repusic and Tristan Crews.

4. KEY INFORMATION

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* establishes a framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present and long-term interests of all Victorians. Various staff members within the Council's Planning and Strategic Focus Department are required to undertake assessments, give advice or investigate various issues in relation to the Act. In order to undertake

these assessments legally, particularly during issues of non-compliance, authorisation under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is required.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

Overarching Governance Principles (s(9)(2) LGA 2020)

The overarching governance principle is:

- a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Policies and Relevant Law (s(9)(2)(a) LGA 2020)

Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation are only provided to any person required to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the administration and enforcement of any Act, regulations or local laws which relate to the functions and powers of the Council. Those authorised under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* must be made or revoked by resolution of Council.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications (s(9)(2)(c) LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s56 LGA 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy)

Not applicable.

Public Transparency (s58 LGA 2020)

Not applicable.

Alignment to Plans and Strategies

Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme 4 – Strong Leadership and Management

Objective 1: We commit to a program of best practice and continuous improvement.

Financial Management (s101 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable.

Service Performance (s106 Local Government Act 2020)

Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

Communication/Implementation

If so resolved, the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation, noting revocation of the instrument, will be sent to the Chief Executive Officer for signature.

Human Rights Charter

No impact.

Officer General or Material Interest

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.

Options

Option 1 – Revokes the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation

This option is recommended by officers as the officers are no longer employed by Council and therefore should not be an Authorised Officer of Council.

Option 2 – Does not endorse the Revocation of the Instruments of Authorisation and Appointment

This option is not recommended by officers as the Instrument needs to be revoked to cease its currency and to have the powers under the Act removed.



INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND AUTHORISATION

(Planning and Environment Act 1987)

In this Instrument "officer" means –

JULIA REPUSIC

By this Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation Colac Otway Shire Council –

1. Under section 247(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* appoints the officer to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the regulations made under that Act and

It is declared that this Instrument –

- (a) comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- (b) remains in force until varied or revoked

This Instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Colac Otway Shire Council on 28 August 2019.

THE COMMON SEAL of Colac Otway Shire
Council was hereunto affixed in accordance
with Local Law No 4


.....
Chief Executive

Revoked by Anne Howard,
Chief Executive Officer

Date:

Dated 29/8/2019



INSTRUMENT OF APPOINTMENT AND AUTHORISATION

(Planning and Environment Act 1987)

In this Instrument “officer” means –

TRISTAN CREWS

By this Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation Colac Otway Shire Council –

1. Under section 247(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* appoints the officer to be an authorised officer for the purposes of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the regulations made under that Act and
2. Under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officer either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this Instrument.


It is declared that this Instrument –

- (a) comes into force immediately upon its execution
- (b) remains in force until varied or revoked

This Instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Colac Otway Shire Council on 26 August 2020.

THE COMMON SEAL of Colac Otway Shire Council was hereunto affixed in accordance with Local Law No 4




Chief Executive Officer

Dated

28/8/20

Revoked by Anne Howard,
Chief Executive Officer

Date:

Item: 9.15

Report of Informal Meeting of Councillors

OFFICER	Lyndal McLean
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Anne Howard
DIVISION	Executive
ATTACHMENTS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Informal Meeting of Councillors - Council Briefing - 20 September 2023 [9.15.1 - 2 pages] 2. Informal Meeting of Councillors Record - Central Reserve Advisory Committee Meeting - 20 September 2 [9.15.2 - 1 page] 3. Informal Meeting of Council - Council Meetings- 27 Sept 2023 [9.15.3 - 2 pages] 4. Informal Meeting of Councillors - CB - 4 October 2023 [9.15.4 - 2 pages] 5. Informal Meeting of Councillors - Councillor Briefing - 11 October 2023 [9.15.5 - 2 pages] 6. Informal Meeting of Councillors - Unscheduled Council Meeting - 11 October 2023 [9.15.6 - 2 pages] 7. Informal Meeting of Councillors - Planning Committee Meeting preparation - 11 October 2023 [9.15.7 - 2 pages]

1. PURPOSE

To report the Informal Meetings of Councillors.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colac Otway Shire Governance Rules require that records of informal meetings of Councillors which meet the following criteria:

If there is a meeting of Councillors that;

- *is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;*
- *is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and*

- *is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting*

be tabled at the next convenient meeting of Council and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

All relevant meetings have been recorded and documented, as attached.

