



Minutes

Unscheduled Council Meeting held at 12.31 PM on Monday 25 September 2023 in the Council Chamber.
Pleasant Creek Historic Precinct, Stawell.

Present

Cr Kevin Erwin (Mayor)
Cr Murray Emerson
Cr Trevor Gready
Cr Rob Haswell
Cr Karen Hyslop
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD

Mr Brent McAllister, Chief Executive Officer
Mr Vaughan Williams, Director Corporate and Community Services
Mr Trenton Fithall, Director Infrastructure and Amenity
Ms Justine Kingan, Director Strategy, Prosperity and Engagement

Affirmation

We recognise the traditional owners of the land.
We are inspired by the early pioneers and by those who gave their lives for our country.
We now ask God's blessing on our deliberations
and on our commitment to build a better lifestyle and environment.

Confirmed at the meeting of Council on Monday, 2 October 2023.

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1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cr Dempsey.

RESOLUTION

That the apology be received and leave of absence granted.

Moved: Cr Eddy Ostarcevic

Seconded: Cr Murray Emerson

Carried

2. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting

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

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

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

The Councillor must, in either event, exclude themselves from the decision-making process, including any discussion or vote on the matter and any action in relation to the matter and leave the Council meeting immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

Members of Staff

A member of Council staff must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing or contributing to the preparation of a report for a Council meeting. They must immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest and explaining its nature.

Nil.

3. Consideration of Reports of Officers

3.1. Preparation of Annual Report 2022-23

Author/Position: **Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services**

Purpose

To provide Council with the Financial Statements and Performance Statement, relating to the 2022-23 financial year, for in principle approval and to authorise two councillors to certify these statements in their final form.

Summary

As legislated under section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must prepare an annual report for each financial year. Section 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council formally resolves to approve in principle the Financial Statements and Performance Statement and nominate two councillors to be authorised to certify the statements.

Recommendation

That Council, in accordance with section 98 and 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- 1. approves in principle, the following statements for the 2022-23 financial year:**
 - **Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023**
 - **Performance Statement 2022-23**
- 2. authorises Councillor _____ and Councillor _____ to certify the 2022-23 statements as detailed in part 1 of the recommendation in their final form after any changes recommended, or agreed to, by the Auditor General have been made and in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

RESOLUTION

That Council defers the item to a future meeting.

Moved: Cr Murray Emerson

Seconded: Cr Karen Hyslop

Carried

Background/Rationale

The financial statements reflect the position of Council's finances at the end of the financial year. The performance statement contains the results of the prescribed service outcome indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and is included in the annual report. The financial and performance statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

External audit of the statements is completed by RSD Audit as an agent for the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO). RSD Audit presented its audit findings to the ARC in conjunction with the presentation of the statements.

The ARC recommended that Council approve the Financial Statements and Performance Statement for 2022-23, on an in principle basis, after any agreed changes arising from the finalisation of the audit are processed.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25 - Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

That Council, in accordance with section 98 and 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

1. approves in principle, the following statements for the 2022-23 financial year:
 - Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023
 - Performance Statement 2022-23
2. authorises Councillor _____ and Councillor _____ to certify the 2022-23 statements as detailed in part 1 of the recommendation in their final form after any changes recommended, or agreed to, by the Auditor General have been made and in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council does not approve the financial reports and defer to a later date. It is a regulatory requirement to approve the financial reports in principle prior to submitting the statements to the auditor for reporting on the audit. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

There are no procurement matters as the statements are prescriptive in nature and report Council's prior year performance.

Community Engagement

There was no engagement as the statements are prescriptive in nature in order to report Council's prior year financial performance.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The financial statements and the performance statement are prepared in line with the LG sector's better practice guide and model financial statements.

Collaboration

The financial statements and the performance statement are prepared in line with the LG sector's better practice guide and model financial statements.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Annual Report 2022-23 - No Financials Included [**3.1.1** - 98 pages]

Annual Report

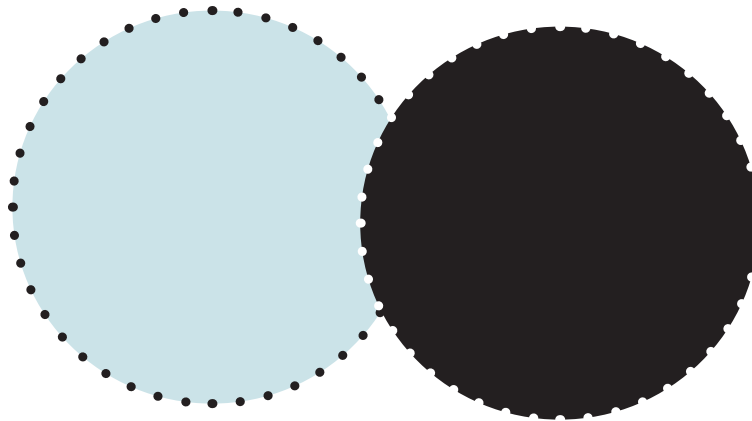
2022-23





Acknowledgement of Country

Northern Grampians Shire Council acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, and we pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging.





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Message from the Mayor

It has undoubtedly been a tumultuous but ultimately positive year in Northern Grampians Shire. There has been so much going on from the Northeast to the Southwest that I am not entirely sure that I can condense all the shire's shared tragedy, hard work, significant wins, small gains, occasional steps back and the challenges we, and the broader community, have faced over the past twelve months into a few brief paragraphs.

The council has carried out significant groundwork to ensure that we are able to increase the available housing in the area and we should be seeing the results of this fairly soon. In turn, we hope this will enable us to support residents, migrant workers, and local businesses and industry to secure sufficient housing moving forward. Sherridon Homes have almost sold their Stage One release and council groundwork is well underway.

Emergency preparedness, community resilience, and recovery work this past twelve months has been outstanding, with Emergency Management teams dedicating their reserves to ensure that each stage of planning, preparation, co-ordination and recovery are second nature within all our core teams. The team is also working on a community app prototype that will be a gamechanger in this area, we hope!

We have worked hard to ensure that assets are placed in the right hands and officially returned Sister's Rocks, a landmark that represents so much more than wayward teens and the artistic expression of travellers, into the hands of those to whom it belongs. We've raised flags and celebrated the collective threads that bind us all to the shire.

Early in the year, we farewelled our dear friend and colleague, Tony Driscoll and have continued to mourn Tony, a willing and kind leader whose commitment to community has, and will continue to have, a great impact on our shire and residents.

We said goodbye to Liana Thompson, a clear-sighted and fair leader, whose energy and dedication to Local Government facilitated an uplifting and positive work – life balance. We searched far and wide to replace her, welcoming Brent McAlister, a proud Kiwi with a penchant for networking driven by his keen interest in people and have found that his passion for stable upward economic growth is having a positive impact already.

Australia-wide attention focused in on our shire as we celebrated the life and achievements of a much-loved daughter of the shire, Stella Young, through the Remembering Stella Young project and have subsequently watched on with joy as children and adults alike immerse themselves in Stella's outlook. We too have learnt from Stella and hope to ensure that accessibility is at the forefront of future plans.



Infrastructure has been equally productive – everything, everywhere, all at once is the catch phrase for this incredible team of hard-working folk. From government engagement to grants, drawing board design to getting the job done, Superman would be pretty jealous of what this crew can do.

The Heath Street Bridge in Halls Gap is inching ever closer to reality, with the detailed design for Health Street representing a significant win for us. This will, of course, be dependent on future funding opportunities but we are very proud of the work achieved to date and continue to advocate for significant structural works to be funded throughout the shire.

Our waste programs are in full swing, with the background work for our FOGO rollout in St Arnaud hidden behind town hall walls. Sometimes the best work is done behind closed doors; this team has achieved leaps and bounds.

Really important work is not always given the spotlight it deserves, so here's to Northern Grampians Shire Council and the people that ensure that the jobs get done.

This year has been a year of consultation and community building. I think sometimes it isn't always known quite how much we care about our community – no matter where you are in the shire. No matter your age, we try our best to reach out and grab available funding to bring your various wishes to fruition. From Youth Surveys to new skate parks – we are working for everyone, using the skills and experiences available to us.

Our St Arnaud and Stawell Tourism Branding is a great example of what we can achieve when we work with our communities to develop a common vision.

We've turned on bright lights across the shire in support of our sporting communities and get out there on the field to score when we can. And fought the good fight, alongside our friends and family on a variety of pertinent issues. We've celebrated our natural resources and invested what we have managed to secure in accordance with the wishes of the majority as democracy so plainly prescribes.

Iam sure that I have left out a vast array of good work, and in closing I would like to offer my sincere thanks to each and every one of you – from residents and business owners, to staff and councillors. Thank you for working together to make Northern Grampians Shire the place we choose to live, work, invest, and visit.

