



AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting Tuesday, 28 May 2024

I hereby give notice that an Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council will be held on:

- Date: Tuesday, 28 May 2024
- Time: 1:00 PM
- Location: Mathoura Visitor & Business Centre Multi-function room 23 Moama Street Mathoura NSW 2710

Terry Dodds Chief Executive Officer

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1 OPENING MEETING

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

I acknowledge and respect the Traditional Custodians of the Lands where we stand today, I acknowledge Elders past and present, the pioneers whose toil inspires us still; And those who gave their lives, that we many now, On this proud past, a vibrant future build.

3 APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Questions without notice arising from minutes of previous meeting:

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

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4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES - ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 23 APRIL 2024 OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL & EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2024

File Number:

Author:	Lindy Leyonhjelm, Executive Assistant
Authoriser:	Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council held on 23 April 2024 & Extra Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council held on 14 May 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

DISCUSSION

Murray River Council held its Ordinary Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 23 April 2024, commencing at 1:00pm at the Council Chambers (Lower Level), Moama Administration Office, 52 Perricoota Road, Moama.

A copy of the draft minutes for the meeting are attached for ratification by the Council at this meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Unconfirmed Minutes of Ordinary Council Meeting Tuesday 23 April 2024 🗓 🛣
- 2. DRAFT MINUTES EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING 14 MAY 2024 🗓 🛣

23 April 2024

MINUTES OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MOAMA ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 52 PERRICOOTA ROAD, MOAMA ON TUESDAY, 23 APRIL 2024 AT 1:00 PM

- PRESENT: Cr Frank Crawley (Mayor), Cr Neil Gorey (Deputy Mayor), Cr Nikki Cohen (Councillor), Cr Ann Crowe (Councillor), Cr Dennis Gleeson (Councillor), Cr Kron Nicholas (Councillor), Cr Thomas Weyrich (Councillor), Cr Geoff Wise (Councillor)
- IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Dodds (Chief Executive Officer), Lindy Leyonhjelm (Executive Assistant), Rod Croft (Director Planning & Environment), Stephen Fernando (Director Corporate Services), Sarah Ryan (Director Community & Economic Development), (online) Sandra Gordon (Manager Governance & Risk)

1 OPENING MEETING

The Mayor held a short appropriate prayer.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

3 APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES - ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2024 OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 010424

Moved: Cr Dennis Gleeson Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council held on 26 March 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

Questions without notice arising from minutes of previous meeting/s

5 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

Cr Thomas Weyrich declared a 'Pecuniary Conflict of Interest' in CONFIDENTIAL 'Item 11.4 Notice of Motion – that a 12-month extension be given to the mortgagee in terms of their obligations under contract with MRC for purchasing and development of land in Moama Business Park'.

23 April 2024

6 **DEPUTATIONS**

At this stage of the meeting, being 1:09pm, Mr Matthew O'Farrell made a presentation on Item 9.3.1 Echuca-Moama Flood Study Final Adoption.

MOTION

RESOLUTION 020424

Moved: Cr Thomas Weyrich Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Council bring forward Item 9.3.1 Echuca-Moama Flood Study Final Adoption for resolution.

CARRIED

7 MAYORAL MINUTE(S)

Nil

8 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Nil

- 9 REPORTS TO COUNCIL
- 9.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.1.1 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT – INQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY

RESOLUTION 030424

Moved: Cr Thomas Weyrich Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council makes a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport's inquiry into local government sustainability.

CARRIED

9.1.2 MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL LEASING AND LICENSING OF COUNCIL PROPERTY POLICY - POL-218

RESOLUTION 040424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Council endorses the draft Leasing and Licensing of Land Policy to be issued for public exhibition.

CARRIED

23 April 2024

9.1.3 RESOLUTIONS OF THE COUNCIL - RESOLUTION TRACKER & INFOCOUNCIL ACTION REPORTS

RESOLUTION 050424

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That the Council resolve to receive and note the status of previous resolutions of Council (in open and closed Council) contained in the Monthly Operation Report including the Resolution Tracker Reports.

CARRIED

9.1.4 MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT

RESOLUTION 060424

Moved: Cr Kron Nicholas Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That the Monthly Operational Report as of March 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council.

CARRIED

9.2 DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.2.1 AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (ARIC) DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THE 26 FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLUTION 070424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That the DRAFT minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting held on the 26 February 2024 be noted by Council.

CARRIED

9.2.2 FINANCIAL REPORT - UNAUDITED FY 2023/24 PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2024

RESOLUTION 080424

Moved: Cr Kron Nicholas Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve to receive the Monthly Financial Report for the period to March 2024 (FY 2023/24) and note its contents.

CARRIED

23 April 2024

9.2.3 KPW LAWYERS HOMES OUT WEST VEHICLE

RESOLUTION 090424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve:

- 1. to transfer the ownership of vehicle asset number 3000340 a Ford Focus, registration number EBF48T, to KPW Lawyers, and
- 2. that the value to be placed on the registration transfer form be \$16,000, and
- 3. the aforesaid transfer of ownership be conditional to Council being reimbursed for all outstanding registration and insurance cost incurred on the vehicle.

CARRIED

9.2.4 POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT - DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESOLUTION 100424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Murray River Council (Council) delegate to its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) the necessary delegations to enable the CEO to negotiate, enter into, and sign one or more Power Purchase Agreements, with a total contract value not exceeding Twelve Million Dollars (\$12,000,000)

CARRIED

9.3 DIRECTOR IINFRASTRUCTURE REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.3.1 ECHUCA-MOAMA FLOOD STUDY FINAL ADOPTION

RESOLUTION 110424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

- 1. To consider submissions following formal community consultation; and
- 2. To seek adoption of the Final Draft Echuca Moama Flood Study Report.
- In Favour: Crs Frank Crawley, Neil Gorey, Ann Crowe, Dennis Gleeson, Kron Nicholas, Thomas Weyrich and Geoff Wise

Against: Cr Nikki Cohen

CARRIED 7/1 CARRIED

23 April 2024

9.3.2 MID MURRAY LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (INCORPORTING EDWARD RIVER COUNCIL & MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL)

RESOLUTION 120424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Kron Nicholas

That the DRAFT minutes of the Mid Murray Local Emergency Management Committee (incorporating Edward River Council & Murray River Council) together with the Mid Muray Local Rescue Committee held on 22 February 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council.

CARRIED

9.3.3 2024 MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

RESOLUTION 130424

Moved: Cr Dennis Gleeson Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Council lodge a Submission of Motions to the 2024 Murray Darling Association Annual General Meeting scheduled for 10 July 2024.

CARRIED

9.4 DIRECTOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

Nil

9.5 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.5.1 MOAMA LIONS COMMUNITY VILLAGE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT - REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF LOAN REPAYMENTS

RESOLUTION 140424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Council does not approve reimbursement of the principal and interest repayments for the loan obtained to construct new units at 10 & 12 Council Street Moama to Moama Lions Community Village Committee of Management.

CARRIED

9.5.2 SECTION 355 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AS AT MARCH 2024

RESOLUTION 150424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes	23 April 2024

Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council receive and note the March Section 355 Committee report

CARRIED

9.5.3 CADLWELL HALL COMMITTEE AGM

RESOLUTION 160424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council

- 1. Revoke existing members of the Caldwell Hall Committee of Management and
 - (a) Pursuant to Section 355 of the Local Government Act 1993 appoint new committee members nominated at the May 2023 AGM.

CARRIED

9.5.4 MOULAMEIN CENTENARY RESERVE - COMMITTEE DISSOLVED

RESOLUTION 170424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council

- 1. Revoke existing members of the Moulamein Centenary Reserve Committee of Management;
- 2. Dissolve the Moulamein Centenary Reserve Committee of Management pursuant to Section 355 of the Local Government Act 1993;
- 3. Hold the balance of funds in a reserve pending a further report to Council.

CARRIED

9.5.5 MOAMA LIONS COMMUNITY VILLAGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF RATES

RESOLUTION 180424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council approve reimbursement of rates paid on the vacant land at 10 & 12 Council Street Moama to Moama Lions Community Village Committee of Management.

CARRIED

23 April 2024

9.5.6 MATHOURA RETIREMENT VILLAGE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT - REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF RATES

RESOLUTION 190424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Thomas Weyrich

That Council approve reimbursement of rates paid on the vacant land at 12 Mathoura Street, Mathoura to the Mathoura Retirement Village Committee of Management.

CARRIED

9.5.7 2024 MOAMA LIGHTS - MRC RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

RESOLUTION 200424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council receive and note the report concerning the 2024 Moama Lights event being evaluated within Council's Risk Management Framework.

CARRIED

9.5.8 MATHOURA RETIREMENT VILLAGE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT - REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF LOAN REPAYMENTS

RESOLUTION 210424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Council does not approve reimbursement of the principal and interest repayments for the loan obtained to construct new units at 12 Mathoura Street, Mathoura to Mathoura Retirement Village Committee of Management.

CARRIED

9.5.9 MOAMA LIGHTS - CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

RESOLUTION 220424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Rescind Resolution 301123 to not renew the Corporate Sponsorship Agreement between Transgrid and Murray River Council for the delivery of the 2024 Moama Lights event and delegate authority to the CEO to terminate the agreement, and:
 - (a) Council contributes the required funding (reallocating from Darts) and runs the 2024 event.

the Corporate Sponsorship Agreement between Transgrid and Murray River Council delivery of the 2024 Moama Lights event and delegate authority to the CEO to ate the terms of a renewed agreement and sign the contract documents.
Crs Frank Crawley, Neil Gorey, Ann Crowe, Dennis Gleeson, Kron Nicholas and Geoff Wise
Crs Nikki Cohen and Thomas Weyrich
CARRIED 6/2
CARRIED

9.5.10 DRAFT SOUTHERN RIVERINA REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

RESOLUTION 230424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Southern Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan;
- 2. Places the Draft Southern Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan on public exhibition for a period of 28 days; and
- 3. Receives a further report regarding the Draft Southern Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan at the June 2024 Council meeting.

CARRIED

9.6 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

9.6.1 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

RESOLUTION 240424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Kron Nicholas

That the Correspondence Report be received and the information noted by the Council.

CARRIED

9.7 SUNDRY DELEGATES REPORT

9.7.1 SUNDRY DELEGATES REPORT

RESOLUTION 250424

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

23 April 2024

That the Sundry Delegates Report of the Mayor and Councillors for the period 1 March 2024 through to 31 March 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council; and reasonable out of pocket expenses be met by Council.

CARRIED

10 NOTICE OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

10.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - THAT POLICY # 101 CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE BE AMENDED AT SECTION 5.11

RESOLUTION 260424

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Policy # 101 Code of Meeting Practice be amended at Section 5.11 "Giving notice of business to be considered at Council meeting" by adding the following sentence: "The Notice of Motion must include a separate rationale sufficient that councillors, staff and the general public understand the reason for its submission"

CARRIED

10.2 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCIL GIVES AN UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF THE MOULAMEIN MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, INCLUDING THE TIMELINES INVOLVED AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

RESOLUTION 270424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Murray River Council gives an update on the delivery of the Moulamein Main Street Redevelopment Project, including the timelines involved and community engagement. Following the meeting, a media release to be issued, updating the community on this project.

CARRIED

At 2:42 pm, Cr Kron Nicholas left the meeting.

11 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RESOLUTION 280424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That Council moves out of Open Council into Closed Council at 2:48pm.

CARRIED

At 2:44 pm, Cr Kron Nicholas returned to the meeting.

23 April 2024

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

11.1 Outsourced IT Services Contract Renewal

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

11.2 Mayoral Minute - Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Review 2023/24

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - a of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

11.3 Sale of Mathoura Line Road Land (Lot 3, DP 813704) - Proposal for Option to Purchase Land

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) and d(ii) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it and information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council.

11.4 Notice of Motion - That a 24-month extension be given to the Mortgagee in terms of their obligations under contract with MRC for purchasing and development of land in Moama Business Park

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - a of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

RESOLUTION 290424

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Kron Nicholas

That Council moves out of Closed Council into Open Council at 3:35pm.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION 300424

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Nikki Cohen

That Council brings forward the resolutions from Closed Council into Open Council and these be read aloud.

CARRIED

23 April 2024

11.1 OUTSOURCED IT SERVICES CONTRACT RENEWAL

RESOLUTION 310424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve to authorise the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to enter into and sign a contractual arrangement with Centorrino Technologies (CT), in keeping with the proposal attached to the report as Attachment 1, for the provision of Managed IT Services, including the provision of 2.6 embedded FTEs as Help Desk Support Officers, for a period of no more than three years.

CARRIED

11.2 MAYORAL MINUTE - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2023/24

RESOLUTION 320424

Moved: Cr Frank Crawley Seconded: Cr Kron Nicholas

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve:

- 1. to note the Mayoral Minute and support the priorities outlined in the report for the Chief Executive Officer to be included in the Performance Agreement for 2024/25, and
- 2. to congratulate the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Terry Dodds on his outstanding performance in the year under review and encourage his personal attention to the priorities listed in the Performance Agreement for 2024/25, and.
- 3. in order to assist Council in making judgements on the most appropriate remuneration package that should apply the CEO role for a local government entity the size and nature of Murray River Council, that range based on the NSW Remuneration Tribunal for Senior Executive Service (noting that Local Government General Managers are subject to the same remuneration guidelines), and that the level be as specified in the section titled "Recommendation" within the body of this report, and
- 4. that having regard for the overall rating of 4.5 out of 5 assigned to the 2023/24 performance review of the CEO, the CEO's Total Remuneration Package (TRP) be increased by 4.5%, resulting in a TRP for the CEO for the year 2024/25 as detailed in the section titled "Recommendation" within the body of this report.

CARRIED

11.3 SALE OF MATHOURA LINE ROAD LAND (LOT 3, DP 813704) - PROPOSAL FOR OPTION TO PURCHASE LAND

MOTION

MOTION WAS LOST

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve to:

23 April 2024

 authorise the Chief executive Officer (CEO), or duly appointed delegate, to enter into negotiations with the **Proposer** (as identified in the report) to establish an Option Agreement for the sale of Lot 3 of Deposited Plan 813704, located on Mathoura Line Road, Moama (the **Land**), subject to the maximum option period identified below, and

Maximum Period of Option: (to be determined during debate),

2. require the **CEO** to present the final details of the negotiated agreement to **Council** for debate and adoption, prior to entering into the said Option Agreement.

At 3:07 pm, Cr Thomas Weyrich left the meeting.

11.4 NOTICE OF MOTION - THAT A 12-MONTH EXTENSION BE GIVEN TO THE MORTGAGEE IN TERMS OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER CONTRACT WITH MRC FOR PURCHASING AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND IN MOAMA BUSINESS PARK

RESOLUTION 330424

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Murray River Council grants a 12-month extension to the Mortgagee of 5 Wild Court Moama, in terms of meeting his obligations under contract with MRC, the Mortgagor. As part of the agreement, the Mortgagee is to complete the final two payments before the close of the contract. The Mortgagee to be given title to the lot immediately.

CARRIED

At 3:14 pm, Cr Thomas Weyrich returned to the meeting.

12 CONCLUSION OF MEETING

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 3:39pm.

The next Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council will be held on Tuesday 28 May 2024, commencing at 1:00 PM, in Mathoura Visitor & Business Centre, Multi-function room, 23 Moama Street, Mathoura NSW 2710.

THESE MINUTES ARE SIGNED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL HELD ON 23 APRIL 2024, IN ACCORDANCE WITH A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL ON 28 MAY 2024.

MAYOR

CEO

14 May 2024

MINUTES OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MOAMA ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 52 PERRICOOTA ROAD, MOAMA ON TUESDAY, 14 MAY 2024 AT 9:30 AM

- PRESENT: Cr Frank Crawley (Mayor), Cr Neil Gorey (Deputy Mayor), Cr Nikki Cohen (Councillor), Cr Ann Crowe (Councillor), Cr Dennis Gleeson (Councillor), Cr Kron Nicholas (Councillor), Cr Thomas Weyrich (Councillor), Cr Geoff Wise (Councillor)
- IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Dodds (Chief Executive Officer), Lindy Leyonhjelm (Executive Assistant), Rod Croft (Director Planning & Environment), Stephen Fernando (Director Corporate Services), Jack Bond (Director Infrastructure), Sarah Ryan (Director Community & Economic Development), Sandra Gordon (Manager Governance & Risk)

At 9:30 am, Cr Dennis Gleeson did not attend from the beginning of the meeting.

At 9:30 am, Cr Thomas Weyrich did not attend from the beginning of the meeting.

1 OPENING MEETING

The Mayor held a short appropriate prayer.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

3 APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

There were no conflict of interests declarations received from Councillors or staff on any matter within the meeting.

5 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

5.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

Nil

5.2 DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

5.2.1 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - GENERAL RATES

RESOLUTION 010524

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Nikki Cohen

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days):

14 May 2024

 in accordance with s493 and ss514 through 519 (inclusive) of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), to categorise land within the Council area, and in accordance with s493(2) and s529 of the Act, sub-categorise land within each category as follows:

	Category	Sub-category	
	Farmland	none	
Desidential		Urban	
	Residential	Non-Urban	
	Business	Urban	
	Business	Non-Urban	; and

- in accordance with s377 of the Act, to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer (General Manager), the authority to determine the category and the sub-category of a given parcel of land in keeping with the relevant provisions of the Act; and
- 3. in accordance with s494 of the **Act**, to make and levy Rates as Ordinary Rates, on each and every rateable property across all categories and sub-categories, using the following structure, in keeping with s497(b) of the **Act**:
 - a. a Base Amount of \$315.00 per rateable property per annum, and in keeping with s499(2) of the **Act**, such base amount to be applied to all rateable properties, irrespective of the category or sub-category of the rateable property, and
 - b. in addition to the said Base Amount, as per s498 of the **Act**, an Ad Valorem amount based on the Ad Valorem rate applicable to each category and sub-category of land as per the table below, applied to the unimproved land value of the rateable property as currently determined by the Valuer-General of NSW in keeping with the Valuation of Lands Act 1916, as follows:

Category & Sub-category	Ad Valorem Rate	
Farmland	0.002350	
Residential Urban	0.003040	
Residential Non-Urban	0.003040	
Business Urban	0.003150	
Business Non-Urban	0.003350	; and

4. for purposes of making and levying Ordinary Rates, treat lots in a strata plan as allowed for in s495A of the Act.

CARRIED

At 9:36 am, Cr Dennis Gleeson arrived to the meeting.

5.2.2 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - STORMWATER CHARGES

RESOLUTION 020524

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Neil Gorey

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days), in accordance with s496A of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), to make and levy Stormwater Management Services Charges, on all eligible properties as defined in s125A of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulation), for the maximum amounts as specified in s125AA of the said **Regulation**.

CARRIED

At 9:39 am, Cr Thomas Weyrich arrived to the meeting.

14 May 2024

5.2.3 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - WATER CHARGES

RESOLUTION 030524

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days):

- in accordance with s501 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), make and levy, Filtered Water Service Charges, to be used towards the purchase of and payment for water allocations, and for the operation, maintenance, renewal, and expansion of **Council**'s raw water extraction & filtered water treatment facilities and its filtered water storage, pumping & distribution network, as follows:
 - a. an annual Filtered Water Access Charge, on each and every property serviceable through the filtered water supply network, on the basis of the size of the connection to a given property as detailed below:

Connection Size/Type	Annual Charge (\$)	Connection Size/Type	Annual Charge (\$)
Vacant/Unconnected	460	50 mm	3,060
Fire Connections	500	63 mm	4,860
20 mm	480	75 mm	6,900
25 mm	750	80 mm	7,890
32 mm	1,120	100 mm	12,260
40 mm	1,980	150 mm	27,600

plus

b. in accordance with s502 of the Act, a Filtered Water Consumption Charge, per kilolitre (kL) of water drawn through the filtered water meter or meters, in two tiers, for the respective types of properties as detailed below:

types of properties as detailed below.			
Category	Charge (\$ per kL)		
Properties with Dual Supply			
Tier 1 - up to 250	1.40		
kL per annum	1.40		
Tier 2 - above 250	2.70		
kL per annum	2.70		

Category	Charge (\$ per kL)	
Properties with only a Filtered Water Supply		
Tier 1 - up to 400 KI per	1.40	
annum	1.40	
Tier 2 - above 400 Kl	2.70	
per annum	2.70	

; and

- 2. in accordance with s501 of the Act, make and levy Raw Water Service Charges, to be used towards the purchase of and payment for water allocations, and for the operation, maintenance, renewal, and expansion of Council's raw water extraction facilities and its raw water storage, pumping & distribution network, as follows:
 - a. an annual Raw Water Access Charge, on each and every property serviceable through the raw water supply network, on the basis of the size of the connection to a given property as detailed below:

Meter Size	Annual Charge (\$)	Meter Size	Annual Charge (\$)
Vacant/Unconnected	100	50 mm	1,080
20 mm	175	75 mm	2,400
25 mm	270	80 mm	2,800
32 mm	450	100 mm	4,350
40 mm	690	150 mm	9,000
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b. in accordance with s502 of the **Act**, a Raw Water Consumption Charge, per kilolitre of water drawn through the raw water meter or meters, based on the circumstances prevailing during all or most of the billing period as detailed below:

0		
Water Restriction Level	Charge (\$ per kL)	
Periods when Permanent Water Conservation Measures Apply	1.10	
Periods when Level 1 or Level 2 Water Restrictions Apply	1.70	
Periods when Level 3 or Level 4 Water Restrictions Apply	2.20	
	CAR	RIED

5.2.4 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - SEWER CHARGES

RESOLUTION 040524

Moved: Cr Dennis Gleeson Seconded: Cr Geoff Wise

That Murray River council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days):

- in accordance with s501 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), to make and levy Sewer Service Charges, to be used towards the operation, maintenance, renewal, and expansion of Council's sewerage collection, pumping & storage network, treatment facilities, and effluent storage and discharge facilities, as follows:
 - a. annual Sewerage Access Charge, on each and every property serviceable through the sewer network, based on the potable water connection to the property as follows:

Property Category	Annual Charge (\$)	
Unconnected/Vacant	610	
Residential	710	
Business - 20 mm.	650	
Business - 25 mm.	800	
Business - 32 mm.	1,300	
Business - 40 mm.	2,100	
Business - 50 mm	3,200	
Business - 75 mm.	7,200	
Business - 80 mm.	8,200	
Business - 100 mm.	12,750	. and
		,

in accordance with s501 of the **Act**, an annual Sewerage Charges, on the following types of properties:

Property Category	Annual Charge (\$)
Council Owned Retirement Villages (per Unit)	360
	7,750
Caravan Parks with no Water Supply Connection	,
Occupied House Boats	200
Septic Tank Pump-Out	200
Occupied Passenger Vessels - 0-20 Persons	300
Occupied Passenger Vessels - 21-50 Persons	500
Occupied Passenger Vessels - 51-75 Persons	800
Occupied Passenger Vessels - 76-100 Persons	1,000

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Occupied Passenger Vessels - over 100 Persons	1,500	
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- b. a Sewer Discharge Charge of \$0.80 per kilolitre (kL) of water drawn through the filtered water meter or meters adjusted by the Sewer Discharge Factor as specified in Appendix G of the Liquid Trade Waste Guidelines issued by the Department of Planning & Environment of NSW, in keeping with the methodology described in Council's Revenue Policy, on properties categorised as Business but are not registered as Liquid Trade Waste discharges and serviced by the sewer network, and
- c. in accordance with s377 of the Act, to delegate to the Chief Executive Officer/General Manager (CEO), the authority to provide a discount of either 20% or 40%, as the CEO deems appropriate, on the Sewer Discharge Charge, for Business properties that do not have a raw water connection, if in the sole discretion of the CEO, it is determined that a significant portion of the filtered water usage does not get discharged to the sewer network;

and,

, plus

- 2. in accordance with s501 of the Act, to make and levy Trade Waste Charges on business properties that discharge Liquid Trade Waste into the sewer network, to be used towards the operation, maintenance, renewal, and expansion of Council's sewerage collection, pumping & storage network, treatment facilities, and effluent storage and discharge facilities, as follows:
 - a. annual Trade Waste Charges, based on the Trade Waste Category as specified in the trade waste discharge approval as follows:

Trade Waste Category	Annual Charge (\$)	
Category 1	125	
Category 2	350	
Category 3	1,300	, plus

b. a Trade Waste Discharge Charge, per kilolitre of water drawn through the potable water meter or meters adjusted by the Trade Waste Discharge Factor as specified in Appendix G of the Liquid Trade Waste Guidelines issued by the Department of Planning & Environment of NSW, in keeping with the methodology described in Council's Revenue Policy, on properties categorised as Business and serviced by the sewer network as follows:

Trade Waste Category	Charge (\$ per Kilolitre)	
Category 1	3.00	
Category 2 - with approved pre-treatment	3.00	
Category 2 - without approved pre-treatment	25.00	
Category 3 - with approved pre-treatment	6.00	
Category 3 - without approved pre-treatment	not applicable	
	C	CAR

5.2.5 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - WASTE CHARGES

RESOLUTION 050524

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Kron Nicholas

That That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days):

1. in accordance with s496 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), to make and levy annual Waste Charges, on each and every property serviced or serviceable with a kerbside collection

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service (Waste collections are typically carried out once a week, while Recyclables and Green Waste collections are collected fortnightly, on alternate weeks) for the recovery of costs related to the kerbside collection of waste, green waste, and recyclable materials and for the operation, maintenance, renewal, and expansion of Council's waste management facilities including landfills, transfer stations, and recyclable materials processing facilities, as follows:

Service Type	Amount (\$)	Applicable to
Vacant/No Bins	75	
General Waste 140 Litre (per bin)	265	Properties serviced or able to be
General Waste 240 Litre (per bin)	400	serviced (within service area), with one or more of the identified
Recyclables 240 Litre (per bin)	135	services.
Green Waste 240 Litre (per bin)	135	

, and

2. in accordance with s496 of the Act, to make and levy an annual Landfill Rehabilitation Charge, to be applied solely towards meeting the rehabilitation costs (both operational and capital) of landfills and for monitoring and remediating environmental impacts resulting from such landfills, on each and every property serviced with either a 140 litre or a 240 litre General Waste bin(s) of \$75.

CARRIED

5.2.6 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - SCHEDULE OF FEES

RESOLUTION 060524

Moved: Cr Geoff Wise Seconded: Cr Nikki Cohen

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days), in keeping with Chapter 15, Part 10 the Local Government Act 1993, to adopt the Schedule of Fees as appearing as Attachment 1 to this report.

CARRIED

5.2.7 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE - ADMINISTRATION OF RATES & CHARGES

RESOLUTION 070524

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (subject to public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days):

- 1. to levy the Rates & Charges, in keeping with Chapter 15, Parts 5 and 7 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act), in the following manner:
 - a. the Ordinary Rates, Stormwater Management Services Charges, Filtered Water Access Charge, Raw Water Access Charge, Sewer Access Charge, Trade Waste Charges, the Waste Management Levy and Waste Charges, in a single annual Rates Notice, issued at the beginning of the Financial Year, with the option for ratepayers to pay the Rates Notice in whole or in four equal quarterly instalments, with each instalment being one fourth of the total Rates Notice, and

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- b. the Filtered Water Consumption Charge, Raw Water Consumption Charge, Sewer Discharge Charge, and Trade Waste Discharge Charge in three Water Notices for the Financial Year; and
- c. that each Rates Notice specify the Due Date for payment of the full amount as well as each of the quarterly instalments, and the Water Notice specify the Due Date for each Notice, with the Due Date for each such Notice to be between 30 and 40 days from the date of the Notice, and
- 2. that Pensioners, as defined by s134 of the **Regulation**, be afforded the Pensioner Discount in accordance with Chapter 15, Part 8, Division 1 of the **Act**; and
- 3. that ratepayers facing defined financial hardship be entitled to seek relief in keeping with **Council**'s Rates & Charges Hardship Policy, and
- 4. that the maximum interest rate payable on overdue rates and charges, as determined by s563(3) of the **Act** and gazetted by the NSW Government through Gazette number 140 dated 19 April 2024 of 10.5% per annum, be applied to all Rates and Charges that remain unpaid past their Due Date.

CARRIED

5.2.8 BUDGET 2024-25: REVENUE POLICY

RESOLUTION 080524

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Dennis Gleeson

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (pending public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days), as prescribed in s223(f) of the **Act**, to adopt the Revenue Policy appearing as Attachment 1 to this report.

CARRIED

5.2.9 BUDGET 2024-25: 2024-25 OPERATIONAL PLAN AND 2024-25 TO 2033-34 LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

RESOLUTION 090524

Moved: Cr Ann Crowe Seconded: Cr Nikki Cohen

That Murray River Council (Council) provisionally resolve (pending public display of the 2024-25 budget for 28 days) to:

- 1. In keeping with s405 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act) adopt the
 - (a) Draft Operational Plan for the upcoming financial year, appearing as Attachment 1 to this report, and
 - (b) the Draft Long Term Financial Plan covering the ten financial years commencing the upcoming financial year, appearing as Attachment 2 to this report, and
- 2. place the said draft plans identified in section 1 of this resolution on public display for a period of 28 days.
- 3. make the following transfers to and from Reserves:
 - (a) to fund Capital activities:

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	(i) \$6,109,236 from the General reserve	
	(ii) \$91,000 from the Sewer reserve	
	(iii) \$2,724,250 from the Water reserve	
	(iv) \$2,018,270 from the Waste reserve	
(b)	from Operational activities:	
	(i) \$2,197,213 from the General reserve	
	(ii) \$3,587,668 to the Sewer reserve	
	(iii) \$3,549,596 to the Water reserve	
	(iv) \$3,882,154 to the Waste reserve	
		CARRIED

5.3 DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

Nil

5.4 DIRECTOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

Nil

5.5 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

NIL

- 5.6 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT
- Nil
- 5.7 SUNDRY DELEGATES REPORT
- Nil
- 6 CONCLUSION OF MEETING

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10:52am.

The next Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council will be held on Tuesday 28 May 2024, commencing at 1:00 PM, in the Mathoura Visitor Business Centre Multi-Function Room, Moama Street, Mathoura.

THESE MINUTES ARE SIGNED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL HELD ON 14 MAY 2024, IN ACCORDANCE WITH A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL ON 28 MAY 2024.

MAYOR

5 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

- 6 DEPUTATIONS
- 7 MAYORAL MINUTE(S)

Nil

8 **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

Nil

9 **REPORTS TO COUNCIL**

9.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.1.1 PLANNING PROPOSAL TO RECLASSIFY 18 LOTS OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL LAND FROM COMMUNITY TO OPERATIONAL.

File Number:

Author: Chris Godfrey, Manager - Plant, Fleet & Stores & Strategic Property Specialist

Authoriser: Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council endorse the Planning Proposal prepared by Habitat Planning Pty Ltd to amend the Murray Local Environment Plan 2011 and Wakool Local Environment Plan 2013 to reclassify 18 lots from Community to Operational land including:
 - Barham Linton Park Drive Reserve Lot 32, DP789761
 - Mathoura Part of Soldier Memorial Gardens Lot 2, DP 1145866 & Lot 9A, DP 916470
 - Mathoura AE Murthy Park Lot C, DP403653
 - Moama Highlands Park, Lot 185, DP 1080039
 - Moama Murray Shire Reserve (East), Lot 27, DP253930
 - Moama Hickey Park, Lot 102, DP717500
 - Moama Murray Shire Reserve (West) Lot 28, DP 253930
 - Moama Ruby Court Park, Lot 75, DP 717500
 - Moama Rivergums Drive Park, Lot 57 DP 1045248,
 - Moama McMahon Park, Lot 53, DP 247666
 - Moama Ivo Ham Park, Lot 34, DP 708269
 - Moama Ivo Ham Palk Walkway, Lot 33, DP 803895
 - Moama Martin Street Buffer Zone, Lot 1 DP 249655
 - Moama Southern Cross Homes Parkland (Regent Street Park), Lot 21 DP747384
 - Tooleybuc Caccaviello Reserve, Lot 2, DP 867575
 - Goodnight Goodnight Landing Reserve, Lot 46 DP 12982
 - Murray Downs Swan Hill Road, Lot 73, DP 1117956
- 2. The Planning proposal be sent to NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) for Gateway determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
- 3. Council staff complete all actions, as outlined in the gateway determination.

- 4. Council note that any subsequent disposal/repurposing plan resulting from the conversion to Operational Land will require future Council Report and resolution as per the Murray River Council Land Acquisition and Disposal Policy (POL602).
- 5. Council notes that the Planning Proposals to reclassify community to operational land is interlinked and should read in conjunction with:
 - the Murray River Council Buildings Strategy
 - the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy

Both of these documents form part of this month's Ordinary Council agenda.

BACKGROUND

Between 2020-2023, Murray River Council engaged an independent consultant to undertake a detailed 'Needs and Demands' analysis of its sports and recreation assets to determine current provisions and required future provisions. CT Management Consulting was engaged to undertake community surveys, via QR codes and website feedback via Councils YourSay page.

As part of the brief, the consultant was to identify all land that Council owns or maintains then further assess the condition of all assets on this land. This included buildings and park assets such as furniture, structures, play equipment and general infrastructure. The final draft report from CT Management (Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities 2021) clearly identified the high number of assets Council owns. The report also identified areas that contained an overly high number of assets in certain areas that need to be maintained. This is no longer financially sustainable due to Council's current financial position and commitment for council to break even financially over the next 10 years.

In mid-2022 the Revenue Taskforce (the Taskforce) was a sub-committee of Council commissioned to improve the financial sustainability of Murray River Council. The Taskforce identified in early 2023, that council had a significant amount of land and building assets surplus to current and future needs of our communities in certain areas. The final draft report supports the disposal of these surplus assets, which in turn would offer a significant reduction in longer-term operational expenditure (maintenance, servicing and depreciation).

In considering the outcomes of the CT Management Needs and Demand Analysis and the Revenue Taskforce, the recommendations for proceeding with identified land conversion from Community Land to Operational Land and developing a consistent framework for Council owned and managed open spaces and buildings, will allow for future management opportunities of these assets which could include disposal.

The following resolutions provide the direction to progress the Land Conversion project (reclassifying community land to operational land) in conjunction with the development of the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034. It was also identified that several of the land assets identified Council owned or managed buildings that were required to be assessed in relation to their future use as part of the Murray River Council Building Strategy.

11.3 Needs and Demands Assessment Recommendations and Recreational & Open Space Provisioning Strategy

RESOLUTION 290323

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve the recreational and open space service provisioning standards and proposed parks hierarchy recommendations, and

2. Progress the Recreational and Open Space Provisioning Strategy to public consultation, and

3. Provide a further report to Council on Planning Proposals for the reclassification of Community land to Operational land, and Road Reserve, once public consultation is completed for Council's consideration.

CARRIED

9.1.1 REVENUE TASKFORCE REPORT – DRAFT

RESOLUTION 070323

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: CR Dennis Gleeson

That Council consider, as an initial step in relation to Land Assets, to commence the development of a detailed project management plan for land conversion with a view for change of use, lease, or sale, the public consultation process, which, when finalised, would then be reported for further consideration of Council.

CARRIED

9.1.3 REVENUE TASKFORCE ASSET RATIONALISATION PROJECT - COMMENCEMENT OF STAGE 2

RESOLUTION 140523

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council note the commencement of stage 2 (two) of the Asset Rationalisation Project (land conversion), as derived by the Revenue Task Force, considered in resolution 070323 at the 28 March 2023 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

In 2023, Council endorsed the *Murray River Council Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreational Facilities (2021)* (the "Needs and Demand Assessment"). The Needs and Demand Assessment comprehensively audited all parks and recreation facilities throughout the Council area and sought to "*identify opportunities and requirements for improvement of consolidation of resources, and to ensure that the level of facility provision is suitable for the current distribution of residents throughout the Council's communities both now and into the future."*

As part of the Needs and Demand Assessment, Council identified a number of land parcels which are surplus to Council requirements or not in accordance with Council's direction and provision of community facilities or open space. Further analysis of land and buildings completed in response to the recommendations of the Revenue Task Force has resulted in 3 additional land assets being identified as surplus to Council requirements and included in this submission.

DISCUSSION

This Planning Proposal has been prepared by Habitat Planning on behalf of Council in support of an amendment to the *Murray Local Environmental Plan 2011* ("the MLEP") and *Wakool Local Environmental Plan 2013* ("the WLEP").

The Planning Proposal seeks to reclassify 18 Lots from "Community land" to "Operational land" in accordance with Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the *Local Government Act 1993* by amending Schedule 4, Part 1 of the MLEP and WLEP to include this land.

All land identified within this Planning Proposal includes parcels of Council land which have been identified as surplus to Council requirements or not in accordance with Council's direction and provision of community facilities or open space. The current Community land classification restricts the realisation of the potential 'best use' options for these land parcels. To enable greater future potential for these land parcels, including opportunities for reuse or divestment, the land is now sought to be reclassified from Community land to operational land. Any reuse or divestment of these land parcels will require future Council Report and resolution as per the Murray River Council Land Acquisition and Disposal Policy (POL602).

This report has been prepared to address the requirements of Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), as well as satisfying the requirements of the *NSW Department of Planning & Environment's* guideline titled: *Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline (August 2023).*

The planning proposal has been assessed by Habitat planning in accordance with relevant legislation and ministerial direction requirements, and is considered consistent.

It is requested that the Planning Proposal be referred to the Minister for Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the EP&A Act.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.11 - Strategic planning which produces consistent, strategic, transparent outcomes - Town Planning / Land Use Strategies

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

There are no budgetary implications as a result of the reclassification. Any budgetary implications of the eventual use of the land parcels are to be considered separately to the subject Planning Proposal.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

The land parcels remain classified as Community.

• How can it happen?

The subject Planning Proposal is not supported by Council and/or the State Government

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Future potential opportunities for reuse or divestment of these land parcels cannot be realised.

- What is the likelihood of the event happening?
 Low
- Adequacy of existing controls?

The Planning Proposal is the only means of achieving the reclassification.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Support the Planning Proposal and resolutions of this report.

CONCLUSION

This Planning Proposal provides an analysis of the physical and strategic planning constraints and opportunities and considers the relevant environmental, social and economic impacts of the proposal and its strategic merit.

The Planning Proposal has strategic merit and is in the public interest for the following reasons:

- The proposal is consistent with the strategic planning framework including State, Regional, District and local planning strategies for Murray River Council.
- The proposal seeks to reclassify land that is surplus to Council's needs or requirements and enables opportunity to ruse or divest the land and directly enable funding and/or improvements for other community purposes.
- The proposal is consistent with the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies and Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.
- The proposal is not expected to have any negative economic, environmental, or social impacts on the local area.
- The proposal is the result of the endorsed Murray River Council Needs and Demands Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities (2021).

Therefore, the proposed amendment to the LEP is appropriate and well-considered and warrants approval subject to the conditions of a Gateway Determination.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Proposed Operational Site Final Council Report 🕂 🛣
- 2. Planning Proposal Reclassification of surplus community land parcels (under separate cover)



Murray River Council Needs And Demands Assessment Recommendations - Proposed Operational Sites

COUNCII							
lity	Facility Number	Street Address	Town	Ward	Area (m2) Land Type	Proposed Action	Reason
						Convert to Operational	
am Linton Park Drive Reserve	LAND198	Wakool Street	Barham	Wakool	5,611 Community	(Subdivision & Easement Required)	Surplus to need
houra Memorial Park	LAND59 (Part)	LIVINGSTONE ST	Mathoura	Murray	1,620 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
houra AE Murphy Park	LAND1	LIVINGSTONE STREET	Mathoura	Murray	351 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
ama Highlands Park	LAND17	HIGHLANDS ESTATE	Moama	Moama	9,051 Community	Convert to Operational (Subdivision & Easement Required)	Surplus to need
ama Francis-Lawson Parkland (East)	LAND8	LAWSON DRIVE	Moama	Moama	638 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement & Boundary Realignment Required)	Surplus to need
ama Hickey Park	LAND9	Lawson Drive	Moama	Moama	3,615 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement & Boundary Realignment Required)	Surplus to need
ama Francis-Lawson Parkland (West)	LAND7	LAWSON DRIVE	Moama	Moama	713 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement Required)	Surplus to need
ama Lawson Drive - Ruby Court Parkland	LAND26	LAWSON DRIVE	Moama	Moama	1,209 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement Required)	Surplus to need
ima Rivergums Drive	LAND56 (Part)	RIVER GUMS DRIVE	Moama	Murray	487 Community	Convert to Operational (Subdivision & Easement	Surplus to need
Jahon Park Moama	LAND34	23 Hillview Avenue	Moama	Moama	5,112 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement & Boundary Realignment Required)	Surplus to need
ama Ivo Ham Park	LAND19	29 Iluka Avenue	Moama	Moama	2,322 Community	Convert to Operational (Easement Required)	Surplus to need
ma Ivo Ham Park	LAND63	WINNIMA AVENUE	Moama	Moama	136 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
tin Street Buffer Moama	LAND32	BLAIR STREET	Moama	Moama	3,504 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
ama Rivergums Drive	LAND56 (Part)	RIVER GUMS DRIVE	Moama	Murray	7,328 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
eybuc Caccaviello Reserve	LAND281	3 Wakool St	Tooleybuc	Wakool	1,865 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
dnight Landing Reserve		Pevensey Lane	Goodnight	Wakool	15,186 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
erve beside Swan Hill Road		Swan Hill Road	Murray Downs	Wakool	38,000 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
ent Street Park		Regent Street	Moama	Moama	2,843 Community	Convert to Operational	Surplus to need
9.1.2 PLANNING PROPOSAL TO RECLASSIFY 22 LOTS OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL LAND FROM COMMUNITY TO OPERATIONAL FOR DRAINAGE RESERVES.

File Number:

Author: Chris Godfrey, Manager - Plant, Fleet & Stores & Strategic Property Specialist

Authoriser: Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council endorse the Planning Proposal prepared by Habitat Planning Pty Ltd to amend the Murray Local Environment Plan 2011 and Wakool Local Environment Plan 2013 to reclassify 22 lots from Community to Operational land, to correct historical classification errors, including:
 - Moama Barnes Road-Graham Street Buffer Lot 126 DP 1264832
 - Moama Business Park Drainage Basin Lot 11 DP 1103416
 - Moama Lakeview Park Lot 16 DP 1084308
 - Moama Lea Court Buffer Lot 23 DP 256000
 - Moama Beer Road Business Park Buffer Lot 56 DP 1175457
 - Moama Perricoota Run Drainage Reserve Lot 91 DP 1220526
 - Moama Dungala Estate Lot 33 DP 1259774
 - Moama Dungala Estate Lot 34 DP 1259774
 - Moama Barbers Paddock Lot 34 DP 1209212
 - Moama Barbers Paddock Lot 104 DP 1256111
 - Moama Business Park Drainage Basin (South) Lot 17 DP 1175457
 - Moama Pump Station No. 27 Ghost Gum Place Lot 95 DP 1201662
 - Moama Pump Station No. 30 Winbi 2 Lot 131 DP 1226905
 - Moama Perricoota Road, Winbi & Merool Drainage Basin Lot 2 DP 1255836
 - Moama Marsanne Drive Reserve Lot 171 DP 1245186
 - Moama Dungala Drainage Reserve Lot 115 DP 1268382
 - Moama Hermitage Drive Reserve Lot 226 DP 1261570
 - Moama Perricoota Road Buffer Lot 61 DP 1082147
 - Moama Barber Court Buffer Lot 9 DP 841556
 - Moama Marsanne Drive Reserve Lot 121 DP 1238057
 - Moama Lakeview Drainage Basin Lot 194 DP 1251358
 - Barham Vinecombe Lane Reserve Lot 23 DP 1240379
- 2. The Planning Proposal be sent to NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) for Gateway determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

- 3. Council staff complete all actions, as outlined in the Gateway Determination.
- 4. Council notes that the Planning Proposals to reclassify community to operational land is interlinked and should read in conjunction with:
 - the Murray River Council Buildings Strategy
 - the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy
 - Both of these documents form part of this month's Ordinary Council agenda.

BACKGROUND

Between 2020-2023, Murray River Council engaged an independent consultant to undertake a detailed 'Needs and Demands' analysis of its sports and recreation assets to determine current provisions and required future provisions. CT Management Consulting was engaged to undertake community surveys, via QR codes and website feedback via Council's YourSay page.

As part of the brief, the consultant was to identify all land that Council owns or maintains then further assess the condition of all assets on this land. This included buildings and park assets such as furniture, structures, play equipment and general infrastructure. The final draft report from CT Management (Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities 2021) clearly identified the high number of assets Council owns. The report also identified areas that contained an overly high number of assets in certain areas that need to be maintained. This is no longer financially sustainable due to Council's current financial position and commitment for council to break even financially over the next 10 years.

In mid-2022 the Revenue Taskforce (the Taskforce) was a sub-committee of Council commissioned to improve the financial sustainability of Murray River Council. The Taskforce identified in early 2023, that Council had a significant amount of land and building assets surplus to current and future needs of our communities in certain areas. The final draft report supports the disposal of these surplus assets, which in turn would offer a significant reduction in longer-term operational expenditure (maintenance, servicing and depreciation).

In considering the outcomes of the CT Management Needs and Demand Analysis and the Revenue Taskforce, the recommendations for proceeding with identified land conversion from Community Land to Operational Land and developing a consistent framework for Council owned and managed open spaces and buildings, will allow for future management opportunities of these assets which could include disposal.