3. REPORTING

The Informal Meetings of Councillors are reported herewith:

1. Councillor Briefing	20 September 2023
2. Central Reserve Advisory Committee	20 September 2023
3. Council Meeting preparation	27 September 2023
4. Councillor Briefing	4 October 2023
5. Councillor Briefing	11 October 2023
6. Unscheduled Council meeting preparation	11 October 2023
7. Planning Committee meeting preparation	11 October 2023

4. KEY INFORMATION

The following Informal Meetings of Councillors have been held and are attached to this report:

1. Councillor Briefing	20 September 2023
2. Central Reserve Advisory Committee	20 September 2023
3. Council Meeting preparation	27 September 2023
4. Councillor Briefing	4 October 2023
5. Councillor Briefing	11 October 2023
6. Unscheduled Council meeting preparation	11 October 2023
7. Planning Committee meeting preparation	11 October 2023

5. OFFICER GENERAL OR MATERIAL INTEREST

No officer declared an interest under the *Local Government Act 2020* in the preparation of this report.



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 20 September 2023

Time: 12.30pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin, Cr Stephen Hart (videoconference), Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt, Erin Sonego (videoconference), Natasha Skurka, Mark McLennan, Kanishka Gunasekara, Xavier Flanagan, Tamzin McLennan, Sharyn Ryan, David Butterfield, Dora Novak, Doug McNeill (videoconference), Liza Kennedy, Blaithin Butler, Ian Williams
External attendees:
Chair, Audit and Risk Committee
Apologies:
Cr Kate Hanson
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 12.40pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Doug McNeill	General Conflict of Interest	Item no 1.8 - Consideration of Submissions to Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Draft Climate Change Action Plan	An extended family member has lodged a submission to the Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Draft Climate Action Plan which my team has responsibility for.
Anne Howard	General Conflict of Interest	Item No 1.5 - Proposed disposal of 80a Hart Street, Colac (Council Property)	This property is in close proximity to my private property / residence.



Councillor Briefing 20 September 2023 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
12.40pm – 1.10pm	Colac Civic Health and Rail Precinct Plan - Proposed Re-scope	Erin Sonego (videoconference) Doug McNeill (videoconference)
1.10pm – 1.34pm	Chair report on Audit and Risk Committee Activities to Council	Chair Audit and Risk Committee (videoconference) Natasha Skurka
1.34pm – 1.52pm	Hopkins Street Birregurra Unused Government Road Issues	Mark McLennan Kanishka Gunasekara David Butterfield
1.52pm – 2.04pm	Proposed Sale of 80(a) Hart Street Colac	Mark McLennan Kanishka Gunasekara David Butterfield
2.04pm – 2.07pm	Break	
2.07pm – 2.32pm	Approval and Certification of in-principle Financial Statements and Performance Statement 2022-23	Xavier Flanagan Toni Uphill
2.32pm – 2.43pm	Break	
2.43pm – 3.04pm	Winifred Nance Playspace Tender Update	Tamzin McLennan Paula Gardiner David Butterfield
3.04pm – 3.44pm	Consideration of Submissions to Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Draft Climate Change Action Plan	Dora Novak Doug McNeill (videoconference) Liza Kennedy
3.44pm – 4.19pm	<u>General Business</u> 710 Blue Johanna Rd	Blaithin Butler Ian Williams
4.19pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

This form must be completed by the attending Council Officer and the completed form must be provided to governance@colacotway.vic.gov.au for reporting at the next practicable Council Meeting.

Please refer to Chapter 5 (Disclosure of Conflict of Interest) and Chapter 6 (Informal Meetings of Councillors) of the Governance Rules and the guidelines over page.

Meeting Details

Meeting name: Central Reserve Advisory Committee

Date: 20/09/2023 **Time:** 5:15pm

Meeting Location: Central Reserve – Upstairs Pavilion

Matter/s Discussed:

- Facilities and Grounds Maintenance Reports;
- City Reserves Planning Project (Central Reserve Master Plan) – project update;
- Update from User Groups;
- Central Reserve Bookings – upcoming and proposed ground and facility use – regular users and casual bookings;
- Central Reserve Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference and Committee member appointment update;
- Council's Committees Policy and discussion around the future status of Central Reserve Advisory Committee.

In Attendance:

Councillors:
Cr Chris Potter
Officers:
Nicole Frampton – Recreation and Open Space Coordinator

Conflict of Interest Disclosures for Councillors and Officers: (refer to over page for guidelines)

Name	Type of interest	Left meeting at	Returned to meeting at
Nil			

Completed by: Nicole Frampton – Recreation and Open Space Coordinator



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Council Meeting

Date: 27 September 2023

Time: 2.00pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt, Xavier Flanagan, Blaithin Butler, Tamzin McLennan, Paula Gardiner, Ian Williams, Doug McNeill, David Butterfield, Nicole Frampton
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 2.04pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Cr Chris Potter	General Conflict of Interest	Item 9.5 - Contract 2401 - Memorial Square Public Toilets Redevelopment	A family member is a principal in the business on BDH who submitted a tender for this contract.
Ian Seuren	General Conflict of Interest	Item 9.5 - Contract 2401 - Memorial Square Public Toilets Redevelopment	Family members are employed by one of the contractors that have tendered for the contract.



