



Ararat Rural City

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 26 November 2024

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

Commencing at 6.00pm

Council:

Cr Jo Armstrong (Mayor)

Cr Rob Armstrong

Cr Peter Joyce

Cr Teli Kaur

Cr Luke Preston

Cr Bob Sanders

Cr Bill Waterston

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.

SECTION 1 - PROCEDURAL MATTERS	2
1.1 LIVE STREAMING	2
1.2 TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/OPENING PRAYER/COUNCILLORS PLEDGE.....	2
1.3 APOLOGIES	2
1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	2
1.5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST	3
SECTION 2 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	4
2.1 PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS.....	4
SECTION 3 - REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION	5
3.1 S5 DELEGATIONS FROM COUNCIL TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	5
3.2 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY	7
3.3 BUILDING FEE INCREASES	9
3.4 PITCH MUSIC FESTIVAL 2025 TOW-AWAY ZONES	11
3.5 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT	13
3.6 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS - FINANCIAL CLAUSE UPDATES	18
3.7 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2024-34	22
SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS	28
4.1 MCCROWS ROAD BRIDGE	28
4.2 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 2024	30
4.3 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PREPARATION	36
SECTION 5 - INFORMAL MEETINGS	38
5.1 COUNCIL BRIEFINGS	38
SECTION 6 - COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS	40
SECTION 7 - NOTICES OF MOTION	41
SECTION 8 - URGENT BUSINESS	42
SECTION 9 - CLOSE SESSION (CONFIDENTIAL)	43
CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC	43
OPEN COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCEMENT	43
LIFTING OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTIONS	43

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 8 October 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 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

2.1 PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

- 1 Unless *Council* determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion (other than a motion to receive the same) may be made on any petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application until the next *Council meeting* after that at which it has been presented.
- 2 It is incumbent on every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to acquaint himself or herself with the contents of that petition or joint letter, and to ascertain that it does not contain language disrespectful to *Council*.
- 3 Every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to *Council* must:
 - write or otherwise record his or her name at the beginning of the petition or joint letter; and
 - confine himself or herself to a statement of the persons from whom it comes, the number of signatories to it, the material matters expressed in it and the text of the prayer or request.
- 4 Every petition or joint letter presented to *Council* must be in *writing* (other than pencil), typing or printing, contain the request of the petitioners or signatories and be signed by at least 12 people.
- 5 Every petition or joint letter must be signed by the persons whose names are appended to it by their names or marks, and, except in cases of incapacity or sickness, by no one else and the address of every petitioner or signatory must be clearly stated.
- 6 Any signature appearing on a page which does not bear the text of the whole of the petition or request may not be considered by *Council*.
- 7 Every page of a petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter.
- 8 If a petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application relates to an operational matter, *Council* must refer it to the *Chief Executive Officer* for consideration.

SECTION 3 - REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

3.1 S5 DELEGATIONS FROM COUNCIL TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GOVERNANCE AND RISK LEAD
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18088

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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 Local Government Act 2020, and a variety of other legislation, makes provision for the appointment of delegates to act on behalf of Council. The delegation of powers is essential to enable day to day decisions to be made and for the effective operation of the organisation.

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider remaking the S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to the Chief Executive Officer.

DISCUSSION

Under the Local Government Act 2020, Section 11 (1)(b) A Council may be instrument of delegation delegate to the Chief Executive Officer any power, duty or function of a council under this Act or any other Act other than power, duty or function specified in subsection (2)

The S5 Instrument has been drafted to take into account the matters that cannot be delegated by the CEO pursuant to section 11(2) of the 2020Act. These matters are listed as Conditions and Limitations in the Schedule to the S5 Instrument, including the conditions under section 11(5) that any delegation to enter into a contract must include a financial limit.

Pursuant to section 11(4) of the 2020 Act, a council may delegate to the CEO the power to appoint an Acting CEO for a period not exceeding 28 days.

There are no changes to this delegation from previous delegations however, as a newly elected Council to delegate this powers, duties and functions to the Chief Executive Officer

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.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications arising from the review of the S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to the Chief Executive Officer.

Policy/Relevant Law

Under the section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020, Councils have the power to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer any power, duty or function of a Council under this Act other than an power, duty or function specified in subsection (2).

Section 11(8) of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that the Council keep a register of delegation. This delegation will be made available to the public.

Section 437 (1) the Environment Protection Act 2017 states that the Governing Board may be instrument delegate all or any of the Authority's powers and functions under this Act to (b) a council.

Sustainability Implications

There are not economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to the Chief Executive Officer.

Risk Assessment

The remaking of the Instrument of Delegation form Council to CEO ensures ongoing legislative compliance for Ararat Rural City Council.

It is essential that the Instrument of Delegation are kept up to date to ensure that the CEO is properly empowered to undertake the role.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Any amendments or recommendations regarding the Instrument of Delegation for Council to the Chief Executive Officer have been sources utilising Council's subscription to the Maddocks Lawyers Delegations Service.

The delegation service provides two updates per year and mini updates as required when legislation changes. This review has been initiated following the first update for 2023 and the updated Procurement Policy.

The revocation and consideration of delegations does not require any public consultation; however, Council is required to keep a public register of all delegations.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

In the exercise of the powers conferred by Section 11(1)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), Ararat Rural City Council resolves that -

- 1. There be delegated to the person holding the position, acting in or performing the duties of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the attach Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;**
- 2. The instrument comes into force immediately the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument;**
- 3. On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked;**
- 4. The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the Instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt; and**
- 5. The instrument is signed under the seal of the Council**

ATTACHMENTS

S5 Instrument of Delegation - Council to CEO is provided as Attachment 3.1

3.2 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GOVERNANCE AND RISK LEAD
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18089

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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.

Introduction

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Council is required, as far as reasonably practicable, to provide and maintain a safe and risk-free working environment for all employees. The Occupational Health and Safety Policy defines the responsibilities of the Council, managers, leaders and employees in achieving this objective.

Discussion

Occupational health and safety (OHS) Policy outlines the Council's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all employees. This policy serves as a guiding framework to help staff understand their roles and responsibilities in promoting safety and preventing workplace hazards. By implement an effective OHS Policy, the Council can achieve several key benefits, including:

- **Creating safer working environments:** Preventing physical and mental injuries through proactively safety management
- **Reducing workplace injuries:** Preventing physical and mental injuries through proactive safety management
- **Lowering injury-related costs:** Minimizing expenses associated with workplace accidents and related downtime.
- **Enhancing business opportunities:** A safer workplace fosters productivity and attracts partnerships.
- **Ensuring legal compliance:** Meeting legislative requirements reinforces Councils commitment to safety
- **Building a positive reputation:** Demonstrating a genuine concern for employee welfare strengthens trust and credibility.

This policy has been updated to align with the current standards established by WorkSafe Victoria and has been revised to incorporate clear and accessible language for improved understanding.

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.

6.2 Deliver appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions. Council's internal function is applied to area of perceived risk.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications in relation to the development of the OHS Policy

Policy / Relevant Law

Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2017

Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013

Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Regulations 2014

Sustainability Implications

Environmental, social and economic impacts have been considered in the development of the OHS policy.

Risk Assessment

The development of the OHS Policy will provide clarity to Council and all the employees.