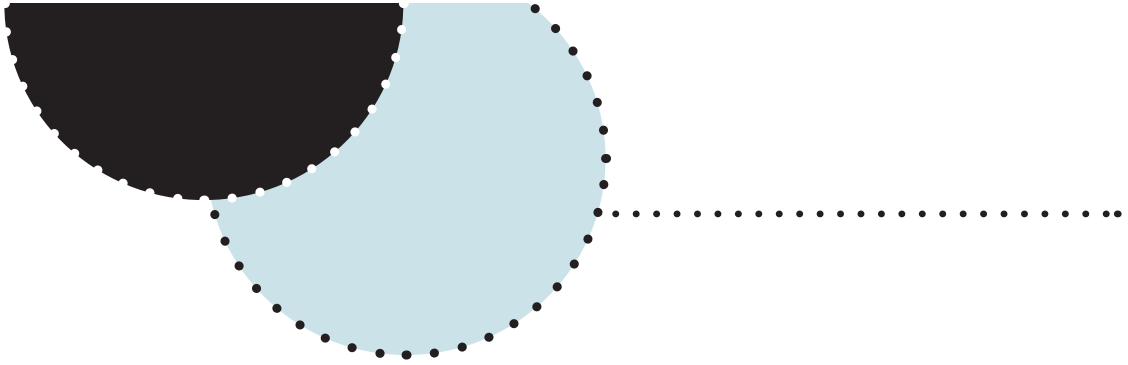
Yours sincerely,



Cr Kevin Eriwn
Mayor of Northern Grampians Shire

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Our Core Values

Northern Grampians Shire Council is committed to providing a seamless citizen engagement experience

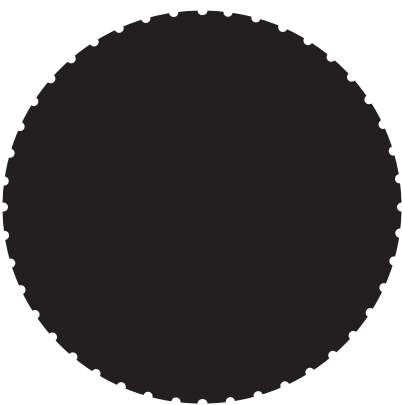
Responsive: we will engage with all stakeholders and listen and respond appropriately to your needs.

Innovative: we will be positive and endeavour to find solutions and choice in our service delivery.

Continuous Improvement: we will continually strive, within our means, for best possible practice and improvement in service delivery.

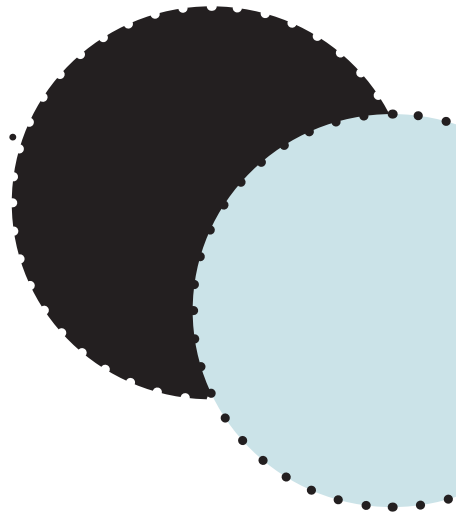
Prompt: we will respond promptly, within agreed timeframes, to all of your requests.

Respectful: we will be respectful and conscious of diversity and make available information and services in an accessible and inclusive manner.



Our Motto

LIVE. WORK. INVEST. VISIT.



Our Affirmation

// We recognise the traditional owners of the land. We are inspired by the early pioneers and by those who gave their lives for our country. We now ask God's blessing on our deliberations and on our commitment to build a better lifestyle and environment."

Our Goals



- Enhance Lifestyes and Community
- Boost Economic Growth
- Provide Sustainable Infrastructure
- Improve Organisational Effectiveness



Our Councillors

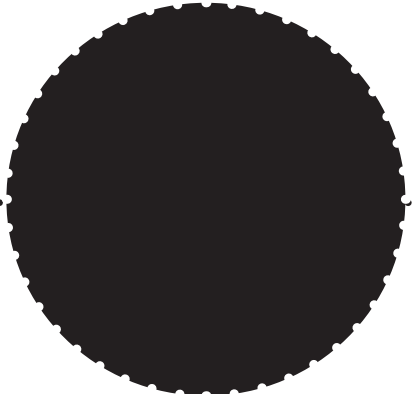




L-R Cr Trevor Gready (South West) - Cr Murray Emerson (Stawell) - Cr Rob Haswell (Stawell) - Cr Lauren Dempsey (Stawell) - Cr Karen Hyslop - (Kara Kara) - Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD (Kara Kara) - Mayor 2022 - 23 Cr Kevin Erwin (Central)



Highlights 2022-23



L-G Lord Nelson Park Great Western Lighting

N-S North Park Netball Courts
Loane Street Corridor Infrastructure

S-S Stawell and Halls Gap Pop Up Parks
St Arnaud Caravan Park Upgrade



Our Shire at a Glance



Major Towns and Villages

Stawell, St Arnaud, Great Western, Halls Gap, Glenorchy, Navarre, Marnoo, Stuart Mill.

Economic Profile

Diverse and dynamic, the Northern Grampians Shire Council boasts an exciting array of industries and business enterprises. There are over 1,000 businesses operating within the shire with major activities encompassing tourism, mining, food production, and the processing and agriculture industries. These centres service regional need for shopping, business and commercial services and host other activities including brick making, meat processing, steel fabrication, feed production, supply and service of farm machinery and small service nature.

Workforce

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is driven by a highly skilled and multi-disciplinary workforce. Amongst the front runners of the region, it is responsible for environmentally sound and innovative growth and development, particularly in grain, sheep and viticulture. A range of professional opportunities exist in health, food processing, hospitality and trade.

Location

Stawell is located in Central West Victoria on the Western Highway between Adelaide (500kms) and Melbourne (230kms).

St Arnaud is located on an important transport link at the junction of the Sunraysia and Wimmera Highways between Melbourne and Mildura, providing excellent access to the west, north-west and south-east. St Arnaud has railway links to Melbourne and Mildura. Other key links include Horsham, Ballarat and Bendigo.



- 5,918 Square Kilometres
- 11,948 Population (Census 2021)
- 3,371 Kilometres of Local Road
- 9,494 Rateable Properties
- \$20.135M Rates/Charges Revenue
- \$40.1M Total Revenue
- 1,000+ Businesses
- 1M Tourists and Visitors



TAN Transport

Two airports are located at Stawell (24-hour sealed airport with instrument panel) and St Arnaud. A national gauge railway connects Stawell to Adelaide, Melbourne, Geelong and Portland.

CAN Climate

Average daily temperatures sit at a minimum of 8.6 degrees degrees celcius and a maximum of 19.7 degrees celcius. Average annual rainfall is 576mm.

TAN Telecommunications

Telecommunications and e-commerce service delivery have provided for exciting opportunities in business expansion and diversification and a new realm of opportunity for new business investment. Effective communication infrastructure allows for the combination of an attractive lifestyle setting with the capacity to service target markets wherever they may be located.

Local Government Indicators



Performance Reporting

Effective performance reporting is essential for letting our residents and ratepayers know how public money is being spent, the quality of services delivered, the outcomes being achieved and how the outcomes relate to our strategic objectives.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and the Know Your Council website enable local communities to compare how their council has performed during the year against others.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

The State Government established a suite of performance measures that are compulsory for every Victorian council to report against. Called the 'Local Government Performance Reporting Framework' (LGPRF), the indicators are part of the *Local Government Act 2020*. There are three comparatives in the report. Comments have been included for indicators that have moved significantly and other indicators where we believe they may provide clarity or context to the result.

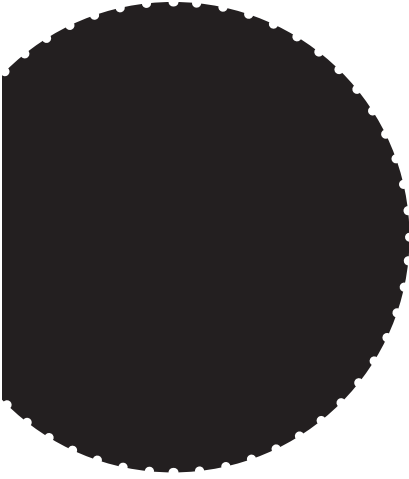
Know Your Council Website

Residents and ratepayers can compare results for the Northern Grampians Shire Council with other councils across key service areas and financial performance for the last financial year and the year ended 30 June 2023 via the Know Your Council website www.knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au

Occupational Health and Safety

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment for employees, councillors, contractors, volunteers, clients and members of the public that is safe and without risks to health, so far as is reasonably practicable. Northern Grampians Shire Council is insured for Workcover through GallagherBassett and through this relationship aims to provide the following benefits:

- Continuous improvement in health and safety and return to work performance,
 - Improvements in injury prevention, and
 - Better human and financial outcomes



Core Service Initiatives

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Customer Service

Northern Grampians Shire Council has customer support centres located in Stawell and St Arnaud. These centres provide an important resource for the community and serve as the principal point of contact from which staff provide information and services. Our friendly customer support staff endeavour to answer all enquiries, and can respond to requests for a wide range of services, including receipting, VicRoads procedures and animal registrations.

