



Ararat Rural City

AGENDA

UNSCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 8 October 2024

To be held in the Council Chambers, Shire Offices
(Livestreamed)

Commencing at 6.00pm

Council:

Cr Bob Sanders (Mayor)

Cr Gwenda Allgood

Cr Jo Armstrong

Cr Rob Armstrong

Cr Peter Beales

Cr Henry Burridge

Cr Bill Waterston



Ararat Rural City

A recording of this meeting is being made for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of the minutes of the Council Meeting.

The recording is being streamed live via Facebook, to improve transparency between council and the community and give more people the opportunity to view what decisions are being made. You do not require a Facebook account to watch the live broadcast, simply enter www.facebook.com/araratruralcitycouncil into your address bar.

Recordings of Council Meetings (excluding closed sessions) are made available on Council's website.

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SECTION 1 – PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 LIVE STREAMING

Council is keen to engage with members of the community and live streams the formal Council Meetings to make them accessible. The stream is available to view on Council’s Facebook page from 6pm and on Council’s website following the Council Meeting.

1.2 TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/OPENING PRAYER/COUNCILLORS PLEDGE

Traditional acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, we humbly ask you to help us, as elected Councillors of the Ararat Rural City Council. Guide our deliberations. Prosper what is your will for us, to your honour and glory and for the welfare and benefit of the people whom we serve in the Ararat Rural City.

Councillors Pledge

We will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions invested in us under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of our skill and judgement.

1.3 APOLOGIES

RECOMMENDATION

That the apology of Cr be accepted.

1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24 September 2024 be confirmed.

1.5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a *Council meeting* at which he or she:

- 1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the *Council meeting* immediately before the matter is considered; or
- 2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the *Chief Executive Officer* before the *Council meeting* commences a written notice:
 - (a) advising of the conflict of interest;
 - (b) explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and
 - (c) detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:
 - name of the other person;
 - nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
 - nature of that other person's interest in the matter,

and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the *Chief Executive Officer* under this sub-Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the *Council meeting* immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

SECTION 2 – REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

2.1 CONSIDERATION OF ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE:

OFFICER DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Report is prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, Local Government Act 1989 and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

The Annual Report 2023/2024 will be forwarded to the Minister for Local Government once complete.

The purpose of this report is to formally present the Annual Report 2023/2024 to Council.

DISCUSSION

The Annual Report 2023/2024 outlines the activities undertaken during the financial year.

In accordance with section 98, 99 and 100 of the Act, an Annual Report must contain the following in respect of the financial year reported on:

- Report of operations of the Council
- Audited performance statement
- Audited financial statements
- Copy of the auditor's report on the performance statement
- Copy of the auditor's report on the financial statements under Part 3 of the Audit Act 1994, and
- Any other matter required by the regulations

Additional information outlined in the attached Annual Report includes:

- A summary of Council's activities and performance
- Information on Council's service delivery
- Information pertaining to governance activities undertaken by Council
- Information pertaining to the structure of our organisation
- Report on Council's compliance and accountability

The Annual Report is the primary means of advising the community about Council's operations and performance during the year ended 30 June 2024.

Several highlights to note from the Annual Report 2023/2024 are as follows:

- Achieving a net 0% increase in rates over the last 7 years.
- Announced delivery of Free TAFE Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and Care to the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct, in conjunction with Federation University Australia.
- completion of the \$4.725 million Gordon Street Recreation Reserve redevelopment project.
- Completion of trunk infrastructure at Ararat East Development Zone, and continuation of the Workforce Pilot Program to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and alleviate workforce shortages.
- Completion of the Helendoite Road Bridge construction project, Alexandra Oval resurfacing project, and McLellan Street culvert project.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

- 6 Strong and Effective Governance
We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

The Annual Report 2023/2024 reports on the progress in achieving the strategic objectives as listed in the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 3).

Budget Implications

Costs associated with the production of the Annual Report are included in the Budget for 2023/2024.

Policy/Relevant Law

Completion and circulation of the Annual Report is a key legislative requirement for all Councils.

Sections 98 to 100 of the Local Government Act 2020 outlines the requirements that Council must meet in preparing and considering the Annual Report for 2023/2024.

Sustainability Implications

This report does not raise any sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment

Council must meet the legislative requirements of the Act in relation to the preparation and consideration of the Annual Report 2023/2024.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

None identified.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Various Council officers have been involved in the preparation of the Annual Report 2023/2024.

Financial statements and performance statements were presented to the 26 September 2023 Council Meeting. These statements have been signed by the Victorian Auditor-General and are incorporated into the Annual Report 2023/2024.

A copy of the Annual Report 2023/2024 will be submitted to the Minister for Local Government before the Ministerial deadline.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Annual Report 2023/2024.

ATTACHMENTS

A Draft copy of the Annual Report 2023/2024 is provided as Attachment 2.1