Innovation and Continuous Improvements

The OHS Policy can be a driver of innovation and continuous improvement by fostering a proactive and adaptable approach to workplace safety.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

This policy was presented to the Health and Safety Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee

RECOMMENDATION

That:

Council endorses the Occupational Health and Safety Policy

ATTACHMENTS

The Occupational Health and Safety Policy is provided as Attachment 3.2

3.3 BUILDING FEE INCREASES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: MANAGER DEVELOPMENT & REGULATION
DEPARTMENT: DEVELOPMENT & REGULATION
REFERENCE: 18090

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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

Councils, like most Victorian Government departments and agencies charge fees for services and regulatory purposes, including licensing and registering certain activities. The below outlines new fee amounts for Report and Consent S36(2a) and Report and Consent S36(4)

DISCUSSION

After request from Council’s, the Department of Transport and Planning have undertaken a review of statutory building fees. The purpose of the fee review was to determine whether fees relating to report and consent for siting matters and stormwater legal point of discharge works where adequate considering the work undertaken assess applications.

It was determined that it was appropriate to increase the maximum amount that could be charged as follows:

Fee description	Current Fee	Updated maximum fee
Report and Consent Section 36(2A) Siting consideration under Part 5 of the building regulations	\$320.20	\$448.30
Report and Consent Section 36(4) Stormwater Legal Point of Discharge Works	\$159.50	\$231.40

After assessing the work required to undertake determination of the report and consent applications listed above it is recommended that fees are increased to the maximum.

KEY CONSIDERATION

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.
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications

Policy/Relevant Law

Building Regulations 2018

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental, social and economic impacts with the adoption of these fees.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Consultation with Department of Transport and Planning was undertaken

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council adopts the above building fee increases.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments relating to this item

3.4 PITCH MUSIC FESTIVAL 2025 TOW-AWAY ZONES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GOVERNANCE AND RISK LEAD
DEPARTMENT: CEO OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18091

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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 purpose of this report is to request endorsement from Council to establish tow-away zones adjacent to the Pitch Music Festival site.

Council will work in conjunction with Pitch Music Festival (Sound Event Group) and a contractor to install and manage the installation, enforcement and removal of vehicles.

DISCUSSION

Pitch Music Festival, in conjunction with Council and VicRoads have established a tow-away zone to mitigate risks from the parking of vehicles in the road reserves adjacent to the festival site.

The risks include the following:

- Vehicles being parked over dry grass and other vegetation creating an extreme fire hazard
- Vehicles pulling over on side roads causing traffic hazards
- Restricting the carriageway width on road reserve which require unobstructed travel for the time of the festival
- Risk of pedestrian accidents while passengers are disembarking from a vehicle located along the road reserves
- Vehicles being used as camp sites during the time of the festival.

Council officers, and festival organisers believes that undertaking this action will improve safety and reduce risk to the community, road users and festival attendees during the time of Pitch Music Festival. Having the authority to undertake the enforcement and removal of vehicles within the area of the festival provides some rigor to the process, and immediately eliminates a risk once it has been identified.

The location of the proposed two away zones are as follows:

- Moyston Dunkeld Road from White Cockatoo Road north of the Pitch Site (the Patron entry is at the intersection of Moyston Dunkeld Road and Regulating Basin Road), south to Mafeking Road
- Andrews Lane from Moyston Willaura Road to Muirhead Road
- Regulating Basin Road from Moyston Dunkeld Road to past Muirhead Road
- Mafeking Road from Moyston Dunkeld Road to Muirhead Road
- Muirhead Road from Andrews Land to Regulating Basin Road.

It is proposed that:

- Council will establish an appropriate impound area at the Council depot - to keep vehicles safe
- The release fee will comply with Road Management Act Schedule 4 clause 5(2A). It must reflect the reasonable costs of impoundment, including overhead and indirect costs.
- If a contractor is undertaking the towing, then any cost recovery fee received by the council is received as an agent for the towing company and can be paid to them.

- Council authorised officers will negotiate this payment process with event organisers. This fee will also reflect the cost associated with all aspects of management and release of impounded vehicles.
- The formal notification requirement for the tow away will be published in the Government Gazette. This cost and the cost of appropriate signage will be required to be met by the event organisers.
- Council will arrange the application through Vic Road to receive the appropriate authorities to establish and enforce the tow-away zones for the length of the festival

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objective

- 5 Enhancing Community Life
We will work with the community of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life and enhance safety.
- 6.2 Ensure appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions.
Councils internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications

Policy / Legal / Statutory

Road Management Act 2004

Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2022

Risk Assessment

If vehicles are allowed to park on the road reserves adjacent to the festival site, they are likely to pose a significant fire risk to the festival itself and to surrounding residents and townships. Enforcing the tow away zoned mitigate the risk to the best of Councils ability.

Stakeholder Consultation and Communication

This has been discussed with the community at previous Community Consultation sessions. Consultation with VicRoads has also been undertaken to ensure that the appropriate processes have been followed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the application process to gain delegation from VicRoads to establish the tow-away zone in the locality of the Pitch Music Festival for the duration of the festival each year going forward; and**
- 2. Endorses the Chief Executive Officer's actions to authorise council officers on behalf of the Pitch Music Festival event organisers to implement an appropriate process to apply fees associated with the management and enforcement of the tow-away zone for the duration of the festival.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Tow-away zone map is provided as Attachment 3.4

3.5 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18092

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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 financial statements and performance indicators have been prepared for the period ended 30 September 2024.

Based on the information provided by responsible officers and managers Council's overall financial performance is in line with budget.

DISCUSSION

Council must establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound financial management.

Key Financial information:

Income Statement (Attachment 1)

The Income Statement measures how well Council has performed from an operating nature. It reports revenues and expenditure from the activities and functions undertaken, with the net effect being a surplus or deficit. Capital expenditure is excluded from this statement, as it is reflected in the Balance Sheet.

Attachment 1 shows that Council generated \$26.097 million in revenue and \$9.198 million in expenses to 30 September 2024. This has resulted in an operating surplus of \$16.899 million for the three months ended 30 September 2024.

Income

Rates and charges account for 50% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25. Rates and charges are recognised when the rates have been raised, not when the income has been received. An amount of \$17.482 million has been recognised as income for the three months ended 30 September 2024.

User fees account for 4% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25 and \$0.539 million has been received to 30 September 2024. The majority of this relates to transfer station fees, fitness centre income and commercial waste management charges.

Recurrent Operating Grants total \$7.425 million to 30 September 2024, including \$4.221 million from the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission for general purpose grants and \$2.736 million for the local roads grants.

Non-recurrent Operating Grants total \$0.024 million to 30 September 2024. Council has been successful in obtaining several grants that had not been budgeted for, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Operating Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Ararat Housing Transition	-	-	300
Digital Twin Victoria	-	-	954
Free Public WiFi Services	-	-	1,196
Supported Playgroups	65	16	-
Ararat Rural City Sport, Active Recreation & Open Space Strategy	-	-	36
Tiny Towns Fund - Pomonal Community Hub	-	-	200
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Recreation Reserve Pavillion Redevelopment	-	-	25
Other Minor Grants (under \$30,000)	-	8	-
	65	24	2,711

Non-recurrent Capital Grants have not been received in the three months to 30 September 2024, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Capital Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Mt William Road reconstruction	5,000	-	-
Buangor-Ben Nevis Road reconstruction	843	-	-
Pedestrian Infrastructure Program	-	-	70
Tatyoon Oval Upgrade Grant	-	-	225
	5,843	-	295

Note

It is important to note the following:

1. Unearned revenue received in prior years has been adjusted between the Original Budget and Current Budget with an additional \$2.936 million for Grants Operating (non-recurrent), \$0.366 million for Grants Capital (recurrent) and \$0.070 million for Grants Capital (non-recurrent) included in the Current Budget on the assumption that each of the grant projects will be completed during the 2024/25 financial year.
2. These changes in the budget, plus the note reported under expenses, create a change in the reported surplus position from a projected surplus of \$8.163 million to a surplus of \$9.205 million for 2024/25. The year-end variance is a deficit of \$0.612 million when the actual year to date expenses are compared to the year to date budget.