Media and Communications

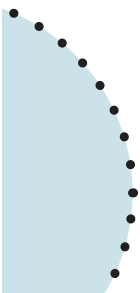
In 2022-23, media and communications continued its focus on improving council's communication and engagement with its communities. Council's Executive Leadership Team endorsed a new Media Policy and Guidelines in June 2022. The policy sets out the general principles to ensure media and communication activities are timely, accurate, well-planned, compliant with applicable laws, responsive to the needs of the community and delivered within budget. The supporting guidelines explain how the Media and Communications Team will actually do that and set out the who, what, where, when and how the policy purpose will be met. They provide the information about Council branding and corporate messaging, legislative requirements, governance arrangements and protocols for the use of media and communication tools. It is a focus of the policy and guidelines to ensure we reach all stakeholders with Council communications and tell the community what it wants and needs to know. A key focus for media and communications has been consistent messaging to the community about council activities, and visually promoting the benefits of the shire through photos and video footage which is being shown on our external and internal televisions located in our main administration centres, the Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre and on social media platforms.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ngshire

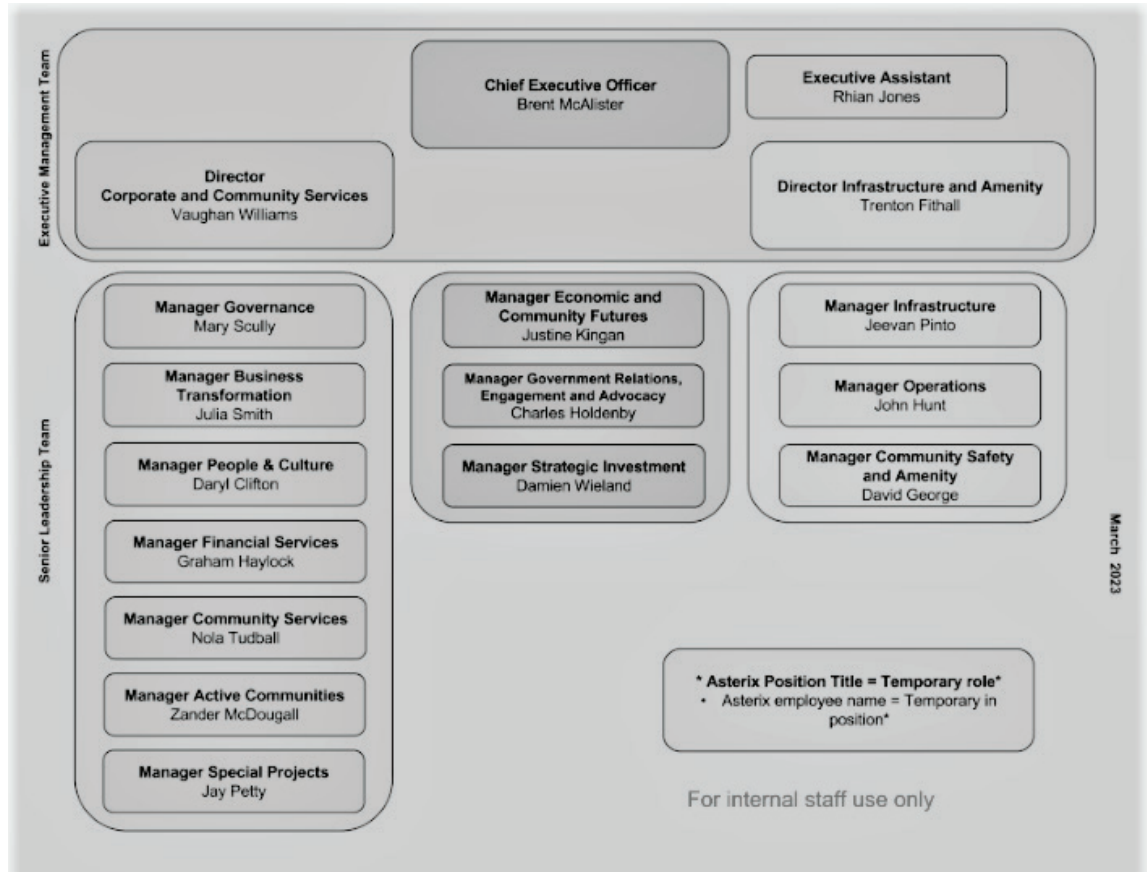
Youtube: [@northerngrampiansshirecoun6063](https://www.youtube.com/@northerngrampiansshirecoun6063)

Instagram: www.instagram.com/northerngrampiansshire

Northern Grampians Shire Council Website: www.ngshire.vic.gov.au



Organisation Structure



Council Staff

14.

Employment Type and Gender	
Employment Type/Gender	Total
Permanent FT - Female	53
Permanent FT - Male	100
Permanent PT - Female	63
Permanent PT - Male	7
Temporary PT - Female	3
Temporary PT - Male	0
Temporary FT - Female	1
Casual - Female	32
Casual - Male	5
All Employee Total	264

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Human Rights

The Victorian Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities is a legal document requiring all public authorities to act in compliance with its standards and provides legal protection over the basic freedoms and rights of all Victorians. Council is legally obliged to take into account the following human rights in all decision-making processes and day-to-day operations: Recognition and equality before the law; Right to life; Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; Freedom from forced work; Freedom of movement; Privacy and reputation; Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief; Freedom of expression; Peaceful assembly and freedom of association; Protection of families and children; Taking part in public life; Cultural rights; Property rights; Right to liberty and security; Humane treatment when deprived of liberty; Children in the criminal process; Fair hearing; Rights in criminal proceeding; Right not to be tried or punished more than once; Retrospective criminal laws.

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Equal Opportunity

The Northern Grampians Shire Council continues to be committed to the principles of Equal Opportunity. Any allegations of harassment or discrimination by an employee, independent contractor, volunteer or councillors will be immediately acted upon in accordance with Council's Equal Opportunity, Harassment & Bullying Policy and Procedure. Council is also committed to ensuring that equity and equal opportunity are built into all of our recruitment policies and procedures.

The Northern Grampians Shire Council seeks to promote and provide an environment that supports all of our external and internal customers. Council is committed to combating discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification by:

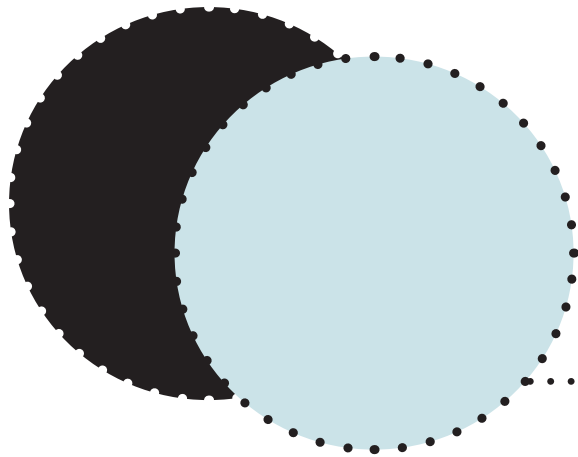
Conducting Gender Impact Assessments on all revised or new policies and procedures that impact shire residents; Developing and implementing a four-year Gender Equity Action Plan; Encouraging employee awareness through induction and training and; Ensuring there is prompt and adequate attention to any issues raised.

Child Safety Standards

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is committed to being a child-safe organisation, with zero tolerance for child abuse. Along with a range of organisations, we are working towards compliance with the latest Victorian Child Safe Standards (2022).

Council aims to create a culture of child safety that reduces the opportunity for harm and gives staff a clear process to follow when someone raises concerns about child safety or reports abuse. Council has developed and implemented a "Child Safe Statement of Commitment" and a Child Safe Policy and actively endorses all of its organisational responsibilities through all employees, volunteers, work experience students, contractors, contract employees and Councillors.