The following resolutions provide the direction to progress the Land Conversion project (reclassifying community land to operational land) in conjunction with the development of the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034. It was also identified that several of the land assets identified Council owned or managed buildings that were required to be assessed in relation to their future use as part of the Murray River Council Building Strategy.

11.3 Needs and Demands Assessment Recommendations and Recreational & Open Space Provisioning Strategy

RESOLUTION 290323

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Approve the recreational and open space service provisioning standards and proposed parks hierarchy recommendations, and
- 2. Progress the Recreational and Open Space Provisioning Strategy to public consultation, and

3. Provide a further report to Council on Planning Proposals for the reclassification of Community land to Operational land, and Road Reserve, once public consultation is completed for Council's consideration.

CARRIED

9.1.1 REVENUE TASKFORCE REPORT – DRAFT

RESOLUTION 070323

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: CR Dennis Gleeson

That Council consider, as an initial step in relation to Land Assets, to commence the development of a detailed project management plan for land conversion with a view for change of use, lease, or sale, the public consultation process, which, when finalised, would then be reported for further consideration of Council.

CARRIED

9.1.3 REVENUE TASKFORCE ASSET RATIONALISATION PROJECT - COMMENCEMENT OF STAGE 2

RESOLUTION 140523

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council note the commencement of stage 2 (two) of the Asset Rationalisation Project (land conversion), as derived by the Revenue Task Force, considered in resolution 070323 at the 28 March 2023 Ordinary Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

In 2023, Council endorsed the *Murray River Council Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreational Facilities (2021)* (the "Needs and Demand Assessment"). The Needs and Demand Assessment comprehensively audited all parks and recreation facilities throughout the Council area and sought to "*identify opportunities and requirements for improvement of consolidation of resources, and to ensure that the level of facility provision is suitable for the current distribution of residents throughout the Council's communities both now and into the future."*

As part of the Needs and Demand Assessment, Council identified a number of land parcels which are classified as Community land in error. The purpose of these lots is for drainage reserves rather than servicing any community or social function and the Planning Proposal is administrative only.

DISCUSSION

This Planning Proposal has been prepared by Habitat Planning on behalf of Council in support of an amendment to the *Murray Local Environmental Plan 2011* ("the MLEP") and *Wakool Local Environmental Plan 2013* ("the WLEP").

The Planning Proposal seeks to utilise the provisions of Clause 5.2 of MLEP and WLEP to reclassify 22 lots from Community land to Operational land in accordance with Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the *Local Government Act 1993* by amending Schedule 4, Part 1 of the MLEP and WLEP to include this land.

The parcels of land to be reclassified within this Planning Proposal comprise land used as drainage reserves and associated infrastructure. The lots have been identified by Council in the *Murray River*

Council Needs and Demands Assessment (2023) as errors in land classification and are now sought to be corrected by this Planning Proposal.

This report has been prepared to address the requirements of Section 3.33 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act), as well as satisfying the requirements of the *NSW Department of Planning & Environment's* guideline titled : *Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline (August 2023).*

For the purposes of this guideline, the application is classified as a 'Standard' Planning Proposal as it relates to the classification or reclassification of public land through an LEP.

It is requested that the Planning Proposal be referred to the Minister for Gateway Determination in accordance with Section 3.34 of the EP&A Act.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.11 - Strategic planning which produces consistent, strategic, transparent outcomes - Town Planning / Land Use Strategies

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

There are no budgetary implications as a result of the reclassification. Any budgetary implications of the eventual use of the land parcels are to be considered separately to the subject Planning Proposal.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

The land parcels remain classified as Community.

• How can it happen?

The subject Planning Proposal is not supported by Council and/or the State Government

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

The historical classification errors remain.

- What is the likelihood of the event happening?
 - Low
- Adequacy of existing controls?

The Planning Proposal is the only means of achieving the reclassification.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Support the Planning Proposal and resolutions of this report.

CONCLUSION

This Planning Proposal considers the relevant environmental, social, and economic impacts of the proposal and its strategic merit.

The Planning Proposal has strategic merit and is in the public interest for the following reasons:

- The proposal is consistent with the strategic planning framework including State, Regional, District and local planning strategies for Murray River Council.
- \circ $\;$ The proposal seeks to correct historical classification errors.
- The proposal is consistent with the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies and Section 9.1 Ministerial Directions.
- The proposal is not expected to have any negative economic, environmental, or social impacts on the local area.

Therefore, the proposed amendment to the LEP is appropriate and well-considered and warrants approval subject to the conditions of a Gateway Determination.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Planning Proposal Reclassification of Drainage Reserves (under separate cover)
- 2. Proposed Operational Site Final Council Report 🗓 🛣



Murray River Council Needs And Demands Assessment Recommenda

COUNCII						
lity	Facility Number	Street Address	Town	Ward	Area (m2) Land Type	Proposed Action
ama Barnes Road - Graham Street Buffer	LAND3	GRAHAM STREET	Moama	Greater Murray	22,004 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Business Park Drainage Basin	LAND5	MCCULLOCH DRIVE	Moama	Greater Murray	14,562 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Lakeview Park	LAND23 (Part)	CABERNET DRIVE	Moama	Greater Murray	11,369 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Lea Court Buffer	LAND28	LEA COURT	Moama	Greater Murray	8,578 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Beer Road Business Park Buffer	LAND31	Moama Business Park, Martin	Moama	Greater Murray	6,178 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Perricoota Run Drainage Reserve	LAND351	Cabernet Drive	Moama	Greater Murray	20,661 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Dungala Estate	LAND352 (Part)	Brolga Ave	Moama	Greater Murray	12,200 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Dungala Estate	LAND354 (Part)	Brolga Ave	Moama	Greater Murray	10,000 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Barbers Paddock	LAND355	Marion Court	Moama	Moama	7,799 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Barbers Paddock	LAND356	Firefly Court	Moama	Moama	4,787 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Business Park Drainage Basin (South)	LAND381	Lot: 17 DP: 1175457	MOAMA	Greater Murray	3,616 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Pump Station No. 27 - Ghost Gum Place	LAND389	Ghost Gum Place	MOAMA	Greater Murray	56 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Pump Station No. 30 - Winbi 2	LAND396	RIVER GUMS DR	MOAMA	Greater Murray	64 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Perricoota Road Winbi & Merool Drainage Basin	LAND406	Perricoota Road	MOAMA	Greater Murray	11,012 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Marsanne Drive Reserve	LAND407	Marsanne Drive	MOAMA	Greater Murray	1,694 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Dungala Drainage Reserve	LAND414	Sand Piper Street	MOAMA	Greater Murray	5,889 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Hermitage Drive Reserve	LAND415	Hermitage Drive	MOAMA	Greater Murray	1,200 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Perricoota Road Buffer	LAND49	CABERNET DRIVE	Moama	Greater Murray	24,585 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Barber Court Buffer	LAND53	Regent Street	Moama	Greater Murray	9,953 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Marsanne Drive Reserve	LAND400	Marsanne Drive	MOAMA	Greater Murray	250 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ama Lakeview Drainage Basin	LAND413 (Part)	Durif Drive	MOAMA	Greater Murray	31,193 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)
ham Vinecombe Lane Reserve	LAND423	Vinecombe Lane	Barham	Wakool	4,191 Community	Convert to Operational (for Drainage)

lations - Propo	sed Operatio	nal Sites
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Reason
Correction of unfitting classification

9.1.3 SHARED SERVICES

File Number:

Author:Terry Dodds, Chief Executive OfficerAuthoriser:Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That council notes and condones the endeavours of the Administration to commence investigating shared services.

BACKGROUND

Murray River Council and its neighbouring Edward River Council are considering the possibility of embracing Shared Services as a strategy to address resourcing, succession planning, risk management, and cost issues (among others).

It is not a new thing to say that local governments of all kinds are under pressure to save money for a range of reasons. (That is only a small component though.) For smaller and remote councils this is even more urgent to continually evolve. Commonly cited pressures include cost shifting, the constraints on council funding (such as rate capping) or a reliance on grants and increasing community expectations.

Shared Services and collaboration can provide opportunities for local government to capture economies of scope (where an organisation increases its critical mass in order to be able to do things it otherwise could not) and enhance its strategic capacity. It may also reduce risk, particularly where each participant only has 'one' staff member completing a function.

An individual council on its own may not have the skills, budget, organisational capacity or sufficient local need to provide a particular service but may be able to provide the service if it joins with others.

Additionally, as the Productivity Commission notes in its draft report (Productivity Commission 2012), the mounting complexity of the functions local government is required to undertake, and hence the additional skills and resources required, is another key driver for sharing regulatory and other services.

Another increasingly important driver is the need for improvements in standards of service delivery. Many local governments are exploring ways to respond to community expectations for higher quality and improved levels of service. Sharing service delivery with others can result in the provision of greater access and better quality of services.

Digital transformation – a key issue for Local Government generally – increasingly enables staff communication at separate locations as well as remote working. Thereby overcoming the impediments generated by distance particularly in rural and regional locations and thereby opportunities for shared services.

Subject to fully understanding the 'pros and cons;' risks and challenges; the most effective governance models, and the essential elements of Service Level Agreements, local government - particularly rural and regional councils - can benefit to varying degrees from shared services arrangements, but only if it's delivered correctly.

DISCUSSION

In 2012, the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government published an Interim report entitled 'Legal and Governance Models for Shared Services in Local Government' which offered the following definition:

DEFINITION

'Shared services' in this context may be defined as two or more local government authorities jointly planning, employing staff, undertaking management, business and/or regulatory activities, delivering and/or maintaining infrastructure, or providing services to their communities. Such collaborative activities can be conducted in a variety of ways, ranging from simple written agreements (such as an exchange of letters) through loosely structured regional organisations of councils (ROCs) and other more formal entities, to jointly owned companies with independent boards.'

This, and various other research projects, conducted on this subject have found that most councils across Australia, to a varying degree, report collaborating in some way with other councils in their region or beyond. As a result, the sharing of information and activities, and joint advocacy on common issues are not new to local government.

Actual Shared Services arrangements consistent with the ACLGE definition, however, are not as common as those survey results suggest.

For example, closer examination of the survey undertaken by the NSW Office of Local Government in 2015 reveals that it coincided with the initiative of the NSW Government to consider wideranging amalgamations of local governments which may have influenced the respondents to the survey to 'paint a very positive picture' of regional collaboration as a defence against amalgamation proposals. (Read: A false positive.)

However, whilst there was **little hard evidence** at the time of wide-spread real and enduring shared service arrangements amongst the majority who professed to it, there are now a number of important examples which do demonstrate successful collaborative relationships if approached correctly.

The range of service delivery options available to local governments in the broadest sense comprises:

- 'In-house production' when a local council arranges its own production.
- 'Co-ordinated production' where two or more councils co-ordinate production activities.
- 'Joint production' where two adjacent councils organise a single production unit, which can take various forms including a separate legal entity.
- 'Intergovernmental contracting' where one council contracts services from another council or state or federal government agency.
- 'Private contracting' where a council outsources the service to an external private service provider.
- 'Franchising' where a council gives a commercial producer the right to produce a given service from which residents can purchase the service.
- 'Vouchering' where a council sets standards and the level of provision by allows households to select their own producer using a voucher.

• Shared Services arrangements, generally through Service Level Agreements.

In terms of this latter model, the following are the most common forms that appear in Australian local governments:

1. One local government in the region has, or acquires, additional resources to be able to offer to undertake particular services for other local governments and enters into a contractual relationship with them to provide those services upon request, at an agreed level of service and agreed price.

2. Two or more councils in the region combine resources as a joint provider (joint local government) to provide services to the region's councils upon request, at an agreed level of service and agreed price.

3. Two or more councils in the region combine to create a separate controlled entity to provide services to the region's councils upon request, at an agreed level of service and agreed price.

NSW has substantial history and examples of Shared Services arrangements – some with demonstrably positive - and some with demonstrably negative – outcomes.

Local Government in Queensland does not have a history of significant shared services arrangements, although models do exist at State Government level. Other states – (notably Victoria and Western Australia) and New Zealand have undertaken a deeper exploration of the options, and a number of collaborative ventures continue to derive benefits for their participating local governments.

The most recent and comprehensive research into Shared Services models was in 2018 by the NSW Audit Office, initiated in that Office's belief that 'sharing services is one-way councils can meet the needs of their communities and further the principles of the [Local Government] Act'. In that context under the NSW Act 2013, councils must comply with principles that guide how they deliver these services, including:

- Provide the best value for residents and ratepayers.
- Plan for the delivery of efficient and effective services.
- Ensure that decision-making is transparent, and decision-makers are accountable.
- Work cooperatively with the state government and other councils.

Despite that only a little over 50% of the local governments in that state responded to the survey, the Audit Office was able to derive some valuable information. Of the 67 councils responding, over 80% said they were involved in some form of shared services arrangement across multiple (on average five (5)) services.

Typically, these services comprised:

External services – Waste & Recycling, Environmental management, Road Maintenance.

Internal services – Procurement. Asset Management, Human Resources.

Reasons given for joining shared services arrangements included:

- Savings from economies of scale.
- Enhanced regional collaboration.
- Reduced costs.
- Improved community outcomes.
- Building or enhancing strategic partnerships.

Barriers identified by respondents to entering shared services arrangements included:

- Resource commitments.
- Risk to autonomy and local control.
- Politics & inter-council relationships.
- Questions over effective governance.
- Uncertainty about costs and benefits.

About a third of the arrangements were governed by a formal joint agreement between the participating councils, about a quarter were made under a simple MOU and about 10% were by means of a joint agreement between councils and a private provider.

The Governance arrangements amongst the respondent local governments comprised:

 A council member-based association (e.g. Joint Organisation / Regional Organisation of Councils) – about 40%.

- Fully managed by a Lead Council around 36%.
- A board or oversight committee around 25%.

Less than 60% of the respondent councils conducted or received formal assessments of potential costs and benefits before entering into shared services arrangements. Of those that did, 85% found the actual costs to be consistent with their expectations and 87% found the actual benefits to be as good as or better than their expectations.

Lack of a strong business case, access to seed funding, and monitoring and evaluation were the top reasons reported by councils for not proceeding with, or withdrawing from, shared services.

The report's findings included that:

- Some services are more suitable to be shared than others.
- Areas of success in the local government sector and other jurisdictions included IT, HR, procurement and waste management, and
- Services that are transactional in nature often involve less tailoring or customisation, resulting in lower costs and faster implementation. (Corporate Services.)

The Audit Office found that most councils in NSW are not efficiently and effectively engaging in shared services due to three main factors:

a) Not all surveyed councils were assessing the performance of their current services before deciding on the best service delivery model. Where they have decided that sharing services is the best way to deliver services, they do not always build a business case which outlines the costs, benefits, and risks of the proposed shared service arrangement before entering.

b) Governance models were commonly not fit for purpose and some governance models used by councils to share services affect the scope, management, and effectiveness of their shared service operations. Not all models are subject to the same checks and balances applied to councils themselves, thus risking transparency and accountability issues. Councils identified ineffective governance models as one of the main barriers to successful shared services.

c) Many councils lack the capability required to establish and manage shared service arrangements. Identifying whether sharing is the best way to deliver council services involves analysing how services are currently being delivered and building a business case. Factors in unsuccessful models included:

i) Councils were not adequately negotiating with partner councils to determine which governance model is fit for purpose.

ii) The project management for planning to establish a shared service arrangement was also clearly lacking in many cases.

iii) Some NSW councils were found to not be clearly defining the expected costs and benefits of shared service arrangements. As a result, the benefits from these arrangements cannot be effectively evaluated.

The Audit Office noted that the NSW Office of Local Government did not provide specific support or guidance to councils about effectively sharing services, despite part of the role of the NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) being to work with the sector on policy and programs intended to strengthen local government, including councils' service delivery. The Audit Office considered that guidance or principles to help councils decide on effective and transparent governance models would benefit the sector.

The initiatives resulting from these reviews have been variable but there are a number of successful examples for that State to boast of, usually involving large and complex joint procurement initiatives or regional strategy development.

Whilst considering successful models it is also useful to examine initiatives that have **not** succeeded and appreciate the reasons for that outcome.

Issues related to assessing shared services:

- Councils failed to agree on the nature and extent of reform required at the outset of the Alliance.
- Lack of trust, fear of loss of autonomy and loss of control of core services, and key staff.
- Some were created as an alternative to amalgamation.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

5. Strategic Theme 5: A place of Prosperity and Resilience

5.7 - Continue to develop strong and resilient communities - Development of a resilient economy.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The time to develop, as an ongoing operational expense, is part of everyday business.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Issues related to managing shared services:

- Failure to address important governance issues (e.g., legal liability, assets).
- No agreed timeline or targets to implement and measure shared arrangements.
- Convoluted decision-making processes.
- Lack of formal, well-structured service level agreements to provide accountability.
- Ineffective performance management arrangements.
- Complex and confusing organisational structure, lack of accountability.
- Absence of project and operational plans to guide the implementation of business cases.

• How can it happen?

Poor communication. Disingenuousness by parties. Power plays.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

A waste of time and resources. Damage to staff culture if not orchestrated correctly.

- What is the likelihood of the event happening? Medium.
- Adequacy of existing controls?

Nil. Need to design protocols and controls.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk? Communication of intent at every step is critical.

CONCLUSION

The Pro's and Con's

Benefits of collaborative arrangements include -

- Increased opportunities for regional and subregional strategic development.
- Increased cost savings and economies of scale (back office).
- Increased economies of scope.
- Reduced duplication.
- Access to a service not otherwise available.
- Improved access to technical expertise and higher quality work that one member council may not have thereby building organisational capacity at less cost meeting political and community expectations that a member council's limited resources may not enable.
- Better environmental outcomes.
- Reduced risk due to internal capacity improvements. (Better staff coverage.)
- Increased training opportunities
- Improvement in career paths, potentially better candidate attraction.
- Emergency management.
- Ability of staff to learn and gain valuable experience across a wider area without having to leave a council.
- Greater scale regarding advocacy.

Challenges identified included -

- The time-costs of engaging in collaborative arrangements in addition to normal responsibilities.
- The lack of start-up and ongoing funds to support collaborative arrangements.
- The need for leadership and commitment at the top level including the mayor, councillors, and the CEOs.
- The need for an organisational culture that is willing to embrace and see the benefit of shared activities with other councils: versus seeing it as a threat.
- The need for arrangements to have strong strategic direction supported by a business plan and service level arrangements.
- Governance challenges associated with arrangement design and decision making.
- The overcoming of any distrust at political and or staff level, and ensuring that neither council has or perceives any inappropriate degradation of control, status, or influence. (There may be a need to develop relationships of trust, cede some local control and compromise for the overall public good.)
- Staff parochialism and (unfounded) job security concerns.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.1.4 RESOLUTIONS OF THE COUNCIL - RESOLUTION TRACKER & INFOCOUNCIL ACTION REPORTS

File Number:

Author: Lindy Leyonhjelm, Executive Assistant

Authoriser: Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council resolve to receive and note the status of previous resolutions of Council (in open and closed Council) contained in the Monthly Operation Report including the Resolution Tracker Reports.

BACKGROUND

All resolutions of Council in Open and Closed council, including completed actions within the previous 6 weeks, are now shown in the Monthly Operation Report under their relevant section and responsible person.

In November 2018, Council introduced a software program called InfoCouncil. Resolutions of the Council that require action/s after each Council Meeting are automatically generated in InfoCouncil to the relevant Council officer for their action and comment.

DISCUSSION

The **Resolution Tracker Open Report** and the **Resolution Tracker Closed Action Report** contain 'active' resolutions respectively from open and closed meetings of the Council held since November 2018 that require action by Council's officers. The **Resolution Tracker Completed Actions Report** shows all actions that have been completed in the previous 6 weeks.

Comments for the action are shown in the Monthly Operations Report under each division and allocated responsible person. Resolutions that are reported by Council's officers as complete will drop off the 'active' list.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

2. Strategic Theme 2: A Place of Progressive Leadership

2.6 - Provide clear, concise and consistent information that is easily accessible to our customers - Improve externally provided information and communication.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Council's officers do not action the resolutions of the Council.

• How can it happen?

Resolutions from Council Meetings not being recorded in a systematic fashion.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Actions, because of the resolutions of the Council, not being completed in a timely manner or at all.

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Low.

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Use of the report and minute system, InfoCouncil, which automatically forwards actions (as a result of the resolutions of the Council) from Council Meetings to the relevant Council officer (report writer) after the completion of the minutes of a Council Meeting. A report can then be generated on the status of incomplete/outstanding actions.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Due diligence undertaken by Council's officers (administration and report writers).

CONCLUSION

The Resolution Tracker and Action Reports are presented to Councillors for information in the Monthly Operation Report.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.1.5 MONTHLY OPERATIONAL REPORT

File Number:

Author:Courtney Dean, Coordinator CommunicationsAuthoriser:Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Monthly Operational Report as of April 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council.

Below are summary points from several Business Unit reports. Please refer to the Monthly Operational Report for full details.

Please note: Business Intelligence, IT and Major Projects don't currently have a manager in the role, so project statuses and summaries have not been updated from previous month/s. However, these reports are still included as the financial data relating to each portfolio is up-to-date.

Civic Office

- The Mayor and CEO attended the NSW Country Mayors Association meeting held on the 10th of May. Linda Scott, the National President of the Australian Local Government Association gave a presentation to the 89 mayors and 39 CEOs in attendance, specifically mentioning Murray River Council's submission to the Federal inquiry into local government financial sustainability in order to encourage others to follow MRC's lead.
- NSW Country Mayors Association has made a submission to the NSW inquiry into local government financial sustainability. The Chair of Chairs of the 13 Joint Organisations across NSW, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick, Bega Valley Shire Council, wrote the submission. Mayor Fitzpatrick thanked Murray River Council for our contribution (on changing the way depreciation is addressed).

Strategic Assets

 The TechOne build of asset details and asst books continues to progress in conjunction with BAU. Mapping of buried assets now loaded into Before You Dig (BYD) platform for auto-generation of external service requests, with 284 referrals provided in the month of April.

Planning and Environment Directorate

Meninya Street project

- Following the completion of feature surveying and traffic data analysis, Spiire and Council have landed on preliminary cross section widths for footpaths, bike paths, roadways, green buffers and commercial activation zones. The cross sections are inline with the Council approved and adopted concept designs that were largely supported by the community. Parking was reviewed and investigations undertaken to see whether angled parking is feasible as part of the design. It was identified that outdoor dining, green buffer areas and cycling ways would be impacted if angled parking was pursued conflicting with the objectives set by Council and the community. Therefore parallel parking has been retained in alignment with the endorsed concept designs.
- As of 10th May 2024, AUS-SCAN commissioned by Spiire is completing GPR service location in Meninya Street to accurately capture service depths and alignments to be featured on designs. Spiire has surveying staff members onsite surveying located services to incorporate into designs.

Community Engagement

 On 10 April, we celebrated the official opening or 'tap turning' of the Koraleigh Raw Water Pipeline. The new pipeline supplies raw water to the urban households within Koraleigh, reduces reliance on treated water for non-potable purposes, such as garden use and also allows better access to water during emergencies, as hydrants have been relocated from back lanes to front access roads and pressure has been increased.

Parks, Gardens, Open Spaces and Biosecurity

Highlights

- Draft Operational Service Delivery Plans introduced to Parks Teams for review and trial.
- Biosecurity team submitted the 23-24 WAP funding application. Now waiting on reply of outcome, expected 8/5/24. The WAP funding application was changed to align with NSW application guidelines. It is now a competitive grant against other LCA's only within the Murray LLS region.
- Parks Team- achievement for Easter Preparations in all locations.
- Horseshoe Lagoon Enhancements underway.

Threats

- High customer expectations for service delivery in Parks.
- Staff shortages due to multiple resignations in Moama impacting operational service delivery. Recruitment in progress.
- Plants drying off quickly and going to seed after dry period and cold spell now arrived.
- Online sales of Priority weed out of Victoria.

Waste and Compliance

- Bunnaloo and Womboota bin stations closed at the end of April. The communications approach around this closure worked well, with residents following the call to action to contact the Waste team if they needed to discuss waste disposal options. In most cases this led to the team being able to provide kerbside bins to a number of residents in the area that have never had a kerbside service before. They were also able to address any concerns by speaking with the customer. A great outcome when dealing with a change in service.
- The Automated Depot project has progressed with the subgrade for roadways almost complete and ready for asphalt. The shed structural works are complete with insulation and cladding commenced at the end of April. The main stormwater plumbing is also underway to capture and redirect shed runoff.
- Recruitment has commenced for the operation of the Moama Automated Depot.
- Waste staff attended the Orange Automated Depot facility to ask questions and gather ideas for the operation of Councils site when it opens.
- Meetings commenced with IT for transitioning records between CM9 and ECM.
- Food safety assessments continued throughout the LGA.
- Two enquiries received regarding setting up home based food businesses.
- New Superintendent Compliance, Liz O'Farrell commenced in her role on 22 April 2024.
- The Mathoura Transfer Station solar power upgrade has commenced with some hardware fitted to the site. A delay in some materials has seen the project temporarily put on hold.
- EHC attended Goulburn Murray Community Leadership training day which focused on Frist nations people. It highlights the importance of working with aboriginal communities on community projects and the crucial role of Aboriginal perspectives on council initiatives and explored strategies for fostering meaningful coloration. The takeaway challenge was to explore how well Council currently does this and where we can improve.

Infrastructure Directorate

Internal Flood group is building with improvements being made, including the following;

- Shout out to John Hore for his work in this space.
- Moulamein Flood Study review has been awarded this month, to commence soon.
- Barham Flood Study review project with overland drainage combined has applied for funding.
- Echuca Moama Torrumbarry Flood Study has been adopted and Risk Management progressing well.
- Onsite training has been held with operation staff to improve operation and maintenance knowledge.
- Funding has been given to Public Works to help complete and adopt our Levee Owner Manuals.

Buildings and Facilities

- Yanga RFS Shed: Internal fit is well underway and the project is due for completion at the end of May 2024.
- Building Strategy2024-2034 has been developed to final draft stage.

Plant, Fleet and Stores

- April fuel costs in line with QBR2 and QBR3.
- Some delays with delivery of capital assets expected in March and April means that May and June will see significant capital expenditure timing difference only.
- Caterpillar Grader for Barham/Moulamein works teams due in mid-May.
- 8 x 5 Tandem Trailer for Barham/Moulamein region Emergency Recovery function due at the end of May.
- JA Cox Combination Roller for Barham/Moulamein works teams due at the end of May.
- 2 x ISUZU D-Max utilities for Water Services teams due early June.
- RAV4 Hybrid Wagon for Building Surveyor, Moama due mid-June.

Works

- Barham Road rehabilitation works, under the guidance of Mick O'Toole, have been completed to a high standard, within budget and timelines. Sealing works and linemarking have now been completed.
- After great progress in the past six months, flood restoration works have slowed in recent weeks due to focus shifting to other construction requirements with a deadline of 30 June 2024. The deadline for flood restoration works is 30 June 2025 and we will continue as required over the coming months (as suitable with weather and scheduling).
- Gayan Gunarathna has work tirelessly to deliver Council's reseals program. Works will be completed early May within some kerb and gutter works being completed prior to the final reseal locations.
- Roads to Recovery has been fully expended three months prior to the deadline. We are also finalising project planning for future Roads to Recovery funding from 01 July 2024. Great effort from all involved on the previous round of funding and those completing works to ensure projects are ready for the new round.
- Rick Keen has retired from his role as Project Engineer and we wish him all the best in his future endeavours.
- Moama and Mathoura staff have complete resheeting works on Perricoota Road, six months ahead of schedule. Well done to all involved in this works.
- Removal of redundant railway was completed on Thyra Road, with the pavement reinstated. Similar works will be completed in future years at designated locations.
- Upcoming works include finalising reseals, Mathoura footpaths, Vallance Court, Moulamein footpaths, Moulamein kerb and gutter, and various maintenance and renewal works as the end of financial year is approaching.

• As construction works are finishing up, focus is being shifted to increased maintenance works, including maintenance grading of unsealed roads. This time also allows for further training opportunities with a focus on Chain of Responsibility coming up in May.

Strategic Property Specialist

- Moulamein Aerodrome site remains advertised for sale through agent.
- 18 Regent Street, Moama (old Moama Pre-school site) has been approved for disposal through an open market approach of Expression of Interest or competitive direct sale at the March Council Meeting. Expression of interest process to be completed inhouse and expected to be advertised during May, with closure date in early June.

Local Committees (Section 355s)

- A tool to track all tasks/requests made by committees has been implemented and is now being used by all council officers who work with committees. This has increased effective communication between officers, Manager Local Committees (MLC) and Committees.
- Community Recovery Officer, funded by NSW Reconstruction Authority has been appointed. CRO has tapped into other Council CROs for the networking opportunity. Commenced mapping services that support community members during and after a natural disaster. CRO is attending S355 meetings with MLC to begin the process of community engagement before moving out into the wider community.

Property and Procurement

- Investigation into an appropriate software platform to appropriately manage contracts and leases continues. Preferred (current) supplier identified and contract being negotiated.
- Reviewing administrative functions within the fleet and property areas in particular. Once complete, PD to be drafted to encompass the fleet management work and some more administrative property work (ie, leasing and licensing).
- A system for staff to request legal support (internally or externally) is set up in Jira and will have an internal policy underpinning it. The Jira system needs some final tweaking before it is rolled out to staff.
- Number of tenders are currently out or due to go out to the market in the next few months, in time for the pre-election banned advertising period. Any public tenders not ready to go in the next two months or so may need to be put on hold until after the election.
- Lease register is still a work in progress. Green Cloud Consulting are working on incorporating it into the compliance module of Tech One – in the interim, process is manual (Excel spreadsheet). A system is needed for managing key dates and ensuring renewals and rent reviews are not missed and all lease documentation is kept current.
- Reviewing administrative functions within the fleet and property areas in particular. Once complete, PD to be drafted to encompass the fleet management work and some more administrative property work (ie, leasing and licensing).

Development Services

- At present the Development Services Team is operating with 4 Senior Staff in place, 4 administration staff, one paraplanner, 3 cadets, a Building Surveyor and two mid-level staff on deck. We also currently have engaged four Consultants. Three of these Consultants work consistently on development applications and planning proposals whilst the third is working predominantly on the development control plan.
- The ratio of senior to junior staff now means that a huge portion of our time is spent mentoring and training staff, along with BAU commitments. This is an investment in the future of the team and our long-term progress and achievement however for the time being, and as predicted and expected our timeframes for applications has slowed down to allow for this quality mentoring to occur. It is predicted

that these time frames will steadily decrease as we move back into our previous timeframes that we were achieving.

Economic Development and Tourism

- Signage for the Wakool Recreation Reserve has now been installed, this includes a new River Country regional map, Wakool town map, camping rules, welcome sign, and toilet signs.
- Council was successful in its application to the Youth Holiday Break Program for conducting Youth Skateboarding workshops.
- Planning is underway for the 2024 Moama Lights and the 2024 Campaspe Murray Business Awards.
- The River Country Silo Art Trail project planning is well underway.
- Staff continue to support various community event organisers to organise and promote their events, as well as progress through Council's event approval process.

Water Services

- 23 leaks for found as part of the Regional Network Leakage Detection Project and fixed by Council Sater and Sewer staff.
- Barham's water pressure has been significantly increased with the commissioning of the new pump station at the water tower after the issue was identified through the CSP. The filtered water mains were also flushed as part of the project after notifying the community.
- Draft Augmentation plans for the Moama water treatment plant for any future black water events are being reviewed by DPIE for approval.
- Council has received funding through the Safe Secure Water Program for essential upgrades to the Moama Sewer Treatment Plant following recommendations from the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan.
- Council has received funding through the Regional Leakage Reduction Program for the installation and establishment of District Metered Areas for active leak detection across Council.

Community Services

• Skateboarding workshops were held to celebrate Youth Week. We had approximately 20 youth attend our sessions. We received very positive feedback from participants, and family members watching on. The staff at Totem (who ran the workshops) commented on the quality of our skate parks and also how well maintained the grounds were, which is a credit to MRC Parks and Gardens Staff.

Corporate Services

- The Financial Sustainability of the Council remains the most significant risk for Council. Restoring Current deficit to a break-even position purely through cost saving measures will require significant service level adjustments that may not be palatable to the community.
- Cyber Security needs to be improved. Review by external party underway.
- No firm buyer for Mathoura Line Road land yet.
- Some instability in the Finance and IT departments due to restructure. Permanent recruitment process in final stages.
- Current Management Accountant Nikki Chalmers has been appointed to the role of Financial Controller.
- Heads of Agreement (HoA) for the Sale of Cobb Highway land has been completed. Due-diligence period extended to 31 May 2024.
- Council Continues its automation journey through the Implementation of the TechOne System.
- Budget for 2024/25 provisionally adopted.

Customer Service

- The Barham Library has registered for the Young Mentors program. It supports older Australians to improve their digital skills by bringing them together with young people in a mentoring capacity, to share digital skills and knowledge. It is a free program for schools and organisations. The weekly one-hour sessions focus specifically on the needs of the older learners and are delivered over a period of six weeks. Along with building confidence of older Australians in using digital technology, people of all ages taking part in the Young Mentors pilot reported increased social connection and understanding across generations. Barham library will be partnering with the local High School to facilitate and coordinate one-hour sessions that are delivered over six weeks with Year 11 students.
- The customer service team is facing a significant challenge as two members, who were trained in Service NSW as well as Council, and one who specialised in cemetery administration, will be transitioning to positions within other business units of the organisation. While we are pleased that they have remained within the business and recognise that they will be valuable assets in their new roles, their departure leaves a notable knowledge gap within the team. The expertise they brought to handling intricate agency-related inquiries is now reduced, posing a challenge in maintaining the same level of service excellence. Additionally, the training timeframes for acquiring proficiency in agency services are not immediate, and with only one training position offered at a time, the team faces the dilemma of resourcing sufficiently. Balancing these demands while ensuring uninterrupted service delivery presents a challenge for the customer service team.
- Our Snap Send Solve users provide feedback via the application with regards to Communication, Satisfaction with the Solve, Speed to Solve and an Overall rating. The majority of our users are satisfied with the speed to solve and the satisfaction with the solve however our communication generally received one star out of five. Our current version of Snap Send Solve, which is free to local councils, offers basic functionalities such as issue reporting, local tagging, and photo attachments and does not allow two way communication or to provide messaging to keep the customer updated. We are investigating an up grade to the current application to a platform that facilitates instant communication between residents and MRC, enables faster response times and updates on issue resolution progress. This real-time feedback loop ensures that residents are kept informed and engaged throughout the process. In the meantime, the Customer Service team are working with other business units to gather feedback on submitted issues, a progress report and aim to close out the issue efficiently. A trial of this process has seen an improvement in communication ratings received from Snap Send Solve and customer satisfaction with response.

ATTACHMENTS

1. April 2024 Monthly Operational Report (under separate cover)

9.2 DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.2.1 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (ARIC) MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2024

File Number:

Author: Sandra Gordon, Manager Governance & Risk

Authoriser: Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting held on 6 May 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council.

DISCUSSION

As attached

ATTACHMENTS

1. Minutes of the ARIC Meeting held on the 6th May 2024 🗓 🛣

MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL Audit Risk & Improvement Committee	6 May 2024
Meeting Minutes	-

MINUTES OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL AUDIT RISK & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ADMINISTRATION OFFICES, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 52 PERRICOOTA ROAD MOAMA ON MONDAY, 6 MAY 2024 AT 4:00 PM

1 OPENING

Welcome to Lawrissa Chan – Audit Office, Nick Bell and Tyson Holt - RSD

2 PRESENT

Richard Ham – Chair, Jean Sutherland – Independent Member, Suzanna Barry – Independent Member, Larrissa Chan – Audit Office (Video), Penny Corkhill – Centium, Nick Bell – RSD Accounting, Tyson Holt – RSD Accounting, Nikki Chalmers, Peter Smith (video), Stephen Fernando, Sandra Gordon.

3 APOLOGIES

Councillor Nikki Cohen, Councillor Neil Gorey, Aubrey Perez - Audit Office

4 PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Audit Risk & Improvement Committee Meeting held on 26 February 2024 be confirmed.

MOVED: Jean Sutherland

SECONDED: Suzanna Barry

4.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Nil

4.3 REPORTS

Lawrissa Chan – Audit Office spoke on the Annual Work Program and the Cyber Security Report and their impact on the upcoming audit.

4.3.2 RSD - INTRODUCTION AND AUDIT PROCESS PRESENTATION

RECOMMENDATION

That the verbal report from Nick Bell - RSD be noted

Nick Bell outlined the Audit Engagement Plan

- that RSD will be at Council on the 21-23 May 2024.
- Assets to be revalued in this audit Water, Sewerage and Stormwater (APV doing the revaluations)
- New item included this audit Key Staff

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MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL Audit Risk & Improvement Committee6 May 2024Meeting Minutes6 May 2024

- RSD appointed for a 3 year period with a possible extension of 2 years.
- Timetable for completion has been set any changes RSD will notify the ARIC.

ACTION: Council to give RSD Tech 1 access so they can do testing as required

4.3.3 CENTIUM - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND BCP INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

That the verbal report from Penny Corkhill – Centium be noted.

Draft internal audit on Emergency Management and Business Continuity Planning is on track, with a proposed meeting on the findings and interim report with Council management on the 16 or 17 May 2024

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil

6 STANDARD AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 FINANCIAL MATTERS

6.1.1 SHELL STATEMENTS 2024/25

RECOMMENDATION

That the ARIC receive and note the Shell Statements for the 2023/24 Financial Year.

Audit Office to review the Shell Statements.

ACTION: Peter Smith to send copy of the Shell Statements to RSD and also to the AO.

6.1.2 2023-24 AUDIT ENGAGEMENT PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

That the ARIC receive and note the Audit Engagement Plan (AEP) for the 2023-24 external audit.

As outlined by RSD earlier in the meeting.

6.1.3 2023-24 FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That the ARIC receive and note the MRC Financial Report to Council to end March 2024.

The format of the Monthly Report has been changed to give a clear and succinct picture at that point in time.

These reports can be influenced by the timing of receiving grants – particularly the FAGS grants.

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MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL Audit Risk & Improvement Committee Meeting Minutes

6 May 2024

6.1.4 DRAFT BUDGET 2024-25

RECOMMENDATION

That the ARIC consider the Draft Budget for 2024-25 and the ten year Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and provide feedback and comment as required to Council.

- Council has resolved to keep the deficit under \$9.6 for the 2024-2025 financial year and to be at zero at the end of the 10 year plan.
- All Council loans will be finalised by Year 6.
- Adjustment required for the loans previously drawn down for the Mathoura and Moama Aged care living facilities these have been paid out
- Defined Benefits Superannuation scheme now only 10 or less employees involved.
- Very conservative estimates factored in for rates growth.
- Budget to be presented to the Extraordinary meeting of Council to be held 14 May 2024, after the period of public display will be at the June Ordinary Council meeting for final adoption.

ACTION: Nikki Chalmers to forward a copy of the Council report to the ARIC members – which includes the assumptions made in formulating the 2024-2025 Draft Budget

6.1.5 MANAGEMENT LETTER - AUDIT FOR YEAR END 30 JUNE 2023 - STATUS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That the ARIC receive and note the status report.

ACTION: Peter Smith to forward the Impairment memo to the Committee

7 OTHER ITEMS

Nil

8 CONCLUSION OF MEETING

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT 5.05 pm

THE NEXT MEETING OF MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL AUDIT RISK & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (ARIC) WILL BE HELD ON 5 AUGUST 2024, COMMENCING AT 4:00 PM, IN ADMINISTRATION OFFICES, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 52 PERRICOOTA ROAD MOAMA.

THESE MINUTES ARE SIGNED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD FO THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUDIT RISK & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE (ARIC) OF THE MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 6 MAY 2024, IN ACCORDANCE WITH A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON 5 AUGUST 2024

..... CHAIR

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9.2.2 INTERNAL AUDIT FRAMEWORK, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CHARTER - FINAL ADOPTION

File Number:

Author: Sandra Gordon, Manager Governance & Risk

Authoriser: Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1. The Internal Audit Framework V#1, the Terms of Reference V#5 and the Charter V#3 be adopted and placed in the Policy Register; and
- 2. All previous versions be rescinded.

DISCUSSION

Under Section 428A of Local Government Act 1993, each Council must have an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC or the Committee) to independently review and provide advice to Council regarding the following aspects of Council's operations:

- Compliance
- Risk management
- Fraud control
- Financial management
- Governance
- Implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies
- Service reviews
- Collection of performance measurement data by Council, and
- Any other matters prescribed by the regulation (i.e. internal audit).

The Local Government Act 1993 (the 'Act'), the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the 'Regulation') and the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW (the Guidelines) require each Council in NSW to have:

- An ARIC that continuously reviews and provides independent advice to Council on how it is functioning and managing risk;
- A robust Risk Management Framework that accurately identifies and mitigates the risks facing Council and its operations; and
- An effective internal audit function that provides independent advice as to whether Council is functioning effectively and Council's internal controls to manage risk are working.

In adopting the Internal Audit Framework, Council has adopted the following recommendations:

- an independent ARIC (not a shared ARIC)
- an outsourced internal audit function.
- The recommended payment method including the payment of superannuation and other expenses; and
- Other requirements as outlined in the document.

The DRAFT Internal Audit Framework, the Terms of Reference and the Charter was adopted at the March 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting and was placed on public display.

Council has received no submissions during the period of public display.

The final documents are attached.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. ARIC Framework V#1 (under separate cover)
- 2. Terms of Reference V#5 😃 🛣
- 3. Internal Audit Charter V#3 🕂 🛣

Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee

Terms of Reference

Version #5

Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW - November 2023



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murray river council	Associated with the ARIC Framework

1 INTRODUCTION

Murray River Council has established an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC or the Committee) in compliance with Section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act), the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) and the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW (the Guidelines).

These <u>Terms of Reference</u> set out the Committee's objectives, authority, composition and tenure, roles and responsibilities, reporting and administrative arrangements.

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of Council's ARIC is to provide independent assurance to Council by monitoring, reviewing and providing advice about Council governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations and overall performance.

2. INDEPENDENCE

The ARIC:

- Is to be independent to ensure it has no real or perceived bias or conflicts of interest that may interfere
 with its ability to act independently and provide Council with robust, objective and unbiased advice and
 assurance.
- Is to have an advisory and assurance role only and is to exercise no administrative functions, delegated financial responsibilities or any management functions of Council.
- Will provide independent advice to Council that is informed by the Council's internal audit and risk
 management activities and information and advice provided by Council employees, relevant external
 bodies and subject matter experts.
- Must always ensure it maintains a direct reporting line to and from Council internal audit function and act as a mechanism for internal audit to report to Council and CEO on matters affecting the performance of the internal audit function.

3. AUTHORITY

Council authorises the ARIC, for the purposes of exercising its responsibilities, to:

- Access any information it needs from Council;
- Use any Council resources it needs;
- Have direct and unrestricted access to the CEO and senior management of Council;
- Seek the CEO's permission to meet with any other Council employee or contractor;
- Discuss any matters with the external auditor or other external parties;
- Request the attendance of any employee at committee meetings, and
- To obtain external legal or other professional advice in line with Council's procurement policies. The CEO's permission is required to expend funds in excess of the budgetary allocation.

Information and documents pertaining to the ARIC are confidential and are not to be made publicly available. ARIC may only release Council information to external parties that are assisting the ARIC to fulfil its responsibilities with the approval of the CEO, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.

4. COMPOSITION AND TENURE

- The Committee will consist of an Independent Chair and two (2) Independent Members who have voting rights and one (1) non-voting Councillor, which is an optional appointment, as required under <u>the</u> <u>Framework</u>.
- The elected Council, by resolution, is to appoint the Chair and Independent Members of the Committee.

ARIC Terms of Reference V#5

Adopted: 28 May 2024

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murray river council	Associated with the ARIC Framework

- All Committee members must meet the independence and eligibility criteria prescribed in the <u>Framework</u>.
- Members will be appointed for up to a four (4) year term. Which will ideally run in parallel with the term of the Council.
- Members can be reappointed for one (1) further term, but the total period of continuous membership cannot exceed eight (8) years. This includes any term as Chair of the Committee.
- Members who have served an eight (8) year term (either as a Member or as Chair) must have a two (2) year break from serving on the Committee before being appointed again.
- To preserve the Committee's knowledge of Council, ideally, no more than one member should retire from the Committee because of rotation in any one (1) year.
- The terms and conditions of each member's appointment to the Committee are to be set out in a letter of appointment.
- New members will be thoroughly inducted to their role and receive relevant information and briefings on their appointment to assist them to meet their responsibilities.
- Prior to approving the reappointment or extension of the Chair's or an Independent Member's term, the Council is to undertake an assessment of the Chair's or Committee Member's performance. Reappointment of the Chair or a Committee Member is also to be subject to that person still meeting the independence and eligibility requirements.
- Members of the Committee must possess and maintain a broad range of skills, knowledge and experience relevant to the operations, governance and financial management of Council, the environment in which Council operates and the contribution that the Committee makes to Council.
- At least one (1) member of the Committee must have accounting or related financial management experience with an understanding of accounting and auditing standards in a local government environment.
- All members should have sufficient understanding of Council's financial reporting responsibilities to be able to contribute to the Committee's consideration of Council's <u>Annual Financial Statements</u>.