Expenses

Employee Costs account for approximately 40% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the three months ended 30 September 2024 Council has incurred \$2.778 million in employee costs.

Materials and Services account for approximately 29% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the three months ended 30 September 2024, Council has incurred \$3.815 million in materials and services costs. There are a number of projects, including those carried forward from 2023/24 that are expected to be completed before the end of the financial year.

Note

It is important to note the following:

There has been an increase in expenditure on materials and services from \$8.259 million in the Original Budget to \$10.589 million in the Current Budget for 2024/25. This has resulted from a carry forward amount of \$2.330 million from the 2023/24 financial year surplus and unspent grant funds which will be used for additional activity in 2024/25.

Balance Sheet (Attachment 2)

The Balance Sheet is one of the main financial statements and reports Council's assets, liabilities and equity at a given date, in this case 30 September 2024. Comparative figures have been provided as at 30 June 2024.

Council's current assets have increased by \$16.455 million from \$11.732 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$28.187 million as at 30 September 2024. Cash and cash equivalents have increased by \$5.377 million from \$3.049 million to \$8.426 million. Trade and other receivables have increased by \$14.468 million from \$5.212 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$19.680 million as at 30 September 2024.

Total liabilities have decreased from \$8.777 million in 2023/24 to \$8.730 million in 2024/25. Trade and other payables have increased by \$0.256 million and trust funds and deposits have increased by \$0.170 million. Unearned income/revenue decreased by \$0.366 million, which includes grants received by Council, where in accordance with accounting standards, they are held as a liability until grant-related performance obligations have been met.

Statement of Cash Flows (Attachment 3)

The Statement of Cash Flows shows how changes in the Statement of Financial Position and Income Statement affect Cash and Cash Equivalents, and breaks down the analysis to operating activities, investing activities and financing activities.

The Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the financial year of \$3.049 million have increased by \$5.377 million to \$8.426 million as at 30 September 2024.

Net cash of \$5.213 million was provided by operating activities, \$0.291 million was provided by investing activities, and \$0.127 million was used in financing activities.

Investing activities includes payments for property, plant and equipment, and infrastructure.

Financial Performance Indicators (Attachment 4)

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework requires Councils to report various performance indicators at the end of each financial year.

A full list of financial performance indicators is included in Attachment 4.

Indicator	30/6/2024	30/9/2024
<p>Working capital Measure - Current assets compared to current liabilities. Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework 100% to 400% Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of working capital suggests an improvement in liquidity</p>	162%	392%
<p>Loans and borrowings Measure - Loans and borrowings compared to rates. Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 0% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of interest-bearing loans and borrowings should be appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities. Low or decreasing level of loans and borrowings suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations</p>	1.71%	1.53%

Indicator	30/6/2024	30/9/2024
<p>Indebtedness <i>Measure - Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 2% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of long-term liabilities should be appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities. Low or decreasing level of long-term liabilities suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations</p>	7.49%	8.48%
<p>Rates concentration <i>Measure - Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 30% to 80% Indicator of the broad objective that revenue should be generated from a range of sources. High or increasing range of revenue sources suggests an improvement in stability</p>	73.82%	66.99%
<p>Expenditure level <i>Measure - Expenses per property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework \$2,000 to \$10,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of expenditure suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency</p>	\$4,592	\$1,238
<p>Indicator - Revenue level <i>Measure - Average residential rate per residential property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - \$700 to \$2,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of rates suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency</p>	\$1,993	\$2,001
<p>Indicator - Percentage of total rates collected The internal audit conducted in 2019 on Rates Revenue and Rate Debtor Management found no routine or regular reporting of large and long outstanding rates debtors. The outstanding Rates Debtors is reported in the Annual Financial report. As at 30 September 2024 the outstanding Rates Debtors totalled \$16.480 million compared to \$2.320 million as at 30 June 2024, an increase of \$14.160 million. In percentage terms 18.1% of the rates raised have been collected at 30 September 2024 compared to 14.9% up to 30 September 2023. Outstanding rates are currently charged 10% interest. Council issues approximately 7,900 rate notices. In 2024/25 there are 2,158 assessments paying by instalments compared with 2,640 assessments in 2023/24.</p>	88.1%	18.1%
<p>Indicator - Asset Renewal & Upgrade <i>Measure - Asset renewal & Upgrade compared to depreciation</i> Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 40% to 130% Assessment of whether council assets are being renewed or upgraded as planned. It compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, replacing or upgrading existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 1.0 indicate there is a lesser risk of insufficient spending on Council's asset base.</p>	124.63%	108.83%

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework provides "Expected ranges" for each indicator. The framework has been developed to consider results at the end of the financial year so some results during the year are outside the expected range due to the timing of receipts and payments.

Explanations are provided in Attachment 4 for those indicators that are outside the "expected ranges".

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

- 6.1** Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness

Budget Implications

Council's financial performance is in line with expectations. Council's cash position was expected to reduce in the first quarter to pay for the outstanding accounts at year end.

Policy/Relevant Law

Section 97 - Quarterly Budget Report of the Local Government Act 2020 states:

- 1 As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.
- 2 A quarterly budget report must include—
 - (a) a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and
 - (b) an explanation of any material variations; and
 - (c) any other matters prescribed by the regulations.
- 3 In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required.

Sustainability Implications

This report does not raise any sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment

Council is required to establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound management and this report assists Council in meeting that requirement.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The content of the Quarterly report is continually reviewed to ensure meaningful data is provided.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council's financial performance reports are published quarterly.

RECOMMENDATION

That the:

- 1 **Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators for the period ended 30 September 2024 be received and adopted.**

ATTACHMENTS

Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators are provided as Attachment 3.5

3.6 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS - FINANCIAL CLAUSE UPDATES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: **PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS LEAD**
DEPARTMENT: **ASSETS**
REFERENCE: **10893**

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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

Asset plans as referred to in the Local Government Act 2020, are community facing documents that show how Council assets will be managed and maintained, while meeting the community's needs and interests.

Assets managed by Local Government include an extensive network of local roads and other assets such as land, buildings, parks and recreation facilities. Good asset management is critical to the asset intensive nature of Local Government, particularly for rural Council's with higher operating costs of assets, it is important to consider the needs, demands and expectations of communities and to deliver services from infrastructure assets in a sustainable and affordable way.

This report reviews the financial details relating to financial reporting and valuation of assets and updates the plans to ensure that Council meets legislative and Australian Accounting standards.

DISCUSSION

The approval of all Council's Asset Management Plan occurred in late 2023. These plans are:

- Bridges and Major Culverts
- Buildings and Structures
- Drainage
- Footpaths
- Monuments
- Playgrounds
- Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities
- Roads and Transport; and
- Trees

Review of these plans has shown that the Financial Clauses of each plan has shown that they require updating in line with Council's updated Non-current Asset Accounting and Valuation Policy.

1. Proposed updates to the following Asset Management Plans

- Bridges and Major Culverts
- Buildings and Structures
- Drainage
- Footpaths
- Playgrounds
- Roads and Transport

is as follows:

"7. Finance and Valuations

This section references councils Non-Current Asset Accounting and Valuation Policy (refer to appendix).