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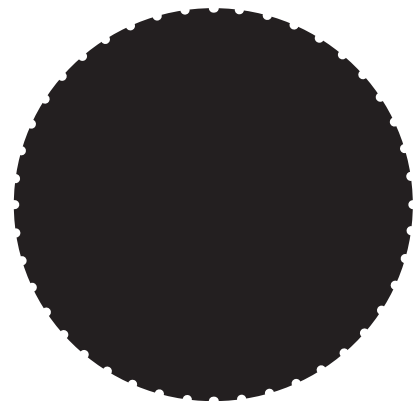


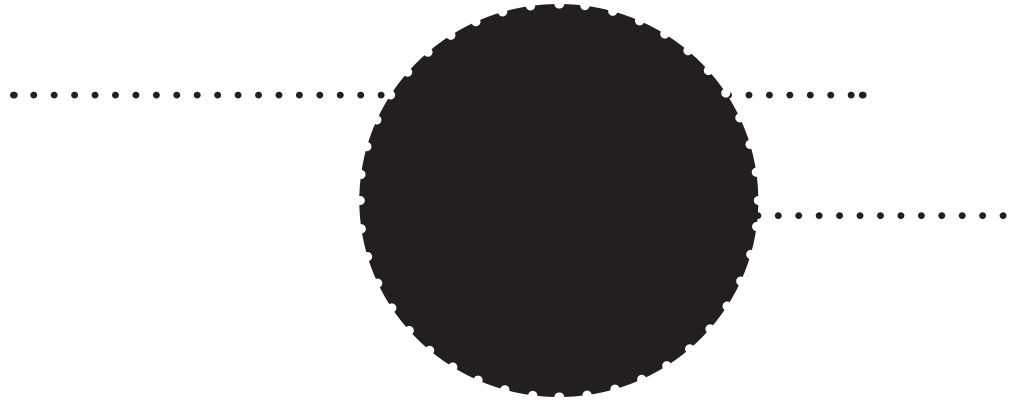
Operational Report

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare a Council Plan containing the strategic objectives of the council, strategies for achieving those objectives and indicators to monitor the achievement of those objectives. In order to achieve the goals set out in the Council Plan 2021-25, a Council Action Plan 2022-23 was adopted by the council at its 27 June 2022 Council Meeting.

The Council Action Plan 2022-23 supports the Council Plan by providing key actions that Northern Grampians Shire Council is to deliver within the second year to accomplish the strategic objectives outlined in the Council Plan. Quarterly progress updates are provided to the council and the community to give a clear indication as to whether the council's goals and objectives are on track to meet delivery targets.

The action plan outlines the major initiatives that are to be carried out in the second year of the Council Plan. The report provides a summary on the progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the Council Action Plan 2022-23.

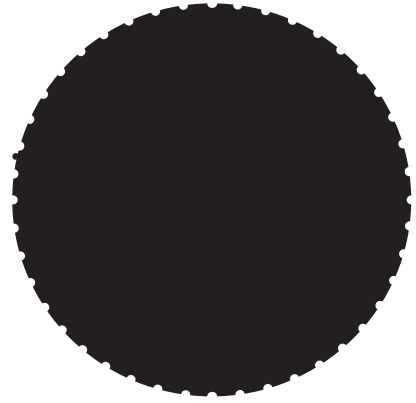




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Actions completed from the Council Action Plan 2022-23:
Renew the St Arnaud Tennis Clubrooms; Deliver the North Park Precinct Soccer Lighting; Deliver a St Arnaud Market Square Performance Space; Design and deliver the Lord Nelson Park Sports Oval Lighting Upgrade; Investigate additional Big Hill precinct lookout (including arboretum) upgrades; Support the Great Western Future Committee to deliver the Great Western Future Plan; Advocate for Central Park Netball Changerooms; Advocate for Central Park Netball Courts; Supply and install a Community Notice Board in Navarre; Supply and install a Community Notice Board in Marnoo; Create and publish a new Historical Assets register; Deliver Arts and Culture Action Plan 2022-25; Advocate for funding and delivery of Great Western PPP Football and Netball Clubrooms; Deliver a Visitor Servicing and Halls Gap Hub Management Review; Support Visitor Information volunteers at St Arnaud and Stawell; Deliver Tourism Events Strategy; Oversight the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL); Deliver 'Live the Grampians Way' campaign; Deliver North Park Master Plan; Investigate retail options in Marnoo; Advocate for new and existing spaces for arts and culture activities; Review and update Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software; Develop an Agency Partnership Framework; Finalise the Stawell Sports & Aquatic Centre (SSAC) Feasibility Study and Master plan; Develop the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25.

Economic Development Economic Growth Program



L launched in 2021, the Business Growth Program has become a cornerstone of the council's commitment to support local business. Throughout 2022-23 the council continued to deliver programs and services to support growth focused business. The program is used by council to help grow jobs, exports, build economic and environmental sustainability, embrace innovation and best practice. Key sectors agriculture, manufacturing, renewable energy, tourism and retail.

Key Achievements

Business connection and development
The council has worked to enhance communication and business networking and supported access to business development opportunities by: Providing 222 businesses with one-on-one consultations, offering tailored guidance to address specific challenges faced by businesses; Listing 583 businesses on the Council Business Directory. Supporting 80 businesses to attend business events and networking; Distributing 34 Business E-news to 484 subscribers with a 49% conversion rate; Providing a concierge service to over 19 business through permit and approval processes; Supporting three businesses to access small business mentoring services.

Funding Accelerator
The council has been supporting businesses to access more external funding opportunities, attracting 108 registrations to the Northern Grampians Shire Council 'Grant Funding Funder' and providing grant writing support. To date, this service has secured over \$50,000 in funding. The council's redevelopment program will enable the Economic Development Team to continue to undertake business visits and promote services to existing and new businesses through monthly newsletters and social media campaigns.

Regional Economic Growth Projects

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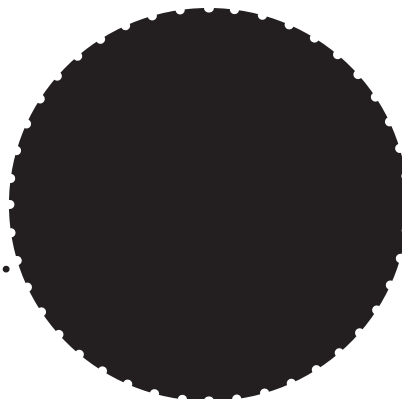
In addition to the Business Growth Program, the council worked with the community and across municipal borders on projects of regional significance.

Northeast Pyrenees Pipeline

In 2022 NGSC partnered with Pyrenees Shire Council to secure funding to prepare a feasibility study for the Northeast Pyrenees Pipeline. The proposed study area encompasses two significant geographic areas within Northern Grampians Shire including: To the north of Stawell between Deep Lead and Glenorchy to the West, across in a north-easterly direction to Beazley's Bridge, then south to Landsborough; From the council boundary at Natte Yallock in the south through to just south-east of St Arnaud.

The project will determine whether there is a technically feasible option to service rural landholders that are impacted by continual lower rainfall seasons. If technically feasible and there is sufficient landholder interest, the feasibility study will provide evidence to other levels of government whether the project can proceed to a full Business Case.

The project aligns strongly with the Northern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2021-25 and Northern Grampians Shire Council Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2021-35. The strategy recognises that one of Northern Grampians biggest challenges is its vulnerability to natural disasters, undermining consistent economic growth. Achieving sustained economic growth is one of three overarching objectives set out in the strategy.





/Live The Grampians Way

In addition, the council partners with Grampians Tourism and its other Local Government Partners to continue the 'Live the Grampians Way' campaign. The campaign continued for eight months, and key activity included:

Registering 15 businesses on the Shift Regional Portal.

2 8,439 people visiting the Live the Grampians site and 794 people visiting the Grampians Jobs site.

5 ,358 people showing interest in living and working in the Grampians region.

Nine candidates were offered positions and moved to the Grampians through the campaign, one candidate moving to Stawell.



Main Streets Activation Program

Mainstreets of Australia campaign was a nationwide event held over a week in May to help support and promote local shopping precincts. This year we supported the businesses on Napier Street, St Arnaud through events that celebrate what was and what is the heart of the community. The week was celebrated by bringing the community and businesses together:

> **Spend and Sip** the community received a coffee voucher to spend at any cafe after spending over \$20 in any business on Napier Street or the surrounding side streets. 20 vouchers with a total spend receipt of \$1680 were handed out to the community. This means that for every \$5 voucher handed out today, an average of \$84 is spent on Napier Street.

> Students from the local primary schools supported the week by creating art masterpieces showing what Napier Street meant to them. The art work was displayed in shop fronts across Napier Street for the week.