5. ROLE

As required under Section 428A of <u>the Act</u>, the role of the Committee is to review and provide independent advice to Council regarding the following aspects of the Council's operations:

- Compliance;
- Risk management;
- Fraud control;
- Financial management;
- Governance;
- Implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies;
- Service reviews;
- Collection of performance measurement data by Council; and
- Internal audit.

The Committee must also provide information to Council for the purpose of improving Council's performance of its functions.

The Committee's specific audit, risk and improvement responsibilities under Section 428A of the Act.

The ARIC will act as a forum for consideration of Council's internal audit function and oversee its planning, monitoring and reporting to ensure it operates effectively.

The Committee has no power to direct external audit or the way it is planned and undertaken but will act as a forum for the consideration of external audit findings.

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The Committee is directly responsible and accountable to Council for the exercise of its responsibilities. In carrying out its responsibilities, the Committee must at all times recognise that primary responsibility for management of Murray River Council rests with the elected Council and the CEO.

The responsibilities of the Committee may be revised or expanded in consultation with, or as requested by, Council from time to time.

6. **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

6.1 INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Chair and Independent Members of the Committee are expected to understand and observe the requirements of the <u>Framework</u>.

Members are also expected to:

- Make themselves available as required to attend and participate in meetings;
- Contribute the time needed to review and understand information provided to it;
- Apply good analytical skills, objectivity and judgement;
- Act in the best interests of Council;
- Have the personal courage to raise and deal with tough issues, express opinions frankly, ask questions that go to the fundamental core of the issue and pursue independent lines of inquiry;
- Maintain effective working relationships with Council;
- Have strong leadership qualities (Chair);
- Lead effective committee meetings (Chair); and
- Oversee Council's internal audit function (Chair).

6.2 COUNCILLOR MEMBER

To preserve the independence of the Committee, the Councillor Member of the committee is a non-voting member. Their role is to:

- Relay to the Committee any concerns Council may have regarding Council and issues being considered by the Committee;
- Provide insights into local issues and the strategic priorities of Council that would add value to the Committee's consideration of agenda items;
- Advise Council (as necessary) of the work of the Committee and any issues arising from it; and
- Assist Council to review the performance of the Committee.

Issues or information the Councillor Member raises with or provides to the Committee must relate to the matters (listed in Clause 6 – Roles of this document) and issues being considered by the Committee.

The Councillor Member must conduct themselves in a non-partisan and professional manner. The Councillor Member must not engage in any conduct that seeks to politicise the activities of the Committee or the internal audit function or that could be seen to do so.

If the Councillor Member engages in such conduct or in any other conduct that may bring the Committee and its work into disrepute, the Chair of the Committee may recommend to Council, that Councillor Member be removed from membership of the Committee. Where Council does not agree to the Committee Chair's recommendation, Council must give reasons for its decision in writing to the Chair.

6.3 CONDUCT

Independent Committee Members are required to comply with Council's <u>Code of Conduct (Committees)</u> <u>Policy</u> (Code of Conduct).

Complaints alleging breaches of Council's <u>Code of Conduct</u> by an Independent Member are to be dealt with in accordance with Council's <u>Code of Conduct Procedures.</u> The CEO must consult with Council before

ARIC Terms of Reference V#5

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taking any disciplinary action against an Independent Member in response to a breach of Council's <u>Code of</u> <u>Conduct.</u>

6.4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Once a year, Committee Members must provide written declarations to Council stating that they do not have any conflicts of interest that would preclude them from being members of the Committee.

The Chair and the Independent Members are 'designated persons' for the purposes of Council's <u>Code of</u> <u>Conduct</u> and must also complete and submit returns of their interests.

Committee Members and observers must declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest they may have in a matter being considered at the meeting at the start of each meeting or as soon as they become aware of the conflict of interest. Where a Committee Member or observer declares a pecuniary or a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest, they must remove themselves from Committee deliberations on the issue.

Details of conflicts of interest declared at meetings must be appropriately minuted.

6.5 STANDARDS

Committee members are to conduct their work in accordance with the <u>International Standards for the</u> <u>Professional Practice of Internal Auditing</u> (the Standards) issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors and <u>Australian Standard 4360: Risk Management</u>, where applicable.

7. WORK PLANS

The work of the Committee is to be thoroughly planned and executed. The Committee must develop a <u>Strategic Workplan</u> every four (4) years to ensure that the matters listed in Section 6 - Roles are reviewed by the Committee and considered by the Internal Auditor/s when developing their risk-based program of internal audits. The <u>Strategic Workplan</u> must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

The Committee may, in consultation with Council, vary the <u>Strategic Workplan</u> at any time to address new or emerging risks. Council may also, by resolution, request the Committee to approve a variation to the <u>Strategic Workplan</u>. Any decision to vary the <u>Strategic Workplan</u> must be made by the Committee.

The Committee must also develop an <u>Annual Workplan</u> to guide its work, and the work of the Internal Auditor/s over the forward year.

The Committee may, in consultation with Council, vary the <u>Annual Workplan</u> to address new or emerging risks. The elected Council may also, by resolution, request the Committee to approve a variation to the <u>Annual Workplan</u>. Any decision to vary the <u>Annual Workplan</u> must be made by the Committee.

When considering whether to vary the <u>Strategic or Annual Workplans</u>, the Committee must consider the impact of the variation on the Internal Auditor's existing workload and the completion of pre-existing priorities and activities identified under the work plan.

8. ASSURANCE REPORTING

The Committee must regularly report to the elected Council to ensure that it is kept informed of matters considered by the Committee and any emerging issues that may influence the strategic direction of Council or the achievement of Council's goals and objectives.

The Committee will provide an update to the elected Council and the CEO of its activities and opinions after every Committee meeting.

The Committee will provide an annual assessment to Council and the CEO on the Committee's work and its opinion on how Council is performing.

The Committee will provide a comprehensive assessment every Council term of the matters listed in Section 6 - Roles to the elected Council and the CEO.

The Committee may at any time report to the elected Council or the CEO on any other matter it deems of sufficient importance to warrant their attention. The Mayor and the Chair of the Committee may also meet at any time to discuss issues relating to the work of the Committee.

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Should the elected Council require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the Chair by resolution. The Chair is only required to provide the information requested by the elected Council where the Chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for Council to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under <u>the Act</u>.

Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the Committee.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

10.1 MEETINGS

- The Committee will meet a minimum of four (4) times per year, including a special meeting to review Council's Financial Statements.
- The Committee can hold additional meetings when significant unexpected issues arise, or if the Chair is asked to hold an additional meeting by a Committee Member, the CEO or the elected Council.
- The Committee may meet up to a total of six (6) times per financial year without the need to seek permission from the Mayor to hold additional meetings.
- Committee meetings can be held in person, by telephone or videoconference. Proxies are not permitted to attend meetings if a Committee Member cannot attend.
- A quorum will consist of a majority of independent voting members.
- ▶ Where the vote is tied, the Chair has the casting vote.
- ► The Chair of the Committee will decide the Agenda for each Committee meeting.
- Minutes are to be maintained of each Committee meeting to preserve a record of the issues considered and the actions and decisions taken by the Committee.
- The CEO or his delegate and the Internal Audit Coordinator (IA Coordinator) should attend Committee meetings as non-voting observers.
- The External Auditor (or their representative) is to be invited to each Committee meeting as an independent observer.
- The Chair can request the Council's Responsible Accounting Officer/ Manager Finance, Manager Governance & Risk, Directors, Councillors and any employee/contractor of Council and any subject matter expert to attend Committee meetings. Where requested to attend a meeting, persons must attend the meeting where possible and provide any information requested.
- Council employees, that are not Managers or Directors, requested to attend the meeting must have the approval of the Director to attend.
- Observers have no voting rights and can be excluded from a meeting by the Chair at any time.
- The Committee can hold closed meetings whenever it needs to discuss confidential or sensitive issues with only voting members of the Committee present.
- The Committee may, on the decision of the Chair, meet separately with the IA Coordinator and Council's External Auditor.

10.2 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Members of the Committee and Council's management should maintain an effective working relationship and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.

In the event of a disagreement between the Committee and the CEO or other senior managers, the dispute is to be resolved by the elected Council.

Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive in writing.

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10.3 SECRETARIAT

The CEO will nominate a Council employee to provide secretariat support to the Committee. The secretariat will ensure the agenda for each meeting and supporting papers are circulated after approval from the chair at least one (1) week before the meeting and ensure that minutes of meetings are prepared and maintained.

Minutes must be approved by the Chair and circulated within two (2) weeks of the meeting to each member.

10.4 RESIGNATION AND DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

Where the Chair or a Committee Member is unable to complete their term or does not intend to seek reappointment after the expiry of their term, they should give two (2) months notice to the Chair and Council (wherever possible) prior to their resignation to allow Council to ensure a smooth transition to a new Chair or Committee Member.

Council can, by resolution, terminate the appointment of the Chair or an Independent Committee Member before the expiry of their term where that person has:

- Breached Council's <u>Code of Conduct (Committees) Policy;</u>
- Performed unsatisfactorily or not to expectations;
- Declared, or is found to be in, a position of a conflict of interest which is unresolvable;
- Been declared bankrupt or found to be insolvent;
- Experienced an adverse change in business status;
- Been charged with a serious criminal offence;
- Been proven to be in serious breach of their obligations under any legislation; or
- Experienced an adverse change in capacity or capability.

The position of a Councillor member on the Committee can be terminated at any time by Council resolution.

10.5 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Committee members that are aware, in advance, that they cannot attend a scheduled meeting, either in person or by video link, they should apply for a leave of absence.

If a Committee member fails to attend two (2) consecutive meetings without a leave of absence or submitting an apology for a meeting, the elected Council can, by resolution, dismiss the Committee member.

A meeting between the Chair and the Committee member should be held to discuss the non-compliance with the Framework, prior to any action taken.

10.6 REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

At least once every Council term, Council must review or arrange for an external review of the effectiveness of the Committee.

These Terms of Reference must be reviewed annually by the Committee and once each Council term by the elected Council. Any substantive changes are to be approved by resolution of a Council meeting.

10. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS

External:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
- Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW.
- > International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing
- Australian Standard 4360: Risk Management

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Internal:

- MRC Policy Code of Conduct (Committees) Policy
- MRC Procedure Code of Conduct Procedures.
- MRC Framework Audit, Risk and Improvement Framework Including

Internal Auditor/s Charter

ARIC Roles and Responsibilities

Definitions and Acronyms:

Term	Definition
ARIC or the Committee	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Chair	The Chair of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
IA Coordinator	Internal Audit Coordinator – An employer of Council that is suitably experienced in the working of Council and an ARIC.
Senior Management	CEO and Directors

11. DOCUMENT CONTROL

V#	Details	Dates	CM9 Reference	Resolutio n No.
1	Initial Issue	17 Oct 2017 to 21 Aug 2018	VF/19/522	
2	Amendment to Section 3.3 to include representatives of the internal auditor as "invitees for specific Agenda items (non-voting)"	21 Aug 2018 to 26 Mar 2019	VF/19/522	
3	Amendments to Section 4.3 added point 5 – include review of financial reports required to be produced under legislation and 4.5 2nd sentence and point 4 – clarify oversight of internal audit activities & communication with int & external auditors	26 Mar 2019 to 8 Feb 2021	VF/19/522	
4	Clause 2 add "the Committee", 4.1 add point 2, 4.5 added point 5 & 7, Clause 5 added 2 points, 6.3 added sentence re agendas	8 Feb 2021 to 28 May 2024	VF/19/522	
5	Based on the OLG - Model Terms of Reference for Local Government ARICs Nov 2023	28 May 2024 to today	VF/19/522	

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy at any time This document is scheduled for review in before 2025.

ARIC Terms of Reference V#5

Adopted: 28 May 2024

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ARIC Terms of Reference V#5

Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee

Internal Audit Charter

Version #3

Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW – November 2023



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1. INTRODUCTION:

Murray River Council has established the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC or Committee) as a key component of Council's Governance Framework and in compliance with the <u>Guidelines for Risk</u> <u>Management and Internal Audit in Local Councils in NSW</u> (Guidelines).

This Charter provides the guidelines for the conduct of the internal audit function at Council and has been approved by the elected Council, taking into account the advice of the ARIC.

2. PURPOSE:

The internal audit function is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve Council's operations. It helps Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. As defined by the <u>International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing - 2017</u> (the Standards).

The internal audit function provides an independent and objective review and advisory service to provide advice to the elected Council, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the ARIC about Council's governance processes, risk management and control frameworks and its external accountability obligations.

It also assists Council to improve its business performance.

3. INDEPENDENCE:

Council's internal audit function is to be independent of Council so it can provide an unbiased assessment of the Council's operations, risk and control activities.

The internal audit function reports functionally to Council's ARIC on the results of completed audits, and for strategic direction and accountability purposes, and reports administratively to the CEO, and/or his delegate, to facilitate day-to-day operations.

Internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the elected Council and Council's management has no role in the exercise of Council's internal audit activities.

The ARIC is responsible for communicating any internal audit issues or information to Council. Should Council require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the Chair by resolution. The Chair may only provide the information requested by Council where the Chair is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the Council to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act).

Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the Committee.

4. DELEGATIONS

The CEO has made the following delegations in relation to the internal audit function of Council:

Be responsible for the coordination of the business, meetings and outcomes of meetings of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.	Director Corporate Services (DCS) Manager Governance & Risk (MGR)
That the Internal Auditors conduct audits on behalf of the ARIC on Council's business units, processes and work practices.	Internal Auditor/s

5. INTERNAL AUDITOR/S

The CEO must consult with the ARIC Chair before appointing or changing the conditions of the Internal Auditor/s, as set out in their contractual agreement with Council. Where dismissal occurs, the CEO must report to the Council advising the reasons why the contract was terminated.

Where the ARIC Chair has any concerns about the treatment of any of the Internal Auditor/s or any action taken that may compromise the Internal Auditor's ability to undertake their functions independently, they can report their concerns to the Council.

The Internal Auditor/s are to confirm at least annually to the ARIC the independence of internal audit activities.

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5.1 INTERNAL AUDITOR/S RESPONSIBILITIES: (SCHEDULE 1)

AUDIT

Internal Audit

- Conduct internal audits as directed by Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee;
- Implement Council's annual and strategic internal audit work plans;
- Monitor the implementation by Council of corrective actions;
- Assist Council to develop and maintain a culture of accountability and integrity;
- Facilitate the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes; and
- Promote a culture of high ethical standards.

External Audit

- Provide input and feedback on the financial statements and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided;
- Review and monitor all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits;
- · Council's implementation of audit recommendations; and
- Provide advice on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides.

RISK

Risk Management

Review and advise:

- If Council's has in place a current and appropriate <u>Risk Management Framework</u> that is consistent with the Australian risk management standard;
- Whether Council's <u>Risk Management Framework</u> is adequate and effective for identifying and managing the risks Council faces, including those associated with individual projects, programs and other activities;
- If risk management is integrated across all levels of Council and across all processes, operations, services, decision-making, functions and reporting;
- Of the adequacy of risk reports and documentation, for example, Council's Risk Register and risk profile;
- Whether a sound approach has been followed in developing risk management plans for major projects or undertakings;
- Whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations;
- ▶ If Council has taken steps to embed a culture which is committed to ethical and lawful behaviour;
- If there is a positive risk culture within Council and strong leadership that supports effective risk management;
- Of the adequacy of staff training and induction in risk management;
- How Council's risk management approach impacts on Council's insurance arrangements;
- Of the effectiveness of Council's management of its assets; and
- Of the effectiveness of business continuity arrangements, including business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans and the periodic testing of these plans.

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Internal Controls

Review and advise:

- Whether Council's approach to maintaining an effective internal audit framework, including over external parties such as contractors and advisors, is sound and effective;
- Whether Council has in place relevant policies and procedures and that these are periodically reviewed and updated;
- Whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the management and exercise of delegations;
- Whether staff are informed of their responsibilities and processes and procedures to implement controls are complied with;
- If Council's monitoring and review of controls is sufficient; and
- If internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately.

Compliance

Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of Council's compliance framework, including:

- If Council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of Council's <u>Risk</u> <u>Management Framework;</u>
- How Council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements; and
- Whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

Fraud and Corruption

Review and advise:

 Of the adequacy and effectiveness of Council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities, including whether Council has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.

Financial Management

Review and advise:

- ▶ If Council is complying with accounting standards and external accountability requirements;
- Of the appropriateness of Council's accounting policies and disclosures;
- Of the implications for Council of the findings of external audits and performance audits and Council's responses and implementation of recommendations;
- Whether Council's financial statement preparation procedures and timelines are sound;
- The accuracy of the Council's annual financial statements prior to external audit, including:
 - Management compliance/representations;
 - Significant accounting and reporting issues;
 - The methods used by Council to account for significant or unusual transactions and areas of significant estimates or judgements;
 - Appropriate management signoff on the statements.
- If effective processes are in place to ensure financial information included in Council's report is consistent with signed financial statements;
- If Council's financial management processes are adequate;
- The adequacy of cash management policies and procedures;

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- If there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:
 - Appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions;
 - Adequate segregation of duties;
 - Timely reconciliation of accounts and balances;
 - Review of unusual and high value purchases.
- If policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of Council are adequate
- ▶ If Council's grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

Governance

Review and advise of the adequacy of Council's Governance Framework, including Council's:

- Decision-making processes;
- Implementation of governance policies and procedures;
- Reporting lines and accountability;
- Assignment of key roles and responsibilities;
- Committee structure;
- Management oversight responsibilities;
- Human resources and performance management activities;
- Reporting and communication activities;
- ► Information and communications technology (ICT) governance; and
- Management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge.

IMPROVEMENT

Strategic Planning

Review and advise:

- Of the adequacy and effectiveness of Council's IP&R processes;
- If appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives; and
- ▶ Whether Council is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

Service reviews and business improvement

Review and advise:

- If Council has robust systems to set objectives and goals to determine and deliver appropriate levels of service to the community and business performance;
- If appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure service delivery to the community and overall performance; and
- how Council can improve its service delivery and Council's performance of its business and functions generally

Performance data and measurement

Review and advise:

 if Council has a robust system to determine appropriate performance indicators to measure the achievement of its strategic objectives;

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- if the performance indicators Council uses are effective; and
- of the adequacy of performance data collection and reporting.

6. AUTHORITY

Council authorises the internal audit function to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records and other documentation and information that the internal audit function considers necessary to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities.

All records, documentation and information accessed while undertaking internal audit activities are to be used solely for the conduct of these activities. The internal audit function and any individual Council employees involved in an audit are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they have access to during an audit.

All internal audit documentation is to remain the property of Council.

Information and documents pertaining to an internal audit are not to be made publicly available. The internal audit function may only release Council information to external parties that are assisting the internal audit function to fulfil its responsibilities with the approval of the CEO, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention.

7. ROLES

The internal audit function is to support Council's ARIC to review and provide independent advice to Council in accordance with Section 428A of the <u>Local Government Act 1993</u> (the Act). This includes conducting internal audits of Council and monitoring the implementation of corrective actions.

The internal audit function is to also play an active role in:

- Developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity;
- Facilitating the integration or risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes; and
- Promoting a culture of high ethical standards.

The internal audit function has no direct authority or responsibility for the activities it reviews nor any responsibility for developing or implementing procedures or systems and does not prepare records or engage in Council functions or activities (except in carrying out its own functions).

7.1 INTERAL AUDIT COORDINATOR

Council's internal audit function is to be coordinated by a Council employee with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its role and responsibilities to Council and the ARIC and will be known as the Internal Audit Coordinator (IA Coordinator). The IA Coordinator must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.

Responsibilities of the IA Coordinator and/or their delegate, include:

- Managing the day-to-day activities of the ARIC;
- Managing Council's internal audit budget;
- Supporting the operation of Council's ARIC;
- Approving internal audit project plans, conducting or supervising audits and assessments and providing independent advice to the ARIC;
- Monitoring Council's implementation of corrective actions that arise from the findings of audits;
- Fulfilling the Committee's <u>Annual Workplan</u> and four-yearly <u>Strategic Workplan</u>;
- Ensuring Council's internal audit activities comply with the Framework (the Guidelines); and
- Contract management and oversight of supplementary external providers (where appropriate).

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7.2 INTERNAL AUDITORS

Council is to contract an external third-party provider to undertake its internal audit activities.

To ensure the independence of the external provider, the IA Coordinator is to ensure the external provider:

- Does not conduct any audits on specific Council operations or areas that they have worked on within the last two years;
- Is not the same provider conducting Council's external audit;
- ▶ Is not the auditor of any contractors of Council that may be possibly subject to the internal audit; and
- ▶ Is able to meet the Council's obligations under the Framework (the Guidelines).

The IA Coordinator must consult with the ARIC and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) regarding the appropriateness of the skills, knowledge and experience of any external provider before they are engaged by Council.

8. PERFORMING INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES

The work of the internal audit function is to be thoroughly planned and executed.

Council's ARIC must develop a strategic plan every four years to ensure that all matters listed in <u>Internal</u> <u>Audit Functions Responsibilities (Schedule 1)</u> are reviewed by the Committee and the internal audit function over each Council term. The <u>Strategic Workplan</u> must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

The Committee is to also develop an <u>Annual Workplan</u> to guide the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.

All internal audit activities are to be performed in a manner that is consistent with relevant professional standards including the <u>Standards</u> and <u>Australian Standard 4360: Risk Management.</u>

The Internal Auditor/s are to provide the findings and recommendations of internal audits to the ARIC at the end of each audit. Each report is to include a response from the relevant Director.

The IA Coordinator is to establish an ongoing monitoring system to follow up Council's progress in implementing corrective actions.

The Internal Auditor/s will sign off on actions when they are fully implemented.

The CEO or his delegate, in consultation with the ARIC, is to develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of Council's internal audit function.

The internal audit function is to ensure that the ARIC is advised at each of the committee's meetings of the internal audit activities completed during that quarter, progress in implementing the Annual Workplan and progress made implementing corrective actions.

9. CONDUCT

Internal audit personnel are required to comply with Council's <u>Code of Conduct (Committees) Policy</u> (Code of Conduct).

Complaints about breaches of Council's <u>Code of Conduct</u> by internal audit personnel are to be dealt with in accordance with the Murray River Council <u>Code of Conduct Procedures</u>.

The CEO must consult with Council's ARIC before any disciplinary action taken against the Internal Auditor/s in response to a breach of Council's <u>Code of Conduct.</u>

Internal Auditor/s are also required to comply with the <u>Code of Ethics for the Professional Practice of</u> <u>Internal Auditing</u> issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

10.1 ARIC MEETINGS

The internal audit function and other relevant Council employees will attend ARIC meetings as an independent non-voting observer.

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The internal audit function and other relevant employees can be excluded from meetings by the Committee at any time.

The internal audit function must meet separately with the ARIC at least once per year.

The Internal Auditor/s can meet with the ARIC Chair at any time, as necessary, in between committee meetings.

10.2 EXTERNAL AUDIT

Internal and external audit activities will be coordinated to help ensure the adequacy of overall audit coverage and to minimise duplication of effort.

Periodic meetings and contact between internal and external audit may be held to discuss matters of mutual interest and to facilitate coordination.

External audit will have full and free access to all internal audit plans, working papers and reports.

10.3 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The internal audit function should maintain an effective working relationship with Council and the ARIC and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way via discussion and negotiation.

In the event of a disagreement between the internal audit function and Council, the dispute is to be resolved by the CEO and/or the ARIC.

Disputes between the internal audit function and ARIC are to be resolved by the Council.

Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the <u>Departmental Chief Executive</u> in writing.

11. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Council's ARIC must review the performance of the Internal Auditor/s each year and report its findings to the Council.

A strategic review of the ARIC must be conducted each Council term that considers the views of an external party with a strong knowledge of internal audit on the performance of the Internal Auditor/s and reported to the Council.

This charter is to be reviewed annually by the Committee and once each Council term by the Council. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the Council.

This Charter was reviewed by:

Person/Position	Signature/ Resolution:	Date:
Internal Auditor/s		
ARIC		
CEO/ Executive Leadership Team		
Council		

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12. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, DEFINITIONS & ACRONYMS

External:

- OLG Local Government Act 1993
- Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit in Local Councils in NSW November 2023
- International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing 2017
- Australian Standard 4360: Risk Management.

Internal:

- MRC Policy Code of Conduct (Committees) Policy
- MRC Procedure Code of Conduct Procedure

Definitions:

Term	Definition
ARIC or the Committee	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
The Framework (the Guidelines)	Internal Audit Framework – current version
Internal Auditor/s	Suitably qualified contractors engaged by Council to undertake Internal Audits on Council's processes, practises, documentation and other matters undertaken by Council within the individual business units
Internal Audit Coordinator	An employer of Council that is suitably experienced in the working of Council and an ARIC.

13. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version No.	Details	Dates	CM9 Reference	Resolution No.
1	Initial Issue	6 Sept 2018 to 25 Nov 2019	VF/19/522	TBA
2	Changes to Item 7 3rd Paragraph – added to end – "The Council may by resolution request copies of specific internal audit reports" Last sentence to read – "the internal audit activity will validate those assertions before recommending closure of the issue to the Audit & Risk Committee"	25 Nov 2019 to 28 May 2024	VF/19/522	N/A
3	Based on the OLG - Model Internal Charter Local Government ARICs Nov 2023	28 May 2024 to today	VF/19/522	

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this policy at any time This Charter is scheduled for review in before 2028

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ARIC Charter V#3

9.2.3 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW - PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

File Number:

Author:Nikki Chalmers, Management AccountantAuthoriser:Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Adopt the budget variations as detailed within the report and any subsequent changes made to those votes, in Council's estimates of income and expenditure for 2023/2024 financial year, which includes changes to the 2023/2024 Capital Listing as updated per Attachment 3 and the following Reserve movements:
 - a. to fund Capital activities:
 - i. \$2,925,442 from General reserve
 - ii. \$1,085,375 from Sewer reserve
 - iii. \$991,036 from Water reserve
 - iv. \$2,449,621 from Waste reserve; and
 - b. from Operational activities:
 - i. \$4,794,646 to the General reserve
 - ii. \$2,915,165 to the Sewer reserve
 - iii. \$2,850,330 to the Water reserve
 - iv. \$1,776,776 to the Waste reserve.

BACKGROUND

Clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulations) requires a Council's responsible accounting officer to prepare and submit a quarterly budget review statement to the governing body of Council. The quarterly budget review statement must show, by reference to the estimated income and expenditure that is set out in the operational plan adopted by council for the relevant year, a revised estimate of income and expenditure for that year.

It also requires the budget review statement to include a report by the responsible accounting officer as to whether they consider the statement indicates council to be in a satisfactory financial position (regarding its original budget) and if not, to include recommendations for remedial action.

Legislative requirements together with the implementation of a formal reporting mechanism will ensure that councils have a robust and transparent budget reporting framework.

DISCUSSION

Budget Position as of 31 March 2024

Overall net budget position, has reduced on the 2023/24 current budget deficit of (\$8,406,917) to a 2023/24 revised budget deficit of (\$4,793,565) – an overall improvement of \$3,613,353 at end of 31 March 2024.

Income Statement - Consolidated

The March 2024 quarter review has revised the estimated operating surplus as of June 2024 to \$17,559,425. This is an increase of \$9,151,936 from the current approved budgeted operating surplus of \$8,407,489 predominately due to increases in revenue.

The information below shows the movements for the March 2024 quarter, as well as the net budget variances resolved by Council outside the quarterly review process.

Murray River Council

Budget review for the quarter ended - 31 March 2024

Consolidated - Income & Expenses

	ORIGINAL	CURRENT	REVISED	BUDGET VARIATIONS	QUARTER BUDGET	TOTAL	YTD
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Via Council Resolutions	REVIEW Movement	Quarterly Revisions	Actual
Income from Continuing Operations	2024	2024	2024	Ouside QBR	2024	Budget Improvement Budget Deterioration	2024
Rates and Annual Charges	21,044,662	21,449,830	21,503,854		54,024	54,024	16,223,125
User Charges and Fees	7,769,384	8,446,514	13,086,585		4,640,071	4,640,071	11,416,320
Interest and Investment Revenue	1,797,010	2,247,306	2,247,306				1,287,442
Other Revenues	1,962,700	1,811,605	1,445,029		(366,576)	(366,576)	964,674
Grants & Contributions for Operational Purposes	20,674,966	22,946,648	22,946,648				5,634,498
Grants and Contributions for Capital Purposes	13,695,405	16,686,142	20,942,758	450,000	3,806,616	4,256,616	19,664,227
Other Income	256,630	421,940	530,288		108,347	108,347	411,814
Gain on Sale of Assets	4,183,000	-	-			-	815,358
Total Income from Continuing Operations	71,383,757	74,009,986	82,702,469	450,000	8,242,482	8,692,482	52,676,432
Expenses from Continuing Operations							
Employee Benefits and On-costs	(19,906,606)	(19,754,766)	(19,587,023)	150,000	17,743	167,743	(14,931,986)
Borrowing Costs	(120,240)	(111,031)	(111,031)			-	(31,919)
Materials and Contracts	(21,655,944)	(24,064,709)	(24,041,578)	(180,000)	203,131	23,131	(14,583,580)
Depreciation and Amortisation	(24,449,000)	(20,344,177)	(20,344,177)		-	-	(15,258,133)
Other Expenses	(1,242,930)	(1,327,815)	(1,059,235)		268,580	268,580	(752,925)
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	(67,374,720)	(65,602,497)	(65,143,044)	(30,000)	489,454	459,454	(49,299,568)
NET OPERATING RESULT FROM CONTINUING							
OPERATIONS SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	4,009,037	8,407,489	17,559,425	420,000	8,731,936	9,151,936	3,376,863
Other Funding Movements							
Total Capital Expenditure	(33,984,758)	(39,229,537)	(40,044,353)	(650,000)	(164,816)	(814,816)	(23,949,478)
Total Transfers From / (To) Reserves	(1,993,510)	(99,684)	(4,885,443)	200,000	(4,985,759)	(4,785,759)	(11,134,411)
Sale Proceeds from Sale of Assets	6,524,500	1,227,125	1,258,376		31,251	31,251	975,358
Total Loan Borrowings	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000		-	-	-
Total Loan Repayments	(596,810)	(526,760)	(526,760)		-		(195,330)
Deferred Debtor Advances Repaid	92,540	(29,727)	1,014		30,740	30,740	(12,995)
Depreciation Contra Reversal	24,449,000	20,344,177	20,344,177	-		-	15,258,133
TOTAL OTHER FUNDING MOVEMENTS SURPLUS/							
(DEFICIT)	(4,009,038)	(16,814,406)	(22,352,989)	(450,000)	(5,088,583)	(5,538,583)	(20,929,238)
TOTAL BUDGET SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	(0)	(8,406,917)	(4,793,565)	(30,000)	3,643,353	3,613,353	(17,552,374)
NET OPERATING RESULT BEFORE CAPITAL ITEMS							
SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	(9,686,368)	(8,278,653)	(3,383,333)	(30,000)	4,925,320	4,895,320	(16,287,364)

Income from Continuing Operations

Projected 2023/24 financial year budgeted revenues are estimated to increase by \$8,692,482 to \$82,702,469. User Charges & Fees and Grants & Contributions for Capital Purposes are the main increases, however offset by other revenue decreases. Detailed breakdown of each variation is shown in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2. A summary of the net variations is shown below:

Budget review for the quarter ended - 31 March 2024 Consolidated - Income & Expenses

Income from Continuing Operations	ORIGINAL Budget 2024	CURRENT Budget 2024	REVISED Budget 2024	BUDGET VARIATIONS Via Council Resolutions Ouside QBR	QUARTER BUDGET REVIEW Movement 2024	TOTAL Quarterly Revisions Budget Improvement Budget Deterioration	YTD Actual 2024
Income nom continuing operations	2024	2024	2024	Ouside QDiv	2024	budget betenoration	2024
Rates and Annual Charges	21,044,662	21,449,830	21,503,854		54,024	54,024	16,223,125
User Charges and Fees	7,769,384	8,446,514	13,086,585		4,640,071	4,640,071	11,416,320
interest and investment Revenue	1,797,010	2,247,306	2,247,306				1,287,442
Other Revenues	1,962,700	1,811,605	1,445,029		(366,576)	(366,576)	964,674
Grants & Contributions for Operational Purposes	20,674,966	22,946,648	22,946,648		-	-	5,634,498
Grants and Contributions for Capital Purposes	13,695,405	16,686,142	20,942,758	450,000	3,806,616	4,256,616	19,664,227
Other Income	256,630	421,940	530,288		108,347	108,347	411,814
Gain on Sale of Assets	4,183,000	-	-		-	-	815,358
Total Income from Continuing Operations	71,383,757	74,009,986	82,702,469	450,000	8,242,482	8,692,482	52,676,432

Expenses from Continuing Operations

Projected 2023/24 financial year budgeted operating expenditures are estimated to decrease by \$489,454 to (\$65,143,044), relating to decreases in employee costs, materials & contracts and other expenses. Detailed breakdown of each variation is shown in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2. A summary of the net variations is shown below:

Murray River Council

Budget review for the quarter ended - 31 March 2024 Consolidated - Income & Expenses

comonautea meome a expenses							
	ORIGINAL	CURRENT	REVISED	BUDGET VARIATIONS	QUARTER BUDGET	TOTAL	YTD
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Via Council Resolutions	REVIEW Movement	Quarterly Revisions	Actual
						Budget Improvement	
Expenses from Continuing Operations	2024	2024	2024	Ouside QBR	2024	Budget Deterioration	2024
Employee Benefits and On-costs	(19,906,606)	(19,754,766)	(19,587,023)	150,000	17,743	167,743	(14,931,986)
Borrowing Costs	(120,240)	(111,031)	(111,031)				(31,919)
Materials and Contracts	(21,655,944)	(24,064,709)	(24,041,578)	(180,000)	203,131	23,131	(14,583,580)
Depreciation and Amortisation	(24,449,000)	(20,344,177)	(20,344,177)				(15,258,133)
Other Expenses	(1,242,930)	(1,327,815)	(1,059,235)		268,580	268,580	(752,925)
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	(67,374,720)	(65,602,497)	(65,143,044)	(30,000)	489,454	459,454	(49,299,568)

Other Funding Movements

Projected 2023/24 financial year budgeted capital expenditure and other funding movements are estimated to decrease by \$5,088,583 to a deficit of (\$22,352,989). This is predominately due to movements in reserves. Detailed breakdown of each variation is shown in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2, Attachment 3 details the updated Capital Listing. A summary of the net variations is shown below:

Murray River Council

Budget review for the quarter ended - 31 March 2024 Consolidated - Income & Expenses

	ORIGINAL Budget	CURRENT Budget	REVISED Budget	BUDGET VARIATIONS Via Council Resolutions	QUARTER BUDGET REVIEW Movement	TOTAL Quarterly Revisions Budget Improvement	YTD Actual
Other Funding Movements	2024	2024	2024	Ouside QBR	2024	Budget Deterioration	2024
Total Capital Expenditure	(33,984,758)	(39,229,537)	(40,044,353)	(650,000)	(164,816)	(814,816)	(23,949,478)
Total Transfers From / (To) Reserves	(1,993,510)	(99,684)	(4,885,443)	200,000	(4,985,759)	(4,785,759)	(11,134,411)
Sale Proceeds from Sale of Assets	6,524,500	1,227,125	1,258,376		31,251	31,251	975,358
Total Loan Borrowings	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000		-	-	-
Total Loan Repayments	(596,810)	(526,760)	(526,760)		-		(195,330)
Deferred Debtor Advances Repaid	92,540	(29,727)	1,014		30,740	30,740	(12,995)
Depreciation Contra Reversal	24,449,000	20,344,177	20,344,177				15,258,133
TOTAL OTHER FUNDING MOVEMENTS SURPLUS/							
(DEFICIT)	(4,009,038)	(16,814,406)	(22,352,989)	(450,000)	(5,088,583)	(5,538,583)	(20,929,238)

Performance Ratios

A summary of the changes to Performance Ratios is provided in the table below. Please note the following regarding Ratios:

- Operating Performance Ratio has improved in the Revised Budget to (5.48%) from the Current Budget (14.44%) as there has been increases of approx. \$4.4m to operational revenue sources, predominately User Charges & Fees as well as a reduction of operational expenses of approx. \$459k.
- The increase in operational revenue and low debt repayments sees an improvement for the Debt Serving Cover Ratio, which in the Revised Budget is 26.77 from the Current Budget of 19.09.

Murray River Council

Budget review for the quarter ended - 31 March 2024 Consolidated - Income & Expenses

	Benchmark	ORIGINAL	CURRENT	REVISED	YTD
	Ratios	Budget			
Performance Ratios		2024	-	-	
Operating Performance Ratio	> 0.00%	-25.92%	-14.44%	-5.48%	-53.12%
Unrestricted Current Ratio	>1.50x	3.26	2.49	1.99	3.36
Own Source Revenue	> 60.00%	51.85%	46.45%	46.93%	51.97%
Debt Servicing Cover Ratio	>2.00x	20.76	19.09	26.77	- 4.39
Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding	< 10.00%	11.40%	11.19%	11.16%	16.20%
Building and Infrastructure Renewal Ratio	>100.00%	80%	94%	90%	58%
Per Capita Operating Expense	Decrease Yearly	\$ 5,189	\$ 5,052	\$ 5,017	\$ 3,797

ALL FUNDS STATEMENT

The following statement is made in accordance with Clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005.

It is in my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Murray River Council for quarter ended 31 March 2024 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30 June 2024 will be satisfactory /-unsatisfactory at year end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure.



Management Accountant, Murray River Council

Date: 15 May 2024

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

2. Strategic Theme 2: A Place of Progressive Leadership

2.6 - Provide clear, concise and consistent information that is easily accessible to our customers - Improve externally provided information and communication.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Refer to annual budget.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

- 1. Inability to manage council financial resources.
- 2. Long term financial sustainability of Council is compromised.

• How can it happen?

- 1. Inadequate financial reporting and checks and balances.
- 2. Operating deficits (before capital items) are not addressed urgently.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

- 1. Risk that council will not know if it is managing its financial resources effectively.
- 2. Council unable to meet service obligations, deterioration of asset quality.

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

- 1. Unlikely
- 2. Likely

• Adequacy of existing controls?

- 1. Adequate
- 2. Need Improvements
- Treatment options to mitigate the risk?
 - 1. Adequate and timely financial planning and reporting
 - 2. Addressing both cost and revenue side issues to improve operating deficit.

CONCLUSION

While Murray River Council's budget and financial performance is manageable as at the end of September 2023, ongoing operating deficits at current or higher levels will have significant impacts on the medium to long term financial sustainability.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Attachment 1 Mar 2024 Qtr Budget Review Detailed Movement Report 🕂 🖺
- 2. Attachment 2 Mar 2024 Qtr Budget Review Outside QBRS Movement 🗓 🛣
- 3. Attachment 3 Mar 2024 Qtr Budget Review Capital Listing 🕹 🛣
- 4. Attachment 4 Mar 2024 Qtr Budget Review Revised Financial Statements 🕂 🖾

Attachment 1 - December 2023 Quarterly Budget Review

/ariations for the December 2023 quarter budget review

Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement Furthe
Rates and Annual Charges	Rates & Annual Charges	Sewer Fund	\$3,065,640	\$3,542,255	\$476,615 Increase in Rates Revenue to align with Actual.
<u> </u>	Rates & Annual Charges	Water Fund	\$3,182,000	\$3,342,659	\$160,659 Increase in Rates Revenue to align with Actual.
	Rates & Annual Charges	General Fund	\$12,332,920	\$12,347,476	\$14,556 Increase in Rates Revenue to align with Actual.
	Total Rates and Annual Charges		\$18,580,560	\$19,232,390	\$651,830
User Fees and Charge	Community Services (DOHA)	General Fund	\$64,200	\$66,720	\$2,520 Increase fees component based on increase in g required to be a percentage of the funding recei
	Community Services (TfNSW)	General Fund	\$41,200	\$44,385	\$3,185 Increase fees component based on increase in g component is required to be a percentage of the
	Liquid Trade Waste	Sewer Fund	\$332,500	\$19,426	(\$313,074) Revise down budget for Liquid Trade Waste ann
	Water User Fees & Charges	Water Fund	\$2,732,050	\$2,778,492	\$46,442 Increases to various Water user fees & charges k
	Waste gate fees	Waste Fund	\$2,600,000	\$3,538,057	\$938,057 Increase budgeted fees based on actual received
	Total User Fees and Charges		\$5,769,950	\$6,447,080	\$677,130
nterest and Investment Revenue	e Retirement Village Loans	General Fund	\$8,860	\$75,117	\$66,257 Update budget based on actuals as Retirement \
nterest and Investment Revenue	e Retirement Village Loans Investment Income	General Fund General Fund	\$8,860 \$663,320	\$75,117 \$1,047,359	\$66,257 Update budget based on actuals as Retirement \ \$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actua
nterest and Investment Revenue	-				
	Investment Income		\$663,320	\$1,047,359	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actua
nterest and Investment Revenue Grants and Contributions - Operating	Investment Income		\$663,320	\$1,047,359	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actual \$450,296 \$25,000 Account for Grant Funding received re NSW Cad
Grants and Contributions -	Investment Income Total Grants & Contributions - Operational	General Fund	\$663,320	\$1,047,359 \$1,122,476	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actual \$450,296 \$25,000 Account for Grant Funding received re NSW Cad \$21,777 Update Grant Funding re DOHA, original budget were not available.
Grants and Contributions -	Investment Income Total Grants & Contributions - Operational Start Strong Cadet Program	General Fund General Fund	\$663,320 \$672,180	\$1,047,359 \$1,122,476 \$25,000	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actual \$450,296 \$25,000 Account for Grant Funding received re NSW Cad \$21,777 Update Grant Funding re DOHA, original budget were not available. \$31,849 Update Grant Funding re Community Services Tf prior year as details were not available.
Grants and Contributions -	Investment Income Total Grants & Contributions - Operational Start Strong Cadet Program Department of Health & Aged Services (DOHA) Community Services TfNSW Reconnecting Regional NSW	General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund	\$663,320 \$672,180 - \$622,270	\$1,047,359 \$1,122,476 \$25,000 \$644,047 \$443,851 \$56,855	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actual \$450,296 \$25,000 Account for Grant Funding received re NSW Cad \$21,777 Update Grant Funding re DOHA, original budget were not available. \$31,849 Update Grant Funding re Community Services Tf prior year as details were not available. \$56,855 Grant Funding predominately for FY23, however update budget to reflect actual.
Grants and Contributions -	Investment Income Total Grants & Contributions - Operational Start Strong Cadet Program Department of Health & Aged Services (DOHA) Community Services TfNSW	General Fund General Fund General Fund General Fund	\$663,320 \$672,180 - \$622,270	\$1,047,359 \$1,122,476 \$25,000 \$644,047 \$443,851	\$384,039 Increase investment revenue to align with actua \$450,296 \$25,000 Account for Grant Funding received re NSW Cad \$21,777 Update Grant Funding re DOHA, original budget were not available. \$31,849 Update Grant Funding re Community Services Tf prior year as details were not available. \$56,855 Grant Funding predominately for FY23, however

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grant funding to DOHA convicts. For component is
grant funding re DOHA services. Fee component is eived.
grant funding re Community Services TfNSW. Fee ne funding received.
nual charges based on actual. based on actual. ed.
: Village loans now closed.
al.
det Program in Development Services.
et was an estimate based on prior year as details
TfNSW, original budget was an estimate based on
er recognition is as per AASB1058 (on receipt),
er operational repair costs.