Council Meeting -27 Sept (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
2.04pm -	<p>Council Meeting Preparation</p> <p>Item 9.5 - Contract 2401 - Memorial Square Public Toilets Redevelopment Cr Potter declared a general Conflict of interest for item 9.5 Contract 2001 – Memorial Square Public Toilets Redevelopment and left the meeting at 3.24pm prior to discussion on this item. Cr Potter returned to the meeting at 3.28pm after discussion has concluded on this item.</p> <p>Cr Max Arnott left the meeting at 3.28pm; returned to the meeting at 3.30pm</p>	
3.36pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 4 Oct 2023

Time: 12.30pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin (videoconference), Cr Stephen Hart (videoconference), Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Tamzin McLennan, Doug McNeill, Simon Clarke, Nicole Frampton, Dora Novak, Blaithin Butler, Mark McLennan, David Butterfield, Liza Kennedy
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Cr Kate Hanson, Marlo Emmitt
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 12.37pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Nil			



Councillor Briefing – 4 October 2023 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
12.37pm – 1.02pm	Park Avenue Planning Application and Open Space	Doug McNeill Simon Clarke Nicole Frampton
1.02pm – 1.19pm	Bike Facilities	Nicole Frampton
1.19pm – 1.27pm	Lake Colac Holiday Park Update	Mark McLennan David Butterfield
1.27pm – 1.35pm	Contract 2405 - Building Surveying & Inspections Services	
1.35pm – 1.38pm	PP137/2023-1 – 37 Wynne Street COLAC - Three (3) Lot Subdivision and Construction of Three (3) Dwellings Cr Stephen Hart left the meeting at 1.35pm; returned to the meeting at 1.45pm.	Doug McNeill Blaithin Butler
1.38pm – 1.46pm	Break	
1.46pm – 3.12pm	Consideration of Submissions to Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy and Draft Climate Change Action Plan	Dora Novak Doug McNeill Liza Kennedy
3.12pm – 3.17pm	<u>General Business</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OPASS Update Referendum 	
3.17pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Councillor Briefing

Date: 11 October 2023

Time: 12.30pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt, Sharyn Ryan, Paula Gardiner, Fiona Maw, Suzanne Barker(videoconference), Erin Sonogo, Doug McNeill
External attendees:
Member for Western Victoria
Apologies:
Cr Kate Hanson
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 12.34pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Nil			



Councillor Briefing – 11 October 2023 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
12.34pm - 1.05pm	Member for Western Victoria Update.	Member for Western Victoria
1.05pm – 1.19pm	Winifred Nance Playspace Next Step	Sharyn Ryan Paula Gardiner
1.19pm – 1.40pm	Colac Cinemas Operations Analysis	Fiona Maw
1.40pm – 1.58pm	Colac Otway Shire Annual Report 2022-23	Marlo Emmitt
1.58pm – 2.13pm	Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan Third Party Funding Agreement	Suzanne Barker(videoconference) Erin Sonogo Doug McNeill
2.13pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Unscheduled Council Meeting Preparation

Date: 11 October 2023

Time: 2.15pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt, James Myatt, Mark McLennan, David Butterfield
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 2.25pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Nil			



Unscheduled Council Meeting Preparation (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
2.25pm – 2.50pm	Unscheduled Council Meeting Preparation	James Myatt Mark McLennan David Butterfield
2.50pm	Meeting Closed	



Informal Meeting of Councillors Record

Planning Committee Meeting Preparation

Date: 11 October 2023

Time: 2.30pm

Meeting Location: Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, COPACC

Invitees:
Cr Max Arnott, Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt
Attendees:
Cr Graham Costin, Cr Kate Hanson, Cr Stephen Hart, Cr Chris Potter, Cr Margaret White, Cr Tosh-Jake Finnigan, Cr Max Arnott, Anne Howard, Andrew Tenni, Heath Chasemore, Ian Seuren, Marlo Emmitt, Doug McNeill, Blaithe Butler, Ian Williams
External attendees:
Nil
Apologies:
Nil
Absent:
Nil

Meeting Commenced at: 2.50pm

Declarations of Interest:

Name	Type of Disclosure	Item	Reason
Nil			



Planning Committee Meeting Preparation – 11 October 2023 (continued)		
Time	Item	Attendees
2.50pm – 3.14pm	Planning Committee Meeting Preparation	Doug McNeill Blaithin Butler Ian Williams
3.14pm	Meeting Closed	