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/ Stawell Easter Festival

The Stawell Gift remains an important driver of the local economy and a terrific showcase for the region with Finals Day on Easter Monday broadcast nationally on the Seven Network.

At the 2023 Stawell Gift, attendees were provided with a postcard showcasing the highlights of Stawell and surrounding areas in Northern Grampians shire. The postcard encouraged attendees to make the most of their visit to Northern Grampians with things to do on the Easter weekend and inspire them to return to continue to exploring the region.

Businesses along Main Street are a vital part of the Easter weekend and were supported with bright footpath decals and feather flags displayed outside Central Park and leading to Main Street. This was to increase the visitation to the Main Street traders from the attendees of the Stawell Gift. Main Street traders hold a Main Street Extravaganza on Saturday morning which is a large drawcard for the community and visitors. The event attracts a large number of attendees with all businesses reporting a very successful morning. The street is closed and many community groups are in attendance to fundraise and showcase their talents.

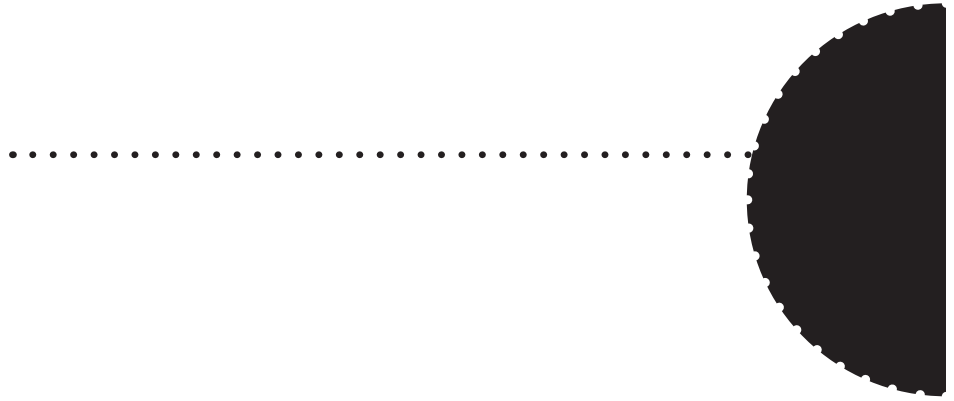
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Stawell and St Arnaud Tourism Action Plans

S**T**he visitor economy is a critical sector in driving the municipality’s economic development and job creation. Council takes a regional approach to tourism destination marketing and investment, partnering with Grampians Tourism. One in six jobs in Northern Grampians Shire is directly or indirectly reliant on tourism spending.

With this in mind, council developed and adopted two Tourism Action Plans for Stawell and St Arnaud to support economic growth and resilience. These Action Plans focused on priority themes to build a foundation to develop the shire’s tourism offering based off the unique experiences, places and people that the shire has to offer. Council developed a new region tourism brand – Discover Northern Grampians, which also includes individual brand identities for Stawell and St Arnaud. Discover Northern Grampians will help us tell the stories of our region and individual towns in an engaging and inspiring way, drawing in new visitors, residents and investors. The brand project deliverables include new visitor guides, town flags, social media creation and website updates on visitgrampians.com.au. Our towns have their own unique story to tell and this new brand will allow council to do this.





/ Stawell Window Revitalisation Initiative

Council ran a new initiative to reactivate and revitalise the main street of Stawell. This included window decals on vacant shopfronts telling engaging and interesting stories about Stawell.

Northern Grampians Visitor Servicing

Northern Grampians Shire Council operates three distinct Visitor Information Centres, comprising the accredited Halls Gap and Grampians Visitor Centre, alongside the unaccredited Stawell and St Arnaud Visitor Centres.

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The Stawell and St Arnaud Visitor Information Centres run seven days a week with approximately 20 volunteers assisting at each location. Since January 2023, the centres collectively welcomed 3,363 visitors, underscoring the vital role these centres play in catering to the needs of tourists in the region.

Notably, the Stawell Visitor Information Centre received an interior revamp and has been very well received by volunteers and visitors. In addition to the Stawell and St Arnaud centres, the Halls Gap and Grampians Visitor Centre welcomed a staggering 72,697 visitors last year. Most of this visitation was from Melbourne, followed closely by interstate and international visitors. To enhance the visitor experience, a new town map has been prominently displayed at the entrance, complemented by an array of additional marketing materials, including an informative town map and an enticing Eat & Drink flyer.



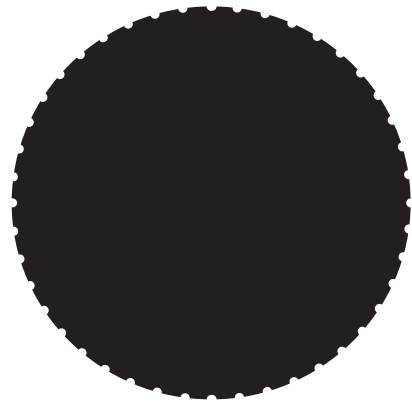
Strong Economic Activity

From 2021 to 2022, NGSC saw growth across 6 of 7 key economic indicators: **G**RP went up by \$50M. Since 2016, real GRP increased by \$30 Billion, reflecting a compounding annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.6%; Output (gross revenue) also went up \$50M; Since 2016, real output increased by \$0.12 Billion, reflecting a compounding annual growth rate (CAGR) of 1.1%; Regional Exports (the value of goods and services exported out of NGSC) is currently up by \$2M; Since 2016, real regional exports increased by \$0.11 Billion, reflecting a compounding annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.38%.

The number of businesses in Northern Grampians Shire rose by 45; Wages and salaries earned by employees from their employers in NGSC was up my \$10M; Since 2016, real wages and salaries have had an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 0.15%.

The median house price increased by \$105K; Since 2016 the median house price has increased by \$171,000, reflecting a compounding annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.82%; Building approvals fell by \$1.61M; Since 2016, residential building approvals have increased by \$8.31 Million, reflecting a compounding annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.61%; Land use development is one key factor that influences the economic growth of the shire.

Planning permit data provides an important economic indicator of future building and land use activity within the shire and is used to monitor economic activity, employment and investment. Council's Planning Department issued a total of 112 planning permits worth over \$43 million in the 2022-23 financial year compared to 126 planning permits worth \$33 million in 2021-22 and 104 planning permits worth \$32 million in 2020-21. This equates to a 30% increase in permits issued which is a substantial investment in the municipality; The number of permits issued this year are slightly lower compared to 2021-22 but the value (cost of works) have consistently increased year on year. This could mean that council is attracting more (complex) applications of significant investment value to the area.



Halls Gap Action Plan

The council has continued to progress the Halls Gap Action Plan with funding secured for the design of the Heath Street Bridge and Street Upgrade. This funding will provide council with a set of drawings, reports and costings that can then be used to advocate for funds to construct the bridge and surrounding road works. This bridge and street works are aimed to commercially activate the Heath Street area. The design is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2023. The Grampians Peaks Trailhead project at Halls Gap to connect the new street front on Grampians Road and the Stoney Creek Bridge Boardwalk to the Grampians Peaks Trail is in the design phase. Parks Victoria is undertaking the design with construction aimed for the 2023-24 financial year.

Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL)

The Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL) concept came into being as a result of a requirement for an underground physics laboratory in the southern hemisphere as part of an ongoing worldwide search for Dark Matter. The design was completed but the project was suspended when the Stawell Gold Mine commenced a transition to closure back in 2013-14. At that time, after more than 30 years of operation, Stawell Gold Mine believed that closure due to economic, operational and other business factors was imminent and the mine was then placed in caretaker mode. After the sale and with the support of the new owners, the project was established in the mine as an underground laboratory.

At its peak in 2011, Stawell Gold Mine was the largest employer in the Stawell area and contributed over \$58.3 million to the local community in wages, purchased goods and services per year. As an industry sector within Northern Grampians Shire, mining represents 19.1% of gross regional product. With the development funded by both state and federal governments, and supported by a number of university, government and community partners, a team of scientists and engineers built the underground laboratory to facilitate further exploration into dark matter, one kilometre underground in the Stawell gold mine. This laboratory is known as the Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL), and it was finally unveiled in August 2022 after years of planning and construction. The opening event of SUPL marked the completion of Stage 1 of the project, and years of planning and construction. The next stages, baselining and the construction and operation of the SABRE experiment, will progress the state-of-the-art dark matter direct detection experiment in Australia. Baselining the environment will be progressed in 2023 with the construction and operation of the SABRE experiment expected to commence in 2024. The staged operation of SUPL represents the dawn of a new era for Stawell and the next, significant, step in the ground-breaking international collaboration amongst leading physicists working on the SABRE project.