7.1 Asset Valuation

Ararat Rural City Council has a responsibility to financially represent its network of assets to fair value. Valuations are conducted using structured classes as nominated within this plan, assigning unit rates to

those classes based on real word values and multiplying the area of each asset to the assigned unit rate, when undertaking a comprehensive revaluation.

7.2 Asset Capitalisation

XXXX assets captured and represented within the Asset Management System are capitalised assets within councils financial reporting.

7.3 Carrying Amount or Net Book Value

The current carrying amount or net book value of an asset is recognised after deducting any accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

7.4 Current and Non-Current Assets

All XXXX assets are treated as non-current and financially planned for as a renewal asset.

7.5 Asset Depreciation

The depreciable amount of each component/part of all Non-Current Assets is undertaken in compliance with clause 5.5 of the Non-Current Asset Accounting and Valuation Policy (refer to appendix).

7.6 Representation of Asset Costings within Finance System

Asset renewal projects are tracked within the council finance system using 'tracking categories'. Maintenance and general works expenses are tracked at a network layer within the finance system; however, individual works costs can also be reported through the Asset Management System (Confirm)."

2. Proposed updates to the following Asset Management Plans

- Monuments
- Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities
- Trees

is as follows:

"7. Finance and Valuations

This section references councils Non-Current Asset Accounting and Valuation Policy (refer to appendix).

7.1 Asset Valuation

Ararat Rural City Council does not undertake valuation of XXXXX assets.

7.2 Asset Capitalisation

XXXX assets captured and represented within the Asset Management System are not capitalised assets within councils financial reporting."

7.3 Representation of Asset Costings within Finance System

Asset renewal projects are tracked within the council finance system using 'tracking categories'. Maintenance and general works expenses are tracked at a network layer within the finance system;

however, individual works costs can also be reported through the Asset Management System (Confirm).”

3. All Asset Management Plans will have the following references added:

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014

Australian Accounting Standards:

- AASB 5 Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations
- AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement
- AASB 16 Leases
- AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements
- AASB 116 Property, Plant & Equipment
- AASB 136 Impairment of Assets
- AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
- AASB 138 Intangible Assets
- AASB 1031 Materiality
- AASB 1051 Land Under Roads
- AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements

Asset Management Plans

Risk Management Policy

Ararat Rural City Council – Non Current Asset Accounting and Valuation Policy

4. Where a clause shows XXXX the applicable types of assets will be placed in the clause for the appropriate Asset Management Plan.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

6. Strong and Effective Governance.

Budget Implications

There are no budget implications in relation to the adoption of the updated Asset Management Plans

Policy/Relevant Law

- Local Government Act 2020
- Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014
- Australian Accounting Standards:
 - AASB 5 Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations
 - AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement
 - AASB 16 Leases
 - AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements
 - AASB 116 Property, Plant & Equipment
 - AASB 136 Impairment of Assets
 - AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets
 - AASB 138 Intangible Assets
 - AASB 1031 Materiality
 - AASB 1051 Land Under Roads
 - AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements
- Asset Management Plans
- Risk Management Policy

Sustainability Implications

The update of the asset management plans will ensure compliance with economic requirements and financial reporting.

Risk Assessment

If the Asset Management Plans are not updated Council is at risk of not meeting the compliance requirements of legislation and the Australian Accounting Standards.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

None Identified

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The revised Asset Management Plans has been created through collaboration with Council's Asset Management operations and the Finance Department.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1 Council adopts the updated Asset Management Plans.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Current Asset Management Plans are provided as Attachment 3.6

3.7 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2024-34

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: STRATEGIC PROJECT LEAD,
AND THE FEDERATION UNIVERSITY INTERN
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18094

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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

At the 25 June 2024 Council Meeting, Council accepted the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 for release for public consultation purposes. This Briefing Report is to review the feedback and consider the adoption of the final Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 by the Ararat Rural City Council.

The council's most recent Environmental Sustainability Strategy became outdated as of 2020. The updated Environmental Sustainability Strategy is proposed to provide a clear direction for the sustainable development and environmental management of the Ararat municipality.

This report presents the final 10-year strategy for endorsement by Council.

DISCUSSION

The draft Strategy was released for consultation on 5 July 2024 on the Engage Ararat website and promoted through a media release and social media. The consultation period closed on 16 September 2024. Seven responses were submitted via the Engage Ararat website. No other responses were received from other channels. The submissions are provided in Table 1 below. The content highlighted in blue will be obscured in the Council Report to prevent any personal information being released. The feedback received from the community consultation process has been considered and responded to in Table 1.

The responses to the feedback are provided below the table.

FEEDBACK RECEIVED
<p>I wish to make the following comments on Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 24 - 34. While the strategies objectives are commendable, the devil, as always, is in the detail and there is no indication on how these objectives will be meet. Below are my comments on the Strategy based on your stated measures of success.</p> <p>CLIMATE CHANGE Municipality at net zero emissions. Very difficult to achieve in a 10-year time frame. Agricultural emissions, heavy transport (including council's own plant fleet), are both difficult and expensive to eliminate. High energy use sites like the Aquatic Centre, hospitals, aged care centers and industries like the abattoirs and AME Systems would require costly electrification of their current heating systems. Offsetting residual emissions would require extensive tree planting or production and use of large amounts of biochar by local farmers (refer point 4).</p> <p>50-54% reduction in emissions produced (from 2005 level). This seems at odds to the previous measure but more realistic.</p> <p>Canopy cover of at least 30% within all townships.</p>

Given the trend towards infill development and multiple dwellings per allotment, canopy cover would need to be achieved by street trees. If the average allotment size in Ararat is 800 m² (20m x 40m) and road width of 20m then allotment plus 50% of road is 1,000 m². A 30% canopy cover could be achieved by planting a large shade tree with an eventual canopy diameter over 10m, every 10m along both sides of every street. This would require undergrounding of most electricity lines in the municipality's residential areas which seems unlikely at present so achieving this objective seems unlikely.

50% of municipality's electricity needs collected from renewable sources.

Hepburn Energy is an example of a community owned electricity producer that's well on the way to providing 100% of Hepburn Shire's electricity needs. Ararat should follow their example. I put forward a proposal for a similar community owned bioenergy plant using local agricultural waste as fuel. My proposal would have met all of the municipality's electricity needs, including future resident electric vehicle charging. Ararat's residential and commercial space heating and hot water needs would be met using the plant's waste heat. Syngas production during periods of low electricity demand would be used to produce renewable diesel for local farmers, transport operators, public transport and emergency service vehicles. The biochar produced as a by-product would be used by local farmers as a soil improver and emissions offset. The economics were good with an ROI of over 15% but unfortunately the Ararat community wasn't interested.

Increase in native vegetation cover on public and private land

May be difficult to achieve unless land managers change their approach to vegetation management, see the next measure.

NATURAL LANDSCAPE AND BIODIVERSITY

Plant diversity at Species occur where they do because of the climate. Rapid climate change due to human activity is greater than the natural species adaptation rate so assisted migration is needed to ensure ecosystems can still survive. This concept is now widely accepted overseas but Australian land managers are still in denial. All land managers, including council, need to begin managing native vegetation for a future climate not a past one to ensure habitat remains for native fauna.