			2023/24 Year	2023/24 Year	
Grants and Contributions - Capital	Parks Development Contributions	General Fund	\$102,410	\$159,519	\$57,109 Update budget relating to Development Contribu
	Roads Development Contributions	General Fund	\$276,245	\$451,220	\$174,975 Update budget relating to Development Contribu
:	Stormwater Development Contributions	General Fund	\$70,440	\$100,170	\$29,730 Update budget relating to Development Contribu
	Fixing Local Roads R4	General Fund	\$780,000	\$1,180,000	\$400,000 Grant Funding associated with expenditure broug costing.
	Kyalite Road Widening	General Fund	\$1,280,000	-	(\$1,280,000) Grant Funding removed (and associated expendit
	Regional & Local Road Repair Program (RLRRP)	General Fund	\$3,617,772	\$2,417,772	(\$1,200,000) RLRRP Funding reallocated to cover operational r
I	Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund (RERRF)	General Fund	-	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000 RERRF (which is replacing RLRRP) Funding brough being utilised for ooperational.
	Water Developer Contributions	Water Fund	\$550,000	\$1,019,273	\$469,273 Increase regarding Developer Contributions to ali
	Sewer Developer Contributions	Sewer Fund	\$150,000	\$371,269	\$221,269 Increase regarding Developer Contributions to ali
	Waste Developer Contributions	Waste Fund	\$50,380	\$65,000	\$14,620 Increase regarding Developer Contributions to ali
	Bartlett St Footpath	General Fund	\$495,000	-	(\$495,000) Removal of Grant funding associated with Bartlet
	Total Grants & Contributions - Capital		\$7,372,247	\$6,964,223	(\$408,024)
	Statewide Welling Rebate	General Fund	\$65,000	\$61,277	(\$3,723) Budget was based on estimate of Wellbeing reba
	Aboriginal Communities Program	Sewer Fund	\$49,000	\$24,500	(\$24,500) Split the budget for Aboriginal Communities Prog
	Aboriginal Communities Program	Water Fund	-	\$24,500	\$24,500 Split the budget for Aboriginal Communities Prog
	Water Fund revenue	Water Fund	\$97,000	\$103,903	\$6,903 Various increases to other revenue within Water
	Compliance Infringements	General Fund	\$2,000	\$11,900	\$9,900 Increase revenue based on actual invoiced / recei
	Total Other Revenue		\$213,000	\$226,080	\$13,080
Lease Revenue	Caravan Park lease revenue	General Fund	-	\$158,149	\$158,149 Increase of Caravan Park lease revenue based on
	Moama Market Lease	General Fund	-	\$11,182	\$11,182 Update budget based on actual for lease income.
	Total Lease Revenue		-	\$169,331	\$169,331
	Total Revenue - Budget Adjustments		\$33,682,209	\$36,616,333	\$2,934,124
OPERATING EXPENDITURE					
Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement Further
Employee Benefits and Oncosts	Waste Overhead Allocation	Waste Fund	-	(\$356,364)	(\$356,364) Account for Waste Overhead budget, not include
	Overhead Allocation	General Fund	\$1,061,000	\$1,417,364	\$356,364 Account for Waste Overhead budget, not include
			,	, ,,	
	Total Employee Benefit & Oncost		\$1,061,000	\$1,061,000	

her Details ibutions (Parks) based on actual received. butions (Roads) based on actual received. butions (Stormwater) based on actual received. bught forward to obtain materials at reduced / bulk diture) as project deferred to FY25. al repair costs. ight forward to fund capital program with RLRRP align with actual. align with actual. align with actual. lett St footpath as no funding available. bate, updated based on actual. ogram between Water & Sewer entities. ogram between Water & Sewer entities. er entity. ceived. on actual and updated estimate for FY24. ie. ner Details ded in Original budget. ded in Original budget.

Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Further
Materials and Contracts	SRV Budget	General Fund	(\$142,850)	(\$33,064)	5109 /86	ction in budget relating to Special Rates Vari nditure.
	Community Services	General Fund	(\$317,168)	(\$231,761)		ction of expenditure relating to DOHA & Con oyee costs under grant funding.
	Reconnecting Regional NSW	General Fund	-	(\$20,700)	<mark>(\$20,700)</mark> Upda fundi	te budget expense based on actual, expendi ng.
	Start Strong Cadet Program	General Fund	-	(\$25,000)	(\$25,000) Unive	ersity Fees for Start Strong Cadet Program.
	Risk & Governance	General Fund	-	(\$10,000)	(\$10,000) Addit	ional consulting costs for Governance Invest
	Human Resources	General Fund	(\$80,000)	(\$50,000)	\$30,000 Redu	ction in budget for general adhoc items afte
	Regional & Local Road Repair Program (RLRRP)	General Fund	-	(\$691,049)		associated with RLRRP operational funding n, balance relates to employee costs which v
	Gravel Pits	General Fund	(\$56,000)	(\$295,000)	(\$239,000) Incre	ased Gravel Pit costs due to clean up require
	Plant Recovery	General Fund	\$6,151,509	\$6,317,573	\$166,064 Incre	ase to Plant Recovery based on chagnes acro
	Project Management Recovery	General Fund	\$3,194,498	\$3,034,008		ction in Project Management recovery due t
	Training	General Fund	(\$332,625)	(\$269,216)	563,409	ction in Council wide training costs to align v e year.
	Vaulation Fees	General Fund	(\$70,900)	(\$74,583)	(\$3,683) Incre	ase to align with actual realtes to property va
	Finance Contractors	General Fund	-	(\$110,520)	(\$110,520) Acco	unt for budget to cover CFO & Financial Cont
	Total Materials and Contracts		\$8,286,464	\$7,480,688	(\$805,776)	
Borrowing Costs	Retirement Village Loans	General Fund	(\$8,860)	\$349	\$9,209 Upda close	ted based on actual, refund of prior year into d.
	Total Borrowing Costs		(\$8,860)	\$349	\$9,209	
	Total Operational Expenditure - Budget Adjustments		\$9,338,604	\$8,542,037	(\$796,567)	

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ariation (SRV) after accounting for actual
Community Services TfNSW due to utilisation of
nditure relates to Reconnecting Regional NSW Grant
l.
restigation.
fter revision of actual expenditure.
ng reallocated to align with actual. Funding is hwere previously unfunded.
ired from recent flood / rain events.
cross Council wide to estimated plant use.
e to other variations across Council.
n with actual and what is estimated for remainder
y valuations from Valuer General NSW.
ontractor roles.
interest accrued. Retirement Village loans now

Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Further Details
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE						
Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Further Details
Council Own Funding	Supplier Portal	General Fund	(\$43,000)	-	\$43,000 (Capital Project relating to Supplier project deferred to FY25.
Grant Funding	Fixing Local Roads R4	General Fund	-	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000) E	Expenditure under Grant Funding brought forward to utilise reduced / bulk pricing on materials.
Grant Funding	Kyalite Road Widening	General Fund	(\$1,415,013)	(\$10,000)	\$1,405,013 F	Project removed as deferred to FY25, small amount left for any pre project works required.
Grant Funding	Regional Sealed Roads	General Fund	(\$1,940,003)	(\$2,075,016)	(\$135,013)	ncrease in road sealing costs as Kyalite Road Widening deferred and to enable meeting Block Grant funding.
Grant Funding	Bartlett St Footpath	General Fund	(\$635,000)	(\$140,000)	\$495.000	Removal of capital expenses associated with removal of grant funding re Bartlett St footpath project.
Council Own Funding	Picnic Point Caravan Park	General Fund	-	(\$33,000)	(\$33,000) F	Private over head power defect rectification as directed from Essential Energy Audit.
Reserve Funding						
	Total Other Capital Expenditure		(\$4,033,016)	(\$2,658,016)	\$1,375,000	
	Total Capital Expenditure - Budget Adjustments		(\$4,033,016)	(\$2,658,016)	\$1,375,000	

Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Further Details
OTHER FUNDING MOVEMENTS						
Budget Group	Budget Item	Fund Allocation	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Further Details
Reserve Movement	Meninya Street South Car Park	General Fund	\$1,975	-	(\$1,975) Re	moval of S94 funding associated with Project being placed on hold.
	Water Reserve Movements	Water Fund	(\$1,372,804)	(\$2,080,581)	(\$707,777) Up	date to reserve movements for changes within Water Fund to balance entity back to nil.
	Sewer Reserve Movements	Sewer Fund	(\$844,946)	(\$1,205,256)	(\$360,310) Up	date to reserve movements for changes within Sewer Fund to balance entity back to nil.
	Waste Reserve Movements	Waste Fund	\$1,750,746	\$1,109,433	(\$641,313) Up	date to reserve movements for changes within Waste Fund to balance entity back to nil.
	Plant Reserve Movemetns	General Fund	(\$2,617,460)	(\$2,849,140)	(\$231,680) Up	date to reserve movements for changes within Plant Fund to balance entity back to nil.
	Total Reserve Movements		(\$3,082,489)	(\$5,025,544)	(\$1,943,055)	
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	Council wide property sales	General Fund	\$10,283,000	\$354,000	(59.979.000)	timated sales of Council Wide property, majority have been deferred to FY25 due to timing of e sales.
	Total Proceeds from Sale of Assets		\$10,283,000	\$354,000	(\$9,929,000)	
Loan Repayments	Retirement Village Loans	General Fund	(\$70,050)	-		moval of loan repayments relating to Retirement Villages as loan since repaid.
		General Fund			-	
	Total Borrowing Movements		(\$70,050)	-	\$70,050	
Deferred Debtor Advances Repaid	Retirement Village Loans	General Fund	\$70,050	(\$52,217)		moval of deferred debtos advances and update based on actual (refund issued for prior oices) as loan since repaid / closed.
	Total Deferred Debtor Advances Repaid		\$70,050	(\$52,217)	(\$122,267)	
	Total Other Funding Movements - Budget Adjustments		\$7,200,511	(\$4,723,761)	(\$11,924,272)	
	Net December 2023	Quarter Budget Move	ement		(\$8,411,715)	

Attachment 2 - Approved Variations Outside QBR Process Quarterly Budget Review

/ariations approved by separate Council resolution up to the December 2023 quarter budget review

The amounts below are those Council resolutions that have a budget impact, for example, they have no budget or a current budget allocation is amended.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE						
Budget Group	Budget Item	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Council Resolution	F
Council own source	Horseshoe Lighning Reinstatement	(\$90,000)	(\$70,000)	\$20,000	101773	ution approving the reallocation of un atement project to Bartlett Street for
Council own source	Bartlett Street footpath investigation and design	-	(\$20,000)	(\$20,000)	101225	ution approving the reallocation of un atement project to Bartlett Street foc
Council own source	Meninya Street South Carpark	(\$423,500)	(\$43,500)	\$380,000	261223 Resolu	ution to place the project on hold for
Council own source	Soundshell Design	(\$80,000)	-	\$80,000	241123	ution to approve the reallocation of in rading repairs at Moama Wharf.
Council own source	Moama Wharf balustrading repairs	-	(\$80,000)	(\$80,000)	241123	ution to approve the reallocation of in rading repairs at Moama Wharf.
	Total Capital Expenditure	-	(\$213,500)	\$380,000		
	Total Capital Expenditure - Outside QBR Review Process	-	(\$213,500)	\$380,000		

Further Details

unspent funds from Horseshoe Lagoon Lightning footpath investigation and design.

unspent funds from Horseshoe Lagoon Lightning

footpath investigation and design.

or when funding available for construction.

f internal budget from Moama Soundshell design

f internal budget from Moama Soundshell design

Attachment 2 - Approved Variations Outside QBR Process Quarterly Budget Review

/ariations approved by separate Council resolution up to the December 2023 quarter budget review

The amounts below are those Council resolutions that have a budget impact, for example, they have no budget or a current budget allocation is amended.

OTHER FUNDING MOVEMENTS						
Budget Group	Budget Item	Current Budget 2023/24 Year	Amended Budget 2023/24 Year	Movement	Council Resolution	F
Reserve Movement	Reserve		- (\$380,000)	(\$380,000)	261223 Resolutio	n to place the project on hold for
				-		
	Total Reserve Movements		- (\$380,000)	(\$380,000)		
	Total Other Funding Movements - Outside QBR Review Process		(\$380,000)	(\$380,000)		

Outside QBR Review Process Budget Movement



2023/24 2nd Quarter Budget Review - Capital Listing	New	Renew	Upgrade	Grand Tota
Theme_1 - A Place of Environmental Sensitivity	549,842	3,252,411	3,066,312	6,868,565
T1.Goal_2 - Protect, enhance & sustance the natural environment	549,842	3,252,411	3,066,312	6,868,565
1.3 - Integrate water cycle management	127,000	1,291,600	2,956,631	4,375,231
Barham AC raw mains replacement yarrien 320m		59,000		59,000
Barham Booster pump filtered			231,200	231,200
Barham flouride implementation			69,000	69,000
Barham River Estate Levee Upgrade			15,812	15,812
Chlorine water treatment replacement for Barham		20,000		20,000
Dampier St filtered water replacement 170m Wakool		34,000		34,000
Detailed Design Stage of the Proposed New Barham Sewage Treatment Plant			390,500	390,500
General Reservoir Works		60,000		60,000
Generator purchase for Moama WTP			59,500	59,500
Koraleigh Raw network			244,000	244,000
Land Acquisition for the Proposed New Barham Sewage Treatment Plant			165,000	165,000
Mathoura Stormwater Easement Works & Management Plan			100,000	100,000
Mathoura WTP WHS issues - Ganty and batter maint		43,000		43,000
Membrane Replacement Wakool		140,000		140,000
Moama & Mathoura Pump Station upgrade (Sewer)			63,690	63,690
Moama Boat Pump Out Station Renewal		173,250		173,250
Moama sewer - main transfer well religning		72,000		72,000
Moama sewer - odour control unit McBerns			34,000	34,000
Moama sewer ponds access track		82,500		82,500
Moama Sewer Treatment detailed design			500,000	500,000
Moama WTP - Upgrade Swinging Gates with SALTO integrated audot sliding gate		35,000		35,000
Moulamein Raw mains replacment Jebb st 230m		44,000		44,000
Moulamein WTP Ring Levee, Town Levee Upgrade & Riverine / Stormwater Backflow Prevention			108,335	108,335
Murray Downs land aquasition for STP upgrade			230,000	230,000
New reservior at Wakool WTP Filtered		106,700		106,700
Realign Backwash tank at Mathoura WTP		29,000		29,000
Rural Roads Stormwater Drainage			199,994	199,994
S3-Nicholas drive 72m filtered water replacement		23,000		23,000
SCADA review	87,000			87,000
Sewer Mains General Works		120,150		120,150
Sewer switchboard Patterson St Moulamein		55,000		55,000
Shed for Moama WTP plant storage	20,000			20,000
Standpipe automation of payment			54,000	54,000
Stormwater additional storage at recreation reserve			67,000	67,000
Stormwater Drainage			50,000	50,000

2023/24 2nd Quarter Budget Review - Capital Listing	New	Renew	Upgrade	Grand Tota
SW power for perricoota rd			148,000	148,000
Tallow St raw water replacement 230m Moulamein		47,000		47,000
Valve on sewer main in Council St			6,600	6,600
W&S Investigation & Design Package			220,000	220,000
Water Mains Renewal		60,000		60,000
Water Mains Valve Replacement	20,000			20,000
WHS well conversion punt road raw		88,000		88,000
1.5 - Landfill rehabilitation works	422,842	1,960,811	109,681	2,493,334
Backhow purchase	42,000			42,000
GPS for Compactor	88,242			88,242
Koraleigh Landfill Fencing			109,681	109,681
Landfill Investigation & Planning Requirement	139,700			139,700
Moama Landfill Litter Fence	119,900			119,900
Push Pit	11,000			11,000
Solar Power & Battery - Mathoura Transfer Station	22,000			22,000
Waste capital works program - Autodepot		1,960,811		1,960,811
heme_2 - A Place of Progressive Leadership	6,368,163		471,040	6,839,203
T1.Goal_2 - Protect, enhance & sustance the natural environment	10,620			10,620
1.3 - Integrate water cycle management	10,620			10,620
Sewer Safety Equipment	10,620			10,620
T2.Goal_2 - Continue to be a trusted & ethical leader that leads by example	4,178,518		471,040	4,649,558
2.5 - Leadership that is trusted, capable & collaborative	4,178,518		471,040	4,649,558
Asset Purchase for Replacement - All other Fleet	3,118,518			3,118,518
Asset Purchase for Replacement - Light Vehicle Fleet	500,000			500,000
CCTV System - Ongoing Growth			30,000	30,000
Meninya Street - Survey, Service Location and Design	560,000			560,000
Meninya Street South Car Park - 23/24 Construction Update			43,500	43,500
PC Replacement			166,000	166,000
Radio Network - Digital Upgrade			130,000	130,000
Server Replacement			25,000	25,000
Sewer CCTV Security			26,540	26,540
UPS Replacement			50,000	50,000
T2.Goal _3 - Provide clear, concise & consistent information that is easily accessible to our customers	2,179,025			2,179,025
2.7 - Improve internal services to better support community needs	2,179,025			2,179,025
Intranet & Governance Overlay for 365	561,775			561,775
Technology One implementation	1,617,250			1,617,250
Theme_3 - A Place of Liveable Communities	8,358,682	567,614	1,561,874	10,488,170
T3.Goal 1 - Create & maintain safe & accessible community spaces that enhance healthy living & promote active lifestyles	6,900,069	508,114	1,271,874	8,680,057

23/24 2nd Quarter Budget Review - Capital Listing	New	Renew	Upgrade	Grand Tot
3.1 - Sports & recreation facilities & spaces	211,600	161,414	811,874	1,184,88
Barham Recreation Reserve Art & Tourism Project Viewing platform			258,561	258,56
Carry On - Moama Soundshell Playground		150,414		150,43
Horseshoe Lagoon Balustrade Works			80,000	80,00
Kerribee Playground (LRIC P4A)	161,600			161,60
Mathoura Common Fencing		11,000		11,00
Moama Botanic Gardens - Stage 5	50,000			50,00
Moama Rec Res Landscaping & Fencing			10,000	10,00
Moulamein Lake Accessibility & Infrastructure Upgrade			270,063	270,00
Passive Recreation Furniture Renewal & Upgrade			75,000	75,00
Riverside Park Barham Irrigation Upgrade			68,250	68,2
Upgrade & Renewal of Shade Structure			50,000	50,0
3.2 - Public Buildings	6,688,469	346,700	330,000	7,365,1
Asbestos Management & Remediation LGA wide		55,500		55,5
Goodnight Hall / Rec Res Toilet Block		20,000		20,0
HVAC Replacement		30,000		30,0
Mathoura Council Offices		14,000		14,0
Mathoura Memorial Park Toilet Block		23,000		23,0
Moama HQ Water Leak Rectification Work		31,000		31,0
Moama Office Ground Floor - Stage 1a		60,000		60,0
Moama Pre-School	5,657,469			5,657,4
MVBC Stage 1 - Security Upgrade & Library Renovation			330,000	330,0
Noorong Hall		12,500		12,5
Office Furniture	15,000			15,0
Security & Compliance Upgrade (SALTO)	86,000			86,0
Staff Dwelling - 21 Morago St Moulamein		43,033		43,0
Staff Dwelling - 37 Turora St Moulamein		16,767		16,7
Toilet Facility Meninya St	580,000			580,0
Wakool Memorial Hall		40,900		40,9
Yamba RFS Shed	350,000			350,0
3.5 - Lighting upgrades & improvements			130,000	130,0
Horseshoe Lagoon Bridge Lighting			70,000	70,0
Koraleigh Lighting Upgrade			60,000	60,0
3.Goal_5 - Update & review our open spaces to reflect community wants & needs	1,458,613	59,500	290,000	1,808,1
3.12 - Cemeteries / commemoration	12,000	25,000		37,0
Barham Cemetery Footpath Renewals	· · ·	25,000		25,0
Moama Cemetery Plinth Expasion	12,000	•		12,0
3.13 - Upgrade, enhance & maintain Parks & Open Spaces that connect communities & are accessible	1,427,113	34,500	290,000	1,751,6

2023/24 2nd Quarter Budget Review - Capital Listing	New	Renew	Upgrade	Grand Tota
Murray Downs Riverside Boat Ramp	1,427,113			1,427,113
Murray Downs Walking Track		34,500		34,500
SCCF5 - Horseshoe Lagoon Landscaping			290,000	290,000
3.16 - Weed Management	19,500			19,500
Biosecurity - Chemical transfer Pumps & 12 volt systems	19,500			19,500
heme_5 - A Place of Prosperity and Resilience		683,046	123,200	806,246
T5.Goal_2 - Continue to develop strong & resilient communities			90,200	90,200
5.8 - Promotion of local attractions			90,200	90,200
Signage			90,200	90,200
T5.Goal_3 - Promote & grow tourism across the region		683,046	33,000	716,046
5.10 - Growing Tourism across the LGA		683,046	33,000	716,046
Liston Caravan Park		13,146		13,146
Moama Caravan Park Retaining Wall (Horseshoe Lagoon		511,500		511,500
Picnic Point Caravan Park - electrical works		20,900		20,900
Picnic Point Caravan Park - Overhead Power Lines			33,000	33,000
Picnic Point Caravan Park Retaining Wall Renewal		137,500		137,500
Theme_6 - Connected Communities	652,968	8,845,385	4,729,000	14,227,353
T6.Goal 1 - Development strategies to deliver road & shared pathway infrastructure that is accessible to all	20,000	220,000		240,000
6.1 - Cycle, foot & other pathways	20,000	140,000		160,000
Bartlett Street Footpath	20,000			20,000
Cycle & Walkways		40,000		40,000
Paved Footpahs		100,000		100,000
6.4 - Local road & drainage options		80,000		80,000
Kerb & Gutter		80,000		80,000
T6.Goal_4 - Enable commercial transport & connection opportunities	632,968	8,625,385	4,729,000	13,987,353
6.10 - Major Raods upgrades	632,968	8,625,385	4,729,000	13,987,353
Depot Improvements			20,000	20,000
Frasers Rd / Murrain Yarrein Ck Bridge		195,295		195,295
Guard Rails			100,000	100,000
Kyalite Road Widening			10,000	10,000
Mathoura Footpath Construction (LRCI P4A)	46,000			46,000
Mathoura Footpath Renewal Program (LRCI P4A)		40,725		40,725
Meninya St Parking Trial - Echuca St & Blair St			44,000	44,000
Moulamein Depot Workshop - Roller Door replacement x 2		20,000		20,000
Perricoota Road Resheet			1,180,000	1,180,000
Regional & Local Roads Repair Program		3,617,772		3,617,772
Regional Reseal		1,320,000		1,320,000
Repair ProgramBarham 61.2 - 62.2km \$500kBarmah 11.9 - 12.7km \$400k Subject to Repair Program approval			900,000	900,000

2023/24 2nd Quarter Budget Review - Capital Listing	New	Renew	Upgrade	Grand Total
Road Furniture / Signage - Regional Roads	50,000			50,000
Road Resheeting		530,000		530,000
Roads to Recovery			2,150,000	2,150,000
Sandys Rd / Barber Ck Bridge		13,814		13,814
Signage Upgrades			25,000	25,000
Survey & Design Package			300,000	300,000
Tooranie Rd / Yarrein Ck Bridge		1,987,779		1,987,779
Unsealed Roads Gravel Resheeting (LRCI P4A)		200,000		200,000
Urban & Local Road Reseal Program	536,968			536,968
Urban Roads		200,000		200,000
Urban Street Reseals		500,000		500,000
Grand Total	15,929,655	13,348,457	9,951,426	39,229,538

Quarterly Budget Review - 31 March 2024



Nhole of Council

NCOME STATEMENT	Original Approved Budget	Current Approved Budget	Revised Budget	Budget Movement Current v Revised
Consolidated	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
				Budget Improvement Budget Deterioration
Income from continuing operations				
Rates and annual charges	21,044,662	21,449,830	21,503,854	54,024
User charges and fees	7,769,384	8,446,514	13,086,585	4,640,071
Other revenue	1,962,700	1,811,605	1,445,029	(366,576)
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	20,674,966	22,946,648	22,946,648	0
Grants and contributions provided from capital purposes	13,695,405	16,686,142	20,942,758	4,256,616
Interest and investment income	1,797,010	2,247,306	2,247,306	0
Other income	256,630	421,940	530,288	108,347
Total income from continuing operations	67,200,757	74,009,986	82,702,469	8,692,482
Expenses from continuing operations				
Employee benefits and on-costs	(19,906,606)	(19,754,766)	(19,587,023)	167,743
Materials and services	(21,655,944)	(24,064,709)	(24,041,578)	23,131
Borrowing costs	(120,240)	(111,031)	(111,031)	0
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non-financial assets	(24,449,000)	(20,344,177)	(20,344,177)	0
Other expenses	(1,242,930)	(1,327,815)	(1,059,235)	268,580
Net gain / (losses) from the disposal of assets	4,183,000	0	0	0
Total expenses from continuing operations	(63,191,720)	(65,602,497)	(65,143,044)	459,454
Net Operating result from continuing operations Surplus / (Deficit)	4,009,037	8,407,489	17,559,425	9,151,936
Other Funding Movements				
Total Capital Expenditure	(33,984,758)	(39,229,537)	(40,044,353)	(814,816)
Total Transfers From/ (To) Reserves	(1,993,510)	(99,684)	(4,885,443)	(4,785,759)
Sale Proceeds from Sale of Assets	6,524,500	1,227,125	1,258,376	31,251
Total Loan Borrowings	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	0
Total Loan Repayments	(596,810)	(526,760)	(526,760)	0
Deferred Debtor Advances Repaid	92,540	(29,727)	1,014	30,740
Defered Debtor Advances Made	0	0	0	0
Depreciation Contra Reversal	24,449,000	20,344,177	20,344,177	0
Total Other Funding Movements Surplus / (Deficit)	(4,009,038)	(16,814,406)	(22,352,989)	(5,538,583)
TOTAL BUDGET SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	0	(8,406,917)	(4,793,565)	3,613,353
Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for				
capital pruposes	(9,686,368)	(8,278,653)	(3,383,333)	4,895,320
Non recurring items				
Net gain / (losses) from the disposal of assets	4,183,000	0	0	0
Adjusted Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions				
provided for capital pruposes	(13,869,368)	(8,278,653)	(3,383,333)	4,895,320

Quarterly Budget Review - 31 March 2024

murray river council

Nhole of Council

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	Original Approved Budget	Current Approved Budget	Revised Budget	Budget Movement Current v Revised
Consolidated	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
				Budget Improvement Budget Deterioration
ASSETS				
Current assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	4,173,516	4,173,516	4,173,516	0
Investments	42,000,000	39,676,945	34,891,186	(4,785,759)
Receivables	7,803,000	10,429,229	8,692,482	(1,736,746
Inventories	666,270	666,270	666,270	(
Other	316,000	316,000	316,000	(
Total current assets	54,958,786	55,261,960	48,739,455	(6,522,505
Non-current assets				
Investments	2,000	2,000	2,000	C
Receivables	879,750	879,750	879,750	C
Inventories	625,900	625,900	625,900	(
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (PPE)	956,386,114	947,036,511	946,221,695	(814,815
Intangible assets	7,097,212	7,097,212	7,097,212	(
Total non-current assets	964,990,976	955,641,373	954,826,557	(814,815
Total assets	1,019,949,761	1,010,903,333	1,003,566,012	(7,337,321
LIABILITIES				
Current liabilities				
Payables	5,692,030	6,462,667	6,003,213	(459,454
Contract liabilities	0	0	0	(
Lease liabilities	192,230	192,230	192,230	(
Borrowings	438,630	394,510	394,510	(
Employee benefit provision	3,838,500	3,838,500	3,838,500	(
Provisions	0	0	0	(
Total current liabilities	10,161,390	10,887,907	10,428,453	(459,454
Non-current liabilities				
Lease liabilities	384,460	384,460	384,460	(
Borrowings	3,086,619	1,421,997	1,421,997	(
Employee benefit provision	401,510	401,510	401,510	(
Provisions	2,438,100	2,438,100	2,438,100	(
Total non-current liabilities	6,310,689	4,646,067	4,646,067	(
Total liabilities	16,472,079	15,533,974	15,074,520	(459,454)
Net Assets	1,003,477,682	995,369,359	988,491,492	(6,877,867
EQUITY				
Current year surplus / (deficit)	4,009,037	8,407,489	17,559,425	9,151,936
Accumulated surplus / (deficit)	729,647,133	736,171,633	736,171,634	5,151,550
IPPE revaluation reserve	263,297,012	250,790,237	234,760,433	(16,029,804)
Council equity Interest	996,953,182	995,369,359	988,491,492	(6,877,868)
Total equity	996,953,182	995,369,359	988,491,492	(6,877,868)

Quarterly Budget Review - 31 March 2024



Nhole of Council

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOW Consolidated	Original Approved Budget	Current Approved Budget 2023/24	Revised Budget 2023/24	Budget Movement Current v Revised 2023/24
	2023/24			
				Budget Improvement Budget Deterioration
Cash Flows from Operating Activities				
Receipts:				
Rates and Annual Charges	20,966,632	24,076,059	15,748,178	(8,327,881
User Charges and Fees	7,769,384	8,446,514	11,349,839	2,903,32
Interest and Investment Revenue	1,797,010	2,247,306	2,247,306	
Grants & Contributions	34,370,371	43,241,679	48,050,849	4,809,17
Other Revenues	1,962,700	421,940	530,288	108,34
Payments:				
Employee Benefits and On-costs	(19,906,606)	(19,655,233)	(19,488,249)	166,98
Borrowing Costs	(120,240)	(111,031)	(111,031)	
Materials and Contracts	(21,599,264)	(25,191,313)	(29,122,032)	(3,930,719
Other Expenses	(1,242,930)	(1,327,815)	(1,059,235)	268,58
Net Cash provided by (or used in) Operating Activities	23,997,057	32,148,107	28,145,913	(4,002,194
Cash Flows from Investing Activities				
Cash Flows from Investing Activities				
Receipts:	6 5 3 4 5 0 0	4 227 425	4 250 276	31,25
Sale of Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment	6,524,500	1,227,125	1,258,376	31,25
Payments:	(22.084.750)	(20,220,527)	(40.044.252)	(814,816
Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment Net Cash provided by (or used in) Investing Activities	(33,984,758)	(39,229,537)	(40,044,353)	
Net Cash provided by (or used in) investing Activities	(27,460,258)	(38,002,412)	(38,785,977)	(783,565
Cash Flows from Financing Activities				
Receipts:				
Proceeds from Borrowings and Advances	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	
Payments:	_,5,000	_,,000	_,,000	
Repayment of Borrowings and Advances	(596,810)	(526,760)	(526,760)	
Net Cash provided by (or used in) Financing Activities	903,190	973,240	973,240	
	<u>.</u>		<u> </u>	
Net Increase/ (Decrease) in Cash and Investments	(2,560,011)	(4,881,065)	(9,666,824)	(4,785,759
Plus: Cash and Investments - Beginning of Year	48,733,526	48,733,526	48,733,526	
Cash and Investments - End of Year	46,173,515	43,852,461	39,066,702	(4,785,759

9.2.4 FINANCIAL REPORT - UNAUDITED FY 23/24 PERIOD ENDING 30 APRIL 2024

File Number:

Author:Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate ServicesAuthoriser:Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That Murray River Council (Council) resolve to receive the Monthly Financial Report for the period to April 2024 (FY 2023/24) and note its contents.

BACKGROUND

This report provides the unaudited estimated financial performance and position of Murray River Council for the relevant period in the current financial year against the budget for the corresponding period.

This report is not a requirement under the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) nor the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation), however, it is provided to as an additional report to complement the existing financial reporting such as the quarterly budget reviews and the investments report.

DISCUSSION

Please see Monthly Financial Report appearing as Attachment 1 and the Monthly Financial Statements appearing as Attachment 2.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

2. Strategic Theme 2: A Place of Progressive Leadership

2.6 - Provide clear, concise and consistent information that is easily accessible to our customers - Improve externally provided information and communication.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

As summerised in the Monthly Financial Report.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Investment Policy (POL203).

Murray River Council Risk Management Policy (POL200).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

Local Government (General) Regulations 2021.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Budget financial thresholds are not met.

• How can it happen?

Revenue shortfalls and/or cost overruns.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Negative financial impact on Council

- What is the likelihood of the event happening?
 Possible
- Adequacy of existing controls?
 - Adequate
- Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Deficit reduction measures are in place.

CONCLUSION

That Council receive the Monthly Financial Report as detailed in Attachment 1 and the Monthly Financial Statements as detailed in attachment 2 for the current financial year and note its contents.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Monthly Financial Report to April 2024 🗓 🛣
- 2. Monthly Financial Statements to April 2024 🗓 🛣
Financial Year: 2023-24 Period Ending: 30 April 2024



BACKGROUND

This report provides the unaudited financial performance and position of Murray River Council for the period to the end of April 2024 against the corresponding Budget for the full financial year.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Details what was charged to our ratepayers and customers compared to what was spent in delivering our services.

For the period under review, Council's operating deficit stood at \$9.1M after charging depreciation (What We Set-aside for Asset Renewals) of \$16.9M.

Net earnings are \$13.2M when Capital Revenue is added to the operating deficit.

Table 1: Income & Expenditure Statement:

	2022/23 Audited	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 YTD Actual	% Variance Bud v Act
What We Levied Our Ratepayers	19,094	21,450	18,034	84%
What We Invoiced our Customers	9,099	8,447	12,753	151%
What We Rcvd. as Grants & Subsidies	21,272	22,947	8,265	36%
What We Rcvd. as Interest from Investment	1,600	2,247	1,470	65%
Our Other Revenue	1,851	2,234	1,476	66%
Our Total Recurrent Earnings	52,916	57,324	41,999	73%
What We Spent on Our Staff	19,436	19,755	16,462	83%
What We Spent on Our Suppliers	23,727	25,393	17,609	69%
Our Total Direct Spend	43,163	45,147	34,071	75%
What We Paid Our Bankers	383	111	35	32%
What We Set-aside for Asset Renewals	23,246	20,344	16,953	83%
Our Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(13,876)	(8,279)	(9,061)	109%
Our Capital Revenue	33,697	16,686	21,087	126%
Our Capital Expenses /(Gains)	4,800	(1,227)	(1,192)	97%
Our Capital Surplus/(Deficit)	28,896	17,913	22,279	124%
Our Net Earnings	15,021	9,635	13,218	137%



FY 2023-24, to 30 April 2024



Income & Expenditure

- Grants & Subsidy revenue is well below budget due to timing differences. The primary source of grants, Financial Assistance Grants are usually received towards the end of the year.
- The rest of the revenue items are tracking as expected.
- Expenses are tracking as expected.
- The unfavourable position of the Operating Deficit in comparison to the budget is due to the lower operating grants as at date.

Details of Revenue and Expenses, compared to the budget are graphically depicted in the two charts below.



COMMUNITY WEALTH

Details the value of resources Council has, to service our community. Net Community wealth at the end of the period stood at \$1.05B.

FY 2023-24, to 30 April 2024



Table 2 : Statement of Financial Position

	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24
	Audited	Budget	YTD Actual
What We Own	992,065	955,641	1,002,454
Inventory We Hold	520	666	497
What We are Owed	12,539	10,429	18,984
What We Have in Bank	57,472	44,166	48,539
Our Total Assests	1,062,595	1,010,903	1,070,475
What We Owe Our Suppliers	7,137	6,463	4,324
What We Owe Our Lenders	8,456	2,393	6,418
What We Have Provided for Future Liabilities	10,912	6,678	10,514
Our Total Liabilities	26,505	15,534	21,256
Our Community Wealth	1,036,091	995,369	1,049,219

• What We are Owed has remained around the same level as at the start of the year.

• Cash balances (what we have in bank) remain at satisfactory levels, noting that a sizeable portion of the investments are restricted for specific purposes. (see investments report)

CAPITAL DELIVERY

Council revised its budgeted capital allocation to \$39.2 Mn for the 2023/24 through the 2nd quarter budget revision. As of April 2024, Council has delivered around 70% of the annual capital budget excluding commitments for 2023/24, totalling \$27.54 million. Several plant items currently on order as well as the flood damage repairs to the roads network is expected to boost the delivery rate in the final quarter.

LIQUID ASSETS & RESERVES

Shown below are the movements in liquid asset balances and investments for the period ending 30 April 2024.

Monthly Financial Report FY 2023-24, to 30 April 2024



Table 3: Movement of Liquid Assets

DETAILS	FEBRUARY 2024	MARCH 2024	APRIL 2024
Cash Book Balance B/Fwd	\$6,490,906	\$5,741,763	\$3,037,307
Add income for month	\$9,009,582	\$4,686,942	\$9,237,362
Deduct expenditure for month	\$8,758,725	\$6,391,399	\$5,594,642
CASH AVAILABLE	\$6,741,763	\$4,037,307	\$6,680,027
Redeem/(Purchase) Investments	(\$1,000,000)	(\$1,000,000)	(\$3,000,000)
CASH BOOK BALANCE	\$5,741,763	\$3,037,307	\$3,680,027
Add on-call account	\$3,831,373	\$2,344,159	\$349,683
Add investments - Deposits	\$46,762,449	\$47,762,449	\$45,250,000
Add investments - Shares	\$2,010	\$2,010	\$2,010
CASH POSITION	\$56,337,596	\$53,145,924	\$49,281,720
As per Bank Statements	\$4,043,053	\$1,077,406	\$4,031,720

The breakdown of the reserves by restriction and fund are as below:

Table 4: Breakdown of Reserves

Breakdown of Cash & Restricted Assets (Reserves) by Fund

Funds	General	Water	Sewer	Waste	Total
Unrestricted	(\$5,065,298)	\$2,421,630	\$5,209,957	(\$392,341)	\$2,173,949
Internally Restricted	\$5,693,398	\$4,041,750	\$8,380,279	\$2,359,432	\$20,474,859
Externally Restriced	\$18,623,911	\$3,745,055	\$3,779,051	\$1,978,373	\$28,126,390
Total	\$19,252,0 <mark>1</mark> 1	\$10,208,435	\$17,369,287	\$3,945,465	\$50,775,198

Additional details of internally restricted and externally restricted reserves are provided in the following tables.

Table 5: Details of Internally Restricted Reserves

Internal Restricted Assets	General Fund	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Waste Fund	Total
Buildings	\$309,576	-	-	-	\$309,576
Bushfire Services	\$45,278	-	-	-	\$45,278
Caravan Parks	\$263,373	-	-	-	\$263,373
Community Services	-	-	-	-	-
Council Contribution - Co Funding Grants	\$63,496	-	-	-	\$63,496
Economic Development	\$42,780	-	-	-	\$42,780
Employee Leave Entitlements	\$1,399,780	-	-	-	\$1,399,780
Heritage Buildings	\$18,495	-	-	-	\$18,495
Infrastructure Works	\$1,247,972	\$4,041,750	\$8,380,279	-	\$13,670,001
Levee Bank	\$339,764	-	-	-	\$339,764
Office Equipment/ IT	-	-	-	-	-
Parks & Recreation	\$115,768	-	-	-	\$115,768
Plant Fund	\$706,150	-	-	-	\$706,150
Public Halls	\$35,018	-	-	-	\$35,018
Quarries	\$289,500	-	-	-	\$289,500
Risk Management	\$12,500	-	-	-	\$12,500
S355 Committees	\$380,318	-	-	-	\$380,318
Software	\$322,485	-	-	-	\$322,485
Stormwater	\$101,145	-	-	-	\$101,145
Waste Management Int	-	-	-	\$2,359,432	\$2,359,432
-	\$5,693,398	\$4,041,750	\$8,380,279	\$2,359,432	\$20,474,859

FY 2023-24, to 30 April 2024



Table 6: Details of Externally Restricted Reserves

External Reserves	General Fund	Water Fund	Sewer Fund	Waste Fund	Total
Unspent Grants	\$14,556,585	-	-	-	\$14,556,585
Unspent Loan Funds	-	-	-	-	-
Section 64/94	\$3,860,864	\$3,531,374	\$3,779,051	-	\$11,171,289
Community Services Ext	\$7,537	-	-	-	\$7,537
Land Management	\$134,638	-	-	-	\$134,638
Water Purchase	-	\$213,681	-	-	\$213,681
Waste Management Ext	-	-	-	\$1,978,373	\$1,978,373
Other	\$64,287	-	-	-	\$64,287
	\$18,623,911	\$3,745,055	\$3,779,051	\$1,978,373	\$28,126,390

The Council's Bank Overdraft limit is \$650,000 which remains unutilised.

Certification

I hereby certify that the balances of the various funds of Council have been reconciled with the bank statements and investment register as at the end of the reporting period.

Peter Smith Interim Chief Financial Officer

INVESTMENTS

As required by Section 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (the Regulation) and Section 625 of the Act, a summary of Council's surplus funds invested, together with an analysis thereof are detailed below.

Certification

As per the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – Reg212(1)(b), all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, applicable Regulations, and council's investment policy.

Peter Smith

Interim Chief Financial Officer

Council's investments are spread across several Australian Deposit Taking Institutions (ADIs) as detailed below.

Table 7: Investments by Deposit Taking Institution

Bank / ADI	Amount	%
ING Bank	\$11,000,000	24.31%
Macquarie Bank	\$2,000,000	4.42%
National Australia Bank	\$22,000,000	48.62%
Suncorp Bank	\$10,250,000	22.65%
	\$45,250,000	100.00%

 Monthly Financial Report
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 ING Bank
 Macquarie Bank
 Suncorp Bank

 ING Bank
 Macquarie Bank
 Suncorp Bank

 ING Bank
 Macquarie
 Macquarie

 ING Bank
 Macquarie</t

The investment ratings of the investments and the returns thereon are detailed below.

Table 8: Analysis of Risk Ratings and Returns

Interest Rates	AA-	A+	Α	Total
from 4.76% to 5.00%	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	-	\$4,500,000
from 5.01% to 5.25%	\$18,000,000	\$7,750,000	\$9,000,000	\$34,750,000
from 5.26% to 5.50%	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$6,000,000
	\$22,500,000	\$12,750,000	\$10,000,000	\$45,250,000

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The maturity profile of the investments are as follows.

Table 9: Maturity Profile

Maturity Dates	AA-	A+	А	Total
May 2024	\$3,500,000	\$1,000,000	-	\$4,500,000
June 2024	\$5,000,000	-	-	\$5,000,000
July 2024	\$3,250,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$5,750,000
August 2024	-	\$2,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$3,500,000
September 2024	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$5,500,000
October 2024	\$1,000,000	\$750,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,250,000
November 2024	\$1,500,000	\$1,250,000	-	\$2,750,000
December 2024	\$3,000,000	-	-	\$3,000,000
January 2025	-	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000
February 2025	\$500,000	\$1,750,000	-	\$2,250,000
March 2025	\$2,250,000	-	\$2,500,000	\$4,750,000
April 2025	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	-	\$2,000,000
	\$22,500,000	\$12,750,000	\$10,000,000	\$45,250,000

Monthly Financial Report FY 2023-24, to 30 April 2024



The portfolio is well invested in reasonable interest rates and the maturity profile varies according to planned cash flow of the Council. The objective is to optimize the cash flow needs and maximize the return on investments while ensuring compliance with the Local Government regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

The current position is to only invest in ADI's that are rated AA- or better as per S&P's long term credit ratings, even though the Investment Policy permits some investments in ADIs with lower ratings.

Murray River Council

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2024

from period 01 July to 30 April

			CY Actual	PY Actua
CY Budget	\$'000	Notes	YTD	Audited
	Income from continuing operations			
21,450	Rates and annual charges	B2-1	18,034	19,094
8,447	User charges and fees	B2-2	12,753	9,099
1,812	Other revenue	B2-3	998	1,565
22,947	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	B2-4	8,265	21,272
16,686	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	B2-4	21,087	33,693
2,247	Interest and investment income	B2-5	1,470	1,600
422	Other income	B2-6	478	286
	Net gain from the disposal of assets	B4-1		
74,010	Total income from continuing operations		63,086	86,612
	Expenses from continuing operations			
19,755	Employee benefits and on-costs	B3 -1	16,462	19,436
24,065	Materials and services	B3 -2	16,849	22,666
111	Borrowing costs	B3 -3	35	383
	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non-	B3 -4		
20,344	financial assets		16,953	23,240
1,328	Other expenses	B3 -5	760	1,061
(1,227)	Net losses from the disposal of assets	B4-1	(1,192)	4,800
64,375	Total expenses from continuing operations		49,868	71,592
9,635	Operating result from continuing operations		13,218	15,021
9,635	Net operating result for the year attributable to Council		13,218	15,021
	Net operating result for the year before grants and			
(7,052)	contributions provided for capital pruposes		(7,869)	(18,676

Murray River Council

Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2024

from period 01 July to 30 April

CY Budget	\$'000	Notes	CY Actual YTD	PY Actua Audite
	ASSETS			
	Current assets			
4,174	Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	1,607	8,60
39,677	Investments	C1-2	46,843	48,6
10,429	Receivables	C1-4	18,984	12,53
666	Inventories	C1-5	497	5
316	Other	C1-11	89	2
55,262	Total current assets		68,021	70,5
	Non-current assets			
2	Investments	C1-2	2	
880	Receivables	C1-4	474	4
626	Inventories	C1-5	315	3
947,037	Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-8	991,116	980,8
7,097	Intangible Assets	C1-10	10,547	10,4
,	Investments accounted for using the equity method	D2-2	- / -	-,
955,641	Total non-current assets	-	1,002,454	992,0
1,010,903	Total assets	-	1,070,475	1,062,5
	LIABILITIES			
	Current liabilities			
6,463	Payables	C3-1	4,324	7,1
-,	Contract liabilities	C3-2	4,281	5,2
192	Lease liabilities	C2-1	28	1
395	Borrowings	C3-3	265	4
3,839	Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	3,295	3,6
0,000	Provisions	C3-5	95	1
10,888	Total current liabilities		12,289	16,8
	Non-current liabilities			
384	Lease liabilities	C2-1	354	3
1,422	Borrowings	C3-3	1,489	2,1
402	Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	512	5
2,438	Provisions	C3-5	6,612	6,6
4,646	Total non-current liabilities	-	8,967	9,6
15,534	Total liabilities	-	21,256	26,5
	Net assets	-	1,049,219	1,036,0
995,369				
995,369	EQUITY			
			13,218	15.0
995,369 1,427 743,152	EQUITY Current years surplus Accumulated surplus		13,218 745,604	15,0 730,5

Murray River Council

Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2024

from period 01 July to 30 April

CY Budget	\$'000	Notes	CY Actual YTD	PY Actual Audited
995,369	Council equity interest		1,049,219	1,036,091
995,369	Total equity		1,049,219	1,036,091

9.2.5 NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE ASSETS RECOGNITION

File Number:

Author:Peter Smith, Interim Chief Financial OfficerAuthoriser:Stephen Fernando, Director Corporate Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Continue to account for Council land and buildings assets used by the NSW Rural Fire Service in Council asset registers and financial statements, as the Council has care, control, and management of the buildings, and
- 2. <u>Not</u> account for the NSW Rural Fire Service plant and equipment in the Council asset registers and financial statements, as the Council does not have care, control and management of the plant and equipment.