Sloane Street Housing Development

Shousing supply remains a critical issue for Northern Grampians Shire Council. Council forecasts a shortfall of 220 houses in Stawell over the next five years. Businesses continue to raise housing as a key barrier to meeting their workforce needs. Known business expansion in Stawell in the next two years, will see a need for approximately 1,000 additional workers.

In addition to land use planning including the Stawell Growth Area Masterplan, 2022-23 saw the council work with several private sector developers to help facilitate new housing. This included working on a joint Planning Scheme and Planning Permit on Sloane Street. Council received authorisation by the Minister for Planning to prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment that proposes rezoning land from Rural Living to Neighbourhood Residential. If approved, the amendment will unlock an additional 120 new house lots into Stawell. The amendment will be taken to the September 2023 Council Meeting for a decision.

Council have continued to work with Passive Place on another housing development in Sloane Street. The development has had a slower than expected start with the first stage offering to local employers receiving little interest or investment required to initiate movement into build stage. Consequently, the new stage of the development will be targeting a mixed demographic comprising predominantly key worker housing, with commencement on site now expected in April 2024. Council has worked closely with Passive Place to ensure obligations of the s173 continue to be met.

B-B Double Upgrades

B-Double upgrades are a part of the annual Capital Works Program which is designed to deliver a number of critical infrastructure upgrades which will enable a quick and efficient movement of freight on local roads. With the local economy being underpinned by agriculture, there is an increasing demand for heavy vehicle access to our road network, enabling primary producers to take their produce to the market.

As part of the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program grant, the council was able to complete Stage 2 of the Queens Avenue Project in St Arnaud. This project is aimed at renewing the road pavement on Queens Avenue around the Barastoc Mill site to ensure one of St Arnaud's largest employers had ongoing heavy vehicle access. This section of road had a very high heavy vehicle use and the condition of the road and kerb was in a very poor condition. Further footpath was constructed to the railway station to remove need for pedestrians to walk on the road. Drainage improvement works were also undertaken as a part of this project.



Emergency and Risk Initiatives

Council has continued to maintain a high level of involvement with Emergency Management (EM) partners and stakeholders at local, regional, and state level in planning for multi-agency activities which help all involved in EM to be prepared for a number of contingencies.

Emergency management exercises and programs run or attended by council staff in 2022-23

Date	Event	Location
	FIRE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES	
7 July 2022	Strategic Fire Breaks Review	Shire-wide
25 August 2022	Victorian Fire Risk Register Review	Shire-wide
August 2022	Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Places of Last Resort (NSP-BPLRs)- Annual Inspection	Stawell, St Arnaud, Halls Gap
November 2022 – January 2023	Annual Fire Hazard Inspections (issuing of Fire Prevention Notices)	Shire-wide
27 January 2023	Safer Together Community Engagement Day	Halls Gap
	TRAINING	
29 September 2022	Introduction to Emergency Management for Council Staff	Online
18-22 October 2022	Municipal Fire Prevention Officer Training	Woodend
14 November 2022	Emergency Relief Centre Audits	Marnoo/ St Arnaud
December 2022 – January 2023	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre Set-up	Stawell PCHP
11 May 2023	Regional Multi-Agency (Aerodrome) Emergency Exercise	Horsham
18 May 2023	Crisisworks System Admin Training	Online
20-29 June 2023	Various Crisisworks Training	Online
	LIAISON ACTIVITIES	
September / December 2022 / March / June 2023	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Meetings	Stawell/Online
September 2021 / March 2022	Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee Meetings	Online
October 2022 – June 2023	NGS Flood Recovery Committee Meetings	Stawell/Online
November 2022 – January 2023	Grampians Recovery Committee	Online
Weekly throughout whole year	Regional Emergency Management Team Meetings	Online
February – March 2022	Recruitment of council staff to EM Roles	Online
Weekly throughout whole year	Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (Grampians councils) Meetings	Online / Ararat
July 2022 – June 2023	Halls Gap Community Preparedness & Resilience Project	Various



Emergency Management Planning

Council, in partnership with emergency service agencies, undertook a review of the Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) in accordance with the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and submitted the plan to the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee on 23 June 2023 for approval.

The Northern Grampians Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (NGS MEMPC) meets four times annually with very good participation and coordination being achieved with the relevant agencies and organisations that constitute the committee. Due to increased staffing in the Community Safety and EM team there are now also additional MEMO's who are on the on-call roster and who can attend if necessary to an incident.

Council keeps abreast of strategic and regional planning through participation on the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee and the Local Government Emergency Management (LG-EM) group. This involvement assists council to understand the changes being introduced throughout the state as a result of changes to EM processes being driven by Emergency Management Victoria and changes to EM legislation.

Council is involved in the Grampians Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (MEMEG). Being on the Grampians MEMEG has allowed for the cooperation and networking with other regional municipalities and Local Government Victoria to discuss and resolve issues relating to EM. Some of the items discussed and planned include undertaking EM exercising and training together.



Grants and Funding Opportunities

Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program (MERP) supplies grant funding for the council's emergency management activities.

Halls Gap Community Preparedness & Resilience Project – Funded by Safer Together, the 2022-23 phase of this project focused on:

The design and development of a digital application to provide localised fire (and other emergency) preparedness information for the broader Halls Gap community (i.e. including absentee landholders, residents, businesses, visitors etc.). The app will also assist in creating a more prepared and resilient community

Halls Gap Community Resilience Workshops were held in January and February:
Workshop 1 – What's the Plan? What to do when your bushfire plan fails.
Workshop 2 – Connecting Better, Working Together

These two community workshops were extremely successful with many community members attending. After completing these workshops, the community opted to run a third workshop on their own and continue to build on the work completed during the first two workshops. As a result, the community has formed a group called the Snappy Gappians which aims to improve social connectedness in the Halls Gap community.





Vulnerable People in Emergencies

Council works in partnership with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and other service providers to identify vulnerable persons in the municipality now receiving services. It is important to note the strong working relationships that are maintained with the various health service providers and other organisations to ensure the Vulnerable Persons Register and the Vulnerable Facilities Register is maintained and kept up to date. The systems utilised mean that the information is readily available to authorised organisations and to Victoria Police when planning for or responding to emergency events or incidents.

The MEMP contains information pointing to systems that indicate locations where vulnerable people might be located (e.g., schools, childcare facilities, hospitals, intellectually disabled, disabled, and aged care facilities). It also recognises the need for these people to be encouraged to be prepared to relocate early if an emergency situation threatens and the need to work with the various service providers to ensure plans are in place for any assisted evacuations.

Additional collaborative work includes:

The review of Neighbourhood Safer Places - Bushfire Places of Last Resort and the Victorian Fire Risk Register-Bushfire with the assistance of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and other Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee members and stakeholders. Council is also represented on the Committee for Community Safety along with Councillors, VicPol, Neighbourhood House and other community stakeholders and monthly meetings are held to discuss areas of local concern and those vulnerable persons in the community and this continues throughout 2023 and beyond.

In partnership with the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP), CFA, and Municipal Fire Prevention Officers we meet to discuss fire management issues such as setting restrictions for permits to burn and working with CFA and DELWP staff on fire management activities and fuel reduction and risk reduction strategies) has occurred throughout the year. We also liaise with Regional Roads Victoria to discuss issues relating to Emergency Road Diversions. Collaboration with the CFA, Parks Victoria, DELWP, Grampians Tourism, and Melbourne University to investigate ways to address the lack of visitor understanding of the Halls Gap emergency risk landscape. Council continues to be involved in flood management discussions regarding the possible sharing of resources between councils for possible risk mitigation projects coming out of the Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy 2016.

Council has undertaken extensive work on the new Halls Gap App (Halls Gap resilience project) and this is due to be rolled out and live at the end of September hopefully. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with a high level of community engagement and this is hoped to benefit not only Halls Gap but anticipated other areas within the shire in future years.



Committees represented on:

CEMPC (Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee); MFMP (Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee); Grampians REMPC (Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee); GREMTEC (Grampians Regional Emergency Management Training & Exercising Committee); MEMEG (Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group); REMT (Regional Emergency Management Team).

Emergency Response and Recovery Activities

October 2022 Floods

E A significant rain band passed through the Grampians Region overnight on 13 October 2022, bringing heavy rainfall that continued into 14 October 2022. This event resulted in flash flooding across several areas, including the Grampians and southern tributaries with significant flooding impacting several towns across the Grampians Region.

In response to this event, NGSC undertook the following recovery activities:

Initiated the Northern Grampians Shire Flood Recovery Committee; Developed the October 2022 Floods Municipal Flood Recovery Plan; Utilised Emergency Recovery funding to employ a full-time temporary Community Recovery Officer for 12 months;

Created communication channels to respond to the event:

Conducted a dedicated flood recovery phone line for community members to contact to receive and provide information; Developed a recovery survey offered online for residents to report concerns, observations, ideas and needs.