Increased vegetation, biodiversity and connectivity between habitat patches; more protection measures along riparian areas, waterways, and wetlands

As per the previous measure, increased protection alone will not save species from climate change and more active management is needed to ensure habitat still remains viable. This could include maintaining artificial wetlands, water for strategic sections of waterways and permanent water sources for animals.

Maintenance or increase in significant roadside vegetation, extent and condition of protected grassland EVCs, and populations of threatened species

Regular burning is a critical tool to promote the health of native grasslands, but declining CFA membership and risk adverse government agencies mean achieving this will be more difficult.

All priority pest animal and weed populations contained or eradicated

A commendable goal but the lack of state government funding of local pest plant and animal activities, including inspections, will make this unlikely to be achieved.

Landfill sites and quality of stormwater to meet EPA requirements.

This is also a commendable goal but minimising sediment and rubbish in stormwater will be difficult. The sediment delta in Alexandra Lake is an example of unmanaged sediment sources. Ensuring areas of exposed soil/gravel are minimised is a step council could take.

Decrease in number and severity of environmental hazard incidents.

A very desirable goal but the biggest risk of a severe environmental hazard incident is the Western Highway transport traffic through Ararat.

Majority of primary production properties maintain 70% of groundcover in paddocks all year, and native vegetation permitted to be removed is offset locally.

Ararat Rural City cereal growers currently need to burn their stubbles each year meaning retaining at least 70% ground cover is impossible. They have trialed direct drilling and stubble retention without success. Until there is a viable market for their straw burning remains the only cost-effective option.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

All new homes to have minimum 7-star building standard under National Construction Code. A good idea.

50% of organic waste from agriculture diverted to biofuel plant.

The success of any bioenergy plant will require the support of local farmers and must be economically viable at market prices for feedstock. The current Valorify proposal isn't offering farmers market prices for their straw and the price doesn't even cover the cost of production let alone delivery. Energy is a critical part of our economy, and the cost of living and Council should take the lead on utilizing the large amount of agricultural waste produced in the municipality.

72% of waste diverted from landfill by 2025 and 80% by 2030 (from 2020).

Science fiction writer, Arthur C Clark, once said "Waste is a resource we are too stupid to utilize." Achieving significant reductions in the amount of waste going to landfill will not be possible with waste to energy. The current focus on recycling ignores a large amount of waste that isn't practical or possible to recycle. Examples include, medical waste, contaminated paper and cardboard, treated and painted timbers, C & D and industrial waste, composite materials such as floor coverings, furniture, clothing and nappies. Ararat sits at the junction of 5 rail lines (Adelaide, Maryborough, Ballarat, Geelong and Portland) making it an ideal location for a regional waste to energy facility.

Waste generation per capita cut to 15%. • 20% reduction in volume of organic material to landfill by 2025 and halved by 2030 (from 2020).

See above.

All glass and organic material collected, aggregated, sorted and processed within the region/municipality. Agree and as per above.

Contaminated recyclable or compostable waste sent to landfill is halved, and litter collected reduced by 40% (from 2020).

See above and best of luck reducing littering.

Amount of wastewater recycled for reuse is doubled, with no net increase in potable water consumption (from 2020).

Not increasing potable water consumption may be difficult to achieve if Ararat's population increases and more rural properties connected to reticulated supply. It's worth keeping in mind the issues created in our sewer system during the Millenium Drought when people started using grey water on their gardens.

10% of all open space irrigation requirements met with non-potable water sources. Decrease in potable water consumption in all Council building.

Probably already at 10% given Alexandra Oval and Gardens currently watered by recycled water. The Outdoor Pool and Fitness Centre are probably the largest potable water users of all council building so co-locating them would reduce overall water consumption.

A monitoring protocol will be integral to ensuring many of the measures of success will be able to be met

The metrics for plant diversity would be more appropriate for new plantations, otherwise that would require an audit of the plants in all current green spaces.

Some detail about the references for this document may be good to demonstrate alignment with scientific best practice, and regional, state and federal recommendations

Hello and well done with creating this environmental sustainability strategy. The Beyond Bolac Catchment Action Group has a good track record of implementing projects on Theme 2, to promote biodiversity enhancement within the rural section of the Ararat LGA. We are available and willing to work with council on this important topic.

As a local researcher in conservation technology, I commend the council for their efforts in developing this strategy to help safeguard our natural environment and vibrant community. In particular, the measures of success are helpful for making the objectives more tangible. I would love to see council succeed in delivering this strategy and believe that a next step will require the development of concrete action plans with timelines, responsibilities, and budget allocations. While I applaud the council's specification of measures of success - of equal importance will be the methods used to measure success. There are cost-effective monitoring opportunities (remotely sensed data, bioacoustic monitoring with AI species classification) that can be supplemented with field surveys or citizen scientists using iNaturalist. Identifying funding sources and exploring potential partnerships with government agencies, businesses, and NGOs will be critical. There is a large opportunity to leverage expertise available at local organisations like Federation University, which I am please to see are already partners, but also Project Platypus, Perennial Pasture Systems, and more.

<p>Hello, my name is xxxxxx. I live in xxxxxx and work as a local Landcare Facilitator through the Vic state government's Landcare program. I support landcare groups across Ararat, Pyrenees and Northern Grampians shire areas. My background is as a trained ecologist, with a focus on field collection of biodiversity data. I am pleased to see what has been included in this environmental sustainability strategy. While the three objectives within Theme 2 are not particularly detailed, I was very interested in the measures of success section. I was pleased to see the following two points:</p> <p>"Increased vegetation, biodiversity and connectivity between habitat patches; more protection measures along riparian areas, waterways, and wetlands.</p> <p>Maintenance or increase in significant roadside vegetation, extent and condition of protected grassland EVCs, and populations of threatened species."</p> <p>In particular, I was pleasantly surprised to see council including an explicit goal of measuring biodiversity/habitat connectivity, as well as calling out our precious endangered native grasslands (which rarely get the love they deserve!). I would be very keen to see Landcare working with council to help achieve these goals. As an ecologist, I am very aware that quantifying biodiversity and habitat connectivity are no small feats, but are absolutely crucial to ensuring that work we do is having meaningful ecological benefits. For that reason, our local Landcare network organization where I work, Project Platypus, and the local landcares I support are also right now have a top priority of developing simple and time efficient ways of measuring habitat connectivity and biodiversity. This is part of our regions goal of creating meaningful 'biolinks', or habitat corridor connections, through our landcare groups' revegetation projects. We have recently formed a catchment wide 'biolink team' where we are working on these challenges together. I would love to explore how we can work together with council to progress together towards this shared goal.</p> <p>Finally, it is also very pleasing to see grassland EVCs mentioned. They are perhaps Victorias most undervalued habitat type, and are even now being excluded from carbon based conservation programs like bush bank. They are particularly hard to conserve because we have barely mapped them in our area. I would love to see council and landcare working together to map and monitor our precious little remnant grassland patches.</p>
<p>2.2 Environmental threats identified and controlled: Can the Shire make available annual weed mapping and control program on regional roads. In particular for noxious weeds such as gorse. I say this as I have noticed some good work on gorse control undone by allowing odd plants to flower after a control program has not been followed up with timely monitoring.</p>
<p>The document sounds good. One glaring admission - fire preparation. We have just seen the result of focusing solely on native plants to the exclusion of community. 40+ houses gone and much much more infrastructure. A balanced approach including community safety is essential and needs to be included up front in this document. The ARCC Municipal Emergency Management Plan needs to be a resource for future sustainability working hand in hand ensuring adequate fire preparation and defensible spaces are part of any program going forward.</p>

Table 1. Feedback received on the draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 (ESS)

Responses to the Feedback:

- The ESS recognises the impacts of climate change on risks to our community, including from the increased likelihood and severity of bushfires and other natural disasters. Local stakeholder input and bushfire risk will be very carefully considered in the selection of areas that are identified for revegetation, and the species of plants, noting that some native plants can be bushfire resistant as well. The Measure of Success will be modified to "Increase in native vegetation cover on public and private land, with consideration for bushfire risk."
- Council officers will explore the suggestion for publicly accessible weed mapping data further and will follow up with the person who has submitted this query.
- Council officers look forward to working with individuals, local groups and organisations to implement this ESS, pursue shared goals and work together to monitor progress.
- Council officers are keen to explore different cost-effective technologies to help support this ESS.
- Agree, funding will be critical, and this ESS will help communicate our priorities for future State and Federal funding opportunities.
- Council officers will investigate a monitoring protocol for reporting on the Measures of Success.