BACKGROUND

The *Rural Fires Act 1997* (hereafter referred to as *the Act*) established the Rural Fire Service (RFS) to coordinate bush firefighting and prevention throughout the state and to provide rural fire services for New South Wales.

The NSW Rural Fire Fighting Fund holds all contributions required to meet the costs of the service and is maintained by the NSW Treasury. Annual contributions to the Fund are sourced from the following:

- NSW Treasurer 14.6%
- Relevant councils 11.7% (at s110(3) of *the Act*)
- Insurance companies 73.7%

RFS districts and RFS brigades are established generally in line with local government areas (LGA). Murray River Council is part of the Mid Murray Fire Zone, which includes Murray River Council, Edward River Council, and part of the former Jerilderie Shire (Murrumbidgee Council).

Murray River Council currently maintains the buildings used by RFS within its LGA and services RFS vehicles through its maintenance depot upon request. Council charges the RFS for these costs directly to the RFS budget that Council maintains for maintenance and operation costs as these buildings are used exclusively by and for the sole benefit of the RFS.

Council accounts for land and buildings used by the RFS situated within the Murray River boundary in Council asset registers and financial statements.

However, Council does not account for RFS plant or other equipment as Council is of the view that these assets do not meet the requirements of Australian Accounting Standard Board (AASB) standard No. 116 (AASB 116). This was the position adopted by Council at the 24 May 2022 Council Ordinary Meeting.

This report is seeking to re-confirm Council's position with regards to <u>not</u> accounting for the NSW Rural Fire Service plant and equipment in the Council asset registers.

DISCUSSION

The Office of Local Government (hereafter referred to as OLG) has stated, via the adopted Code of Accounting and Financial Reporting 2022/23 on page 54 (attached to this report), that '*The NSW Government has confirmed its view that these assets are not controlled by the NSW Rural Fire Services or the State. Councils need to assess whether they control any rural firefighting equipment in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and recognise in their financial statements any material assets under their control and state the relevant accounting policy in relation to the treatment.'*

Update Since May 2022 Report to Council

2021/22 Audit Qualified Opinion by NSW Audit Office

It has been confirmed that forty-three (43) NSW Councils received a qualification on their 2021/22 financial statements, including Murray River Council, because of not recognising rural firefighting equipment in their financial statements.

The qualification that Murray River Council received for the 2021/22 financial year is shown in Attachment 2 of this report (called *FA1763 Report on the Conduct of the Audit 2022*). Within this qualification, it was argued that Council controlled rural firefighting equipment on the grounds that:

- these assets are vested in the Council under section 119(2) of the Rural Fires Act 1997 (Rural Fires Act), giving the Council legal ownership
- the Council has the ability, outside of emergency events as defined in section 44 of the Rural Fires Act, to prevent the NSW Rural Fire Service from directing the use of the rural fire-fighting

equipment by either not entering into a service agreement, or cancelling the existing service agreement that was signed on 1 April 2012

- the Council has specific responsibilities for fire mitigation and safety works and bush fire hazard reduction under Part 4 of the Rural Fires Act. The Council obtains economic benefits from the rural fire-fighting equipment as these assets are used to fulfil Council's responsibilities
- in the event of the loss of an asset, the insurance proceeds must be paid into the New South Wales Rural Fire Fighting Fund (section 119(4) of the Rural Fires Act) and be used to reacquire or build a similar asset, which is again vested in the Council as an asset provided free of charge.

This report outlines the position taken by Council previously, whereby it does not control the rural firefighting equipment. It is recommended that this position remains unchanged moving forward.

For information purposes, a list of the forty-three (43) councils to receive a qualified audit opinion on rural fire-fighting equipment is provided as part of Attachment 3 (see pages 65, 66 and 67 of the report called *Local Government 2022 Report - Extracted Pages*).

Local Government 2022 Report by the NSW Audit Office (hereafter referred to as NSW AO)

In the Local Government 2022 report, there was a focus on the RFS assets – this extract from that report has been included as Attachment 3 (Report called *Local Government 2022 Report - Extracted Pages*). On page 1 in the Auditor-General's foreword, the following comment was made:

"Disappointingly, accounting for the value of rural firefighting equipment vested in councils continued to be an unnecessary distraction and resulted in 43 councils having their financial statements qualified. We continue to recommend that the Office of Local Government should intervene where councils fail to comply with Australian Accounting Standards by not recognising assets vested to them under section 119(2) of the Rural Fires Act 1997."

On pages 10 and 15 of the report, the comment has been made that "The OLG within the department should now intervene where councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment."

The mention of "*should now intervene*" – what does intervention look like? For example, does the NSW AO want the OLG to change the accounting code in a way to force councils to recognise RFS assets? The issue with the NSW AO statement wanting the OLG to intervene is that it is the <u>council's responsibility</u> to apply the accounting standards to the financial statements and not the OLG. It is on council to apply and adhere to the accounting standards when compiling the end of year financial statements.

The report also outlined that there were forty-three (43) NSW councils issued with a qualified audit opinion for non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (refer to pages 65,66 and 67 of the attached Local Government 2022 report). There are forty-seven (47) NSW councils that do recognise rural firefighting equipment currently in their financial statements.

Finally, on page 15 of the Local Government 2022 report, the comment was made that "Given the law and the State's clear position, it would appear that any council not recognising this equipment is non-compliant with the relevant Australian Accounting Standards." This statement is in contradiction to various other analysis and opinions done, including council's own assessment and the recently released Parker report (released in October 2022 under a freedom of information request).

Letter from OLG to the forty-three (43) Councils with Qualified Opinions

It has been brought to council staff attention recently that the OLG has issued the forty-three (43) NSW councils with a qualified audit opinion a letter stating that councils provide the OLG a response on how they intend to address the recognition of rural fire-fighting equipment by way of:

In order to satisfy the Office of Local Government (OLG) that Council will address the qualified audit opinion it is requested that Council provide OLG with:

- the strategies implemented to address the qualified audit opinion and address any significant audit risks raised; and
- a copy of the Audit Office's 2021-22 management letter and Council's response.

At the time of writing this report, MRC has not received this letter from the OLG.

A copy of the letter received by another council has been provided as Attachment 4 for reference purposes.

Local Government NSW (hereafter referred to as LGNSW) Response to OLG

Included with this report is a copy of the LGNSW response letter dated 27 June 2023 (Attachment 5) to the OLG express serious concern and disappointment at the qualification opinion and the OLG issuing letters to councils regarding the qualified opinions. The letter also re-confirms the position taken that councils will not change their position on the matter. The letter was made available to councils as part of the LGNSW President's Message update 5 July 2023. A copy of this can be found on Attachment 6.

To support the position MRC and other councils have taken, the letter outlined reasons as follows:

"The position of LGNSW and councils is supported by:

• The State Government's own Local Government Accounting Code of Practice and Financial Reporting, which provides for councils to determine whether or not they record the RFS assets as council assets based on their professional opinion.

• A 7 June 2022 letter from the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment to the Auditor General which makes clear that 'councils need to assess whether they control any rural firefighting equipment in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards'.

• An independent expert's 2018 report by GAAP Consulting commissioned by the OLG and only recently released after a successful GIPA request, which found that 'councils have no

substantive rights for the control of fire-fighting equipment – vesting by itself does not confer control'. The expert report went on to recommend that:

o Fire-fighting equipment recognised by some councils should be derecognised.

o Fire-fighting equipment vested in councils should be recognised at cost in the RFS's financial statements."

In the letter from LGNSW, it was noted that the GAAP Consulting report, titled '*Review of accounting for red truck assets and other fire-fighting equipment in NSW* was listed as a final draft, and notes that the OLG asked that the draft report first be considered by NSW Government before any consultation with the local government sector. This local government consultation on the report never occurred and the report was not shared publicly until it was successfully released under a Government Information (Public Access) Act request in 2022.

Finally, the LGNSW continues to support councils with the statement *"It is the clear position of LGNSW that councils should not record RFS mobile assets in their financial statements and LGNSW will continue to recommend that councils continue to consider their own position on this matter."*

The Parker Report into RFS Red Fleet Assets

Attached to the letter, and this report (as part of Attachment 5), is the GAAP Consulting report commissioned by the OLG back in 2018. The report was an expert's report by Mr Colin Parker (over 40 years' experience in financial reporting, auditing and ethics policy and implementation as well as a former member of the Australian Accounting Standards Board) into the *Review of accounting for 'red truck' assets and other fire-fighting equipment in NSW.* This report was completed in April 2018 and has recently been released under a GIPA application (requested by LG NSW) to the OLG. The report was made available to councils as part of the LGNSW President's Message update 5 July 2023. A copy of this can be found on Attachment 6.

This report, as stated above was listed as a final draft, and notes that the OLG asked that the draft report first be considered by NSW Government before any consultation with the local government sector, but in summary the report conclusively states that Councils neither control RFS assets nor should recognise them.

To provide further explanation on this, pages 8 and 9 of the report, Mr Parker provides the following recommendations:

My recommendations

31. Fire-fighting equipment recognised by some councils should be derecognised. If the error is considered material, it should be disclosed as such under AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Estimates and Errors.*

32. Fire-fighting equipment vested in councils whether recognised or unrecognised under options in the code should be recognised at cost in the RFS's financial statements. This should be accounted and disclosed as an error under AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Estimates and Errors* if the error is determined to be material.

33. Given the diversity of opinion between two group of stakeholders over a long period, an argument could be made that rather than an error, it is a change in accounting policy resulting for consideration of recently issued accounting standards (i.e., AASB 10, AASB 15, AASB

8|Page Independent opinion - Accounting for 'red truck' assets and other fire-fighting equipment

GAAP Consulting

16) that provide more definitive guidance on the control. Accordingly, it would be not treated as error.

34. Under AASB 108, 'an entity shall change an accounting policy only if the change: ... (b) results in the financial statements providing reliable and more relevant information about the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the entity's financial position, financial performance or cash flows' (AASB 108.14).

35. AASB 108 also identifies two circumstances that are not changes in accounting policies: (a) the application of an accounting policy for transactions, other events or conditions that differ in substance from those previously occurring and (b) the application of a new accounting policy for transactions, other events or conditions that did not occur previously or were immaterial' (AASB 108.16). For an argument of a change in accounting policy to be sustained the 'differ in substance test' would need to be argued.

36. As a change in accounting policy, the derecognition of fire-fighting equipment by those councils that had previously recognised such assets and their recognition by the RFS would present more reliable and relevant information to the users of their financial statements and be in line with the entities' objectives.

37. My preference is for an error correction as the appropriate treatment.

38. Turning specifically to RFS-sourced land and buildings, these should be subject to the same control considerations as the red-fleet vehicles. There are likely to be further implications for councils where council land has been used as a contribution to infrastructure. These need to be determined by each council in accordance with their own facts and circumstances, applying the test of materiality.

NSW Parliament Members Private Bill

The NSW parliament member for Northern Tablelands (& Nationals party representative) Hon. Adam Marshall is trying to initiate an RFS political solution via a Private Members' Bill. A full copy of Mr Adam Marshall MP media release, issued 19 June 2023, is attached to this report (Attachment 7), but to summarise the main points from it:

"MEMBER for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall will introduce a Private Members' Bill into State Parliament this week, amending the Rural Fires Act 1997, to transfer the ownership of NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) vehicles, fire trucks and buildings from local councils back to the State Government."

"My Bill will remedy the situation, bringing the argy-bargy to an end by making it clear that RFS assets belong to, and should be accounted for by, the State Government, via the NSW Rural Fire Service."

"This will bring the treatment of all these items in line with how the vehicle and building assets of all other emergency services in NSW are accounted for and remove an enormous and ridiculous cost burden from our local councils."

"In essence, this Bill reverses a huge and archaic cost-shifting anomaly buried deep within the Act and puts the full cost back on the level of government responsible for the RFS; the State Government."

There are reports that the Private Members Bill above will be supported by Independent Member for Kiama, Hon. Gareth Ward MP.

The information below was reported in the May 2022 report and has remaining unchanged.

Asset Recognition Criteria

The criteria for asset recognition are contained in various sections of the Framework for the Preparation and Presentation of Financial Statements and AASB116.

Under s119 of *the Act*, 'all firefighting equipment purchased or constructed wholly or from money to the credit of the Fund is to be vested in the council of the area for or on behalf of which the firefighting equipment has been purchased or constructed'. The NSW Government has also confirmed its view that these assets are not controlled by the NSW Rural Fire Services or the State.

Whilst *the Act* states that assets are to be vested in the council, the issue is around two core criteria concerns:

- where does effective control lie; and
- where does responsibility for the function lie.

AASB 116 requires that an asset shall only be recognised if, and only if:

- a) it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the entity.
- b) The cost of the item can be measured reliably.

Council does not provide rural fire fighting services to the community. Council helps the RFS to facilitate the delivery of bushfire management. While residents within Council's area receive a benefit from the activities of the RFS, RFS assets DO NOT provide any future economic benefit flow to Council.

Statement of Accounting Concepts 4 "Definition and Recognition of the Elements of Financial Statements" (hereafter referred to as SAC4) sets the basis on which an "Asset" should be recognised. There are three major factors to determine the characteristics of assets (SAC4 at 15):

- 1. The Entity must receive future economic benefits.
- 2. The Entity must have control over those future economic benefits.

3. The transaction or other event giving rise to the entity's control over the future economic benefit must have occurred.

SAC4 also establishes definitions of the elements of financial statements states, in that (at 14) '*An* asset is defined as a resource that is **controlled by the entity** as a result of past events.'

It goes on to state that 'control of an asset means the capacity of the entity to benefit from the asset in the pursuit of the entity's objectives and **to deny or regulate the access** of others to that benefit.

Attention needs to be given to the asset underlying substance and economic reality and not merely its legal form. In respect of not-for-profit entities, economic benefit is synonymous with service provision or enabling them to meet their objectives to beneficiaries.

Information in relation to control of assets.

Further to **the** *Act* s119(2) that provides that all firefighting equipment acquired from the fund is to be vested in the council of the area, a council must not dispose of such equipment without the written consent of the Commissioner (s119(3)).

The Rural Fire District Service Agreement between Council and the Commissioner includes a basic section on district equipment (section 5):

- Council will allow the RFS to use the equipment, which is owned by, vested in or under the control of the Council.
- The Commissioner agrees to maintain the equipment on behalf of the Council; and
- The RFS will maintain a register of the equipment.

This can be compared to the section on Land and Buildings (section 6), which specifically states that the legal right to possession and control over the premises and land remains vested in Council and the RFS only has right of occupation. In addition:

- Council must maintain the premises in good repair.
- Council must pay all utility costs associated with the premises; and
- Council must pay all insurances associated with the building and public risk.

SAC4 (at 26) states that 'Possession or ownership of an object or right would normally be synonymous with control over the future economic benefits embodied in the object or right. However, these are not essential asset characteristics.'

SAC4 (at 37) states 'Control over future economic benefits has been identified as an essential asset characteristic. While the ability of an entity to exercise control will often stem from the existence of legally enforceable rights, the absence of legal ownership does not preclude the existence of control. For example, an entity may protect the future economic benefits embodied in a formula or an invention not by obtaining a patent but by maintaining secrecy. Similarly, **the presence of legal rights does not guarantee control**.' Therefore, the right of ownership is not essential to the determination of control.

Accounting Recognition of Assets

As per AASB116, and stated in SAC4 (at 38) as well, requires that an asset shall only be recognised if, and only if:

- a) it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the entity.
- b) The cost of the item can be measured reliably.

Future Economic Benefits

The RFS is funded directly by the State; both operating and capital acquisitions/ decisions are made directly by RFS Officers. While Council may be consulted in these decisions it takes no part in the final decision and as such Council has no direct input into the operations or capital acquisitions of the RFS.

The Act provides that '*The NSW Rural Fire Service has the function to provide rural fire services for New South Wales*' [9(1)(a)]. It is considered therefore that it is the Rural Fire Service and not councils that receive future economic benefit from firefighting equipment assets in terms of both net cash flows and service provision.

Control of Assets

SAC 4 (24) defines "control of an asset" as; 'the capacity of the entity to benefit from the asset in the pursuit of the entity's objectives and to deny or regulate the access of others to that benefit. The entity controlling an asset is the one that can, depending on the nature of the asset, exchange it, use it to provide goods or services, exact a price for others' use of it, use it to settle liabilities, hold it, or perhaps distribute it to owners.'

(a) Land & Buildings

The Rural Fire Service Agreement clearly identifies that Council retains full legal right to possession and control over premises occupied by the RFS. Councils are required to maintain buildings, pay all utility costs associated with the building and pay all insurances on the buildings and public risk associated with the use of the building.

This is like a lease agreement, and as such, Council retains control of the building and is required to hold the land and associated building as an asset.

(b) Equipment

S119 (3) of *the Act* stipulates that Council must not sell or otherwise dispose of any firefighting equipment ... without the consent of the Commissioner.

S119 (4) of *the Act* requires any funds received from sale must be credited to the RFS fund.

The RFS Zone Manager makes all decisions about capital improvements and new assets, while Council may be consulted in these decisions it takes no part in the final decision. The RFS insures all plant and equipment. In practice, the RFS makes all decisions to switch fleet and equipment to other fire districts as it deems necessary. Council has no access to and is not permitted to the use of any plant and equipment held by the RFS.

Council has no control over the purchase, use or sale of any RFS equipment. As such, the requirements of SAC 4 have not been met and RFS equipment should not be included as assets in Council's asset register or its financial statements.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

2. Strategic Theme 2: A Place of Progressive Leadership

2.5 - Continue to be a trusted and ethical leader that leads by example - Leadership that is trusted, capable and collaborative.

5.1.1 - Council decision making takes into account the needs and priorities of our local communities and the longer term social, cultural, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of our region

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Recommendation is to maintain current accounting treatment, so no budgetary impact on Council's budget.

If Council were to resolve to include the NSW RFS plant and equipment in Council's asset registers, it would impact the Income Statement by way of an increase in depreciation expense of approximately \$560,507 per annum, resulting in a deterioration of Council's financial position and its long-term financial sustainability.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

Rural Fires Act 1997.

Australian Accounting Standards & Statement of Accounting Concepts

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

NSW Audit Office (NSW AO) qualifies the financial statements of Council as a means of pressuring Council to conform the position dictated by the NSW State government through OLG.

• How can it happen?

By Council resolving to not account for the NSW RFS plant and equipment on Council's asset registers & financial statements

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Moderate. Council will have a qualified audit, as it did receive for the 2021/22 financial statements. However, Council is aware that MRC is not alone in taking this position and multiple Councils have continued to not account for these assets. As such if the NSW AO, were to qualify the financial statements again for 2022/23 financial year, if would need to do so for approximately for forty-three (43) councils in NSW, which is likely to bring a higher level of external scrutiny to the issue.

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Likely.

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Controls are limited, as the decision to qualify the financial statements rests with the NSW AO.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Council can resolve to include the RFS plant & equipment in Council financial statements. While that would eliminate the risk of a qualified audit opinion, it would deteriorate the financial position of Council and it may also weaken the position that LGNSW and councils have taken on the matter – need to maintain the collective position on the matter.

CONCLUSION

The AASB Accounting Standards require a standard higher than ownership when accounting for assets. Even if entities may own an asset, unless they have control of that asset and can clearly identify future economic benefits flowing to the entity from that asset, then it cannot be included in the entity's assets schedule.

When all criteria of asset recognition included in the AASB Accounting Framework and Standards are considered, while Council retains effective control of associated land and buildings, the NSW RFS retains control of plant and equipment. In line with this, Council's practice is to recognise associated land and buildings used by the RFS in its asset schedules, but not plant and equipment. It is also considered that regarding the objectives of financial reporting, Council's obligation and commitment to the rural fire fighting function is fully and accurately reflected in the statutory contribution expense made and the net cost of other relevant facilities provided.

Recent updates to this issue, including the LGNSW continuing to support councils, the release of the GAAP consulting report, and the private members bill to the NSW Parliament by Hon. Adam Marshall help to confirm that council is taking the correct position with regards to the non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and more importantly, that council is not alone on this issue. The recommendation is that council does not change its position on this matter.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Attachment 1 Code of Accounting and Financial Reporting 2020-21 General Purpose Financial Statements Pages Extract 🗓 🖫
- 2. Attachment 2 FA1763 Report on the Conduct of the Audit 2022 🗓 🛣

- 3. Attachment 3 Local Government 2022 Report Extracted Pages 🗓 🛣
- 4. Attachment 4 OLG letter to Another Council 🕹 🖀
- 5. Attachment 5 LG NSW Letter and GAAP Consulting Report into Red Truck and Other Rural Firefighting Equipment (under separate cover)
- 6. Attachment 6 LGNSW Presidents Message 5 July 2023 🕹 🛣
- 7. Attachment 7 Mr Adam Marshall MP Media Release 19 June 2023 🗓 🛣



LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF ACCOUNTING PRACTICE AND FINANCIAL REPORTING 2022/23



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December 2022

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	NSW Council Notes to the financial statements 30 June 2023
	14. The cost of a major inspection or overhaul of an item occurring at regular intervals over the useful life of the item is capitalised only where Council has clearly identified as a separate component of the asset an amount representing major inspection or overhaul and has already depreciated that component to reflect the consumption of benefits that are to be subsequently replaced. The carrying amount of the parts replaced should be appropriately de-recognised. In all other circumstances, such costs are expensed as incurred.
	Depreciation
AASB 116.58	 Each part of an item of IPPE with a cost that is significant in relation to the total cost of the asset should be depreciated separately (componentisation). The purpose of depreciation is to record the value (or cost) of the asset that has been consumed during the accounting period so that users can obtain an understanding of Council's assets and their performance. Depreciation expense in the financial statements should not be used as a proxy for the amount of future funding required to replace the existing asset nor a mechanism to set users' charges or rates based on fully funding depreciation. Generally, land has an unlimited life, however Councils need to depreciate land if it is considered to have a finite life, for example being used for quarries or landfill. Straight-line method of depreciation reduces the cost of the asset uniformly over the useful life of
	the asset which is considered the method that most closely reflects the expected pattern of consumption of the future economic benefits embodied in the assets of councils
OLG	19. OLG preference is for all councils to use straight-line method for depreciation of IPPE. If councils are using a depreciation method other than straight-line then councils need to have detailed systems and controls to support that alternative model.
	20. Where a council changes from a depreciation method other than straight-line to straight-line then it is accounted for as a change in accounting estimate per AASB 108 (change in expected pattern of consumption of the future economic benefits embodied in depreciable assets) and therefore should be accounted for on a prospective basis.
	Residual value
AASB agenda decision	The AASB's stated view is that residual value reflects consideration receivable for an asset at the end of its useful life to the entity, and accordingly would not include cost savings from the reuse of in-situ materials. This means that the potential cost savings from reusing existing infrastructure components should not be recognised as a residual value, i.e., an asset should be written down to zero at the point of renewal. Any savings that are expected to be achieved by the reuse of in situ material would be expected to be reflected in the replacement cost.
	Rural Fire Services (RFS) assets
	Under Section 119 of the Rural Fire Services Act 1997 (NSW), 'all firefighting equipment purchased or constructed wholly or from money to the credit of the Fund is to be vested in the council of the area for or on behalf of which the firefighting equipment has been purchased or constructed'.
	The NSW Government has confirmed its view that these assets are not controlled by the NSW Rural Fire Services or the State.
	Councils need to assess whether they control any rural firefighting equipment in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and recognise in their financial statements any material assets under their control and state the relevant accounting policy in relation to the treatment.



Cr Chris Bilkey Mayor Murray River Council PO Box 906 MOAMA NSW 2731

Contact:Daniel MobiliaPhone no:(02) 9275 7379Our ref:D2226256/1763

8 December 2022

Dear Mayor

Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2022 Murray River Council

I have audited the general purpose financial statements (GPFS) of the Murray River Council (the Council) for the year ended 30 June 2022 as required by section 415 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

I expressed a modified opinion on the Council's GPFS.

This Report on the Conduct of the Audit (the Report) for the Council for the year ended 30 June 2022 is issued in accordance with section 417 of the Act. This Report should be read in conjunction with my audit opinion on the GPFS issued under section 417(2) of the Act.

SIGNIFICANT AUDIT ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

I identified the following significant audit issues and observations during my audit of the Council's financial statements.

Modification to the opinion in the Independent Auditor's Report

Non-recognition of rural fire-fighting equipment

The Council has not recognised rural fire-fighting equipment as assets within 'Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment' in the Statement of Financial Position at 30 June 2022. In my opinion, these assets are controlled by the Council and should be recognised as assets in accordance with AASB 116 'Property, Plant and Equipment'.

Australian Accounting Standards refers to control of an asset as being the ability to direct the use of, and obtain substantially all of the remaining benefits from, the asset. Control includes the ability to prevent other entities from directing the use of, and obtaining the benefits from, an asset.

Rural fire-fighting equipment is controlled by the Council as:

- these assets are vested in the Council under section 119(2) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (Rural Fires Act), giving the Council legal ownership
- the Council has the ability, outside of emergency events as defined in section 44 of the Rural Fires Act, to prevent the NSW Rural Fire Service from directing the use of the rural fire-fighting

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equipment by either not entering into a service agreement, or cancelling the existing service agreement that was signed on 1 April 2012

- the Council has specific responsibilities for fire mitigation and safety works and bush fire hazard reduction under Part 4 of the Rural Fires Act. The Council obtains economic benefits from the rural fire-fighting equipment as these assets are used to fulfil Council's responsibilities
- in the event of the loss of an asset, the insurance proceeds must be paid into the New South Wales Rural Fire Fighting Fund (section 119(4) of the Rural Fires Act) and be used to reacquire or build a similar asset, which is again vested in the Council as an asset provided free of charge.

The Council has not undertaken procedures to confirm the completeness, accuracy, existence or condition of these assets. Nor has the Council performed procedures to identify the value of assets vested in it during the year. When these assets are vested, no financial consideration is required from the Council and as such these are assets provided to Council free-of-charge.

Consequently, we were unable to determine the carrying values of rural firefighting equipment assets and related amounts that should be recorded and recognised in the council's 30 June 2022 financial statements.

This has resulted in the audit opinion on the Council's 30 June 2022 GPFS to be modified. Refer to the Independent Auditor's report on the GPFS.

INCOME STATEMENT

Operating result

	2022	2021	Variance
	\$m	\$m	%
Rates and annual charges revenue	17.8	18.0	1.1
Grants and contributions revenue	37.1	37.2	0.2
Operating result from continuing operations	(3.4)	8.1	142.0
Net operating result before capital grants and contributions	(21.8)	(11.1)	96.4

Rates and annual charges revenue (\$17.8 million) decreased by \$0.2 million (1.1 per cent) in 2021–22. The movement is driven by a decrease in annual charges and is not significant.

Grants and contributions revenue (\$37.1 million) decreased by \$0.1 million (0.3 per cent) in 2021–22. The movement is not significant.

The Council's operating result from continuing operations (deficit of \$3.4 million including depreciation and amortisation expense of \$26.3 million) was \$11.5 million lower than the 2020–21 result. The decrease was mainly due to a \$6.4 million increase in depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense in 2020–21 as compared to the prior year. Council's depreciation on road assets increased by \$5.2 million to \$13.9 million in 2021–22 which was a result of the revaluation of this asset class in 2020–21. Council also recorded a \$3.2 million revaluation decrement of IPPE through the income statement in 2021–22 (2020–21: \$2.5 million).

The net operating result before capital grants and contributions (deficit of \$21.8 million) was \$10.7 million lower than the 2020–21 result. The decrease was mainly due to increase in depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense (as noted in above commentary).

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

- Council's cash and cash equivalents was \$2.4 million at 30 June 2022 (\$1.9 million at 30 June 2021). There was a net increase in cash and cash equivalents of \$0.5 million during 2021–22 financial year.
- Net cash provided by operating activities has decreased by \$11.2 million. The decrease is mainly due to the decrease in grants and contributions by \$5.9 million and an increase in payments for materials and services by \$3.9 million.
- Net cash used in investing activities has decreased by \$17.0 million. The decrease is mainly due to a decrease in purchases of investments by \$12.9 million.
- Net cash flows from financing activities have decreased by \$0.9 million, to \$0.8 million used in 2021–22 compared to \$0.1 million received in 2020–21. The decrease is mainly due to \$0.7 million proceeds from borrowings in 2020–21.





■ Operating activities ■ Investing activities ■ Financing activities

FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash and investments

Cash and investments	2022	2021	Commentary		
	\$m	\$m			
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	48.3	52.7	 Externally restricted cash and investments are restricted in their use by externally imposed requirements. The externally restricted funds as at 		
Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments:			30 June 2022 has increased due to an increase in sewer fund restrictions by \$1.1 million and increase in developer contributions – general by \$0.6 million.		
External restrictions	33.5	30.8	 Internally restricted cash and investments have been restricted in their use by resolution or policy 		
Internal allocations	12.5	20.1	of Council to reflect identified programs of works		
Unrestricted	2.3	1.8	and any forward plans identified by Council. The decrease of internally restricted funds of \$7.6 million is primarily due to a decrease in prepaid financial assistance grant by \$2.2 million infrastructure replacement by \$2 million, decreas in employees leave entitlement by \$0.9 million, a decrease in industrial development by \$1.2 millio		
			 Unrestricted cash and investments have remained relatively consistent with the prior year. 		

Debt

Council has \$3.3 million of external borrowings (\$3.8 million in 2021) which is secured over the revenue of Council. Council repaid \$0.6 million of external borrowings and no new loans were entered during the year. Council also has a \$0.7 million bank overdraft facility (2021: \$0.7 million) which was undrawn as of 30 June 2022.

Cash flow statement

4

PERFORMANCE

Performance measures

The following section provides an overview of the Council's performance against the performance measures and performance benchmarks set by the Office of Local Government (OLG) within the Department of Planning and Environment.

Operating performance ratio

The Council did not meet the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'operating performance ratio' measures how well council contained operating expenditure within operating revenue (excluding capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments, and reversal of revaluation decrements). The benchmark set by OLG is greater than zero per cent.

The operating performance ratio decreased to -31.18 per cent (2021: -11.51 per cent) due to the increase in depreciation, amortisation and revaluation decrement expense by \$6.4 million in 2021-22.

Own source operating revenue ratio

The Council did not meet the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent. The own source operating revenue ratio of 42.90 per cent is relatively consistent with the prior year (43.7 per cent).





Own source operating revenue ratio

Unrestricted current ratio

The Council exceeded the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'unrestricted current ratio' is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 1.5 times.

The unrestricted current ratio of 2.87 per cent is relatively consistent with the prior year (3.53 per cent).



Debt service cover ratio

The Council exceeded the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'debt service cover ratio' measures the operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than two times.

Council's debt service cover ratio decreased to 8.58 times (2021: 16.39 times) due to no new loans being entered during the year.



Debt service cover ratio —OLG benchmark > 2x

Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

The Council did not meet the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'rates and annual charges outstanding percentage' assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on council's liquidity and the adequacy of debt recovery efforts. The benchmark set by OLG is less than 10 per cent for regional and rural councils.

The Council's rates and annual charges outstanding percentage has increased due to the increase in rates and annual charges outstanding in 2021–22.



OLG benchmark < 10%

Cash expense cover ratio

The Council exceeded the OLG benchmark for the current reporting period.

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months the council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than three months.

The cash expense cover ratio has decreased due to decrease in cash and cash equivalent and investments by \$4.3 million.



Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment renewals

The Council renewed \$15.1 million of assets in the 2021–22 financial year, compared to \$12.5 million of assets in the 2020–21 financial year. The increase is largely due to increase in renewals on roads and bridges.

OTHER MATTERS

Legislative compliance

My audit procedures identified a material deficiency in the Council's financial statements that will be reported in the Management Letter. Rural fire-fighting equipment was not recognised in the financial statements.

Except for the matter outlined above, the Council's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form that facilitated the preparation and the effective audit of the GPFS
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.

DMobilia

Daniel Mobilia Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

cc: Mr Terry Dodds, General Manager Mr Richard Ham, Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Chair Mr Stephen Fernando, Director of Corporate Services Mr Kris Kershaw, Finance Manager Mr Michael Cassel, Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment



Local Government 2022

NEW SOUTH WALES AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT



THE ROLE OF THE AUDITOR-GENERAL

The roles and responsibilities of the Auditor-General, and hence the Audit Office, are set out in the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

We conduct financial or 'attest' audits of state public sector and local government entities' financial statements. We also audit the Consolidated State Financial Statements, a consolidation of all state public sector agencies' financial statements.

Financial audits are designed to add credibility to financial statements, enhancing their value to end-users. Also, the existence of such audits provides a constant stimulus to entities to ensure sound financial management.

Following a financial audit the Audit Office issues a variety of reports to entities and reports periodically to Parliament. In combination, these reports give opinions on the truth and fairness of financial statements, and comment on entity internal controls and governance, and compliance with certain laws, regulations and government directives. They may comment on financial prudence, probity and waste, and recommend operational improvements.

We also conduct performance audits. These examine whether an entity is carrying out its activities effectively and doing so economically and efficiently and in compliance with relevant laws. Audits may cover all or parts of an entity's operations, or consider particular issues across a number of entities.

As well as financial and performance audits, the Auditor-General carries out special reviews, compliance engagements and audits requested under section 27B(3) of the *Government Sector Audit Act 1983*, and section 421E of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

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GPO Box 12 Sydney NSW 2001

The Legislative Assembly Parliament House Sydney NSW 2000 The Legislative Council Parliament House Sydney NSW 2000

In accordance with section 421D of the *Local Government Act 1993*, I present a report titled 'Local Government 2022'.



Margaret Crawford PSM Auditor-General for New South Wales 13 June 2023



audit.nsw.gov.au



The Audit Office of New South Wales pay our respect and recognise Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land in NSW.

We recognise that Aboriginal people, as custodians, have a spiritual, social and cultural connection with their lands and waters, and have made and continue to make a rich, unique and lasting contribution to the State. We are committed to continue learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' history and culture.

We honour and thank the traditional owners of the land on which our office is located, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and the traditional owners of the lands on which our staff live and work. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and to the next generation of leaders.



Banner image: 'Yarning Circle' by Caitlin Liddle, Audit Office Indigenous Internship Program participant used with permission.

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Local Government 2022

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Auditor-General's foreword

Pursuant to the *Local Government Act* 1993 I am pleased to present my Auditor-General's report on Local Government 2022. My report provides the results of the 2021–22 financial audits of 126 councils, 11 joint organisations and nine county councils. The audits for two councils and two joint organisations are in progress due to significant accounting issues.

Unqualified audit opinions were issued for 83 councils, 11 joint organisations and nine county councils' 2021–22 financial statements. The statements for 43 councils were qualified due to non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment vested under section 119 (2) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. And the audit opinion on Kiama Municipal Council's 30 June 2021 financial statements was disclaimed due to deficiencies in books and records.

This year has again been challenging for many New South Wales local councils still recovering from the impact of emergency events and facing cost and resourcing pressures. We appreciate the efforts of council staff and management in meeting their financial reporting obligations. We share a mutual interest in raising the standard of financial management in this sector, and the importance of accurate and transparent reporting.

Disappointingly, accounting for the value of rural firefighting equipment vested in councils continued to be an unnecessary distraction and resulted in 43 councils having their financial statements qualified. We continue to recommend that the Office of Local Government should intervene where councils fail to comply with Australian Accounting Standards by not recognising assets vested to them under section 119(2) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

Sound financial management is critical to councils' ability to instil trust and properly serve their communities. The recommendations in this report are intended to further improve their financial management and reporting capability, and encourage sound governance arrangements and cyber resilience. I am committed to continuing this work with councils in the 2022–23 year and beyond.

Margaret Crawford PSM Auditor-General for New South Wales

NSW Auditor-General's Report to Parliament | Local Government 2022 | Auditor-General's foreword
Planning and managing bushfire equipment

This <u>Planning and managing bushfire equipment</u> audit assessed the effectiveness of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and local councils in planning and managing equipment for bushfire prevention, mitigation, and suppression.

We found that the RFS has focused its fleet development activity on modernising and improving the safety of its firefighting fleet, and on the purchase of new firefighting aircraft. There is limited evidence that the RFS has undertaken strategic fleet planning or assessment of the capability of the firefighting fleet to respond to current bushfire events or emerging fire risks. The RFS does not have an overarching strategy to guide its planning, procurement, or distribution of the firefighting fleet. The RFS does not have effective oversight of fleet maintenance activity across the State, and is not ensuring the accuracy of District Service Agreements with local councils, where maintenance responsibilities are described.

We recommended that by December 2023, the Rural Fire Service should:

- develop a fleet enhancement framework and strategy that is informed by an assessment of current fleet capability, and research into appropriate technologies to respond to emerging fire risks
- develop performance measures to assess the performance and capabilities of the fleet in each RFS District by recording and publicly reporting on fire response times, fire response outcomes, and completions of fire hazard reduction works
- report annually on fleet allocations to RFS Districts, and identify the ways in which fleet resources align with district-level fire risks
- develop a strategy to ensure that local brigade volunteers are adequate in numbers and appropriately trained to operate fleet appliances in RFS Districts where they are required
- establish a fleet maintenance framework to ensure regular update of District Service
 Agreements with local councils
- review and improve processes for timely recording of fleet asset movements, locations, and maintenance status.

Cyber Security NSW: governance, roles and responsibilities

Cyber Security NSW is part of the Department of Customer Service, and aims to provide the NSW Government with an integrated approach to preventing and responding to cyber security threats.

This <u>Cyber Security NSW: governance, roles and responsibilities</u> audit assessed the effectiveness of Cyber Security NSW's arrangements in contributing to the NSW Government's commitments under the NSW Cyber Security Strategy, in particular, increasing the NSW Government's cyber resiliency. The audit asked:

- Are internal planning and governance processes in place to support Cyber Security NSW meet its objectives?
- Are Cyber Security NSW's roles and responsibilities defined and understood across the public sector?

We recommended the Department of Customer Service, by 30 June 2023, should:

- implement an approach that provides reasonable assurance that NSW government agencies are assessing and reporting their compliance with the NSW Government Cyber Security Policy in a manner that is consistent and accurate
- ensure that Cyber Security NSW has a strategic plan that clearly demonstrates how the functions and services provided by Cyber Security NSW contribute to meeting its purpose and achieving NSW government outcomes
- ensure that Cyber Security NSW has a detailed, complete and accessible catalogue of services available to agencies and councils
- develop a comprehensive engagement strategy and plan for the local government sector, including councils, government bodies, and other relevant stakeholders.

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2. Audit results

Financial reporting is an important element of good governance. Confidence in and transparency of public sector decision-making are enhanced when financial reporting is accurate and timely.

This chapter outlines audit observations related to the financial reporting audit results of councils and joint organisations.

Section highlights

- Ninety-three councils and joint organisations (2020–21: 109) lodged audited financial statements with OLG by the statutory deadline of 31 October.
- More councils received extensions. Fifty-seven councils and joint organisations (2020–21: 41) received extensions to submit audited financial statements to OLG.
- Unqualified audit opinions were issued for 83 councils, 11 joint organisations and nine county councils 2021–22 financial statements.
- A disclaimer of audit opinion was issued to Kiama Municipal Council relating to the 30 June 2021 financial statements.
- The audits of two councils and two joint organisations are still in progress as at the date of this report due to significant accounting issues.
- Qualified audit opinions were issued for 43 councils (2020–21: one) due to non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment vested to councils under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* in their financial statements. Forty-seven councils appropriately recognised this equipment.
- Since 2017, the Audit Office of New South Wales has recommended that OLG address the different practices across the local government sector in accounting for the rural firefighting equipment. Despite repeated recommendations, the OLG has not been effective in resolving this issue.
- The OLG within the department should now intervene where councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment.
- The total number of errors and total dollar values (including corrected and uncorrected) in the financial statements decreased compared to prior year.
- Eighty-two per cent of councils performed some early financial reporting procedures (2020–21: 59%). We continue to recommend that OLG should require early close procedures across the local government sector.

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NSW Auditor-General's Report to Parliament | Local Government 2022 | Audit results

The department should intervene to assess councils' compliance with legislative responsibilities, standards and guidelines

The financial statements of the NSW Total State Sector and the NSW Rural Fire Service do not include rural firefighting equipment that has been vested to councils under section 119(2) of the Rural Fires Act. The State Government has reconfirmed its view that rural firefighting equipment vested to councils under Section 119(2) of the Rural Fires Act is not controlled by the State. In reaching this conclusion, the State argued that on balance it would appear the councils control the rural firefighting equipment that has been vested to them. It is important to note that there are only two parties to the agreements that govern the use of vested rural firefighting equipment, leaving only two parties who would be considered to control this equipment – the NSW Rural Fire Service in the State sector, or councils in the local government sector.

Since 2017, the Audit Office has recommended that the Office of Local Government (OLG) and then the Department of Planning and Environment (the department) address the differing practices across the local government sector in accounting for rural firefighting equipment. In doing so, the Audit Office recommended that OLG should work with NSW Treasury to ensure there is a whole-of-government approach.

In 2021, having again considered the accounting position papers prepared by the respective stakeholders, the Audit Office of New South Wales advised councils and the department that any council not recognising this equipment is not complying with the requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards. We recommended that the department intervene when councils do not recognise vested rural firefighting equipment.

The department's role includes assessing whether intervention is appropriate with respect to councils' compliance with, and performance against legislative responsibilities, standards or guidelines. Given the law and the State's clear position, it would appear that any council not recognising this equipment is non-compliant with the relevant Australian Accounting Standards.

Despite these repeated recommendations in our 'Local Government 2021' and 'Planning and Environment 2022' Auditor-General's reports, the department has not been effective in resolving this issue. Forty-three of 146 completed audits of councils received qualified audit opinions on their 2022 financial statements. Sufficient time and engagement have been afforded to avoid these qualified audit opinions. This situation is unlikely to be resolved in the absence of regulatory intervention.

The department should now intervene to address this matter as a priority.

Recommendation to the department (repeat issue)

Consistent with the NSW Government's accounting position on control of vested rural firefighting equipment and the department's role to assess councils' compliance with legislative responsibilities, standards or guidelines, the department should intervene where councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment vested to them under section 119(2) of the Rural Fires Act.

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Recommendations to the department	Current status			
The department should inter	vene where councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment			
Consistent with the department's role to assess council's compliance with legislative responsibilities, standards or guidelines, the department should intervene where councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment.	We continue to recommend that the department should intervene where councils do not recognise vested rural firefighting equipment (repeat recommendation) Since 2017, the Audit Office has recommended that the OLG and then the department address the different practices across the local government sector in accounting for rural firefighting equipment. In doing so, the Audit Office recommended that OLG should work with NSW Treasury to ensure there is a whole-of-government approach. NSW Treasury has articulated and communicated its clear position. In 2021, the Audit Office of New South Wales advised councils and the department that not recognising this equipment is non-compliant with the Australian Accounting Standards. We	Not addresse		
	recommended that the department should intervene when councils do not recognise rural firefighting equipment. It is the department's role to assess whether intervention is appropriate with respect to councils' compliance with and performance against legislative responsibilities, standards or guidelines.			
	Despite these repeated recommendations in our 'Local Government 2021' and 'Planning and Environment 2022' Auditor-General's reports, the department has not been effective in resolving this issue. Forty-three of 146 completed audits of councils received qualified audit opinions on their 2022 financial statements in relation to this issue.			
	It is our view that this situation is unlikely to be resolved in the absence of regulatory intervention and the department should now intervene to address this matter as a priority. Refer to Section 2.1 for further information on this issue.			
Early close procedures				
OLG should require early close procedures across the local government sector by 30 April 2023.	We continue to recommend that OLG consider requiring early close procedures across the local government sector (repeat recommendation) Potential policy requirements requiring early close procedures	Not addresse		
	have not been discussed with key stakeholders, nor have requirements to perform early close procedures been communicated by OLG to councils and joint organisations as at			

the date of this report.