Reduced risks to public health following the disaster by:

Reducing Environmental Health assessments; providing septic pump outs to six households; provided free mosquito repellent donated by GIVIT to communities with water inundation such as Glenorchy, Navarre and Stuart Mill; Facilitated the clean-up of homes and properties in Glenorchy by providing skip bin facilities;

Provided information around assistance and key supports for Primary Producers and landowners by:

Partnering with Blaze Aid to provide fence restoration and repair; Sending letters of support to Primary Producers affected by the flooding; Distributing flyers to rural communities outlining available support.

Assisted those affected by the disaster to link in with appropriate support services by:

Making referrals to personal support, case management and counselling services; Partnering with The Salvos to provide impacted residents with Christmas Hampers.; Providing on-going case coordination; Used funding from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to hold psychosocial recovery sessions in Glenorchy and St Arnaud to assess the longer-term impacts, identify the persisting challenges, and assess what will best support long term recovery; Worked with St Arnaud businesses to identify emerging economic issues resulting in the formation of a partnership with Resilient Ready to develop a project to support St Arnaud businesses to build social capital and business resilience to effectively respond to future events.

Assisted those affected by the disaster with opportunities to reconnect with their communities:

Two meetings were held in Glenorchy following the event; Community Event Grants were provided to Slaty Creek Memorial Hall and Stuart Mill Progress Association to provide opportunities for community connection after the floods; Worked with key representatives in Glenorchy, Marnoo, Navarre, Stuart Mill, and St Arnaud to identify emerging issues for incorporation into medium and long-term plans; Obtained pro bono support from Ernst and Young to provide strategic advice, coaching support, and planning for emergency response and recovery; Applied for Recovery Hub funding through Emergency Recovery Victoria to continue to build resilience and preparedness after the October event. Funding is being provided until June 2025.

Community Engagement in Emergency Management

Council's commitment to community engagement remains strong. Council led the Northern Grampians Shire MEMPC in recruiting and appointing two new Community Representatives. The new Community Representatives will be highly valued in upcoming major reviews of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan and sub plans.

Meeting Local Priorities

Fire hazard reduction activities for the year were conducted, including roadside fuel reduction operations and fire hazard inspections. This involved liaison between council infrastructure staff, DELWP, and the CFA. Updated procedure completed for Fire Inspections for the 2023 fire season with additions to improved actions for FPN issue and re-inspection practices.

Asset Initiatives

On The Road Again

Council's Infrastructure Department have again completed an effective **Roads and Bridges Capital Program**, including a number of major road renewal and upgrade works.

In a bid to try and reduce ongoing road maintenance costs on gravel roads or improve road functionality and safety, the council undertook several road upgrade projects. These projects included upgrading: Glenvale Road; Saleyards Road; Sumner Street; Seal widening on Concongella Road at the narrow sections of seal; Seal widening on over 6km of Wallaloo East Road; Stage 2 of the Queens Avenue Project in St Arnaud; Madden Street kerb and road renewal.

Drainage improvement works were completed at Campbell and Ligar Streets in Stawell to reduce flood impacts to private properties. A set of box culverts in Canterbury Street, St Arnaud were replaced and were in poor condition. New kerb and channel works were completed at Edwards Street – St Arnaud, Montague Street – St Arnaud, Gertrude Street – Stawell and Crowlands Road - Stawell

Footpath installation was carried out at Wheeler St – St Arnaud to improve access to the school. High-use pedestrian areas at Wills Street, St Arnaud and Grant Street in Stawell were upgraded with concrete footpaths to improve pedestrian safety. A granite sand path was installed in Great Western from Seppelts Winery to Bests Road as a part of the Great Western Trail Project. The final stage of the path along Bests Road will be completed by the end of 2024. Further works on the Halls Gap Bike Path were undertaken. This stage involved constructing an asphalt overlay over the School Road section of the path. The council resheeting program renewed 40km of gravel roads while the resealing program renewed over 35km of sealed roads.



Bridge and Major Culvert Upgrades

The council completed four major culvert and bridge projects

TSome of the completed works on the assets include deck strengthening to cater for heavy vehicle loads, upgrading guardrails to increase safety, and replacement of culverts which were at their end of useful life. Major strengthening works were undertaken on a bridge at Wallaloo East Road and Landsborough Road. Culvert replacement works were completed at Illawarra Road. A major culvert upgrade was undertaken on Willaring Road at Dogtrap Creek. These works involved replacing the low-level crossing with large culverts to improve road safety and access after large rain events. Culvert and road work at Granard Park Road were completed to improve access during large rain events and provide a safer road network.

Airports Taking Off

Grant funding was sourced in 2019 - 20 and 2020 -21 to deliver stages 5B and 5C of the Stawell Airport development project.

Works completed under the Regional Airport Funding Program for the 2022-23:

Realignment of taxiway Bravo including strengthening and widening to Code 'B' requirements and improving access to runways 11/29 and 18/36, apron, hangars, and refueling area; Alignment of taxiway Charlie to align into the adjusted taxiway Bravo and widening of the graded strip to meet the new regulations; Installation of cable-type aircraft tie-downs in the apron parking area; Resealing 6,000m² of general aviation area to ensure the strength and function of the apron is maintained; Line marking of all runways, taxiways, and general aviation areas to be compliant with the current civil aviation safety authority standards.



Buildings

The built assets and their surrounding grounds make up the Northern Grampians Shire Council property portfolio and comprise 137 buildings located across sites in nine townships and districts. The range of buildings and facilities owned by Northern Grampians Shire Council is infrastructure that is provided to the community for a range of uses and services. These built assets are assessed and maintained to ensure they meet council, OHS and legislative requirements. This type of infrastructure represents a significant investment by the community and is vital to its lifestyle, health and wellbeing.

The following is a list of buildings where substantial works were carried out during the 2022-23 financial year:

Stawell Caravan Park

Full renovation of the front toilet block; Removal of old brick shower and toilet cubicles, fittings, fittings, tiles and flooring; Removal of laundry area and creation of accessible toilet and baby change; Widen door, install lintel, and complete new brickwork; Install new plumbing; New shower and toilet cubicles, including ambulant toilet cubicles; New tiles, flooring, and paint throughout; full renovation of laundry and family playroom; Removal of the interior of both areas; Install new cabinetry and walls; Fit out of both rooms. [Stawell Library](#) painting of toilets after renovation; [St Arnaud Tennis Club](#) renovation was completed; Removal of [Old Lord Nelson Park Clubrooms and toilet block](#) were completed; Painting of the inside of the old [St Arnaud Early Learning Centre](#); Installation of [Stella Young Statue and Interactive Information panel](#) and feature stone; Removal of [Old North Park Clubrooms](#); Install of new banner system in Main Street Stawell; Painting of park furniture and grandstands at Central Park for Stawell Gift.

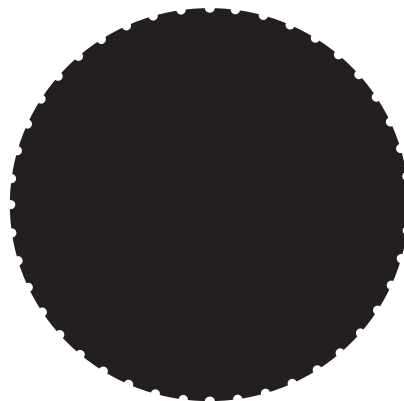


Parks and Gardens

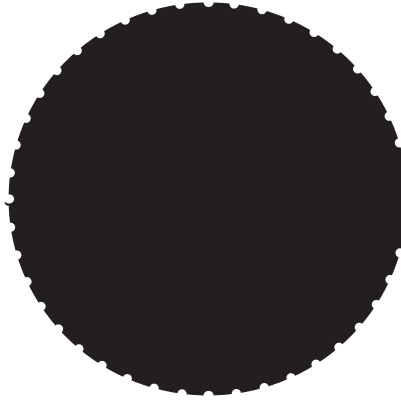
Council's main role in the provision of open space assets is to provide suitable outdoor spaces that are accessible for the community to use for a range of leisure, recreation, sports, cultural and entertainment activities and pursuits. The parks and gardens of Northern Grampians Shire are an important contributor to our quality of life. We need to ensure we have the right tools in place to plan, develop and manage our open spaces for residents and visitors to the region. We also need to plan for our growing community.