- The Measure of Success will be modified to “Plant diversity at <5% single species, <10% single genera, <20% single family (of Recommended Species list) for new plantations and revegetation efforts.”
- References for this document are attached
- This strategy is intended to position the Ararat Rural City to be proactive, exceed the bare minimum legislative requirements, and aim for a sustainable future for everyone in our community. It is acknowledged that there may be challenges ahead to achieve the Measures of Success outlined in the ESS, and we are keen to work with stakeholders to achieve these. This Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-34 provides the strategic framework to align our efforts and resources towards achieving these outcomes.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

This strategy directly addresses the Council Plan 2021-2025 objective to:

3. Preserving our natural environment:

We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement with the circular economy.

- 3.3** Partner with local organisations and scientific experts to develop an appropriate and pragmatic local government Environment Strategy, focused on the circular economy, emission reduction through renewable energy and management of Council assets.

This strategy also assists in addressing the other objectives of theme 3:

- a. Position Ararat Rural City Council as a prime mover in driving circular economy policy in waste management, including local processing and management of recyclables, and in use of renewable energy for Council purposes.
- b. Develop innovative energy solutions utilising locally produced waste.

Budget Implications

Implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 will be incorporated into the Council's annual budget development and forecasting processes to ensure the measures of success are achieved whilst ensuring the Council's financial position.

Policy/Relevant Law

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 aligns with the Local Government Act 2020, section 9(2)(c), which states “the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted”.

The strategy aligns with several internal documents which are currently adopted, as well as State and Federal environmental legislation. Key examples include:

Internal policies:

- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025: Develop environmentally positive health and wellbeing initiatives.
- Waste and Resource Recovery Plan 2021-2025: Reduce community waste production and increase in waste diverted from landfill.
- Ararat Residential Land Use Strategy 2005-2035: Ecologically sustainable design is a base position, and housing will be integrated consistently with the protection of the environment.
- Ararat Sustainable Growth Future Strategy 2014: Protect and enhance environmental and landscape values.

State:

- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Local Government Act 1989 & 2020
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Climate Change Act 2017
- Environmental Protection Act 2017
- Planning and Environment Act 2018
- Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021
- Victorian Planning Provisions

Federal:

- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999
- Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000
- Recycling and Waste Reduction Act 2020
- Nature Repair Act 2023

Sustainability Implications

As detailed above, the strategy will guide positive environmental, economic, and social sustainability impacts across the municipality.

Risk Assessment

The strategy seeks to mitigate risks incurred through inconsistent approaches to sustainability across all areas of Council, and the risk of environmental harm caused by Council activities.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

In implementing the strategy and monitoring the measures of success, Council will better align with best-practice recommendations for environmental sustainability and ensure greater accountability to the community. The measures of success will also ensure actions and targets are continually reviewed and aligned with scientific consensus, the needs and values of the community, and state and national targets.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The Environmental Working Group, comprised of representatives from local Landcare, scientific experts, and land developers, was engaged with at all stages of this strategy's development. The composition of the Environmental Working Group was as follows:

- Ararat Rural City Council Chief Executive Officer, or Nominee (Chair)
- Dr Anthea Nicholls
- Dr Ayesha Burdett
- Marion Da Costa
- Russell Pearse
- Martin Purcell
- Janene Trickey, Regional Manager Community and Partnerships Programs, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- Prof Peter Gell, Professor of Environmental Management, Federation University
- Lauren Jakob, Ecology PhD Candidate, Federation University

Community engagement occurred through the Engage Ararat Portal as detailed within this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1 Council endorse the Environmental Strategy 2024-2034 as presented.**

ATTACHMENTS

The Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2024-2034 is provided as Attachment 3.7

SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS

4.1 MCCROWS ROAD BRIDGE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GRADUATE ENGINEER
DEPARTMENT: DESIGN & PROJECT MANAGEMENT
REFERENCE: 18095

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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

Following routine inspections conducted in September and October, it was identified that McCrows Bridge required further assessment by a specialist bridge engineer to evaluate its condition. Closer examination showed signs of additional structural deterioration observed beneath the bridge. These findings raise concerns about the overall integrity of the bridge, necessitating further evaluation and potential remediation to ensure safety and functionality.

This report will discuss future safety upgrade requirements for the McCrows Road Bridge.

DISCUSSION

Advanced Structural Consultancy is a specialist in Level 3 Bridge Inspections, they were engaged at the end of October, and the report was received included:

- Desktop review
- Previous report review
- Detailed visual inspection and defects mapping
- Geometric survey and reinforcement determination
- Load rating desktop assessment
- Recommendations for asset management
- Determination of strengthening and rehabilitation options

The high priority results were as follows:

- Council should implement a 15 tonne load limit to reduce further risk of damage to the bridge. (This was mainly due to the U-slab deck system not able to distribute the weight of vehicles evenly across the bridge.)
- Council monitor concrete spalling until rectification of the pier crossheads and the edge beams.
- Reposition U-slab to its original position
- Repair all concrete spalling and corroded reinforcement
- Reinstate stopper by dowelling into the existing crosshead.
- Damaged Guard Rail should be replaced in accordance with VicRoads Standards.

To improve the bridge to the standard that the community requires, a concrete overlay over the U-Slabs is proposed. Once completed the load capacity of the bridge will increase to approximately 60 tonne which re-enables the heavy vehicle route to operate as intended. The other works underneath the super structure will also require repair.

The bridge is on the National Heavy Vehicle Register and is a vital route economically for the region. The community around the area use this route as it accesses the Glenelg Highway between Westmere and Lake Bolac creating a much more efficient route to GrainCorp in Westmere or CHS Broadbent in Lake Bolac.

Implementing a 15 tonne load limit requires a detour of an additional 25km to Westmere and an additional 30km if travelling to Lake Bolac. Therefore, farmers in the community will require additional trucks to keep up with the harvest, highly impacting profits in an already very difficult harvest year due to the weather.

Bridge monitoring, rectification works, and strengthening are being planned now with strengthening works to occur around Australia day in the new year so that Council keep disruption to the community to a minimum.

This bridge construction type is common for our bridges as there were a lot of bridges built around the 1960s and 1970s. Further assessment will need to be conducted to work out how many of this type of construction are on other heavy vehicle routes. Similar strengthening work should be made a priority for these locations to also be upgraded in the future.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

4. DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING KEY ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

We will ensure that we plan, fund and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.

Budget Implications

The budget for repair of the McCrows Road Bridge will be required from the 2024/2025 Capital Works budget.