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Appendix three – Councils received qualified audit opinions

No.	Council	Qualification
1.	Bathurst Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
2.	Bega Valley Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
3.	Bellingen Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
4.	Byron Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
5.	Cabonne Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
6.	Carrathool Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
7.	Cessnock City Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
8.	Coolamon Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
9.	Dungog Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
10.	Edward River Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
11.	Federation Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
12.	Forbes Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
13.	Greater Hume Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
14.	Griffith City Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
15.	Hilltops Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
16.	Kempsey Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
17.	Lachlan Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
18.	Leeton Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
19.	Lockhart Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
20.	Mid-Western Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)

NSW Auditor-General's Report to Parliament | Local Government 2022 | Appendix three - Councils received qualified audit opinions

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No.	Council	Qualification
21.	Moree Plains Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
22.	Murray River Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
23.	Murrumbidgee Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
24.	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
25.	Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
26.	Sutherland Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
27.	Tamworth Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
28.	Temora Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
29.	Tweed Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
30.	Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
31.	Wagga Wagga City Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
32.	Weddin Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
33.	Wollondilly Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
34.	Glen Innes Severn Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings on council controlled land (and no evidence to support fair value)
35.	Junee Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings on council controlled land (and no evidence to support fair value)
36.	Snowy Valleys Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings on council controlled land (and no evidence to support fair value)
37.	Blayney Shire Council	Non recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and evidence to support fair value exceeds materiality set for the audit)
38.	Tenterfield Shire Council	Non recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings on council controlled land (and evidence to support fair value exceeds materiality set for the audit)
39.	Warrumbungle Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value) and Council determined to remove rural firefighting equipment from financial statements
40.	Bland Shire Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings (and no evidence to support fair value) and Council determined to remove rural firefighting equipment from financial statements

NSW Auditor-General's Report to Parliament | Local Government 2022 | Appendix three - Councils received qualified audit opinions

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No.	Council	Qualification
41.	Yass Valley Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and no evidence to support fair value)
42.	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	Non-recognition of rural firefighting equipment and buildings on council controlled land (and no evidence to support fair value)
43.	Clarence Valley Council	Non recognition of rural firefighting equipment (and evidence to support fair value exceeds audit overall materiality)

NSW Auditor-General's Report to Parliament | Local Government 2022 | Appendix three - Councils received qualified audit opinions

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Attachment 4 - OLG Letter to Another Council	

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	Office of Local Government
	5 O'Keele Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541 Our Reference: A862438 Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541 Contact: Sarah Gubb Phone: 02 4428 4142
	General Manager
	Via email:
	Dear
nent	I am writing to draw your attention to the qualified audit opinion issued by the NSW Audit Office following the audit of Council's 2021-22 financial statements.
Strengthening local government	The Auditor General has chosen to qualify the audits of those councils that have not included Rural Fire Service (RFS) assets based on her opinion that failure to include these assets is not compliant with the Australian Accounting Standards.
ocal g	The opinion also states that Council has not undertaken procedures to confirm the completeness, accuracy, existence or condition of these assets or performed procedures to identify the value of RFS assets vested in it during the year.
ening	An unqualified audit opinion is a fundamental function of councils and failure to meet this requirement can be an indicator of poor financial management and council governance.
ngth	In order to satisfy the Office of Local Government (OLG) that Council will address the qualified audit opinion it is requested that Council provide OLG with:
Stre	 the strategies implemented to address the qualified audit opinion and address any significant audit risks raised; and
	 a copy of the Audit Office's 2021-22 management letter and Council's response.
	It would be appreciated if Council could provide the requested information prior to 28 July 2023.
	Yours sincerely
	a.w. all
	Ashley Albury A/Deputy Secretary, Local Government

Attachment 6–Local Covernment President's Message NSWNews 5 July 2023. Viewed: 12 July 2023 https://www.lgnsw.org.au/Public/Public/News/President-Message/2023/PM070423.aspx

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5 July 2023

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You may notice we've had a bit of a facelift here at the Weekly and on our website!

After 10 years we thought it was time to freshen up our look, ensuring our digital communications are compliant with best practice and as accessible as possible while avoiding any expensive rebranding process.

Rest assured that other than minor tweaks to our corporate colours and fonts, there 11 be no change: LCNSWs second decade continues with the same brand, same services, and same commitment to members as always!

1 | P a g e

NAIDOC week (2 July to 9 July)

Congratulations to the many councils right across NSWpartnering with First Nations communities to mark NAIDOC week this week, celebrating and recognising the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The 2023 NAIDOC week theme is <u>For Our Elders</u>, highlighting the important role of Elders as cultural knowledge holders and leaders for their communities.

I was very pleased to meet with <u>Gr Pat Dixon Memorial Scholarship</u> Trustees earlier this week to consider applications for 2023 scholarships for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander councillors and council staff, and I look forward to having more to say on this year's recipients soon.

LONSWonline forum this Thursday-Voice to Parliament

Thank you all who have registered for the <u>LCNSWonline forum</u> this Thursday on the Voice to Parliament.

Please join me in hearing from speakers such as the Hon Linda Burney MP (Minister for Indigenous Australians), Professor Megan Davis (Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous UNSW and Professor of Law, UNSW), Gr Esma Livermore (Deputy Mayor, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council) and Gr Darcy Byrne (Mayor, Inner West Council)

The forum will provide you with an opportunity to hear about the upcoming referendum on the Voice to Parliament and ask any questions you may have.

Water Management Conference

Thank you, too, to all delegates who attended the LGNSWWater Management Conference in Parkes last week, discussing the latest technical innovations and best practice in water governance and management.

Among all other terrific speakers, it was great to have the Minister for Water, Rose Jackson MLC, and the Shadow Minister for Water, Steph Cooke MP, address delegates and express their commitment to councils' Local Water Utilities.

The shared commitment to close consultation with the local government sector is particularly welcome, particularly in light of the NSWGovernment's foreshadowed parliamentary inquiry into how best to safeguard and support local water utilities.

2 | P a g e

RFS mobile assets ('red fleet') update

I was extremely disappointed to learn of the letters the Office of Local Government (CLG) has been sending to councils last week, regarding qualified audits these councils have received as a result of red fleet matter.

Many councils have taken the principled and professional decision not to recognise red fleet assets in their financial statements as councils have no control over the acquisition, deployment or disposal of these assets, and LCNSW supports these councils in this decision.

While the Auditor-General's qualified audits of these councils is disappointing, it is especially disappointing that contrary to its previous position the CLG is now asking councils across NSWto divert already strained council resources to provide CLG with information on strategies to respond to the nonsensical position that RFS mobile assets are not assets of the RFS.

This diversion of resources will distract councils from their core work for the community and will not provide a single ounce of public benefit.

LCNSWhas written to the CLGstrongly urging the CLG to reconsider its position on this matter, and highlighting the independent advice the CLGsought that directly contradicts the position the Auditor-General and CLG are now taking. Read the LCNSW letter here.

Audit costs for local government

I wrote last week to the Auditor-General raising concern at the significantly increased audit fees being imposed on councils this year.

Since the NSWAudit Office became the auditor for all NSWcouncils in 2018, the baseline costs of audits have continued to increase.

In the context of significant cost pressures on councils this year, a number of councils have raised with me the unsustainable audit fee increases they are receiving that are well in excess of CPI and far beyond the baseline local government rate peg of 3.7% for 2023-24.1 have seen examples of fees increased by more than 100% year-on-year.

At the 2022 LONSWAnnual Conference, councils resolved to support a motion from Bega Valley Shire Council calling on the NSWCovernment to cover the full costs of audits for local governments in our State. I have also written to the NSWCovernment to highlight this resolution and will keep you updated once a response is received.

3 | P a g e

Federal funding-good news for local government

I was very pleased to see two items of good news for councils confirmed in the past week, supported by advocacy from LCNSW, councils across NSW and the Australian Local Government Association.

The Federal Government has announced the <u>advance payment</u> of the preliminary 2023-24 **Financial Assistance Grants** will represent about 100% of the amount council is entitled to. These funds should be in council accounts now, which is good news especially for councils that have anticipated and developed their budgets based on previous arrangements that have included this prepayment.

I was also very pleased to see the Federal Government announce it would fast track \$888 million in **Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements** (DRFA) in NSW, which will support councils to speed up their recovery and restoration efforts after a very challenging period of compounding disasters in recent years.

Under the DRFA payments are generally made after a State has submitted an audited claim for financial assistance and following reconstruction works. This advance payment will mean more up front support for councils and the communities they support as they recover from disasters.

We look forward to the NSWGovernment acting to remove any obstacles to these funds getting to where they are needed.

Sincerely,

Jarríea

LOCAL COVERNMENT NSW

Level 8, 28 Margaret Street Sydney NSW 2000 02 9242 4000

lgnsw.org.au

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Taken from <u>BILL TO TRANSFER RFS 'RED FLEET' OWNERSHIP TO STATE GOVERNMENT | Adam</u> <u>Marshall</u>

Date Downloaded: 12 July 2023

BILL TO TRANSFER RFS 'RED FLEET' OWNERSHIP TO STATE GOVERNMENT



<u>Photo caption</u>: Taking a stand to transfer ownership of NSW Rural Fire Services fleet and buildings to the State Government, Uralla Shire Mayor Robert Bell, left, Northern Tablelands MP Adam Marshall, Glen Innes Severn Mayor Rob Banham and Walcha Mayor Eric Noakes at the Kentucky RFS station today.

Monday, 19 June 2023

MEMBER for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall will introduce a Private Members' Bill into State Parliament this week, amending the Rural Fires Act 1997, to transfer the ownership of NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) vehicles, fire trucks and buildings from local councils back to the State Government.

Mr Marshall made the announcement today at the Kentucky RFS station alongside the region's Mayors, who have put their support behind the NSW Rural Fires Amendment (Red Fleet) Bill 2023.

"The 'red fleet dispute' has been an ongoing debacle – a political football – over the last 12 months between the State Government and local councils over who own and pays for RFS assets," Mr Marshall said.

"My Bill will remedy the situation, bringing the argy-bargy to an end by making it clear that RFS assets belong to, and should be accounted for by, the State Government, via the NSW Rural Fire Service.

"This will bring the treatment of all these items inline with how the vehicle and building assets of all other emergency services in NSW are accounted for and remove an enormous and ridiculous cost burden from our local councils.

"Why should a local councils use ratepayer dollars to account for a depreciate an 'asset' which they do not purchase, manage or have the authority to dispose of?

"And why do councils legally own these vehicles but not police cars or Fire & Rescue NSW pumpers?"

Mr Marshall said his Bill would amend Section 119 of the Rural Fires Act 1997 to transfer the ownership of all NSW Rural Fire Service vehicles and buildings to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

"This will ensure these assets are vested solely with the RFS, which will be required to account for these assets, and the associated depreciation and costs, on its books," Mr Marshall said.

"Currently the NSW Auditor General requires all local councils to do this, costing them a small fortune, or risk having their accounts qualified.

"Last year 43 local councils had their accounts qualified for the 2021/22 financial year due to them not accounting for and depreciating all RFS assets in their local government areas on their books.

"The depreciation costs alone, cost each council and their ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars, which is money which could be better spent delivering services or fixing local roads.

"In the Northern Tablelands, more than \$4 million annually would be saved if this Bill were to pass the Parliament.

"In essence, this Bill reverses a huge and archaic cost-shifting anomaly buried deep within the Act and puts the full cost back on the level of government responsible for the RFS; the State Government.

"There has been so much talk lately of the financial sustainability of local councils moving into the future, so this Bill has come at a perfect time.

"I hope the government and opposition support my Bill so we can resolve this dispute once and for all."

9.3 DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.3.1 DRAFT BUILDINGS STRATEGY 2024-2034

File Number:

Author: Glenn Bulmer, Manager Buildings & Faciliti
--

Authoriser: Jack Bond, Director Infrastructure

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the Draft *Murray River Council Buildings Strategy 2024-2034* (the Strategy) (attachment 1) to go out for public exhibition for the required 28-day period.
- 2. Notes the Strategy is interlinked and should read in conjunction with:
 - the Planning Proposals to reclassify community to operational land and
 - the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy

Both of these documents form part of this month's Ordinary Council agenda.

Notes that all public submissions received in relation to the draft Strategy will be presented at the next Ordinary Council meeting, where valid public submissions will be included in the final *Murray River Council Buildings Strategy 2024-2034* for final adoption.

BACKGROUND

Between 2020-2023, Murray River Council engaged an independent consultant to undertake a detailed 'Needs and Demands' analysis of its sports / recreation and building assets to determine current provisions and required future provisions. CT Management Consulting was engaged to undertake community surveys, via QR codes and website feedback via Councils YourSay page.

As part of the brief, the consultant was to identify all land that council owns or maintains then further assess the condition of all assets on this land. This included buildings and park assets such as furniture, structures, play equipment and general infrastructure. The final draft report from CT Management (Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities 2021) clearly identified the high number of assets council owns. The report also identified areas that contained an overly high number of assets in certain areas that need to be maintained. This is no longer financially sustainable due to Councils current financial position and commitment for council to break even financially over the next 10 years.

In mid-2022, the Revenue Taskforce (the Taskforce) was a sub-committee of council commissioned to improve the financial sustainability of Murray River Council. The Taskforce identified in early 2023, that council had a significant amount of land and building assets surplus to current and future needs of our communities in certain areas. The final draft report supports the disposal of these surplus assets, which in turn would offer a significant reduction in longer-term operational expenditure (maintenance, servicing and depreciation).

In considering the outcomes of the CT Management Needs and Demand Analysis and the Revenue Taskforce, the recommendations for proceeding with identified land conversion from Community Land to Operational Land and developing a consistent framework for Council owned and managed open spaces and buildings, will allow for future management opportunities of these assets which could include disposal.

The following resolutions provide the direction to progress the Land Conversion project (reclassifying community land to operational land) in conjunction with the development of the Murray River Council Buildings Parks & Open Space 2024-2034 and the Murray River Council Buildings Strategy 2024-

2034. It was also identified that several of the land assets identified Council owned or managed buildings that were required to be assessed in relation to their future use as part of the Murray River Council Building Strategy.

11.3 Needs and Demands Assessment Recommendations and Recreational & Open Space Provisioning Strategy

RESOLUTION 290323

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve the recreational and open space service provisioning standards and proposed parks hierarchy recommendations, and

2. Progress the Recreational and Open Space Provisioning Strategy to public consultation, and

3. Provide a further report to Council on Planning Proposals for the reclassification of Community land to Operational land, and Road Reserve, once public consultation is completed for Council's consideration.

CARRIED

9.1.1 REVENUE TASKFORCE REPORT – DRAFT

RESOLUTION 070323

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: CR Dennis Gleeson

That Council consider, as an initial step in relation to Land Assets, to commence the development of a detailed project management plan for land conversion with a view for change of use, lease, or sale, the public consultation process, which, when finalised, would then be reported for further consideration of Council.

CARRIED

Murray River Council Buildings Strategy Development history

The Needs and Demands Assessment project undertaken by CT Management made recommendations to develop a Parks and Open Space Strategy which was recommended and adopted by the Council at the Ordinary meeting held on 28th March 2023 to progress to further public consultation, this recommendation and the Open Space Hierarchy and inclusions list, was also adopted at this council meeting (Council resolution: 290323). Coupled with this was the requirement to also develop a Buildings Strategy.

DISCUSSION

At the Extraordinary meeting of Council on November 15, 2023 the Council decided not to proceed with community consultation to investigate a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to increase the general rates income to assist with the offset of operational costs and rising inflation. This decision has had a direct influence on the direction, recommendations and actions of this Strategy.

Challenges for Murray River Council:

 Geography - with four main town centres (Moama, Mathoura, Barham & Moulamein) and a network of smaller villages, the geography of the Murray River Council provides a unique challenge and requires the Strategy to strike a balance between proving local facilities in smaller population catchments, as well as providing bigger, co-located facilities to service larger areas.

- Ageing Infrastructure a significant number of the buildings / facilities considered as part of this strategy required maintenance, renewal, or replacement. Many of these buildings / facilities lacked functionality to cater for today's user needs or were at the end of their useful life.
- Balancing Provision Planning for and developing community and operational facilities across Murray River Council requires a strategic approach to ensure that provision is balanced to maximise community and operational benefit within finite resources.
- Increased Cost of Construction and Provision The escalation in construction costs, and ongoing operational costs of facilities has put additional pressure on Councils, particularly rural and regional Councils with limited populations but significant geographic spread.

This Strategy will help guide how we sustainably manage, protect and invest in Councils' buildings and apply a consistent framework across the council area.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.2 - Create and maintain safe and accessible community spaces that enhance healthy living and promote active lifestyles - Public buildings.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The adoption of this strategy will provide strategic guidance for future budget allocations required to manage and maintain Councils buildings.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305). Murray River Council Community Engagement Policy (POL104). Murray River Council Risk Management Policy (POL200).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993. Local Government (General) Regulations 2005. Crown Land Management Act 2016. Native Title (NSW) Act 1994.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & ASSESSMENT ACT 1979.RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Murray River Council will continue to manage and maintain buildings without a defined level of service or strategic direction impacting on council's long term financial sustainability and service delivery.

Diminished service potential and service capacity across of Council's buildings, facilities, recreational, open space, and land assets.

Increased renewal costs due to lack of maintenance and timely intervention.

Unrealistic Community expectations of Council's ability to maintain the status quo.

Reactive and ad hoc service delivery.

• How can it happen?

Attempting to maintain the status quo and spreading Council resources too thinly over too many Council assets and services.

Increasing service levels and delivery areas with diminishing funding.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Financial instability and inability to deliver services to the community.

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Almost certain.

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Inadequate.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

To restore long term financial sustainability, Council will need to review its current commitment to service levels and provisioning standards across our community.

Adopted plans and strategies to enable clear, definitive, and equitable service planning across the Murray River Council LGA.

The implementation of the Buildings Strategy will provide the key strategic framework to maintain sustainable service delivery.

CONCLUSION

The Draft Murray River Council Buildings Strategy 2024-2034 has been developed with extensive strategic analysis as well as a high level of community, stakeholder and officer engagement. The Strategy which is based on the Needs and Demands assessment project conducted by CT Management on Councils buildings, facilities, recreational, open spaces, and land has provided Council with a roadmap for sustainable and equitable service delivery and asset provision with financial capacity and resources adopted by the Council.

The Strategy supports the community's vision for the future and identifies a comprehensive action plan methodology for delivery and service provision in Buildings. It aligns with Councils' broader strategic frameworks, primarily articulated through the Community Strategic Plan, and responds to current and future challenges our council and community face.

Through progression of the Draft Buildings Strategy 2024-2034 to public consultation, Council can have a meaningful discussion with our ratepayers around a realistic future and demonstrate our commitment to the fair and equitable delivery of community and operational buildings / facilities across our Council area.

Murray River Council has a responsibility to provide safe, usable assets to our community, equitably across our LGA, and we have limited resources to do this with. We must provide services and fund our asset maintenance and renewals in the most responsible and sustainable way possible. We have a responsibility to do this right, and we now have the means to deliver it.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Building Strategy V2 (under separate cover)

9.4 DIRECTOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.4.1 DRAFT PARKS & OPEN SPACE STRATEGY 2024-2034

File Number:

Author:	Luke Keogh, Manager Parks & Open Spaces & Biosecurity
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Authoriser: Rod Croft, Director Planning & Environment

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the Draft *Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034* (the Strategy) (attachment 2) to go out for public exhibition for the required 28-day period.
- 2. Notes the Strategy is interlinked and should read in conjunction with:
 - the Planning Proposals to reclassify community to operational land and
 - the Murray River Council Buildings Strategy

Both of these documents for part of this month's Ordinary Council agenda.

3. Notes that all public submissions received in relation to the draft Strategy will be presented at the next Ordinary Council meeting, where valid public submissions will be included in the final *Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034* for final adoption.

BACKGROUND

Between 2020-2023, Murray River Council engaged an independent consultant to undertake a detailed 'Needs and Demands' analysis of its sports and recreation assets to determine current provisions and required future provisions. CT Management Consulting was engaged to undertake community surveys, via QR codes and website feedback via Councils YourSay page.

As part of the brief, the consultant was to identify all land that council owns or maintains then further assess the condition of all assets on this land. This included buildings and park assets such as furniture, structures, play equipment and general infrastructure. The final draft report from CT Management (Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities 2021) clearly identified the high number of assets council owns. The report also identified areas that contained an overly high number of assets in certain areas that need to be maintained. This is no longer financially sustainable due to Councils current financial position and commitment for council to break even financially over the next 10 years.

In mid-2022 the Revenue Taskforce (the Taskforce) was a sub-committee of council commissioned to improve the financial sustainability of Murray River Council. The Taskforce identified in early 2023, that council had a significant amount of land and building assets surplus to current and future needs of our communities in certain areas. The final draft report supports the disposal of these surplus assets, which in turn would offer a significant reduction in longer-term operational expenditure (maintenance, servicing and depreciation).

In considering the outcomes of the CT Management Needs and Demand Analysis and the Revenue Taskforce, the recommendations for proceeding with identified land conversion from Community Land to Operational Land and developing a consistent framework for Council owned and managed open spaces and buildings, will allow for future management opportunities of these assets which could include disposal.

The following resolutions provide the direction to progress the Land Conversion project (reclassifying community land to operational land) in conjunction with the development of the Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034. It was also identified that several of the land assets identified Council

owned or managed buildings that were required to be assessed in relation to their future use as part of the Murray River Council Building Strategy.

11.3 Needs and Demands Assessment Recommendations and Recreational & Open Space Provisioning Strategy

RESOLUTION 290323

Moved: Cr Nikki Cohen Seconded: Cr Ann Crowe

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve the recreational and open space service provisioning standards and proposed parks hierarchy recommendations, and

2. Progress the Recreational and Open Space Provisioning Strategy to public consultation, and

3. Provide a further report to Council on Planning Proposals for the reclassification of Community land to Operational land, and Road Reserve, once public consultation is completed for Council's consideration.

CARRIED

9.1.1 REVENUE TASKFORCE REPORT – DRAFT

RESOLUTION 070323

Moved: Cr Neil Gorey

Seconded: CR Dennis Gleeson

That Council consider, as an initial step in relation to Land Assets, to commence the development of a detailed project management plan for land conversion with a view for change of use, lease, or sale, the public consultation process, which, when finalised, would then be reported for further consideration of Council.

CARRIED

Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy Development history

In the early stages of developing the Strategy, there was a significant amount of data captured from the previous four years of consultation where the feedback was used to prepare the Draft Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034 which included the following;

- Feedback from the Community Strategic Plan public consultation program (2021)
- Meetings and direct feedback from community groups and Section 355 committees (volunteers)
- CT Management Needs and Demands Assessment project and final draft report.
- Capturing data from customer complaints and requests for service
- Murray River Council Local Housing Strategy feedback and recommendations
- REMPlan demographic and population projections
- Data from Sport and recreational participation trends

The Needs and Demands Assessment project undertaken by CT Management made recommendations to develop the Parks and Open Space Strategy which was recommended and adopted by the Council at the Ordinary meeting held on 28th March 2023 to progress to further

public consultation, this recommendation and the Open Space Hierarchy and inclusions list, was also adopted at this council meeting (Council resolution: 290323).

A detailed operational document known as the Service Delivery Plan (attachment 1) will sit underneath this Strategy, which has been prepared by council staff and committee input which considers current and future service delivery standards for Council's Parks and Open Spaces, with a view to become financially sustainable into the future within Councils current resourcing levels.

DISCUSSION

At the Extraordinary meeting of Council on November 15, 2023 the Council decided not to proceed with community consultation to investigate a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to increase the general rates income to assist with the offset of operational costs and rising inflation. This decision has had a direct influence on the direction, recommendations and actions of this Strategy and also the linked service delivery plan.

The final draft report from CT Management (Needs and Demand Assessment for Sport and Recreation Facilities 2021), has allowed council to consider a measured, sustainable and strategic approach for the provision of open spaces across Murray River Council LGA. Outcomes and recommendation of this assessment was workshopped with Councillors and key staff, to determine the Open Space Hierarchy and inclusions list, which was adopted in March 2023 (Council resolution: 290323) and has been included in the proposed draft strategy.

This Strategy will guide how we sustainably manage, protect and invest in the open space network across Murray River Council and apply a consistent framework across the council area and relates to council-owned parks, open spaces, sportsgrounds, cemeteries, drainage reserves and road reserves. It also outlines different categories of open space, along with the corresponding hierarchies and minor asset inclusions with clear guidance and direction for future open space development.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.1 - Create and maintain safe and accessible community spaces that enhance healthy living and promote active lifestyles - Sports and recreation facilities and spaces.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Nil. The adoption of this strategy will provide strategic guidance for future budget allocations required to manage and maintain the Parks and Open Spaces at Murray River Council within the hierarchy system.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305). Murray River Council Community Engagement Policy (POL104). Murray River Council Risk Management Policy (POL200).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993. Local Government (General) Regulations 2005. Crown Land Management Act 2016. Native Title (NSW) Act 1994. Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Murray River Council will continue to manage and maintain Parks and Open Spaces without a defined level of service or strategic direction impacting on council's long term financial sustainability and service delivery.

Diminished service potential and service capacity across of Council's buildings, facilities, recreational, open space, and land assets.

Increased renewal costs due to lack of maintenance and timely intervention.

Unrealistic Community expectations of Council's ability to maintain the status quo.

Reactive and ad hoc service delivery.

• How can it happen?

Attempting to maintain the status quo and spreading Council resources too thinly over too many Council assets and services.

Increasing service levels and delivery areas with diminishing funding.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Financial instability and inability to deliver services to the community.

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Almost certain

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Inadequate.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

To restore long term financial sustainability, Council will need to review its current commitment to service levels across our community.

Adopted plans and strategies to enable clear, definitive, and equitable service planning across the Murray River Council LGA.

The implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will provide the key strategic framework to maintain sustainable service delivery in Parks and Open Spaces.

CONCLUSION

The Draft Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034 has been developed with extensive strategic analysis as well as a high level of community, stakeholder and officer engagement. The Strategy which is based on the Needs and Demands assessment project conducted by CT Management on Councils buildings, facilities, recreational, open spaces, and land has provided Council with a roadmap for sustainable and equitable service delivery and asset provision with financial capacity and resources adopted by the Council.

The Strategy supports the community's vision for the future and identifies a comprehensive action plan methodology for delivery and service provision in Parks and Open Spaces. It aligns with Councils' broader strategic frameworks, primarily articulated through the Community Strategic Plan, and responds to current and future challenges our council and community face.

Through progression of the Draft Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034 to public consultation, Council can have a meaningful discussion with our ratepayers around a realistic future and demonstrate our commitment to the fair and equitable delivery of recreational and open space services and facilities across our Council area.

Murray River Council has a responsibility to provide safe, usable assets to our community, equitably across our LGA, and we have limited resources to do this with. We must provide services and fund

our asset maintenance and renewals in the most responsible and sustainable way possible. We have a responsibility to do this right, and we now have the means to deliver it.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Parks and Open Space Service Delivery Plan-Public (under separate cover)
- 2. Draft Murray River Council Parks and Open Space Strategy 2024-2034 (under separate cover)

9.4.2 ADDITION TO THE SHEDULE OF FEES AND CHARGES

File Number:

Author:Jessica McFarlane, Manager Building ServicesAuthoriser:Rod Croft, Director Planning & Environment

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council agree to an amendment to the Council 2023/24 fees and charges in relation to Planning Proposal Scoping Reports review and provide feedback to include a fee of \$1500 for 'Basic' and 'Standard' proposals and \$3500 for 'complex' and "principal" proposals, as defined in the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline by the Department of Planning and Environment.
- 2. That Council, as per Section 610F of the *Local Government Act 1993*, place the amended fee on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

BACKGROUND

The current listing in Council's fees and charges shows no cost for a preliminary review of Planning Proposals and the time to provide feedback. At present, we are receiving 1-2 requests for reviewing scoping reports per month and more than half of these are sent externally for review, given the lack of internal resources.

DISCUSSION

Due to the time taken to access Planning Proposal Scoping reports and providing feedback, it is considered appropriate to charge a fee for this service, which is non-essential as part of a Planning Proposal and a service which can be provided upon request by a client.

In reviewing a Scoping Report, Planners must assess the proposal against state and local statutes and strategies such as our Local Environment Plan and Housing Strategy and ensure the proposal aligns with their objectives. We then provide feedback to that effect which the client can these use toward their Planning Proposal submission for Council consideration.

It is proposed to charge a fee of \$1500 for 'Basic' and 'Standard' proposals and \$3500 for 'complex' and "principal' proposals, as defined in the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline by the Department of Planning and Environment for the review of a scoping report. This can include meeting with staff on-site or in-office, full assessment and all feedback provided.

In all cases thus far at Council, requests for scoping reports have fit into the 'complex' and 'principal' categories, as our clients seek support and initial advice on larger projects.

It can be noted that for many projects that don't submit a Scoping Report, Council staff will upon request liaise with the client, meet on site and provide preliminary advice even without the submission of a formal scoping report and this is a free service and will continue to be a free service to assist our clients with their concepts.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.11 - Strategic planning which produces consistent, strategic, transparent outcomes - Town Planning / Land Use Strategies

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The amendment to the fees and charges to a standard initial fee of \$1500 for 'Basic' and 'Standard' proposals and \$3500 for 'complex' and ''principal'' proposals, as defined in the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline by the Department of Planning and Environment. would cover costs for internal assessments and the majority of costs for an external assessment.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Section 610Fof the Local Government Act 1993 states that:

- 1. A council must not determine the amount of a fee until it has given public notice of the fee in accordance with this section and had considered any submissions duly made to it during the period of public notice.
- 2. Public notice of the amount of a proposed fee must be given (in accordance with the regulations) in the draft operational plan for the year in which the fee is to be made.
- 3. However, if, after the date on which the operational plan commences:
 - (a) A new service is provided, or the nature or extent of an existing service is changed, or

(b) The regulations in accordance with which the fee is determined are amended, The council must give public notice (in accordance with section 705) for at least 28 days of the fee proposed for the new or changed service or the fee determined in accordance with the amended regulations.

4. This section does not apply to a fee determine by a council for an application made in a filming proposal, if that fee is consistent with a scale or structure of fees set out in an applicable filming protocol.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Additional costs incurred by Council if the amended initial application cost is not supported.

• How can it happen?

Current fees & charges listed do not cover costs of full assessment and administrative processes.

What are the consequences of the event happening?

Moderate

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

High

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Low

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Support the amendment.

CONCLUSION

That Council support the recommendation to amend the fees and charges regarding Planning Proposal Scoping Reports – preliminary review and provide feedback to include a fee of \$1500 for 'Basic' and 'Standard' proposals and \$3500 for 'complex' and "principal" proposals, as defined in the Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline by the Department of Planning and Environment.

This fee has been calculated based on real time assessment and time taken to complete the assessment by consultants on behalf of council.

It is important to note the true cost to undertake the assessment is higher than \$3500 if consultants are completing the work. It is also not a legislative requirement for Council to conduct a preliminary assessment of planning proposal scoping reports, however several consultants do this to gain confidence in their work prior to lodging the planning proposal application.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.4.3	MENINYA	STREET	PRECINCT	PROJECT	-	MAY	UPDATE
File Nu	umber:	-					
Author: Matthew Sherman, Project Manager Meninya Street Precinct Project				roject			
Authoriser: Rod Croft, Director Planning & Environment							

RECOMMENDATION

That the officer's report on Meninya Street Precinct Project - May Update as at 15th May 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council.

BACKGROUND

The Meninya Street Precinct Project encompasses several large placemaking and infrastructure upgrades around the township of Moama including the major streetscape renewal program which acts as the centrepiece of the project. Projects include enhancements in the Horseshoe Lagoon Precinct, Kerrabee Soundshell Precinct as well as pedestrian footpath networks to facilitate connections to points of interest. All projects were identified in the early Meninya Street Master Plans and since December 2021, have been progressing through investigation, consultation, design, and some entering procurement or construction phases for completion.

DISCUSSION

The Meninya Street Precinct Project encompasses several large placemaking and infrastructure upgrades around the township of Moama including the major streetscape renewal program which acts as the centrepiece of the project. Projects include enhancements in the Horseshoe Lagoon Precinct, Kerrabee Soundshell Precinct as well as pedestrian footpath networks to facilitate connections to points of interest. All projects were identified in the early Meninya Street Master Plans and since December 2021, have been progressing through investigation, consultation, design, and some entering procurement or construction phases for completion.

This report provides an update on the progress of these projects and highlights key decisions that have been made as part of the project progress for Council to note. There have been operational decisions made have been by the project management team to achieve the outcomes set by Council, the community and Advisory Committee and have been based on subject matter expert advice or evidence from safety assessments and design reviews.

1.0 - Meninya Street Streetscape Upgrade:

The Meninya Street Streetscape Upgrade refers to the preparation of detailed construction drawings for the public road reserve that will once completed assist grant applications, procurement, and future staged construction. Included into the scope of works is vehicle lanes, nature strips, cycleways, footpaths, commercial activation reserves as well as the design of underground services both internal and external. The designs, which are being prepared by Spiire Australia, are making strong progress towards completion with extensive works being completed including surveying, geotechnical investigation, and service location as well as preliminary works for undergrounding of power lines and property connections.

A major focus since the commencement of design has been reviewing of Council approved concept designs to ensure the initial proposal is satisfactory to implement and meet all safety requirements as per AustRoads and Australian Standards. This has included a review from Spiire Australia and Trafficworks which identified several areas that have since been modified. Reviews focused on vehicle and pedestrian movement to ensure interactions between shops, intersections, bike lanes and road network are safe. During this review, it identified that car parking and the off-street bike lane, required further thought to achieve the objectives of the streetscape and to achieve a safe

pedestrian environment. Three key changes have been made to the design, which are outlined below in sections 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 for Meninya Street.

The next stage of design from Spiire will be incorporating located services and the implementation of design changes into the next iteration of outputs for review by Council. This will include the implementation of parallel parking and reconfigured shared user path network as further detailed below. Service design and planning will also commence by mapping existing services and the design of new service alignments to meet future population demands. This includes a stand-alone fire service network to allow businesses to avoid the requirement for onsite storage tanks. The project team has also commenced planning for CCTV, IOT and smart infrastructure to support future technologies and provide infrastructure for temporary streetscape activations including street markets. The design process remains on track for December 2024 completion.

1.1 - Parallel Car Parking Determination:

Spiire was requested to review parking options for Meninya Street in line with set objectives by Council and the community to ensure the parking approach adopted achieved a safe and functional outcome for the streetscape whilst supporting economic development. Spiire worked with Trafficworks to review possible options including angled and parallel parking approaches in line with AustRoads and Australian Standard dimensions to maximise parking spaces.

The review identified that angled car parking would require substantial cross section width and impact the ability to offer wide footpath networks, greenspace, and outdoor dining, jeopardising the objectives of the Meninya Street Precinct Project. It was identified that to achieve the outcomes set by Council and the community, parallel parking was the **only** option. Parallel parking allows for greenspace, outdoor dining, and footpath networks to achieve a pedestrian focused environment that will support commercial activation and safety of users. As part of the review, it was also identified that angled parking in areas such as the Moama Bakery Precinct was currently only possible due to non-complaint approaches to the footpath network, that resulted in public assets (footpath, bins etc) being placed inside private property boundaries.

The project team has therefore made the decision to implement parallel parking for the **full extent of Meninya Street** supported by Spiire Australia and Trafficworks. The project team acknowledges that this is not the preferred outcome of a couple of businesses, although prioritisation of project objectives and user safety must occur.

1.2 - Shared User Path / Cycling Path:

Spiire and Trafficworks completed an assessment of the proposed off-street bike path included in the adopted concept designs and identified that it posed several conflicts that could be mitigated. The off-street bike path was initially proposed due to conflicts at north and south ends of Meninya Street where pedestrians and cyclists connect to existing networks as well as non-compliant on-street bike path designs currently implemented. The approach recommended by the concept design, attempted to mitigate these issues with a 3.0m stand-alone bike path on the western side of the street.

As part of the safety assessment, it was identified that the off-street bike path in its proposed design, resulting in conflicts with pedestrian crossings, driveways, and parking bays on the streetscape. The off-street bike path also resulted in complications for stormwater management and landscaping with impacts to vegetation growth to achieve shade objectives. Spiire's recommendation was to create a shared user path network and push commuter cyclists to utilise Francis Street and Bartlett Street cycling infrastructure away from Meninya Street.

Spiire's comments:

- The inclusion of a 'dedicated' bike path creates potential conflict points between cyclists and pedestrians, both at formal wombat crossings and informal crossings from parking to footpaths. The number of driveways required to go through the bike path and outdoor dining areas also create further potential points of conflict.
- The space between parking and bike path would leave a space that would be insufficient for larger trees. A smaller tree/shrub type would need to be selected and may have more maintenance requirements and not really achieve cooling.

- The likely users of this bike path would be recreational users (i.e. families with kids, holiday makers) coming into Meninya Street for recreational purposes. More experienced cyclists or commuters would avoid Meninya Street and opt for either Francis Street or Bartlett Street. Consideration would need to be given to how cyclists could also be encouraged to stop and spend time in Meninya Street, rather than just passing through.
- Consideration would need to be given to how the cyclists are entering and exiting the bike path from any direction (north and south connection, as well as from side streets). The signage/line marking/pavement markings would need to be made clear for all users. This may make the space look cluttered and complicated. Riders may choose to ride on the road in the traffic lane rather than utilise the bike path due to ease of use.
- Street tree placement and species selection either side of the bike path would need to consider sightlines between pedestrians and cyclists/vehicles entering or existing driveways. This may impact on the overall number of street trees that can be provided.
- With all these constraints, we could not achieve the outcomes of what a dedicated bike path provided for. The street is for stopping and staying and slow pedestrians, so we are encouraging bikes to do the same.

As a result, the project team accepted the recommendation from Spiire to augment the pedestrian path through the removal of the separated bike path to create a shared user path network. This will consist of a 4.0m shared user path on the west side of the street and 2.5m shared user path on the east side of the street. This design will reduce conflict and push recreational cyclists onto major bike networks on Francis Street and Bartlett Street as highlighted in commentary by Spiire. The project team is currently working on the preparation of new Renders to reflect the design change in line with the cross-section imagery below.

Ref Fig. 1.1:



1.3 - Meninya Street Council Office Car Park:

Public car parking is currently offered at the Meninya Street Council offices that provides an area for public bus operations and a small amount of car parking including several DDA Spaces. Concept

Designs highlighted this are to continue as a parking facility that supports a small number of traditional car parks and several long trailer bay parking facilities. The intent of this space was to support the stop and stay approach for Moama and Meninya street by providing parking opportunities close to the commercial precinct. The Concept Plans also identified the relocation of bus bays onto Meninya Street to achieve a more visible location for public transport users to improve safety and reduce vandalism in the area.

Spiire completed a review of this precinct and identified that the proposed use could be improved through a revision of the parking configuration in the area. Spiire's revision identified that placement of long trailer bay parking in this location was not an efficient use of space, and this area would be better suited as green space with public amenities (with potential to include the space in the Old Council Office prospectus. Spiire's proposal would retain standard and DDA Parking Bays on Blair Street to more effectively utilise this space. The number of parking bays will not be impacted, and long vehicle parking will be relocated further south towards the public skate park where informal parking already exists for long vehicles.

The project team accepted this recommendation from Spiire and will progress design changes for Council review in the future. This design change will also benefit and align with Council's long-term vision of disposing of the old Council Building located at 6 Meninya Street and creating of off-street parking on Meninya Street.

Please refer to attachment 1.

Moama Wharf Balustrade Repairs:

Murray River Council commissioned a structural assessment in 2023 for the review of the Moama Wharf and Horseshoe Lagoon public structures. The assessment identified several structural and compliance issues with short term, medium term, and long-term fixes. Defect rectification works were completed in 2023 for Moama Lights which included additional walkway bracing, supports and repairs to piers. Remaining works included the replacement of non-compliant balustrade sections, staircases, and step-balustrades to achieve new building code requirements. At the time the wharf was constructed, balustrade heights were in line with standards of 900mm, although since then these standards have changes. As the audit is completed against current standards, Murray River Council is recommended to undertake renewal works to achieve compliance.

Following the Audit, Council commissioned a design in December which was completed in April 2024. Designs included all required renewal works including balustrade replacement and structural bracing to achieve required balustrade height as well as static and dynamic load. Procurement was undertaken by request for quotation in line with MRC Procurement Policy with a budget amount allocated based on the estimate listed in the structural assessment for required repair works. Following the completion of procurement, it was identified that all responses exceeded the available budget and as a result a decision was made to not award a successful supplier. For Moama Lights, Council will implement a temporary measure to achieve 1200mm height and prepare a future capital bid submission for Council approval and may investigate grant funding to contribute to renewal works.

Horseshoe Lagoon Construction:

Capital Enhancement works have commenced at Horseshoe Lagoon that will beautify the complete northern embankment of the lagoon through the installation of landscaping, turf, shelters, street furniture, public footpaths, and lighting. The project was on track to commence works in February 2024, although due to a ruptured water main within the project scope, this has required repair and alignment prior to landscaping works. The water main variation has delayed the project by 6-8 weeks due to lost time in scoping, design, procurement, and setbacks onsite. The appointed supplier although is continuing to progress works and complete civils works where possible until water main repairs are completed.

Quarrell Civil Construction has completed the following:

- Site Establishment including TGS implementation.
- Site Cut removal of vegetation including overgrowth, weeds, dangerous branches, and small trees that were impacting vegetation and visibility.

- Bulk Earthworks removal of material to achieve sub-grade benchmarks, removal of soil, exposure of services, compaction, and installation of crushed rock to resolve soft spots.
- Preparation of concrete sub-grade and base materials including shelters with drainage.
- Footpath preparation
- Decommission of old water mains (150mm AC, 200mm AC, 250mm AC) to replace with a 300mm PVC and 315 PE main with simplified valving for more controlled isolation and future proofing.
- Horizonal Direct Drilling (commonly referred to as under-boring) and open trenching to install new water mains. Thrust bracing and concrete encasement has also been completed to protect assets.

Remaining works include:

- Finalisation of water main renewal including installation of final pipe lengths, connections, thrust bracing and pressure testing prior to backfill and handover with as constructed drawings.
- Completion of all concrete works including footpath pours, shelters and required pads for bins and street furniture.
- Installation of drainage including kerbing, ag-pipe, headwalls, outfalls, and pipe works.
- Road Sealing, Car Park Sealing, Bollard Install and Fencing.
- Irrigation, turfing, planting, mulching.

The supplier Quarrell Civil Construction has continued to progress the project and is currently on track to demobilise from site on the 28^{th of} June ahead of Moama Lights.

Project Progress:







ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - 6 Meninya Street 🕹 🛣



ALFRESCO DINING IMAGE EXAMPLES



FEATURE SHELTER IMAGE EXAMPLES







Note: these drawings are not based on accurate site survey. Due to possible distortions associated with the aerial photograph, the location of existing and proposed features are approximate only





ROOF-TOP BAR IMAGE EXAMPLES





O TEA SHO



Project: Meninya Street Moama

Prepared for: Murray River Council

Kerrabee Park - Concept Plan

Date: June 15, 2022 Scale: 1:250 @ A1 Drawing No: 2212- LP10

THOMSON HAY LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS



130 Howards Road WATTLE FLAT VIC 3352 T 03 5334 5321
9.4.4 MATHOURA TRANSFER STATION OPENING HOURS

File Number:

Author:Brian Holmes, Manager Waste & ComplianceAuthoriser:Rod Croft, Director Planning & Environment

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Rescind Point 2 of Resolution 151023, due to inaccuracies in the times for opening hours at the Mathoura Waste and Resource Recovery Facility.
- 2. Endorse the opening hours of the Mathoura Waste and Resource Recovery Facility being open Thursday and Sunday from 8am 4pm.

BACKGROUND

In late 2023, officers reviewed Waste and Resource Recovery Facility opening hours and these were presented to Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 24 October 2024. These included extending Barham opening hours, closing the Wakool landfill, removing unmanned bins at Womboota and Bunnaloo and reducing opening hours at Mathoura. All recommendations were adopted by Council.

DISCUSSION

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 24 October 2023 Council agreed to the following recommendation: "The Mathoura Waste and Resource Recovery Facility opening hours be reduced from three 8-hour shifts per week to two 8-hour shifts per week. Mathoura will be open two full days being 9am-5pm Tuesday and Sunday".

To allow all sites to be manned efficiently, align more closely with Moama Waste Facility staffing arrangements and ensure an even spread of opening hours, Officers would like to change the recommendation from Tuesday and Sunday 9am-5pm to Thursday and Sunday 8am – 4pm.

The Mathoura Facility is currently open Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday 8am – 4pm therefore residents are already used to these hours.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.9 - Delivery best practice and compliant waste and recycling service and infrastructure that meets community needs - Kerbside, landfill and waste collection services and facilities.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

There are no budgetary implications. The recommendation will change a day and hours slightly, no additional hours or resourcing will result from this recommendation.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Nil

• How can it happen?

Nil

- What are the consequences of the event happening?
 Nil
- What is the likelihood of the event happening? Nil
- Adequacy of existing controls?

Nil

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Nil

CONCLUSION

That Council adopt the recommendations to fix up the administrative error in relation to the opening hours of the Mathoura Waste and Resource Recovery Facility being open Thursday and Sunday from 8am - 4pm.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.4.5 ADDITION TO THE SHEDULE OF FEES AND CHARGES

File Number:

Author:Jessica McFarlane, Manager Building ServicesAuthoriser:Rod Croft, Director Planning & Environment

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council agree to an amendment to the Council 2024/25 fees and charges in relation to Private Sanitary Drainage Plan from \$50 to \$25.
- 2. That Council, as per Section 610F of the *Local Government Act 1993*, place the amended fee on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

BACKGROUND

The current listing in Council's fees and charges shows a cost of \$50 for a Private Sanitary Drainage Plan with the description (if available) included in the application form. Previously, common practise was for staff to accept the application for a private sanitary drainage plan and conduct a search for the plan. Where a plan was available, it was provided to the applicant after a fee of \$50 was paid. If no such diagram was available, no fee was charged despite the search time used.

DISCUSSION

It is considered that a once off fee for all applications for private sanitary drainage plans be charged upon application, to cover the time spent for staff to conduct a search. Whilst some diagrams are reasonably easy to find, others require staff to travel to the site of physical storage for files to obtain a diagram (if available).

It is considered a \$50 fee with no outcome may be exorbitant for an applicant who isn't able to obtain a drainage plan, however a once off fee for all applications of \$25 is considered appropriate, at the time of application, to cover council costs.

Council's application form will be updated to reflect this new fee and will also outline that some private plans are not available, and, in these cases, no refunds will be given. The \$25 fee is a search fee.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.11 - Strategic planning which produces consistent, strategic, transparent outcomes - Town Planning / Land Use Strategies

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The fee will allow Council to recover staff costs for all application and not just those searches that have a successful outcome.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Section 610Fof the Local Government Act 1993 states that:

- 1. A council must not determine the amount of a fee until it has given public notice of the fee in accordance with this section and had considered any submissions duly made to it during the period of public notice.
- 2. Public notice of the amount of a proposed fee must be given (in accordance with the regulations) in the draft operational plan for the year in which the fee is to be made.
- 3. However, if, after the date on which the operational plan commences:
 - (a) A new service is provided, or the nature or extent of an existing service is changed, or
 - (b) The regulations in accordance with which the fee is determined are amended,

The council must give public notice (in accordance with section 705) for at least 28 days of the fee proposed for the new or changed service or the fee determined in accordance with the amended regulations.

4. This section does not apply to a fee determine by a council for an application made in a filming proposal, if that fee is consistent with a scale or structure of fees set out in an applicable filming protocol.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Additional costs incurred by Council if the amended initial application cost is not supported.

• How can it happen?

Current fees & charges listed do not cover costs of full assessment and administrative processes.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Moderate

- What is the likelihood of the event happening? High
 - Adequacy of existing controls?

Low

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Support the amendment.

CONCLUSION

That Council support the recommendation to amend the fees and charges regarding Private Sanitary Drainage Plan from \$50 to \$25. Applications for such plans must be made and paid for prior to the search for the plan commencing with no refunds given where a plan is not available.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.5 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS

9.5.1 MRC COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FRAMEWORK 2024-25

File Number:

Author: Tiana Cronin, Grant Officer

Authoriser: Sarah Ryan, Director Community & Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1. Council adopt the DRAFT Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 and place it on public display
- 2. Council note the updated Community Financial Assistance Program Framework 2024-25 document, including the list of annual allocation recipients.

BACKGROUND

Council's Community Financial Assistance Policy (POL-601.V#3), together with Council's Community Financial Assistance Program (CFAP) Framework (the Framework) sets out Council's framework for considering the provision of grant funding, donations, and fee reductions available to the community and provides information for Council and the community on the principles guiding these contributions.

The Framework document outlines the four financial support programs Council delivers, to provide funding and support to the community and it includes a list of those recipients eligible to seek an 'Annual Allocation' from Council. As this list changes from year to year, it requires Council approval, to enable the community groups listed to access financial support.

For the FY24/25, we are seeking to remove automatic payments historically made for service charges and in-kind services and incorporate a Services and Charges Assistance Application Form (via Smartygrants) so Council can ensure improved governance and financial oversight. This approach removes the need for an individual report to Council every time a community group or body requests any kind of financial support from Council.

DISCUSSION

A copy of the updated CFAP Framework document, which includes the list of proposed 'annual allocation' recipients for the 2024-25 period, is attached for council's consideration. The document provides detail on the different programs under which the community can receive financial assistance from Council and the process by which recipients must acquit their project funding.

Recipients who receive financial assistance via Council's Smartygrants system are required to submit a funding acquittal via Smartygrants, within six weeks of the project's completion. Recipients must provide evidence of expenditure and evidence that the project has been completed as outlined in their application form. If the recipient wishes to alter the project from what was proposed in their original submission (including time delays), they must first seek approval, in writing, from the Grants Officer.

Should a recipient not submit their acquittal on time, they will be issued a reminder notice and given two weeks to complete it. If it is still not received after two weeks, an invoice will be issued, requesting the funds be returned.

Recipients are also required to acknowledge Council's support.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

4. Strategic Theme 4: A place of inclusion, culture & wellbeing

4.4 - Develop community led strategy with a focus on social connections / social fabric and a sense of belonging - Provide programs for targeted community demographics.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The annual grant programs are included in the budget.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The attached Framework 2024-25 aligns with the Murray River Council Community Financial Assistance Policy (POL-601.V#3).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 356 (1) A council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Some annual events and community activities may not take place due to circumstances outside of their control. Therefore, there is potential not all annual allocations will be exhausted.

- How can it happen?
- Organisations may no longer require the financial assistance allocated to them.
- What are the consequences of the event happening?
- Council may resolve to reallocate the funding to another group or retain the unspent allocation in the general account.
- What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Medium

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Adequate

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Be flexible in how we deliver support and help community groups to be flexible in running their events and activities.

CONCLUSION

Council's Community Financial Assistance Policy and Framework enables many organisations to undertake projects and present events that otherwise would not be able to be delivered to our community and visitors. Approving this version of the Framework removes the need to present an individual report to Council every time Council is approached for financial assistance.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. MRC Policy Community Financial Assistance Policy POL-601 V#3 DRAFT changes marked-up 1
- 2. MRC Policy Community Financial Assistance Policy POL-601 V#3 DRAFT clean 🗓 🖾
- 3. DRAFT MRC 2024-25 Financial Assistance Framework 🗓 🛣

MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL COUNCIL POLICY

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

POL-601.V#3





1. INTRODUCTION

Murray River Council (Council) recognises the value and importance of the role that community groups and organisations play in building vibrant, inclusive and healthy communities.

Council further acknowledges that local organisations and groups may from time to time, in the absence of alternative funding sources, require financial assistance to help meet a demonstrated need within the community.

Council is accountable to the community for the management and disbursement of its funds that must be undertaken in a manner that maximises the benefits of the community and is seen to be fair and equitable. It also recognises that organisations and groups in receipt of Council funds have a responsibility to use those funds for the purposes for which they were given and that those purposes are of benefit to the community.

2. OBJECTIVE

This <u>Community Financial Assistance Policy</u> (Policy), together with Council's <u>Community Financial</u> <u>Assistance Program Framework</u> (Framework) sets out Council's framework for considering the provision of grant funding, donations, rates and charges to all of Murray River Council community. <u>to the</u> <u>community and provides information for Council and the community on the principles guiding the</u> <u>community grants program</u>.

This Policy specifically outlines Council's approach to making decisions in relation to grant requests, including:

Council commits to:

- Inform the community and Council's employees of its guiding principles and objectives of the administration of the <u>Community Financial Assistance Program;</u>
- Provide a fair, equitable, transparent and consistent method for providing financial assistance to community organisations and groups in accordance with the terms of Section 356 of the <u>Local</u> <u>Government Act 1993</u> (the Act), ensuring agreed outcomes are delivered;
- Provide funds each year for the purpose of providing financial assistance to eligible community groups and organisations and groups in accordance with the terms of Section 356 of the Act ensuring agreed outcomes are delivered. bearing in mind that the Council is trustee and custodian of public assets and is bound by its charter to effectively account for and manage those assets;
- Provide funds each year for the purpose of providing assistance to eligible community groups and organisations, bearing in mind that the Council is trustee and custodian of public assets and is bound by its charter to effectively account for and manage those assets;.
- Funding applications are submitted and considered by Council, within the constraints of Council budgeted funds, adhere to Policy guidelines, build capacity and provide benefit to the community.
- Make decisions on the granting of assistance based upon need, value to the community and conformity with Council's Community Strategic Plan and annual operational plan.
- Inform the community and Council's employees of its guiding principles and objectives of the administration of the community grant program;
- Promote a sense of community and social cohesion within Council's communities;
- Encourage innovation throughout the Council area; and
- Foster community partnership and a positive and professional public image for the Council.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all forms of financial assistance (inclusive of donations, sponsorships, service fees and charges) provided to community groups and organisations by Council and for Council assets.

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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4. LEGISLATION

▶ Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) – specifically Section 356 and Section 377 1 (A) of the Act

5. POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy addresses financial assistance provided by Murray River Council to "not for profit" community groups, organisations businesses and individuals providing services or programs to residents within the Murray River Local Government Area through a competitive grants process.

Council recognises and values the strengths of the Murray River community, including the strong sense of belonging, demonstrated through participation in a range of community and cultural activities. Council aims to draw on these strengths and provide support to assist them to continue to grow. Council acknowledges the important role of community organisations in developing projects and coordinating and managing funded activities which help to further develop these strengths in the community.

The funding and support are also mechanisms for Council to further the aims identified in Council's strategic, social, cultural, economic and environmental plans and policies.

The values incorporated in the Community Financial Assistance Program are:

Measurable community outcomes	Grants must demonstrate that Murray River Council residents and community members directly benefit from the financial assistance awarded.	
Bridging gaps in service delivery	Identified community needs are met by services, organisations and groups through funded projects, programs and events	
Value for money	Council ensures that a broad range of programs, projects and events represent the best value for money for grant recipients across diverse groups and services.	
Capacity building	Opportunities are provided to build skills, develop projects and services that will deliver strong outcomes for community benefit.	
Transparency	Framework is transparent and equitable in line with Council's Coo of Conduct. All decisions are published and feedback provided applicants.	
Equitability	Council provides equal opportunities for residents and groups to apply for all programs within grant guidelines	
Merit based	Applications for financial assistance or sponsorship shall be considered on their merits, taking into account the policy, the circumstances of each case, the availability of funds in Council's budget and the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act as well as guidance from the <u>ICAC publication Sponsorship in the Public Sector 2006.</u>	

5.1 GENERAL CONDITIONS

The following conditions apply to all applications for financial assistance from Council:

- 1. Council will only enter into a grant agreement with an organisation/group whose reputation and image is consistent with the values, objectives and policies of the Council. Applications will not be accepted from political parties or groups.
- 2. Financial assistance will only be granted by Council in accordance with Section 356 of the <u>Local</u> <u>Government Act 1993</u> for the purpose of exercising Council's functions.
- 3. Grant applications will be accepted only during the advertised application period for the relevant grant category or stream.

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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murray river council

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY POL-601.V#3

- 4. If applications for other financial assistance for matters of merit arise outside a specific grant program category or application window, Council may resolve to fund the application through the Quick Response Grants.
- 5. Grant approval will be limited to the defined funding period. Approved applications will not automatically apply to subsequent years.
- 6. Applications in competitive categories will be assessed on merit using the assessment matrix.
- 7. Council may assess and approve applications based on the total financial assistance funding the applicant has been granted, across all program categories.
- 8. All grantees are required to publicly recognise Council's contribution.

5.2 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- No Councillor or employee of Council may seek to receive a personal benefit or be perceived to receive any personal benefit, as a result of sponsorship allocation from Council.
- Applicants must identify and declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest (if applicable) in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct Policy available on Council's website.

5.3 LOBBYING

Applicant with a submission for funding under consideration may not lobby Council employees or Councillors to provide funding for their submission either verbally or in writing. Any applicant who does so will have their submission withdrawn from consideration for that round of funding with immediate effect.

5.4 AQUITTALS

- Recipients shall supply Council, if requested, with an audited balance sheet indicating gross receipts and disbursements. Proof of purchase in the form of receipts must also be provided.
- All recipients must successfully acquit any prior grants before applying for any further grants. Failure to provide satisfactory acquittal evidence will disqualify the organisation for future allocations of funds.
- Applicants must have no outstanding debts to Council.

6. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Grants Officer to monitor the adequacy of this Policy and recommend appropriate changes.

This Policy will be formally reviewed within four (4) years of adoption or as needed, whichever comes first.

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

External:

- Annual Allocation Application Form (Smartygrants) and Guidelines
- Community Grants Program Application Form (Smartygrants) and Guidelines
- Quick Response Application Form (Smartygrants) and Guidelines
- Services and Charges Assistance Form (Smartygrants)
- Local Heritage Fund Application Form and Guidelines
- ICAC publication Sponsorship in the Public Sector 2006.

Internal:

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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murray river council COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY POL-601.V#3

- MRC Framework Community Financial Assistance Program Framework
- MRC Plan Community Strategic Plan
- MRC Plan Annual Operational Plan
- MRC Plan Delivery Plan

MRC Program - Community grant program

Definitions:

Term	Definition
Fee waiver Note: In accordance	Where an individual or group requests that a fee or charge (as outlined in the Council's <u>Community Strategic Plan</u>) is reduced or waived.
with the NSW Local Government Act 1993, annual rates cannot be reduced or waived.	 Examples of what will be considered by Council as a request to waive fees are: a reduction in fee for water usage a reduction in the cost to hire a hall or reserve
reduced of walved.	 a reduction in the cost to hire Council plant or equipment
	Contributions provided to various community-related activities by Council and can include cash, in-kind and fee waiver.
	Examples of grants, as provided through Council's <u>Community Financial</u> Assistance Program, include:
Grants	 Annual Allocations which are allocated to recurring projects that Council generally contributes to on an annual or multi-year basis.
	• Community Grants which are allocated to one-off projects. These grants are open to community groups and organisations who can make application in accordance with the policy guidelines. Applications must be received during the stipulated annual application period.
	 Quick Response Grants which are administered by the Mayor and CEO and may be allocated to worthy projects or opportunities that occur outside of the application window for Council's <u>Community Grants</u> (refer above). Council will allocate funds to the <u>Quick Response Grants</u> each year, during budget deliberations, and may, from time to time, set a maximum grant amount.
	A contribution of Council's staff time, equipment or other services. In-kind support incurs a cost to Council and has a financial value to a group or organisation that must be calculated.
	Examples of in-kind support are:
In-kind support	 utilisation of Council staff or services
	 temporary loan of light depot equipment – sand bags, bollards, witches hats, signage, bunting and safety tape
	 temporary loan of special events equipment
	 preparation of Council reserves for use for special events
	event promotion through Council publications
	auspice of grant funding by Council

Note: In accordance with the <u>NSW Local Government Act 1993</u>, annual rates cannot be reduced or waived.

5. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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murray river council

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

POL-601.V#3

Version No.	Details	Dates	CM9 Reference	Resolution No.
1	Initial Issue	21 Aug 2018 to 22 Oct 2019	VF/19/62	160818
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MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL COUNCIL POLICY

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

POL-601.V#3





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Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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- 8. All grantees are required to publicly recognise Council's contribution.

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

POL-601.V#3

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- MRC Plan Annual Operational Plan
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Definitions:

Term	Definition
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Note: In accordance	,

Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

Adopted: DRAFT

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murray river council	COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY POL-601.V#3
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. . . .

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Community Financial Assistance Policy V#3 (POL-601)

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Community Financial Assistance Program Framework

Author: Grants Officer, Tiana Christie

This version presented to the Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council of 28 May 2024 Previous version adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Murray River Council of 27 June 2023

Murray River Council PO Box 21, Mathoura NSW 2710 p 1300 087 004 f 03 5884 3417 e admin@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au w www.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au



Introduction

The Community Financial Assistance Program Framework (the 'Framework') follows best practice and integrates Murray River Council's (the 'Council') financial assistance activities so that they strategically align with community needs identified in Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

Financial assistance is distributed by the Community Financial Assistance Program (the 'Program') via defined categories, in accordance with Council's CSP objectives and community priorities.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Murray River Council Community Financial Assistance Policy (POL601 V#3).

Categories

Financial assistance is distributed through four (4) funding categories that support current community needs and Council's priorities.

These categories may be reviewed and amended as necessary to maintain alignment with any future changes to Council's vision, CSP or emerging community priorities identified through community consultation and Council strategic planning processes.

The financial assistance categories are:

- 1. Murray River Council Annual Allocations
- 2. Murray River Council Community Grants Program
- 3. Murray River Council Quick Response Grants Program
- 4. Murray River Council Local Heritage Fund

1. Annual Allocations

The **Annual Allocations** category provides a Council contribution through funding annual celebrations, events and programs that support community-strengthening initiatives or improve the quality of life of Murray River residents. Council assists in the provision of funding after receipt of the Financial Year's *Annual Allocation Application Form* (via Smartygrants and as listed and noted by Council) or in-kind support, services and charges fee waiver (e.g. sewerage, filtered water and waste charges) applied on a case-by-case basis via the *Services and Charges Assistance Application Form* (via Smartygrants) pending their financial position and demonstrated need for assistance.

Annual Allocations are not provided for private, individual, or political celebrations or events.

This is a non-competitive category, with funding allocated within Council's annual budget to applications approved by Council through this framework. Once Council adopts this framework, the list of recipients below is deemed eligible for funding and will submit an invoice for payment. Once the project/event has occurred, the recipient is required to submit an acquittal via Council's Smartygrants platform.

Community Financial Assistance Program murray river Framework council Annual Allocations for 2024-25 are included in the table below: SUMMARY FY 24-25 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM 60,000.00 \$ QUICK RESPONSE GRANT PROGRAM 10,000.00 \$ LOCAL HERITAGE FUND suspended until 2026 \$ HERITAGE ADVISORY PROGRAM suspended until 2026 \$ ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS \$ 142,530.00 TOTAL \$ 212,530.00 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM - payment made upon receipt of invoice FY 24-25 Community Grants Program 30,000.00 Round 1 \$ Community Grants Program Round 2 \$ 30,000.00 TOTAL \$ 60,000.00 QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM - payment made upon receipt of invoice FY 24-25 Provided throughout the year \$ 10,000.00 TOTAL \$ 10,000.00 LOCAL HERITAGE FUND PROGRAM - payment made upon receipt of invoice TO BE TRANSFERRED TO PLANNING FOR FY24 AND FY25 \$ 6,500.00 TOTAL HERITAGE ADVISORY PROGRAM - payment made to HA upon receipt of invoice TO BE TRANSFERRED TO PLANNING FOR FY24 AND FY25 6,500.00 \$ TOTAL **ANNUAL ALLOCATIONS - SWIMMING POOLS** FY 24-25 Koondrook Swimming Pool Committee 17,000.00 \$ Council expenditure + balance paid at EOY Moulamein Swimming Pool Committee \$ 16,500.00 Nyah & District Swimming Pool Committee \$ 3,500.00 TOTAL \$ 37,000.00 SERVICE FEES and CHARGES Assistance FY 24-25 Provision of In-kind Services: - Waste Removal Fees Traffic Management Charges At cost each year basesd on approved applications detailing Provision of Rubbish Bins financial position and demonstration of need for assistance Healthy Harold Water Usage Charges Booking Fee Waiver TOTAL \$ 29,290.00

Community Financial Assistance Program Framework



ANNUAL ALLOCATION	S - DONATIONS		FY 24 - 25
Barham Deb Ball	Barham Deb Ball	\$	500.00
Barham Flywheelers Club Inc.	Barham Flywheelers Museum	\$	2,000.00
Barham Koondrook & District Show Association	Barham Koondrook Show	\$	1,000.00
Barham Koondrook Consolidated	River Daze, Barham	\$	5,000.00
Beacon Foundation (Echuca Moama)	Real Futures Program	\$	1,760.00
Community Living Respite Services	Opening Doors Project	\$	3,000.00
Clean Up Australia Day	Clean Up Australia Day - Murray Downs	\$	100.00
Darts Australia	Championships	\$	10,000.00
Echuca Moama Disrtict Agricultural and Pastroal Society	EM Annual Show	\$	1,000.00
Echuca Moama Events	Perricoota Pop & Pour	\$	4,000.00
Echuca Moama Steam Rally Inc	Steam Revival Event	\$	5,000.00
Echuca Winter Blues	Echuca Moama Winter Blues Festival	\$	4,000.00
Goodnight Christmas Tree	Christmas Tree	\$	1,000.00
Koori Kids	NAIDOC Week Schools Initiative	\$	500.00
Local Schools	End of year presentations	\$	1,400.00
Mathoura Bowling Club	Annual Tournament	\$	250.00
Mathoura Events Committee	Mathoura Easter Fair	\$	2,000.00
Mathoura Community Committee	Christmas Carols Event	\$	1,000.00
Mathoura RSL sub-branch	Anzac Day & Remembrance Day	\$	1,000.00
Mathoura Speed Shear Committee	Mathoura Speed Shear	\$	2,000.00
Moama Lions Club	Carols by Candlelight	\$	1,500.00
Moama RSL sub-branch	Anzac Day & Remembrance Day	\$	2,000.00
Moama Water Sports Club	Barry Beehag Ski Race	- \$	15 000 00
Moama Water Sports Club	Southern 80 Water Ski Race	¢	15,000.00
Moulamein Angling Club	Annual Duck Race	\$	100.00
Moulamein Pre-School	Yabby Races	\$	330.00
Moulamein Racing Club	Racing Cup	\$	1,500.00
Moulamein Retirement Village - Edward Rivers Gardens	Reimbursement for Doctors travel	\$	3,800.00
Moulamein WSDC	Moulamein Sheep Dog Trials	\$	500.00
Murray Downs golf club	Bowls tournament	\$	1,000.00
Swan Hill Field & Game	Annual shoot	\$	2,000.00
Wakool Show Society	Wakool Annual Show	\$	1,000.00
Wakool Progress Association	Town Xmas Party	\$	1,000.00
TOTAL		\$	76,240.00

2. Community Grants Program

Council's **Community Grants Program** offers financial support to not-for-profit community organisations and groups for projects, equipment, events, exhibitions, or performances that contribute positively to the Murray River community.

The objectives of the Community Grants Program will be influenced by emerging community needs and therefore the Program's priorities and categories, objectives, and themes may change from year to year.

Community Financial Assistance Program Framework



The Community Grants Program aims to:

- Be responsive to emerging themes, issues, and trends;
- Support not-for-profit community groups to provide a range of opportunities for residents;
- Provide equitable opportunity for the community to seek funding assistance from Council;
- Strengthen communities with local responses to identified community needs;
- Facilitate support for initiatives that strengthen the community through opportunities for participation, development, inclusion, and sustainability;
- Foster support across a range of pursuits and interest areas including health and welfare, education, arts and culture, sports and recreation, youth, ageing, environment and access and equity; and
- Assist Council to deliver identified objectives, priorities and strategies and align with the CSP.

Two rounds are offered each financial year, with \$30,000 available in each round. Applications are submitted using Council's Smartygrants online portal. The assessment panel, inclusive of three Councillors (alternating Council representation each round), and the CEO (or their delegate). Council's Grants Officer then provides a report to Council, outlining the recommendations of the Assessment Panel, for Council to consider and make a final decision on which projects to fund.

3. Quick Response Grants Program

Council's **Quick Response Grants Program** provides Council with the ability to fund worthy and extraordinary opportunities that were not able to be considered for funding as part of the Community Grants Program.

The purpose of the Program is to offer financial support to not-for-profit community organisations and groups for extraordinary and worthy projects, equipment, events, exhibitions, or performances that contribute positively to the Murray River community.

The Quick Response Grants aim to:

- Enable Council to fund projects that have not previously been considered for funding.
- Enable Council to support opportunities that are one-off, or which have arisen outside of application periods for other Council financial assistance.
- Assist Council to deliver identified objectives, priorities and strategies that align with the CSP.

Quick Response Grants funding will only be considered on behalf of Council by the Mayor and CEO if:

- (a) The funding opportunity is a one-off, that was not able to meet the application timeframes for the Murray River Council Community Financial Assistance Program; or
- (b) The funding opportunity is worthy or extraordinary and will provide significant benefit to the community.

Applicants should visit Councils Website for information and guidelines, or contact Council's Grants Officer to discuss their project or for any further assistance.



4. Local Heritage Fund

The NSW Heritage Office partners with Council to co-fund Council's annual **Local Heritage Fund** (LHF) program. The amount of funding received from the Heritage Office, and the amount of funding Council contributes, can change from year to year, however this funding program has been put in recess until 2025/26.

The LHF provides funding for conservation projects (e.g. repair of original features and painting in period colours) for heritage items and items of heritage significance within Murray River Council. Council invites applications once per year, through Council's Smartygrants online application form. Applications are assessed by Council's Heritage Advisory Committee, who then make recommendations to Council on which projects to fund.

General conditions for all financial assistance provided by Council

The following conditions apply to all financial assistance provided by Council:

- 1. Council will only enter into a grant agreement with an organisation/group whose reputation and image is consistent with the values, objectives and policies of the Council.
- 2. Financial assistance will only be granted by Council in accordance with s356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* for the purpose of exercising Council's functions.
- 3. Grant applications will be accepted only during the advertised application period for the relevant grant category or stream.
- 4. If applications for other financial assistance for matters of merit arise outside a specific grant program category or application window, Council may resolve to fund the application through the Quick Response Grants.
- 5. Grant approval will be limited to the defined funding period. Approved applications will not automatically apply to subsequent years.
- 6. Applications in competitive categories will be assessed on merit using the assessment matrix.
- 7. Council may assess and approve applications based on the total financial assistance funding the applicant has been granted, across all program categories.
- 8. All grantees are required to publicly recognise Council's contribution.
- All recipients of financial assistance from council must submit a funding acquittal via Council's Smartygrants system, within six weeks of the project's completion, and provide evidence of expenditure and the project's completion.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding through the Community Financial Assistance Program, applicants must:

- apply via the appropriate application form;
- demonstrate how funds will be used for community benefit;
- meet all specific eligibility requirements and criteria in the relevant program and the Financial Assistance Program Framework;
- have no outstanding debts to Murray River Council;
- sign and comply with the funding agreement accepting the conditions of funding;
- provide any required acquittals to Council for grant funding received, by the specified date;
- be a not-for-profit community organisation, group, or association;

Community Financial Assistance Program Framework



- provide direct benefits to the residents of the MRC local government area;
- be able to demonstrate financial viability and competence;
- have adequate public liability insurance and appropriate child safety and health and safety practices in place;
- be able to demonstrate a contribution in the form of funds, services, or in-kind support;
- be based in the MRC local government area, or have significant benefit for MRC residents;
- be able to plan effectively and be well organised;
- have no outstanding grant acquittals or outstanding debts owing to Council;
- submit their application by the due date;
- submit only one application per funding round.

Who and what will not be funded?

The following will not be considered for funding:

- A group who has failed to acquit a previous community grant for a funded project by the due date;
- Retrospective funding;
- Recurrent costs, salaries, and on-costs;
- Insurance, such as (but not limited to) Public Liability Insurance;
- Social excursions, eg. bus trips or picnics;
- Applicants applying to another Council funding stream for a grant for the same activity;
- Late or incomplete applications (This condition does not apply to the Quick Response Grants).

How much can I apply for?

The various funding Programs have differing maximum amounts that can be applied for. Please refer to the guidelines for each program, for the specific amounts available.

Funding principles

Priority will be given to applications that respond to identified community needs and align with Council's Community Strategic Plan.

The Community Financial Assistance Program will prioritise support where:

- Applicants are based in the Murray River Council (MRC) local government area, or the project must provide significant benefit for MRC residents;
- The applicant is not already in receipt of substantial funding/in-kind support from MRC;
- The proposed activity or project is innovative or unique for the MRC local government area;
- The proposed activity incorporates collaboration/partnerships with other groups;
- The proposed activity maximises community benefit;
- The proposed activity or project meets the priorities of the program;
- The proposed activity demonstrates sustainability; and
- The proposed activity enables access and inclusion in accordance with Council's 'Disability Inclusion Action Plan'.



Application assessment

Applications will be reviewed to ensure they are eligible for consideration, that all sections of the application have been completed and that required supporting documentation is attached.

Applications will be assessed by the relevant assessment panel for each program, using the assessment criteria specific to that program.

Other important information

- Multiple applications from the same group in the same funding round will not be assessed.
- Applications to fund an event or a project that may be offensive to sections of the community will not be considered.
- Applications submitted will be acknowledged via a confirmation email.
- Successful applicants will need to accept the funding under the conditions that the grant will be made available. Council may make funding conditional and subject to specific conditions being met.
- Successful applicants will be required to acknowledge Council's support, the specific details will depend upon which program the funding has been received. For example, an official Murray River Council logo (and specific wording) must be used on any promotional material or at any official events associated with the activity and on any produced literature.
- Successful applicants will need to report on how the grant was spent (acquittal).
- Applicants must not spend money on the proposed activity before funding decisions are announced. This is considered retrospective funding, which is not eligible for support.
- Funding is not automatic on application. All requests are subject to consideration on their individual merits each year.

Funding Acquittals

All recipients of financial assistance from Council are required to submit a funding acquittal via Council's Smartygrants system, within six weeks of the project's completion. Recipients must provide evidence of expenditure (receipts) and evidence that the project has been completed as outlined in their application form. If the recipient wishes to alter the project from what was proposed in their original submission (including time delays), they must first seek approval, in writing, from the program manager.

Should a recipient not submit their acquittal on time, they will be issued a reminder notice and given two weeks to complete it. If it is still not received after two weeks, an invoice will be issued, requesting the funds be returned.

Further information

Help and advice in relation to Council's Community Financial Assistance Programs is available by contacting:

Tiana Christie, Grants Officer

Murray River Council PO Box 906, Moama NSW 2710 Phone: 1300 087 004 Email: <u>tchristie@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au</u>

9.5.2 TOOLEYBUC BRIDGE KEEPERS COTTAGE LEASE

File Number:

Author:Karen Buckley, Manager of Local ConnectionsAuthoriser:Sarah Ryan, Director Community & Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Council leases the Tooleybuc Bridge Keepers Cottage to Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill

BACKGROUND

Tooleybuc Bridge Keepers Cottage is managed by the Section 355 Committee – Tooleybuc Piangil Action Group. For many years the cottage has been run as an opportunity shop by a group of volunteers, with no lease or rent paid. This group has recently decided they no longer wish to continue running the op shop and have ceased operations.

For the last 6 years the opportunity shop has been operated on a Thursday each week, by the group Echuca Discoveries, supported by the groups manager.

Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill are requesting approval to continue to operate the opportunity shop on a permanent basis.

DISCUSSION

Whilst the organisation Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill is a private company - NDIS Service Provider, the group also has a not-for-profit branch Discovery Support Group. Echuca Discoveries Pty Ltd would be responsible for required insurances and any money raised would be managed by the not- for- profit Discovery Support Group.

The Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill Group, over many years have become a well-known group regularly involved in activities around the area. Recently the group catered 250 meals for the 'shit box rally'. The group are embraced by the Tooleybuc community.

The groups vision is that all money made from the op shop operations would go back into activities the group is involved in around the Tooleybuc area, and events and local projects around the Tooleybuc community.

The groups vision includes continuation of an opportunity shop that has been an integral part of the Tooleybuc community for many years, the group sees the possible closure as a great loss to the community. The op shop is a place where community come together not only as it is a place where many people shop, it also encourages travellers to stop in the town and spend money at the local businesses whilst there.

The group would like to grow the shop to include the sale of local produce and arts and crafts as well as providing a level of tourist information for passing travellers, supporting, without competing with other existing Tooleybuc businesses.

Council's DRAFT Leasing and Licensing Policy S5.2 non-profit, sporting and community organisations states - (a) Leases may be granted to non-profit, sporting and community organisations for non-commercial purposes for below market rent.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.2 - Create and maintain safe and accessible community spaces that enhance healthy living and promote active lifestyles - Public buildings.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Councils budget for annual maintenance on the Bridge Keepers Cottage is currently:

Fire: \$150, Gutters: \$600, Pest: \$496, HAVC: \$120,

Sub Total: \$1,366

MRC Operational and maintenance annual allocation to S355 Committee \$1,530

Total \$ 2,896

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305).

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Closure of a shop that has been providing service to the community for many years.

• How can it happen?

Original group has ceased operations at the shop.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Building/asset may sit vacant. Negative impact on community sentiment.

- What is the likelihood of the event happening?
 - Likely
- Adequacy of existing controls?

Moderate

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Enable continuation of op shop operations.

CONCLUSION

Council approves lease of the Tooleybuc Bridge Keepers Cottage to Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill at a below market rent.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Request Letter Tooleybuc Bridge Keepers Cottage May 24 🗓 🛣
- 2. Information Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill 🗓 🛣

98-100 Gray Street Swan Hill 3585 12th April 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

We are respectfully requesting approval to operate the Tooleybuc Op Shop on a permanent basis, as the most recent committee have retired from the many tasks required to operate this facility.

For the last six years we have been operating the Bridge Keepers Inn Op Shop on a caretaker basis. We believe that keeping the Op shop open has many advantages for both Tooleybuc and for Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill participants. It could be a win/win for all involved.

The Op Shop is located in a perfect position to attract the many travellers to stop in town. The historical significance of the Bridgekeepers cottage, the close proximity to the park and amenities, the variety of refreshment options offered and the opportunity for some shopping, appeals to the many tourists who pass through Tooleybuc. Attracting people to stop and spend some time brings more money into town therefore supporting local businesses.

The Op shop does have regular customers who buy locally instead of having to go into Swan Hill. Many local farm workers also rely on the Op Shop as a budget friendly option when purchasing their work clothing.

We believe that the Tooleybuc Op Shop provides a vital place for people to catch up. There is always a smiling face to greet customers and to chat about everyday things.

Since we have been operating the Op Shop we have noticed that apart from providing a welcoming hub for our regular customers, we have been able to answer the many questions that travellers have regarding accommodation, things to do, places to eat; a bit like an informal Information Centre.

The positives for Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill participants are many. The Op Shop provides a great place to learn and develop customer service skills including teamwork and communication skills, which are very important skills for life.

If we are successful in our request, we plan to give back to the Tooleybuc community through projects which our participants could support. We would also like to sell our arts, crafts and produce. Echuca Discoveries Pty Ltd would be responsible for required insurances. Any money raised would be managed by our Not- for- profit Discovery Support Group, and all money made would go back into activities our group is involved in around the Tooleybuc area, and events and local projects around the Tooleybuc community.

Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill have been a regular fixture in Tooleybuc since we began operating in 2018. During the height of Covid times, even more so, as our activities centred around Tooleybuc.

We were fortunate to have been made welcome by the community, notably by the Tooleybuc Club and by our manager Joanne O'Bree-a lifetime Tooleybuc local- at her own property.

Some of the ways that we support Tooleybuc are:

- Holding all of our big social events at the Club Christmas Parties, Talent Quests are held in the auditorium- minimum 60 patrons and up to 120
- Our Catering group under the guidance of our two fully qualified chefs cater at the Tooleybuc Club when their chefs are away.
- We play golf, mini golf, bowls and have meals in the bistro weekly- (aprox 18 -25 patrons) twice a week.
- We utilise Tooleybuc Club Villas, booking all six at a time for sleepover respite weekends for our clients many times during the year, dining at the club whilst there.
- We volunteer at the Bridge Keepers Inn Op Shop each Tuesday and Thursday
- Our Catering group catered 250 meals for the Shit Box Rally, this event won an award at the Australia day ceremony.
- Golf buggy hire from the Motel
- Patronising Lucky Phil's takeaway, Tooleybuc Pub and Café, Post Office shop

We value the welcome that we have received from the Tooleybuc community, and we are very interested in continuing our association by providing the service that the Bridge Keepers Inn Op Shop Shop gives to many.

Thank you for considering our request. Please don't hesitate to contact me on 0408305525 if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Joanne O'Bree

Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill - Manager

ECHUCA DISCOVERIES SWAN HILL IN THE TOOLEYBUC COMMUNITY

Echuca Discoveries Swan Hill have been a regular fixture in Tooleybuc since we began operating in 2018. During the height of Covid times, even more so, as our activities centred around Tooleybuc.

We were fortunate to have been made welcome by the community, notably by the Tooleybuc Club and by our manager Joanne O'Bree-a lifetime Tooleybuc local- at her own property.

We have given back to the local community through supporting the Clubs, Cafe's, Pub and post office, running the local Bridgekeepers Inn Op-shop every week on a Thursday- giving information to travelling tourists, regularly renting out local accommodation etc.

A member from the Tooleybuc Club told us we were a big part of keeping the club going through Covid.

TOOLEYBUC CLUB

- All of our big social events- Christmas Parties, Talent Quests are held in the auditorium- min 60 patrons and up to 120
- Our Catering group under the guidance of our two fully qualified chefs cater at the Tooleybuc Club when their chefs are away.
- We play golf, mini golf, bowls and have meals in the bistro weekly- (aprox 18-25 patrons) twice a week
- We utilise Tooleybuc Club Villa's, booking all six at a time for sleepover respite weekends for our clients many times during the year, dining at the club whilst there.

TOOLEYBUC COMMUNITY

- Volunteering at the Bridge Keepers Inn Op Shop each Thursday
- Our Catering group catered 250 meals for the Shit Box Rally, this event won an award at the Australia day ceremony.
- Golf buggy hire from the Motel
- Patronising Lucky Phil's takeaway
- Tooleybuc Pub and Cafe
- Patronising Post Office shop
- Patronising Kyalite Pub
- Patronising Koraleigh Pub, hall & tennis courts
- Having meals & takeaway from the Tooleybuc Hotel
- Attending Steve Cole's Sculpture Studio at Goodnight
- Volunteering at the Tooleybuc Hotel and Butchers Shop Cafe

JOANNE O'BREES PROPERTY

- Horse riding program
- Animal Education program
- Work Skills program

OUR VISION

We have been asked to take on the complete running of the local Op-Shop as the current committee are closing it down. If Tooleybuc closes the op shop it would be a massive loss to the community- not only as it is a place where many people shop, it also encourages travellers to stop in the town and spend money at the local businesses whilst there. Many local farm workers also rely on the Op Shop as a budget friendly option to purchase their work clothing without having to travel out of town.

If we were to take it over, we would be putting the proceeds back into the community through projects which our participants could support, or activities to take part in.

We would also like to sell our clients artwork, pottery, woodwork, as well as local farmers produce. We will also be providing visitors to the area, with local information.

Workers and clients would be covered under Echuca Discoveries Insurances and we legal liability and TFN.

Any money raised through op shop sales would be managed by our Notfor- profit Discovery Support Group. All money made would go back into activities around the Tooleybuc area that our group is involved in or projects benefitting the Tooleybuc community.










28 May 2024



9.5.3 SECTION 355 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES AS AT APRIL 2024

File Number:

Author:	Karen Buckley, Manager of Local Connections
Authoriser:	Sarah Ryan, Director Community & Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the April Section 355 Committee report

BACKGROUND

Council Section 355 Committees are to provide minutes of each committee meeting to keep Council informed of the committee's activities.

DISCUSSION

Council has 24 x Section 355 committees. These committees are made up of community volunteers who oversee the day-to-day management of facilities owned by council and/or provide advice to Council about such facilities.

The death of a Section 355 Committee Volunteer in NSW has exacerbated the need for Council to review the operating model of all our community committees to ensure that volunteers are well supported and managed from recruitment right through to execution of delegated responsibilities.

Karen Buckley has joined the Economic Development team. Karen's new role as Manager Local Connections, will be responsible for working collaboratively with committees to assist them to meet their obligations as required by S355 of the Local Government Act 1993 and to improve governance and risk mitigation.

Minutes are attached to this report for Council's information.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

3. Strategic Theme 3: A place of Liveable Communities

3.2 - Create and maintain safe and accessible community spaces that enhance healthy living and promote active lifestyles - Public buildings.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Scope of Committees financial transactions vary.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Asset Management Policy (POL305). Murray River Council Section 355 Committee Policy (POL119

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 1993.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

Committees and Council fail to meet their obligations.

• How can it happen?

Committees are generally unaware of the full extent of their roles and responsibilities, particularly in relation to WH&S, operational procedures and systems, procurement, financial management (compliance with LG Act) and reporting.

There have not been the resources within council to provide requisite support and guidance to committees to ensure they understand their responsibilities and have necessary skills and capacity to fulfill obligations. This is not a reflection on the committee and expertise of Council staff, it is about the need to appropriately and adequately resource and support committees.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

A number of Section 355 committees are very fragile and their medium to longer-term viability is questionable.

Council is under considerable pressure to comply with onerous obligations relating to the support and management of section 355 committees under the Local Government Act (and other Acts).

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

Likely

• Adequacy of existing controls?

Low to moderate, but awareness is improving.

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Council needs to carefully consider the structure required to best support committees whilst managing all legal obligations.

A new role of Manager Local Connections has been created to work collaboratively with committees of Council to assist them to meet their obligations as required by S355 of the Local Government Act 1993 and to improve governance, risk mitigation, and long-term sustainability.

Steps will be taken to optimise the viability of committees where appropriate; consider the scope of support council will provide to support committees; determine the criteria that will trigger council's intervention in the operations of Section 355 committees, and what the intervention will be; plan for contingency management options, and fully recognise the cost of this in council's long term financial plans.

CONCLUSION

The following list are items raised at recent committee meetings:

Barham Recreation Reserve

No items of note

Bunnaloo Recreation Reserve

Bush Bus Child services are using the rec reserve for a children's play group once a month. Accessing the oval, playground, tennis courts and toilet facilities external to hall.

Does the recreation reserve have a vehicle access and parking plan – Safety reasons and accessibility are concerns with many younger children accessing the facility with families including daycare, group fitness sessions, school concerts. This can be carried over to the next meeting to discuss with council representative. Previously there has been discussion that the car park could be closed off and not accessible.

Amy Barnes and Belinda James discussed with those in the meeting the proposed Murray River Council 355 Committee policy and management agreement. Discussion was – Do we as a committee want to remain as a committee in control of the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve and sign the Management agreement. Those present in the meeting unanimously decided that we would like to continue with management of the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve.

Caldwell Hall Management Committee

No items of note

Kyalite Progress & Recreation Reserve Association Committee

Kyalite Hall and MRC Condition Report and Discussion Murray River Council engineer report advised it to be demolished. KPRRA Association to communicate with Kyalite Community and find out what the consensus of the Hall is. Do we still require a Community Hall? How would the Community Feel if we didn't have a hall anymore? Furthermore, what Historical value does the Hall represent for some of the older community member.

Action: Gavin to contact Anne Crowe special meeting to discuss the future of the hall after consultation with some of the older community members.

All other items in minutes relate to the Balranald Council area of Kyalite.

Womboota School of Arts Hall Committee

Re. replacement of shade sail. Unanimous decision by all in attendance that it is too expensive and unnecessary. Funds would be more widely spent on grounds maintenance.

Re. Rubbish bins. Motion that the issue be put to Karen Buckley that if the bins are to be removed? What does the committee do with litter after the charity functions held throughout the year and especially the children's Christmas party? Carried.

Table Tennis competition. Due to start mid-June. Final night will be a community BBQ.

Murray Downs Park Reserve

106.75 Volunteer hours during Feb. \$74 from produce & \$183.60 from bottle collection.

Insurance for volunteers at the community garden, Members for the 355 are covered by insurance. Karen is working on a process to get all volunteers in a register to complete volunteer work on a MRC asset.

Completed scanned forms to be emailed to Karen Buckley at MRC. Form only needs to be completed once.

Mathoura Retirement Village

Betty raised the matter of security cameras. All agreed that safety should be given the same priority as maintenance and aesthetics. AJM Electrics have been followed up and they are unable to engage in security camera work. Ian will follow up obtaining quote(s). Echuca Locksmith may be a possibility. All agreed to quotes and proceeding with this work. Moved: B. Murphy 2nd M. Crack

Secretary – noted that over the years many individual and community donations have been made to MRV. The Village has been a registered charity for over 40 years, and it is on this basis that donations have been received. All donations have been publicly and transparently acknowledged in minutes and financial statements presented to the committee. These donations add up to many thousands of dollars, plus interest. It was agreed by all that these donations do not form part of council assets.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Meeting Minutes Barham Recreation Reserve 🗓 🛣
- 2. Meeting Minutes Bunnaloo Recreation Reserve 🕹 🛣
- 3. Meeting Minutes Caldwell Hall Committee 🖞 🛣
- 4. Meeting Minutes Kyalite Progress & Recreation Reserve Committee 🗓 🛣
- 5. Meeting minutes Womboota School of Arts Hall Committee 🗓 🖾
- 6. Meeting Minutes Murray Downs Park Reserve Committee 4
- 7. Confirmed Meting Minutes Mathoura Retirement Village April 24 🗓 🖀

Barham Recreation Reserve Committee Inc.

Meeting Commenced: 7.15 pm, 8th April 2024, Barham Recreation Complex.

Present, Sandy Lang, Bobbie Eaton, Neil Gorey, Julie Frankling, Banny O'Farrell,

Apologies:

Greg Lake, Luke Keogh (MRC), Tim Coote, Karen Buckley (MRC), Melissa Davis, Jack Lambert,

Previous Minutes – provided to all members via email and in hard copy.

Moved by Julie Frankling

Seconded by Bobbie Eaton

Business Arising from previous minutes.