Policy/Relevant Law

ARCC Road Management Plan

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

Risk Assessment

It is considered low risk that the bridge will fail under b-double loading however due to the safety factors of all the new standards it is recommended the load limit and speed reduction be implemented, and upgrade works be undertaken in the new year.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Innovation and continuous improvement will be considered as part of the design process for the upgrade and repair of the bridge.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Repair timeframes have been considered in consultation with the surrounding landowners and community representatives.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- Council receive the McCrows Road Bridge report.**

ATTACHMENTS

The McCrows Road Bridge - Level 3 Inspection Report is provided as Attachment 4.1

4.2 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - NOVEMBER 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18096

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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 Council has approved its 2024/2025 Capital Works Program as a pivotal component of the current budget. With a substantial capital works investment totaling \$15.513 million, the budget primarily targets infrastructure enhancements.

Key initiatives include:

- Mount William Road Stage Two Construction - supported by Federal Government funding.
- Buangor Ben Nevis Road Stage One Construction - beginning from the Western Highway section for approximately 1.5 kilometers
- Urban Gravel to Seal Road Upgrades continuing to upgrade accessibility across urban areas.
- Maintenance of Footpaths, Drainage, and Kerb and Channel

These projects underscore the Council's commitment to improving local infrastructure and fostering community development in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

DISCUSSION

Council's 2024/2025 Capital Works Program marks a significant shift from previous years, reintroducing larger road and bridge construction projects post-pandemic. The program's budget has increased by \$6 million, with substantial state and federal funding, alongside smaller targeted works.

The focus for 2024/2025 remains on renewing and updating Council assets, leveraging in-house capabilities, and supporting local employment and contractors.

Key areas include:

- Enhanced road reseal program
- Urban drainage improvements
- Footpath network upgrades
- Major urban road gravel to seal program
- Stage two of Mt William Road Reconstruction
- Three Roads to Recovery funded projects (Churchill Avenue, Webb Street, Buangor Ben Nevis Road bridge)

Budget Status:

As of 18 November, 2024, 24% of the budget is spent, with end-of-month invoices pending. The annual road resealing program is 85% complete and the Pomonal Tennis Court project has been finished and officially opened. Community and property projects including the Tatyoon Oval Drainage and Irrigation Project and the Library Upgrade have progressed well in the current year. Inhouse works in Churchill Avenue are due to commence in the coming weeks starting with footpath works.

Buangor Ben Nevis Road plans are complete, and commencement of stage two of Mt William Road are ready to commence, pending cultural heritage and flora and fauna reports.

	Budget	Committed/ Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
PROPERTY - CAPITAL					
Property Capital	\$270,000		\$148,180	56%	Works have been completed for the resurfacing of the Pomonal Tennis Courts, replacement of windows at the Town Hall in the Arts & Crafts Room, painting of the Maroona Rec Reserve and new touch screen kiosks.
Ararat Library Upgrade	\$200,000	\$82,875	\$95,053	48%	All ordering has been completed for the works of the Library Upgrade works are expected to be undertaken in February 2025.
Tatyoan Oval, Drainage, Irrigation & Resurfacing	\$333,500 \$83,500 Council \$250,000 Country Football & Netball Program (CFNP)	\$88,230	\$228,416	69%	Aqualines Irrigation Pty Ltd are currently completing the works with all trenches and irrigation installed and the connection of a new tank and pump, works are expected to be complete in late January 2025.
TOTAL PROPERTY		\$171,106	\$471,649	59%	
PLANT & EQUIPMENT					
Book stock - Library Book Replacement	\$40,000	-	\$20,422	51%	
TOTAL PLANT & EQUIPMENT		-	\$20,422	51%	
ROADS		-	-	-	
Gravel Road Sheeting, Widening & Alternative Sealing	\$1,800,000	-	\$1,047,999	58%	Resheeting, widening and alternative seal works have been completed on a number of roads including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tatyoon North Road • Mt William Road • Webbs Road • Rockies Hill Road • Coopers Road • Astons Road (Shoulders) • Tunnel Road • Moyston Township
Reseal Program	\$1,000,000	-	\$845,338	85%	Reseal works are 85% complete for the current financial year.

Mt William Road (24/25 - HSVPP Funding)	\$6,250,000	-	\$1994	-	These works will commence on receipt of final cultural heritage management plan reporting.
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	\$2,143,000	\$68,522	\$64,515	3%	Plans and technical reporting have been completed. Council is working with Australian Cultural Heritage Services to complete CHMP Due Diligence and plan requirements. The complex site testing has been completed with a meeting with traditional owners expected by the end of the month. This should then move the final approval of the plan. Construction in segmented areas should be able to progress once that area has been documented and approved.
Weighbridge Place, Lake Bolac		\$74,900	\$582		Asphalting works at Weighbridge Place are to be undertaken by SHS Civil, works will not commence until the completion of grain season. The intersection with Mortlake Ararat Road is in poor condition and require the upgrade to withstand the heavy vehicle that use the area.
Churchill Avenue, Ararat	\$800,000	\$2,750	\$28,865	4%	Design works have been completed, footpath are expected to commence at the start of December on footpath works.
Webb Street, Ararat	\$700,000	\$3,700	\$8,179	1%	Design works are complete, and work will be completed in-house. Discussions are being undertaken with GWM Water with relation to the water main and the ability to replace this as a part of the reconstruction works.
Urban Road Gravel to Seal	\$700,00		\$717,145	102%	Works are currently being completed at various urban locations with kerb and channel and drainage being installed including Bailey Lane, Currajong Ave/McLellan Street, Mulcahy Road and Young Street.

					Multiple design works are being finished for the coming years programs.
Major Patching	\$100,000	\$26,590	\$1,018	1%	Works have not commenced.
Bridges	\$80,000	\$25,240	\$56,463	71%	Investigations into the works required for the Buangor Ben Nevis Road Bridge 1 project are underway. Other bridge strengthening works are being investigated and estimated for upcoming programs.
Footpath Renewal Program	\$400,000	\$261,384	\$113,197	28%	Council's footpath program has commenced with a footpath section in with tenders awarded for Barkly/Queen Street Asphalt Path, and Maude Street Path. Other costs within this budget include works on Tunnel Track, Pomonal which was a funded project.
Urban Drainage Works	\$750,000	8,356	\$320,831	43%	Drainage works are progressing with works currently completed at Ararat Cemetery and Thompson and Kneale Street. The Queen Street Stormwater Project has also been completed.
Kerb and Channel	\$239,000		\$15,568	7%	Works on the Walkerville and Wileman Street project in Willaura have recommenced with following works undertaken by GWM Water replacing a asbestos pipe in the works area.
Miscellaneous			\$127,674		These works include finalisation of works at Gordon Street Reserve and small projects carried over from previous years.
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	\$471,442	\$3,349,368		6%	
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS	\$642,548	\$3,841,439		24%	

There are also projects that were funded in the 2023/2024 budget that have extended beyond the single financial year. The committed expenditure includes contracts entered for construction of various elements of the projects. The table below provides a summary of these projects:

	Budget	Previously Expended Funds	Committed/Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
Mt William Road	\$1,000,000	\$313,911		\$512,028	83%	<p>Work commenced in late May 2024.</p> <p>The works have been set out, tree and stabilising works have been completed. There was significant soft spots found within the area and these have been remedied.</p> <p>Final works include class A stone and sealing works.</p>
Buangor Recreation Reserve Kitchen Extension		\$53,849		\$167		<p>The project has been out to the market and came in with a significant price difference between the cost plan and the pricing received from the tenderers.</p> <p>Funding has been received as part of the Tiny Towns Funding Program which will help progress Stage 1 of this project.</p> <p>Council is currently undertaking quotation works with a local commercial builder to try to progress these works.</p>

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2021-2025, particularly the following:

- 4.1** Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2021-2031.
- 4.2** Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- 4.3** Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, promote community wellbeing and safety and align with Council's financial sustainability.
- 6.1** Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.