• Safety Strips failed after being installed – MRC has painted now

Correspondence in:

- 29.02.2024 Cater Edge Inv 12261
- 11.03.2024 MRC Karen Confirmation of next meeting date
- 04.04.2024 Karen Buckly Apology for meeting on the 08.04.2024

Correspondence Out:

- 29.02.2024 Michelle Robinson Cater Edge Inv 12261
- 13.02.2024 MRC Meeting Minutes February 2024
- 11.03.2024 MRC Karen Buckley Confirmation of meting being 08.04.2024
- •

Moved by Julie Frankling

Seconded by Banny O'Farrell

Treasurers Report: Prepared by Michelle Robinson

Jan-24									
Date	Details		Rent	Hire	Cleaning	Council Funding	Electricity		
2	Charles L King		640.00						
4	Barham Koondrook			651					
4	Show Soc power						800		
		2091.00	640.00	651.00	0.00	0.00	800.00		
Date	Details	Chq No	Fuel	Electricity	Advert	R & M	Misc	P & E	M'Ment Fees
4	Charles L King			•					56.3
		56.32	0	0	0	0	0	0	56.3
	Opening Balance			\$ 37,595.31					
	Opening Balance Income			\$ 37,595.31 2091.00					

Feb-24									
						Council			
Date	Details		Rent	Hire	Cleaning	Funding	Electricity		L
1	Charles L King		640.00						
								L	
								ļ	
		640.00	640.00	0	0	0.00			
		640.00	640.00	0	0	0.00			M'Ment
Date	Details	Chq No	Fuel	Electricity	Advert	R & M	Misc	P&E	Fees
	Charles L King	ciqito	i uci	Licentery	Auvent	nam	Wilse		56.32
	BP Barham		724.02						
12	Mitre 10					476.80			
12	TACS					480			
		1737.14	724.02	0	0	956.8	0	0	56.32
								ļ	
	Opening Balance			\$ 39,629.99					
	Income			640.00					
	Expense			1737.14					
	1								1

Mar-24									
					. .	Council	_		
Date	Details		Rent	Hire	Cleaning	Funding	Electricity		-
1	Charles L King		640.00						
		640.00	640.00	0	0.00	0			
Date	Details	CharNa	Fuel		Advert	R & M	Misc	P&E	M'Ment Fees
	Charles L King	Chq No	ruei	Electricity	Advert	K OX IVI	IVIISC	PQL	56.3
	Origin			1472.81					50.3
	BP Barham		280.57	1472.01					
	Molin Motorcycle & Marine		200.37			699			
	Cateredge					475.2			
	Australia Post					473.2	59		-
27		3042.9	280.57	1472.81	0	1174.2			0 56.3
	Opening Balance			\$38,532.85					
	Income			640.00					
	Expense			3042.9					
	Closing Balance			\$36,129.95					

Moved by

Julie Frankling

Seconded by Banny O'Farrell

MRC - Manager Local Connections - no report

User Groups Reports:

Barkool Polocrosse

BKHSS

• AGM held, but a quorum not made. New AGM date set, and hoping for a larger show of interest in forming a 2024 committee.

Pony Club

Barham Koondrook Cricket Club

KBFNC – Bobbie/Julie

- Safety strips – getting painted as strip failed and lifted off.

MRC - Neil Gorey

- Nothing to report.

MRC – Luke Keogh

General Business:

- Insurance Claim? Still not completed, but is underway. MRC will update when they have more information.
- No more correspondence on BRRC Management Agreement
- Shipping container needs to be painted, looks an eye saw. KBFNC to do this.
- New toilet block KBFNC look after during football/netball season, will place paper etc in it.
- Solar light at entrance Parkman Av end is not working.
- Garden Club Contact Marg Minnis
- Koondrook Barham Ladies Committee Marg O'Neill

Meeting closed: 7:25 pm, next meeting scheduled for the 10th June 2024.

Meeting Dates 2024

March	No meeting	August	12 ^{th,} 7pm
April	8 ^{th,} 7pm	September	No meeting
May	No meeting	October	14 th , 7pm & AGM
June	10 th , 7pm	November	No meeting
July	No meeting	December	Dinner Meeting TBC

Minutes of the General Meeting of the

Bunnaloo Recreation Reserve Thursday 18th April 2024

Meeting commenced: 7.45pm

Present: Amy Barnes, Gerrard James, Belinda James, Amelia Walsh, Georgina Kellock, Doug Scott

Apologies: Annie Peat, Ryan Vagg

Minutes: Minutes of the last meeting 5th October 2022 read.

Moved Belinda James Seconded: Gerrard James

-that the minutes and apologies be accepted.

Carried

Business Arising:

Fire tank adjacent to the Hall had to be plumbed in to be accessible and compliant and has been completed.

Leaking windows were reported and still not resolved.

Mower change over was to occur. Ryan Vagg to confirm if exchange occurred.

Deniliquin Childrens centre childcare are still reporting issues with the toilets not flushing and draining properly. Septic has been emptied so problem should be resolved. Cleaning and mice issues at the hall are also reported to be problems but have reduced in recent months.

Investigation into a grant for the hot water system was completed and hot water system has been installed. Those present in the meeting were unsure of installation date or who facilitated its installation and location/placement of hot water system.

Group fitness has been occurring in the hall three times a week. Uptake has been quite high with minimum of 8 people at all times.

Request for gravel on the track has been completed prior to the 2023 campdraft.

Gerrard James reported there is a leak under water tank and issue is yet to be resolved. Has been an ongoing issue for quite some time and difficult to fix.

Funding planning had commenced at last meeting for a BBQ area. Planning ceased post last meeting due to flooding events.

Mel Walmsley from the Bunnaloo Campdraft executive committee had arranged dirt to come in for the campdraft event and asked the rec reserve to pay for the last load delivered. No payment has been made.

Council representative was not appointed and therefore unavailable at last meeting held. Amy Barnes asked if our council representative was considered to be Geoff Wise. No confirmation from those present in the meeting.

Correspondence:

In: Email correspondence from Murray River Council regarding updated 355 Committee – Karen Buckley as correspondant.

Out: Minutes to the Shire – sent by Belinda James

Treasurer's Report: Delivered

Income:

Operating Account - 29/12/23 - \$21782.87 Closing balance (cheque account)

Building fund as at 29/23/23 \$27947.60

Football Account as at \$10367.64

Campdraft loan as at 18/04/2024 - \$8000 outstanding and no payment made for 2 years

Moved: Doug Scott

Seconded: Gerrard James

Presidents report:

Updated 355 Management committee information from the Murray River Council was presented in Ryan Vaggs absence.

General Business:

The money that we have in accounts is currently sitting idol and gaining very minimal interest. Interest rate is at 1.3% for theBuilding and Football account.

Bush Bus Child services are using the rec reserve for a children's play group once a month. Accessing the oval, playground, tennis courts and toilet facilities external to hall.

Georgina Kellock reported In the Murray matters it was advertised that the Murray River Countil would be decommissioning assets within the shire that they deemed unviable. Will this happen to the hall? This will be carried over to discuss at next meeting with a shire representative present.

Council still to work on the water tanks and current leak. Ryan Vagg to communicate with Murray River Council representative.

Question was asked by Doug Scott on people's thoughts in investing our finances into a term deposit to gain higher interest. All in agreeance that finances be placed into a term deposit or moved to a higher interest bank account.

Doug Scott moved the motion to place \$20 000 from the building account to a term deposit. Moved: Doug Scott Seconded: Belinda James

Doug Scott reported that James Scott had investigated an AED for the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve – Ambulance Victoria currently subsidise the device and Bunnaloo Recreation reserve committee would be required to pay the balance to purchase. Discussion was had that the committee would be happy to purchase but have asked Doug to provide further details to discuss in the next meeting. The general consensus in the meeting was explore the avenue of doing this through the Council and to explore the ramifications of upkeep, maintenance and security of the device.

Does the recreation reserve have a vehicle access and parking plan – Safety reasons and accessibility are concerns with many younger children accessing the facility with families including daycare, group fitness sessions, school concerts. This can be carried over to the next meeting to discuss with council representative. Previously there has been discussion that the car park could be closed off and not accessible.

Question was asked if the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve committee access any community money and grants that are available as it is felt we are missing out. No grants had been accessed for some time and the discussion was had that moving forward do we access a grants officer within the Murray River Council to support applications. Discussion in the next meeting as to what grants we would like to access for potential blinds, curtains.

Amy Barnes and Belinda James discussed with those in the meeting the proposed Murray River Council 355 Committee policy and management agreement. Discussion was – Do we as a committee want to remain as a committee in control of the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve and sign the Management agreement. Those present in the meeting unanimously decided that we would like to continue with management of the Bunnaloo Recreation reserve.

The committee is prepared to remain in control of Management of the Bunnaloo Hall Rec committee but would like to seek clarity on certain aspects including liquid licensing for events, invoicing and pricing to hire the hall.

Steps moving forward -

Amy Barnes to contact Karen Buckley to confirm potential dates for upcoming meeting that she is able to attend.

Amy Barnes to advise a date to executive committee and advertise date in the local social streams and network including facebook and Bunnaloo Primary school newsletter. members.

Meeting closed – 9.00pm

Next meeting – Date to be confirmed.

Minutes of the Caldwell Hall Management Committee Meeting Held on the 06.03.2024 5pm

Present:

• Barb Goudie, Jamie McKindlay, David Martin, Don Hearn, Penni Douglas-Garden & Jo Hearn.

Apologies:

• Tim Garden, Karen Buckley & Geoff Wise

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

• Minutes of the previous meeting were read and accepted by Don and David CRD

Inward Correspondence:

- Council Audit
- Minutes to Karen
- Heater Acquittal

Outward Correspondence:

• Nil

Financial Report:

- Balance of account is \$2899.80 income and expenditure as attached
- CCC money to be moved to Hall Account
- Moved Barb Seconded Tim. CRD

General Business:

- FoSH- 22.3.2024
- Raffle- Peter McDonald voucher, Hearn's Wine, Goudie's Plant, Penni Easter Eggs, Jamie and Lyn eggs and Salad dressing
- Barb to pick up Tablecloths
- Working Bee 20th March at 9am- Penni check toilet paper etc, set up merchandise table, Barb to move Fire trucks, Friday afternoon, Don to borrow Santa Bell, Penni will donate Bunting and candles Jo
- Jo to approach Echuca Moama tourism about Blues festival
- Silo Art-GrainCorp has said no, now trying AGS site
- Airconditioning and heating are fantastic
- Next meeting May and will be AGM

Meeting Finished 5.18pm

Meeting Agenda Kyalite Progress & Recreation Reserve Association Committee Tuesday 9th April 2024

Location: Kyalite Pub

Chair: Gavin Spinks

Time: 6:10pm

Minutes Officer: Lauren Standen

- 1. Opening of Meeting & Attendees
 - Margie Bruton
 - Neville (Bimbo) Bruton
 - Andrew Bowring
 - Greg Rae
 - Lauren Standen
 - Gavin Spinks
- 2. Apologies
 - Sally Rae, Anne Crowe
- 3. Confirm last meeting minutes

Andrew Bowring Moved and Margie Bruton 2nd.

4. Correspondence

James G Consulting consultation report attached. Overview advice was to go back to Balranald shire to gain their involvement. Full report attached.

Actions Lauren to get Craig Bennetts and Connie Malletts email details to Andrew Bowring.

Andrew to email Balranald Shire Council to find out if they are interested in getting involved. Outlining the findings of the consultation process along with discussion with local NSW Governor visit to Kyalite.

- 5. Treasurers Report (Attached)
 - 5.1 Opening Balance as at 30th November \$37,620.03
 - Monthly Xero payments of \$32.00
 - James Goldsworthy Consulting (Town Water Research) first payment of 7979.40
 - Kyalite Christmas Tree Reimbursement for BBQ meat and Bread to Gavin Spinks \$494.31
 - Advance Turf \$2600 for the Kyalite Boat Ramp
 - Origin Energy Payment for Kyalite Hall \$9.21

Closing Balance as at 28th March 2024 \$26,440.71

5.2 Payments awaiting approval are the 2nd payment for James Goldsworthy Consulting of \$2656.50. So far, this project is coming in somewhat under budget however Andrew Bowring did explain that James Goldsworthy consulting can be utilised to help liase with Balranald Shire if required.



Moved Margie Bruton 2nd Greg Rae

- 6. Actions from minutes
 - 6.1 Lauren to follow up how to get added as authorised user on bank account and remove Simone.

Lauren has access to the KPRRA account and is able to process payments however ow requires the authority to removes and ad users when required.

Lauren to be added as administrator all in favour.

Simone to be removed as administrator all in favour.

Joel removed Signatory all in favour.

All three Actions above Moved by all in attendance.

Actions Lauren to complete.

- 6.2 Andrew to email and detailed report on the current water feasibility study to be disseminated amongst the committee. Completed
- 6.3 Gavin to contact Balranald shire re meeting Aug 15 stronger communities grant for toilet block. Completed See below Action
- 6.4 Gavin to also contact Balranald Shire regarding the pontoon at the boat ramp that has become disconnected during last year's floods. Completed Stuart Carmichael made repairs after consultation with Shire. Short term fixes where made.

Long term solution still required, discussion to be held with council.

- 6.5 Gavin to also follow up general waste bins for the boat ramp. Completed, Shire responsibility. Bins where delivered.
- Toilet Block Design, 3 options. Attached for consideration. All in agreement with option one standard colouring, with timber panelling, solar lighting. Accepted by Bimbo Bruton and 2nd by Margie Bruton.
- 8. Town raw water, as per above correspondence with Andrew.
- 9. Kyalite Hall and MRC Condition Report and Discussion

Murray River Council engineer report advised it to be demolished.

KPRRA Association to communicate with Kyalite Community and find out what the consensus of the Hall is. Do we still require a Community Hall? How would the Community Feel if we didn't have a hall anymore? Furthermore, what Historical value does the Hall represent for some of the older community member.

Action: Gavin to contact Anne Crowe special meeting to discuss the future of the hall after consultation with some of the older community members.

10. General Business

NSW Governor Margaret Beasley visit was well received by all that attended. Special shoutout to all involved and who attended the advent.

Does the KPRRA become and incorporated, this could be beneficial moving forward with the raw town water supply along with future funding opportunities.

Action Gavin to find out what would be required to become and incorporated.

Meeting Close 7.13pm

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WOMBOOTA SCHOOL OF ARTS / HALL COMMITTEE

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 28th February 2024

Meeting opened at 8 pm

Welcome;

Attendance; Stephen Holschier (chairman), Victoria Starritt (secretary/treasurer), John Stewart, Ian Starritt.

Apologies; Bernard James, Amos Ferguson. Apologies accepted. Moved by Ian Starritt Seconded by John Stewart. Carried.

Minutes of previous general meeting read and received. Moved J. Stewart, Seconded I. Starritt.

Business arising deferred to general business.

Financial report; Balance in Westpac account \$2,130.77. Secretary to follow up on request for debit card.

Correspondence in; Emails from K. Buckley.

out; return emails K.Buckley.

General Business; re. hall painting. Sec. has been in contact with Dave Dundee. New contractor is available.

Re. replacement of shade sail. Unoamous decision by all in attendance that it is too expensive and un necessary. Funds would be more wisely spent on grounds maintaince. i.e. regular grass cutting.

Inspection of replacement BBQ (paid for out of hall funds \$1,099). Sec. to purchase new gas bottle. S. Holschier to donate an exchange bottle.

Re. Bubbish bins. Motion that the issue by put to Karen Buckley that if the bins are to be removed? What does the committee do with litter after the charity functions held throughout the year and especially the children' Christmas party? Moved Stephen Holschier. Seconded John Stewart. Carried.

Re. De fribulator. President to seek advise as to battery replacement?

Re. Table tennis competitions. Due to start mid June. Thursday evenings for 5 weeks. The final night to also be a community BBQ.

Next meeting AGM 17/6/24 TBC

bucklos a

Meeting closed 8.49 pm.



Agenda of MRC Section 355 Murray Downs Park Reserve

Held at Murray Downs Fire Shed, Murray Downs Drive, Murray Downs NSW 2734

On Wednesday 17th April 2024 at 6.00pm

Present: Brenten Hogan, Brendan Yu, Johanna Hullands, Ken Smith, Glenis Smith, Karen Buckley, Neil Gorey

Apologies: Anne Crowe

- 1. Opening Meeting: Brenten Hogan
- 2. Confirmation of previous minutes Moved: Ken Smith Seconded: Johanna Hulands
- 3. President's Report

4. Treasurer's Report

Current position: \$3408. YTD loss \$1.26

Moved: Johanna Hulland

Seconded: Glenis Smith

5. Correspondence in

Karen Buckley email advising had an update of insurance for vul

6. Correspondence out

Nil

7. Volunteer hours:

106.75 hours \$74.00 from produce Project from the MRC grant application is nearly complete, just the slab and shed to be completed.

Moved: Ken Smith

Seconded: Johanna Hullands

8. Community Garden Report:

\$183.60 from bottle collection from the previous meeting

Moved: Ken Smith

Seconded: Johanna Hullands

9. Business Arising from last meeting:

- a. Insurance for volunteers at the community garden Members for the 355 are covered by insurance. Karen is working on a process to get all volunteers in a register to complete volunteer work on a MRC asset. Completed scanned forms to be emailed to Karen Buckley at MRC. Form only needs to be completed once
- **b.** \$183.60 from bottle collection from the previous meeting

Agenda Items

1. Boat Ramp update

MRC have commenced the boat ramp.

No update from Luke Keogh on the removal of trees near the boat ramp.

2. Park update

Walking path towards the bridge has commenced from Murray Downs station Still need to complete drainage with minor works to allow the water to go to the other side of the road.

Possibly a fence on a section to ensure safety.

The path is planned to go as far as opposite the Federal Hotel.

3. MRC Community Grant

4. General Business

Karen Buckley MRC:

To discuss the Instrument of delegation or an MOU at the next meeting.

Meeting closed: 7.00pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday 15th May 2024

Appendix

Confirmed Minutes: 5 March 2024

Apologies: Jannette Robinson, Di Peters, Val Childs, Jenny Fisher Moved: Betty Murphy 2nd Marie Crack

Present: Ian Fisher, Betty Murphy, Marie Crack, Kay Arthur, Graham Collett, Katherine Chernov

Previous minutes read and accepted. Moved: B. Murphy 2nd M. Crack

Business arising from previous minutes:

- Decision not to move additional funds from the everyday account to the term deposit
- All agreed that tenant rental payments are to be made by direct debit. This will occur, this week and next week, organised by Jannette and Ian. Direct debit is a condition of tenancy.
- Betty raised the matter of security cameras. All agreed that safety should be given the same priority as maintenance and aesthetics. AJM Electrics have been followed up and they are unable to engage in security camera work. Ian will follow up obtaining quote(s). Echuca Locksmith may be a possibility. All agreed to quotes and proceeding with this work. Moved: B. Murphy 2nd M. Crack
- Ian noted that June Jenkins has had a meeting with the council. Generally, this was positive, nothing signed off.
- Secretary noted that over the years many individual and community donations have been made to MRV. The Village has been a registered charity for over 40 years, and it is on this basis that donations have been received. All donations have been publicly and transparently acknowledged in minutes and financial statements presented to the committee. These donations add up to many thousands of dollars, plus interest. It was agreed by all that these donations do not form part of council assets.
- Agreed that the secretary will write a letter of thanks to the Ogden Foundation for their most recent donation. Moved: K Chernov, 2nd K. Arthur

President's Report: attached

Treasurer's Report: attached

Secretary / correspondence: attached

Garden Report: attached.

- Some of the concreting works have been completed, significantly improving areas requiring maintenance.
- Steven Street aspect insufficient tidying up in nature strip area, gardener to be notified.
- The current sprinkler system in front of Unit 1 is not properly functioning and requires replacing in the Steven Street upgrade works. Replacement with irrigation that is more suited to the MRV garden lay out is recommended. Middle

1

garden section is looking dry. Front of Unit 1 also dry. Irrigation with appropriate programming and timing is required.

- Pest control will be attending next week.

General business:

There are still issues with residents locking themselves out of their units. Ian is currently fixing a damaged lock. All agreed that this should be replaced. Ian will advise.

Concluded: 4:03 pm

Next meeting: 30 April 2024, 3 pm.

9.5.4 MURRAY RIVER COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM, 2023-24 - ROUND 2 ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

File Number:

Author: Tiana Cronin, Grant Officer

Authoriser: Sarah Ryan, Director Community & Economic Development

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council funds the below projects under Round 2 of the 2023-24 Community Grants Program.
- 2. Council notes that the program is under subscribed.

Group	Project Title	Total Amount Requested	Total Project Cost	Amount Recommended
Western Murray Land Improvement Group	Murray Connect - Volunteers Program	\$3,000.00	\$10,000.00	Amount Requested In Full
Mathoura Cancer Fundraiser Inc	Mathoura Speed Shear	\$1,800.00	\$7,850.00	Part Funding \$1,000
Echuca Moama Cycling Club	Winter Race Season, 'Come and Try'	\$3,000.00	\$13,000.00	Ineligible outstanding debt to MRC
Kerang Legacy Group	Legacy Morning Tea Events	\$3,000.00	\$11,600.00	Amount Requested In Full
Moulamein Football Netball Club	Promoting Child Safe in Sport & Refurbishment of Seating	\$1,807.00	\$2,000.00	Amount Requested In Full
Echuca Moama Athletics	Adult equipment - hurdles	\$792	\$5,792	Amount Requested In Full
Tooleybuc Manangatang Football Netball Club	5 G Wifi booster	\$2,985.00	\$5,000	Amount Requested In Full
TOTAL FUNDS AVAIL	TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE \$30,000			<u>\$12,584.00</u>

BACKGROUND

Every year, Council runs two rounds of the Murray River Council Community Grants Program offering \$30,000 in grants per round.

Round 2 of the 2022-23 Murray River Council Community Grants Program details are as follows:

- Round Opened: 1 December 2023
- Round Closed: 3 April 2024
- Applications received: 7

The assessment panel, comprising Councillors Crowe, Weyrich, Nicolas, Council's Director Community and Economic Development, Sarah Ryan (delegate for Terry Dodds, General Manager)

and Grants Officer Tiana Christie, assessed the applications on Thursday 2nd May and recommended the above projects be funded as listed.

DISCUSSION

The total amount of funding requested was \$16,384.00. There is \$30,000 available to grant in this round of the program.

After consideration of the projects and assessment against the criteria, the panel sort further supporting evidence (quotes) from several applicants to justify the financial request and agreed to not provide funding to another due to an outstanding debt owed to MRC.

The total value of the projects recommended for funding is <u>\$12,584.00</u>.

Regarding the current under-subscription in this funding round, it's important to recognise a recurring trend that mirrors observations from previous years, particularly noticeable during the second round of funding. Despite our efforts to promote the program through various channels such as media releases, social media, and electronic direct mail (EDMs).

Several factors may contribute to this behaviour:

- Procrastination: Many groups delay their application process due to internal decisionmaking processes, document collection, or underestimation of the required submission time.
- Timing: Organisations strategically plan their funding applications to coincide with specific projects or events, frequently occurring towards the year's end.
- Project selection: groups utilise the years proceedings, events and activities to assist in identifying a need or want.

To address this challenge and ensure a fair distribution of resources across funding rounds, we propose implementing the following measure:

• Commence an earlier Awareness Campaign: Increase efforts to promote both funding program round timelines (well in advance), rather than focusing on rounds individually and advise that round two has consistently been under subscribed.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

5. Strategic Theme 5: A place of Prosperity and Resilience

5.11 - Partner with industry, community, and government organisations to promote and nurture innovation - Innovation.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

Council has \$30,000 available per round for each of the two community grant rounds per year, (as per 27 November 2018 resolution of Council).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Murray River Council Community Financial Assistance Policy (POL109)..

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Council can financially assist others under s356 of the Local Government Act 1993 (LGA), for the purpose of exercising its functions. Also, under s377 (1A) of the LGA, Council may delegate its functions relating to the granting of financial assistance if the financial assistance is part of a specified program, and included in Council's draft operational plan, and does not exceed 5 per cent of Council's proposed income from the ordinary rates levied for that year.

RISK ANALYSIS

• What can happen?

1. There is a slight risk that projects funded under the Community Grants Fund will not be delivered due to resource or financial constraints experienced by a grant recipient.

2. There is a risk that there may be some negative reactions from the unsuccessful applicants.

• How can it happen?

- 1. Change of circumstance for the applicant.
- 2. Frustrated applicants.

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

- 1. Additional work and potential changes to the scope of a project.
- 2. Relationships diminished

• What is the likelihood of the event happening?

- 1. Low likelihood
- 2. Low likelihood

• Adequacy of existing controls?

- 1. Adequate
- 2. Adequate

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

1. Council will seek to mitigate this risk by working with community groups to support the delivery of their project.

2. Council will seek to mitigate this risk by communicating the high level of requests made and the Economic Development team will work with these applicants to seek funding opportunities elsewhere where possible.

CONCLUSION

The projects recommended cover a broad geographic area of the Council and also a variety of sectors within the community.

It would be both beneficial and judicious for Council to allocate funds towards those projects recommended.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

9.5.5 BRIDGE ART COMMITTEE INC - UNDER THE BRIDGE ARTWORK PROJECT UPDATE

File Number:

Author:Sarah Ryan, Director Community & Economic DevelopmentAuthoriser:Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note an update on the 'Under the Bridge Artwork Project'.

BACKGROUND

At its July 2021 meeting, Council resolved (*Resolution 180721*) to enter into a binding agreement with the Bridge Art Committee Inc ("the committee") for the installation of artwork on the supports under the railway approaches to the Echuca Moama Bridge (NSW side of the border, located in Moama). The committee will be responsible for all costs associated with the project including appropriate insurance cover, management and maintenance of the artworks. Once the agreement has been executed, Council will enter into an Access Agreement with V/Line that will enable the committee to present the 'Under the Bridge Artwork Project'.

DISCUSSION

The committee have developed a brief to install artwork on the supports under the railway approaches to the Echuca Moama bridge. The committee are hopeful to complete at least one pylon during 2024 as they have secured funding to commence the project.

Given the time that has passed since the Council resolution in 2021, Council officers have now met with V/Line who have indicated their support for the project. However, V/Line is not willing to enter into an agreement with an incorporated body and have asked Council to be the applicant and responsible entity in relation to the Access Agreement.

Other conditions of V/Line include: it will not be held responsible for any damages caused to the artwork whilst undertaking maintenance or repairs to the structure. Their responsibilities lie with the structure and safety of the bridge therefore that will always take precedent over the aesthetics of the bridge. Council also needs to acknowledge that the artwork is of a temporary nature and may, therefore, be removed or damaged subject to maintenance requirements as required by V/Line's safety and maintenance responsibilities. In discussions with the committee, they have agreed to enter into a binding agreement with Council and will be responsible for all costs, including future costs, incurred with the project.

Council officers will now work with the committee to enter into a binding agreement outlining the conditions of V/Line as the responsibility of the committee. Once executed, Council will enter an Access Agreement with V/Line for the project to commence.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

4. Strategic Theme 4: A place of inclusion, culture & wellbeing

4.6 - Foster and develop strategy to recognise and celebrate our rich heritage and indigenous culture (in partnership with community) - Regional History.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The committee will be responsible for all costs associated with the project including appropriate insurance cover, management and maintenance of the artworks.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

RISK ANALYSIS

- What can happen? The Bridge Art Committee Inc cease to be an entity
- How can it happen?

By decision of the committee

• What are the consequences of the event happening?

Council would, by default, become responsible to ensure that conditions of the agreement are met

- What is the likelihood of the event happening?
 Possible
- Adequacy of existing controls?

Adequate

• Treatment options to mitigate the risk?

Manage via a binding agreement with the committee.

CONCLUSION

The Bridge Art Committee Inc wish to implement, fund and manage this project however, V/Line are not able to enter into an agreement with the committee and have suggested that council become the applicant for the Access Agreement. Council can mitigate risk by entering into a binding agreement with the committee. The agreement will confer all conditions onto the committee including all costs associated with the project, insurance cover, management and maintenance of the artworks.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Brief for Project 🕹 🛣
- 2. Landscape design concept 🗓 🛣

Bridge Art Project Incorporated

"Under the Bridge Art Project"

Brief

The Bridge Art Project Incorporated is a not-for-profit community group established in 2012 with the aim of establishing a significant art precinct on donated land in Moama. 17 hectares of land has been deeded to BAP. It runs alongside the new Echuca Moama bridge roadway from the river through riverine forest towards Moama's main street where BAP has purchased land at No. 74 Meninya St as the site to build a gallery, planning for which is at an advanced stage. A Masterplan has been prepared for the arts precinct and the gallery. This plan was done in conjunction with Murray River Council as part of its strategy to reinvigorate Meninya Street once the heavy traffic was diverted on to the new bridge. Murray River Council has also developed a plan for the South Meninya St area.

Included in the BAP Masterplan is a planned arts and recreation circuit which utilises the current Murray River crossing (via the Cobb Highway) and the second new river crossing and will feature historical and cultural attractions in both Echuca and Moama. When complete, it will allow people to walk or cycle around the roughly 5km circuit and encounter art sites on both sides of the river.

The 'Under the Bridge Art Project' was conceived as part of that circuit utilising the railway viaduct close to the old Echuca Moama bridge.

V/Line engineers examined BAP's application to utilise the railway viaduct pylons to apply artwork to ten pylons. Approval was granted if Murray River Council accepted responsibility for the project (and arrange a secondary agreement with BAP to take responsibility for the work over the long term). BAP has covered the area on its insurance policy and will be responsible for ongoing maintenance. It will be an ongoing project – being built and maintained over a number of years.

The area under the Cobb Highway and the railway track adjoining Kerrabee Sound Shell at the south end of Meninya Street are used for a fortnightly market. Murray River Council has plans to improve the area. The market is approximately 200 metres away from the pylon area and is used by marketgoers for shaded car parking.

The BAP Committee will be responsible for the project. They contracted landscape architect and art consultant, David McCubbin to assist with developing the brief for the project in March 2021. Since then, the site was inundated by floodwater in the October-December 2022 major flooding of the Murray river. BAP would like to commission an artist to paint two faces of one of the large central concrete railway pylons with a representation of the major flood.

"The Under the Bridge Art Project"

Introduction

Echuca Moama are twin towns on the New South Wales/Victoria border. As the closest point on the Murray River to Melbourne, they have a significant history, as both a river port and railhead. Both towns occupy a significant place in the cultural traditions of inland Australia. The history of aboriginal occupation, and the several hundred years of European occupation, the myths, legends, art, music and literature speak to us from the past, and enthral us in the present.

Moama is a 'living town' and represents the challenges and opportunities faced by regional centres that rely primarily on water, agriculture, transport, commerce and tourism for their existence. The river is the living breathing "life force" that unifies, consolidates and establishes any 'other' human, cultural or social experience as secondary.

Because of this, Moama is alive to the potential for an integrated art circuit experience, combining new and existing elements that promote, enhance, and proclaim Echuca Moama's place in contemporary Australia.

A rich and deeply layered tapestry.

Echuca Moama is synonymous with the great epoch of riverboats and river communities, and it remains the heart of the river boat trade. Moama is the node for the Western Riverina region and fosters industries that contribute to the wealth of the district. From Moama, and to Moama, the river is a metaphor for the stream of historical and human subconscious. It is in Moama that the paddle-steamers are repaired, and a new generation of riverboats is born. It is, a proud inheritor of the glory days of Australian inland commerce, and the crossroad for a rich and dynamic culture steeped in traditions both sacred and cultural passed down through aeons.

The proposal. The Under the Bridge Art Project.

The proposal is to develop a suite of images that are reflective of some aspect of Echuca Moama. The works will then be painted directly on to the ten piers comprising the higher, central, railway viaduct piers. This proposal is to paint just one of the piers.

The viaduct mural will comprise the first stage of an integrated community arts project. This celebratory project will establish Moama as the foundation of a dynamic and nurturing hub for local and national artists. In all, twenty images will be sought, and the artists commissioned to finish works to an acceptable standard.

Existing conditions

The railway viaduct is a structure that was built in the 1960's consisting of concrete pylons and steel decking to support the Moama Echuca rail link. This structure is parallel to the Cobb highway bridge and both bridges share a common ancestry with Moama's historic function as an inland port and road/rail hub.

Access to the site via Blair street segues into the flood-plain which consists of a hardstand of compacted gravel and bitumen, the usual treatment for a rest-stop in the 60's and 70's. The site is 'utilitarian and functional'. The



"openess is a consequence of providing both access and perhaps an uninterrupted floodway. Though adjacent Red gums (*E.camaldulensis*) and saplings are to be found on either side of the road/ rail viaducts, there is nothing remarkable about the plantings or existing species within the subject site.

The Murals

A suite of 20 images are planned to complete this project. At the "ends" of the viaduct it is proposed to commission the local schools to develop signature pieces. These pieces will "anchor" the murals within the context of locale and community.



The selection process

The Bridge Art Project committee and its nominees will **invite proposals from appropriately skilled artists to undertake the painting of the first pylon with a 'flood' theme.** This first exercise will help to inform the process to commission additional work on the remaining 9 pylons.

The Committee and its nominees will select work with visual, social and artistic merit. The successful image will be on display in Echuca Moama and at a metropolitan gallery in Melbourne. In doing so, we bring the country to the city. The images to adorn the concrete piers are to be selected in an open competition. The winning entries will receive a prize, (of say five thousand each) for a conceptual work. The artist will then be commissioned to undertake painting on the two faces of the selected pylon. A copy of the image will also be exhibited at the Bridge Art Gallery in Moama when built.

The Art

The theme of the request for proposals will be: "Across Rivers, Across Cultures, Across History", as a driver for the public conversation about our rivers, and the cultural traditions that are encapsulated by it.

Key Selection Criteria

Whilst the scope of art, materials, medium and technique are diverse and entirely open, works will need to address the theme, in the first instance, "Flood".

After the initial selection, artists will be selected to either develop a specific theme, or integrate a suite of themes that project a positive image of Moama, both historically and culturally, whilst maintaining a vision for Moama that is contemporary and dynamic.

Central to this will be the encapsulation of the following themes. The themes are indicated by, but not confined to the following:

Moama

- Geomorphology of the region
- First Nations
- The Rivers
- Agriculture
- Natural History, (plants and animals)
- Fish and fisheries
- Australian Literature (Furphy, Lawson) related to the river
- Echuca Moama
- Significant people
- Local myths and legends
- Volunteers (WW1 and 2)
- The working man's life
- The working woman's life
- Images wholly and totally specific to Moama.
- Local Industry

Contemporary First Nations artists are invited to submit proposals.

Format

- The aim is to have artists and experts to prepare stories which can be told in visual form and to apply the artwork to the railway pylon. Approval was sought from Vic Track to decorate 10 panels (20 faces) in total. These measure 4m wide by 3m high on both large faces.
- To gain publicity for subsequent invitations, local schools will be invited to participate.
- The local media outlets will be engaged to publicise the project as it develops.

Each large format image A0 is to be signed and accompanied by a brief description of the work, with an artist's statement, (no more than a paragraph) indicating how the image relates to the selection criteria.

Process

The selected images will be used as the basis for the murals to be painted by the artist or by other artists under the supervision of the selected artist.

Signage

An industrial/graphics designer will be contracted to prepare signage and positioning to ensure the murals are understood in the context of the overall suite of Bridge Art Projects. The original images will be displayed in the gallery. The industrial designer will be commissioned to prepare signage for the Under the Bridge Art Project according to Council regulations.

Staging

Where do we want to be in 20 years-time? Completing the murals can be a catalyst for funding for bigger and more ambitious projects.

We want this project to be the catalyst for an ongoing suite of projects that really establishes Moama as the spiritual heart of the Murray.

The themes are descriptive of the rich history and contemporary flavour of Moama, its community and stories. The images are intended to describe the following and demonstrate the role people have played in developing the distinctive character of the town and its links to Echuca, the river itself and the broader theme of transport, sheep, timber, rail, the Yorta Yorta, the environment, etc.

Timeline

April 2024	Application for grant to decorate one panel
15 July 2024	Advertise Request for Proposal
30 August 2024	Applications close
15 September 2024	Selection of finalist
1 October 2024	Notification of finalist
30 January 2025	Work must be complete

The Landscape Component

The Under the Bridge Art Project will be significantly enhanced if the area is suitably landscaped. The aim will be by January 2025, to have a fully integrated landscape design ready to ensure that the suite of projects are unified and represent the first component of the integrated 'Echuca Moama Art Circuit.

Collaboration with Murray River Council

Murray River Council has a masterplan for Meninya St South which incorporates an upgrading of facilities around Blair St and the soundshell. The Bridge Art Project committee will lobby for an upgrading of facilities around the railway viaduct by January 2025.

We need to focus attention on the viaduct. The landscape should offer continuity with the skate park, the vehicle access and rest areas, whilst really doing something to combine the drama and physicality of the road and rail bridge. Strong vertical, colour and a presentiment of something exciting to complement the murals. Great sculpture /art in an area that's changed from its pristine state, needs an artist's touch to offset one against the other and maximise the visual appeal.

Possibilities for the future:

Hands up for the landscape concept and design drawings.

And for even more colour down the track, the site could incorporate other working artefacts, the steam mill, the timber tram, the winches, the saw-benches, the snag pulling gear, the pulleys and the hit and miss engine that goes 't-chok t-chok'...all this is just shy of the working tractors, the fowler crawler and the traction engine. All of this is situated just to the side of the working bullock team and the bullocky, (part showman, part actor) who is hired to utter colourful nineteenth century expletives.



Budget details

- 1. Advertising and Social Media posts and E Newsletter
- 2. Cost of project
- 3. Signage detailing the project
- 4. Cost of project coordinator

\$800

\$300

\$5000

\$600 (in kind contribution by BAP) \$6,100
Poetry at Moama; The Viaduct Project



David McCubbin, Artist, Landscape Architect.

February 2021



This story is dedicated to my dear friend Stewart, and old bottles still to be FOUND!



To get Moama, youve gotta understand poetry.



If you dont get the poetry, you'll miss the mark.



"Get the poetry right, and you're in the groove".



This will inform you as to what will work, and what will not work.



It will inform you about materials, finishes, and the character of everything you wish to utilise to tell a good story.



In the end design is all just a good story told WELL,



But if you get the story wrong, YOU'RE BUGGERED!



Youve gotta listen to your own stories, only you can tell those stories,



Outsiders dont know your stories and they'll lose the most important things,

LOST in TRANSLATION.

So, materials, finish, and place are EVERYTHING!

And, the people of Moama.

Simple as ABC,



So, raise the curtain and let's get started.

9.6 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

9.6.1 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

File Number:	-
Author:	Lindy Leyonhjelm, Executive Assistant
Authoriser:	Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Correspondence Report be received and the information noted by the Council.

DISCUSSION

Due to the volume of correspondence that Council receives from Government Agencies, each Councillor has been forwarded the emails directly. As per resolution 290921 at the September 28, 2021, Council meeting, incoming emails from Government Agencies will not be included in this report unless by exception, only outgoing correspondence to Government agencies and general correspondence is recorded in the report.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE:

- The Hon Ron Hoenig correspondence from Minister for Local Government 2 May 2024
- Thank You Letter to Councillor Ann Crowe Piangil RSL 2 May 2024

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

• Hon Ron Hoenig MP Shared Service – 25 Mar 2024

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. 240325_Hon Ron Hoenig MP_Shared Service 🗓 🛣
- 2. A889713 Cr Crawley Correspondence from the Minister for Local Government 20240502 J
- 3. Thank You Letter to Councillor Ann Crowe Piangil RSL 🗓 🛣



Murray River Council PO Box 906 Moama NSW 2731

p 1300 087 004

- e admin@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au
- w www.murrayriver.nsw.gov.au

25 March 2024

The Hon Ron Hoenig MP Minister for Local Government, Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly Vice President of the Executive Council

Email: office@hoenig.minister.nsw.gov.au

Dear Minister Hoenig

I hope this letter finds you well. As Mayor of Murray River Council, and having been a local government administrator, auditor, finance, and governance professional for over four decades I feel qualified to have an opinion on, and am very interested in, the financial sustainability of local government.

I am writing to you today to request a meeting to discuss a potential model of management that hasn't been developed thoroughly and with much vigour, or reached the potential it has in other jurisdictions.

The 2016 amalgamations, whilst they brought many benefits, didn't deliver the financial savings purported. The political ramifications are still causing a fall out in many councils to this day.

I am advocating for a hybrid model that may harvest some missed opportunities that combines the benefits of consolidation with the preservation of local identity and autonomy. I believe that by adopting a hybrid model, we can strike a balance between effectiveness of service delivery, especially back-of-house, and the importance of maintaining local decision-making processes and community cohesion.

I trust that you are aware of the challenges being faced with Edward River Council, immediately to and bordering Murray River Council's north. The timing of any discussions regarding potential changes in service delivery models may be quite well aligned.





Your leadership and guidance on this matter is crucial, and I am confident that through open dialogue and cooperation, we can work towards a solution that benefits all stakeholders involved.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to the opportunity to discuss in person.

Yours sincerely,

ZL 5

Cr Frank Crawley Mayor

Ph: 0417 883 521 Email: fcrawley@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly Vice-President of the Executive Council Minister for Local Government



Our Ref: A889713 / M024-0081

His Worship the Mayor Cr Frank Crawley Murray River Council PO Box 906 MOAMA NSW 2731

Via email: admin@murrayriver.nsw.gov.au

Dear Cr Crawley,

Thank you for your letter to the NSW Government regarding cost shifting onto Murray River Council.

The financial sustainability of councils is a key priority for the NSW Government, and together with the Office of Local Government (OLG), I have been in regular discussions to investigate paths forward. While the NSW Government funds billions of dollars of services and infrastructure for Councils across the state every year, it is unmistakeable that Councils nevertheless face financial challenges at a growing rate and that something must be done to address this matter.

Accordingly, I have asked the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on State Development to report and inquire into the ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services. Importantly, it will examine the income received by Councils to ascertain whether the rate peg has kept up with Council expenses, as well as whether current levels of service delivery and financial sustainability in local government, including the impact of cost shifting on service delivery and financial sustainability, has changed over time.

Details of the inquiry can be found on the NSW Parliament website at the following link: <u>https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-</u> <u>details.aspx?pk=3040</u>. I encourage you to lodge a submission outlining your concerns and your suggestions to improve the financial sustainability of councils.

In the meantime, the NSW Government has asked IPART to implement changes to the rate peg methodology to ensure the general income of councils is more reflective of changes in costs incurred by the local government sector. As you would be aware, these changes include a more direct reflection of the costs of the emergency services levy, to ensure there is no overall burden on the Council's financial sustainability due to this expense.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly Vice-President of the Executive Council Minister for Local Government

52 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000 GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001 02 7225 6150 nsw.gov.au/ministerhoenig 2 MAY 2024

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Received	0	2	MAY	2024
Moama				kn

"Serving Still"

RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA Piangil RSL Sub-Branch

Cr Ann Crowe, Murray River Council, PO Box 906, MOAMA.NSW.2731

^{2nd} May 2024,

Dear Cr Ann Crowe,

Re: Piangil & Tooleybuc Community Anzac Day Ceremony – Piangil 25th April 2024

We are writing to thank you so much for your attendance on our very special day this year and we believe it assisted us in completing a very successful service.

Your contribution was greatly appreciated by all members of the RSL and the community alike.

Yours truly,

Sophia Sutton Secretary

"The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance"

LEST WE FORGET

9.7 SUNDRY DELEGATES REPORT

9.7.1 SUNDRY DELEGATES REPORT

File Number:	-
Author:	Lindy Leyonhjelm, Executive Assistant
Authoriser:	Terry Dodds, Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Sundry Delegates Report of the Mayor and Councillors for the period 1 March 2024 through to 31 March 2024 be received and the information noted by the Council; and reasonable out of pocket expenses be met by Council.

DISCUSSION

The **Mayor, Councillor Frank Crawley** reported on his attendance at the following meetings and functions:

- 3 April: Meeting with CEO Terry Dodds
- 5 April: Offsite meeting with CEO
- 9 April: Monthly Councillor Workshop
- 9 April: Women in Service commemorative service
- 9 April: Murrumbidgee Local Health District update with CEO online
- 9 April: Moama Lions Community Village meeting
- 10 April: Meeting CEO Terry Dodds
- 12 April: EMFM radio interview
- 15 April: Online update on Barham Medical officer with NSW Health
- 16 April: Councillor Budget Workshop
- 17 April: Meeting with CEO Terry Dodds
- 19 April: Coffee meeting with Campaspe Shire Mayor
- 22 April: Meeting with Director Corp Services
- 22 April: Meeting with CEO Terry Dodds
- 23 April: Pre-briefing and Monthly Council meeting
- 23 April: Interview with ABC Riverina regarding Council Agenda
- 25 April: Anzac Day Dawn Service Moama
- 27 April: Echuca Moama Rotary Luncheon

The **Deputy Mayor, Councillor Neil Gorey** reported on his attendance at the following meetings and functions:

- 8 April: Barham Recreation Reserve Barham School of Arts
- 9 April: Monthly Councillor Workshop
- 16 April: Councillor Budget Workshop

- 17 April: Murray Downs Advancement Group
- 17 April: Moama & District Preschool Monthly meeting
- 23 April: Pre-Briefing and Council meeting
- 25 April: Anzac Day Barham/Koondrook

Councillor Nikki Cohen reported on her attendance at the following meetings and functions:

- 9 April: Monthly Councillor Workshop
- 16 April: Moama Recreation Reserve Meeting
- 23 April: Pre-Briefing and Council meeting
- 25 April: Anzac Day March, commemorative service and wreath laying

Councillor Kron Nicholas did not supply a report on his attendance to meetings and functions for this time period.

Councillor Thomas Weyrich did not supply a report on his attendance to meetings and functions for this time period.

Councillor Geoff Wise did not supply a report on his attendance to meetings and functions for this time period.

Councillor Dennis Gleeson reported on his attendance at the following meetings and functions:

•

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

10 NOTICE OF MOTIONS/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

11 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council moves out of Open Council into Closed Council at Enter time.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

11.1 Award of Tender MRC-2404 - Raw and Filtered Watermain Renewals

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council moves out of Closed Council into Open Council at Enter time.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council brings forward the resolutions from Closed Council into Open Council and these be read aloud.

12 CONCLUSION OF MEETING