Budget Implications

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2024/2025 Budget. In the current civil construction market, it is essential that Council manages capital works expenditure carefully to ensure budget outcomes are met.

Policy/Relevant Law

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2024/2025 Budget.

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

Risk Assessment

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program was developed as a mitigation of the financial risks associated with market volatility currently being experienced in the civil and building construction sectors.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Development of the 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represented an agile response to market conditions. A capacity to rework strategy based on a changing environment is a critical element in developing an innovative organisation.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the 2024/2025 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1. That Council receive the Capital Works Program - November 2024 report.**

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments relating to this item

4.3 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PREPARATION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: GOVERNANCE AND RISK LEAD
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 18097

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT 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

Under various Acts including the Country Fire Authority Act 1958, the Emergency Management Act 2013, as well as the State Emergency Management Plan, Council has a range of services and activities that we are responsible.

DISCUSSION

The nature and extent of work by Council to deliver activities will depend on our capability, capacity and particular circumstances of an event. Council will utilise a variety of approaches and local arrangements to best affect the delivery of these responsibilities to meet unique local needs. Most of the activities listed below are carried out by council in close conjunction with government departments and agencies. Local arrangements are specified in the Municipal Emergency Management Plans, developed by multiagency Municipal Emergency management Planning Committee (MEMPC)

Some of the activities that municipalities are responsible for include:

- Support the control agency which provides relief information to assist communities to make informed decisions about their safety.
- Coordination of relief services information to communities
- Coordination of support to communities at the municipal level
- Establish Emergency Relief Centres to provide immediate and basic services to people affected by an emergency.
- Provision of available council-managed resources to Control Agency
- Provision of available facilities for emergency services staging areas.
- Partial / full closure of council-managed areas to exclude the public from dangerous areas
- Partial / full local road closures and determination of alternative routes
- Oversight of all recovery environments and associated activities
- Recovery information for community
- Coordination of community recovery services
- Coordination of local recovery activities, and lead agency to coordinate secondary impact assessment.

To be in the best position to help our community during and after an emergency, Council has continued with its training and upskilling of staff.

Training that has or is currently being undertaken is:

- 25 staff completed Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) operation training. Together with 25 staff from the previous year provides a sound base.
- 2 additional staff being trained in Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) giving the council 5 trained MEMO's
- 2 additional staff being trained in Municipal Recovery Managers (MRM) giving the council a total of 5 trained MRMs.
- 4 staff being trained in Emergency Management Liaison Officer (EMLO) who will cover the three Incident Control Centres - Ballarat, Ararat and Horsham
- 1 staff trained in Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO)

- 5 staff trained in Assistant Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (AMFPO)

Under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958, section 41, the fire prevention officer of a municipality council may serve a fire prevention notice. Council are currently sending correspondence to land owners, who, own land / houses in areas which have been deemed to be in a high to extreme risk area according to the Victoria Fire Risk Register. This includes green waste vouchers which can be used at our Resource Recovery Centres to help with clean ups.

The Fire Declared Period came into force yesterday 18 November 2024 and the AMFPO will be out in the Municipality beginning next week covering Pomonal, Moyston, outskirts of Ararat, Elmhurst, Warrak, Streatham, Westmere, Lake Bolac, Wickliffe and Willaura.

KEY CONSIDERATION

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

5. Enhance Community Life - We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.
- 6.2 Ensure appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisation decisions. Councils internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.

Budget Implications

The Emergency Management training programme represents a small element of the training budget. Council managers the training budget closely but will make sure staff are adequately trained for their role in emergency management

Policy/Relevant Law

Country Fire Authority Act 1958
Local Government Act 2020
State Emergency Management Plan
Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment has been carried out to ensure the safety of staff and that of the community

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Council is committed to continuous improvement of their emergency management response.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

Council collaborates with other agencies at the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) and the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC)

RECOMMENDATION

That

1. Council receive the Emergency Management Preparation report

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments relating to this item

SECTION 5 - INFORMAL MEETINGS

5.1 COUNCIL BRIEFINGS

AUTHOR'S TITLE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEPARTMENT: CEO'S OFFICE
REFERENCE: 13039074

OFFICER'S 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 Governance Rules state that if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

1. is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of *Council* or briefing Councillors;
2. is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
3. is not a *Council meeting*, *Delegated Committee* meeting or *Community Asset Committee*

meeting, the *Chief Executive Officer* must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:

- a. tabled at the next convenient *Council meeting*; and
- b. recorded in the minutes of that *Council meeting*.

DISCUSSION

As a requirement of the Governance Rules, a summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings held since the last Council Meeting are presented to Council and will be recorded in the minutes.

INFORMAL MEETINGS
Council Briefing held on 19 November 2024

Issues discussed at the briefing:

- Audit and Risk Committee Vacancy
- S5 CEO Delegations
- OH&S Policy
- Environmental Strategy
- Capital Works Update
- Asset Management Plans
- Quarterly Finance report
- Emergency Management Preparedness
- Community Recovery Hub
- McCrow's Road Bridge
- Building and Planning reports
- Building Fees
- Greenhill Lake
- Flyfishing Club
- Little Athletics
- Tow-away Zones

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

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.

- 6.3 Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while acknowledging the need for a range of different techniques to ensure effective engagement.

Financial

There are no financial impacts for the receiving of Informal Meetings of Councillors.

Policy/Relevant Law

Reporting of Informal Meetings is in line with the requirements of the Governance Rules.

Risk Assessment

Following the requirements of the Governance Rules will ensure that Council meets its legislative requirements.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

A summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings are presented for community information.

RECOMMENDATION

That

the Informal Meetings of Councillors Report be received.

ATTACHMENTS

The Summary of Council Briefings are provided as Attachment 5.1.

SECTION 6 - COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS

No Committee Minutes/Reports received

SECTION 7 - NOTICES OF MOTION

A *notice of motion* must be in writing signed by a Councillor and be lodged with or sent to the *Chief Executive Officer* no later than 12.00pm (noon) and at least six (6) days prior to the Council Meeting to allow sufficient time for the *Chief Executive Officer* to include the *notice of motion* in agenda papers for a *Council meeting*.

SECTION 8 - URGENT BUSINESS

Items cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:

- 1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the *agenda*; and
- 2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next *Council meeting*.

SECTION 9 - CLOSE SESSION (CONFIDENTIAL)

In accordance with section 66(2)(a), 3(1) *Confidential Information (a)* of the Local Government Act 2020, the following agenda items are listed for consideration in the confidential section:

- Item 9.1 - Recruitment for Independent member for Council's Audit & Risk Committee
- Item 9.2 - Councillor - Request for leave of absence

CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

The Open Council Meeting will now be closed, but members of the public are welcome to rejoin the Council Meeting following the recommencement of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.

OPEN COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCEMENT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Open Council Meeting recommence.

Gallery invited to return to Council Chamber.

LIFTING OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTIONS

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. The decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Item 9.1 be lifted on adoption of the motion and;**
- 2. The report of Confidential Agenda Item 9.1, not be lifted on adoption of the motion and;**
- 3. The confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Item 9.2 not be lifted on adoption of he motion.**