Works undertaken in the 2022-23 financial year are in line with achieving the Council Plan 2021-25 to enhance lifestyle and community through wellness and welfare:

Landscaping works including new paths and feature concrete slab for Stella Young Statue; Continuation of our nature strip management, with the installation of street trees throughout Stawell and St Arnaud; Planting of 45 vines to go in the newly installed vine guards in St Arnaud; Installation of new irrigation through a section of Queen Mary Gardens; Installation of new garden beds and turf around the new shelter in Market Square; Installation of a new ramp and seating area at the front of the North Park Clubrooms; Installation of new lights on the athletic oval in Stawell; Lawn cemetery extensions, install of turf and gardens; Stawell Gift preparations and oval work.



Waste Initiatives



As per Recycling Victoria's reforms for the introduction of new mandated Food Organic/Green Organic (FOGO) and glass waste collection services, the council's Waste Action Plan 2020-30, details the actions to be implemented, as noted below.

Initiatives 2022-23

FOGO (Food Organics/Garden Organics) Kerbside trial commencing in September 2023 across an initial 1158 residential properties in the St Arnaud Township area. FOGO to be processed on site at the old Hard Hills Landfill site.

Projects/Funding

TUSUF (Transfer Station Upgrade Fund) focusing on management of glass across our shire. Six box trailers have been manufactured to have located for designated time periods in rural townships. 13 cubic metre skips and additional bins to be placed at Transfer Stations to enable residents to easily dispose of glass. This will complement the Container Deposit Scheme and catch all residual glass not captured through the scheme.

New Public Place Recycling Bins project. Additional Public Place recycling bins being placed in major traffic areas in St Arnaud and Stawell Townships.

Behaviour Change grant application was successful and will be run in conjunction with the new kerbside waste contracts commencing on 1 July 2024. This will assist in educating residents on any changes to what can be placed in recycling bins, to prepare for what can be put in a FOGO bin and how to manage glass.



Social Community and Environment Initiatives Regional Assessment Service

Council provides a specialist Regional Assessment Service. Our trained and skilled staff work with residents who require support to remain living independently in the community, to determine their care needs and eligibility for services. Together, they develop support plans which outline individual's goals and preferences. Our staff provide the information they need about the costs and types of services and residents are able to choose the services they believe best suit their needs.

Direct Care Services

In 2022-23, the council's Direct Care workers delivered a total of 19,176 hours of services to 493 residents who require assistance to remain living independently in the community. Most of the services were domestic assistance and personal care (80% of services), with most services provided to people over the age of 70 years (80%).

A mix of staff and dedicated volunteers spent 12.5 hours per day delivering 11,993 meals to residents living in Stawell and St Arnaud, prepared by East Wimmera Health Service and Grampians Regional Health (Stawell Hospital).

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2020-24

The council has a legislative responsibility to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan over the life of a council. This is a critical strategic document which addresses the priority health and wellbeing concerns of the community and is aligned with the Victorian State-wide Public Health Plan. Council has partnered with health, community service and education providers across the municipality to work with the community to improve the health and wellbeing of residents across the shire. Our vision, developed in partnership with the community is **Northern Grampians – where communities are thriving, healthy and welcoming.**

During 2022-23, we have continued to work together with the community and key service providers to deliver on the five goals of the plan. These are:

Improve mental health and wellbeing; Increase access to health services; Reduce family violence; Increase healthy eating and active living; Act on climate change. Some of our key achievements include working with young people to develop special and different fitness and activities, working towards developing a whole-of-shire strategy to engaging young people and addressing their concerns for the future and working with the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden to promote healthy food options at the Stawell Sports and Aquatic Centre (SSAC).

Summer Outdoor Pools

SW we had more than 9,200 visitors through the gates of the St Arnaud Swimming Pool to seek respite from the summer sun. The 'no fee' access to the pool, the fun water aerobics sessions and school group swimming saw a range of ages enjoy the beautiful pools for the summer. New pool covers were installed to improve the overall experience for the community by maintaining the pool temperature and keeping the water cleaner. For the second time we ran a Swim and Survive program in St Arnaud with 75 students enrolled with great community feedback.

Once again the water slides of the Stawell Outdoor Pool were a draw card for many patrons travelling from near and far. School swimming lessons and carnivals saw usage of the outdoor pool during the school terms while kids and families enjoyed the pool and surroundings for summer picnics, birthday parties and everyday summer fun.

Stawell Sports & Aquatic Centre (SSAC)

SSAC had 12 months of growth through all our service units with a record amount of 426 students enrolled in our swim and survive program. SSAC finished the year with 376 active members and had nearly 70,000 visits for the financial year. SSAC has seen a large demographic of patrons, however notably the 50+ age group has been a consistently committed group participating in our Active Aging classes and we have had 40 over 75 years of age members join our platinum membership. Our school program continues to grow with 11 different schools accessing our programming both in aquatics and sports. During the year we ran our mixed netball competition with eight teams competing at the North Park Netball Courts.

NAGS Libraries

NS tawell library redevelopment was completed with some considerable improvements to the building including: new shelving, front reception desk, carpet, lighting, new kitchenette, improved entry and brand new multi-purpose room for improved programming. The improvements also gave the external facade a facelift. During this financial year the libraries added over 2,971 more stock to its total collection of 22,212 items. There were over 1,656 active library members across the shire. The community library cupboard in Marnoo is stocked with stock from the Stawell library and has continued with great success. This is an honesty system and largely managed by the community.

St Arnaud Early Learning Centre

S t Arnaud Early Learning Centre is continuing to offer three long day care age group programs and two funded kindergarten programs for three and four years olds. Both the three and four year old Kindergarten children have extended 7.5yrs sessions with a total of 15hrs of Kindergarten each week. This allows them to have more focused learning experiences, relaxation time, self-help morning tea, group incursions and excursions including Bush Kinder, Library sessions and visiting performances. There are currently a total of 132 children enrolled at the service across long day care and kindergarten. Unfortunately, we are also experiencing high demand for our services which has resulted in waiting lists across the whole of the centre. We are working with the Department of Education to develop and implement strategies to best manage this. The Early Learning Centre is involved in multiple events on the Early Childhood Education calendar. We celebrated Harmony Week, World Autism Day and NAIDOC week, just to highlight a few. We also involve the St Arnaud community and families as much as possible in weekly activities including special persons days, school visits for story-telling and program of both incursions and excursions.





Maternal and Child Health

Mour Maternal and Child Health Service (M&CH) continues to provide critical health, wellbeing and parenting support for all families with children aged 0 - 6 years across the shire. The service is jointly funded by the Victorian Government and council and is free for all families. Births across the shire were slightly higher than the previous year, with 123 birth notifications in 2022-23. The main service provided is the Key Ages and Stages (KAS) appointments for children aged 0 - 6 years, at 10 important developmental stages. In 2022-23, our nurses attended a total of 1,154 KAS appointments including home visits. The service also provides a range of programs and supports for children and families which are offered on a regular basis. These include parenting groups, Sleep and Settling programs, Healthy Eating information, first-time parent groups and specialist support for families who require additional assistance to support their children to get the best start in life.

Supported Playgroups

Supported Playgroups (SPGs) provide opportunities for local families with children aged 0 - 5 to come together to make social connections and learn simple, educational ways to play with their children. Many parents require additional support to help their children achieve their potential health and development. And for some, getting to a community playgroup just isn't possible. Our SPGs focus on sharing healthy food, linking playgroup to other events happening in the community and the wider world, as well as creating play ideas with simple items found at home – making play accessible no matter the economic situation of the family. During 2022-23, we operated a group in Stawell at the Neighbourhood House. This playgroup was very well attended, between 10 to 15 families attending this group on a weekly basis. Our Marnoo playgroup continued to run at the Marnoo Primary School and our at home service continued to support multiple families providing advice about parenting strategies and support services. We recently recruited another supported playgroup facilitator which will enable us to expand the service further across our shire and support even more families. Supported Playgroups are fully funded by the Victorian Government.

Immunisation service

Immunisation is one of the most significant public health interventions, globally and within Australia. Australia's approach is underpinned by the National Immunisation Program (NIP) which is a collaborative initiative involving all levels of government – national, state and territory, and local, as well as healthcare providers, administrators and researchers. In Victoria, immunisation services, except for Covid vaccinations, are a function of Local Government Authorities (LGAs) outlined in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. There are two components of the immunisation program. These are the infant and child program for 0 - 5-year-olds and the adolescent program, conducted in secondary schools for Years 7 and 10 students. During 2022-23, approximately 300 children were vaccinated. This year for the first time the service provided immunisation pop up sessions in January throughout the shire. The sessions were-a success and will continue in 2024. The council also delivers influenza vaccinations for children and staff. In 2022-23, 93 influenza vaccines were administered. Throughout March and April, the Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccine was also offered to the community.



Strategic Planning Land Use Planning



Strategic Growth Area Master Plan

SDuring 2021-22 the council commenced work on the Stawell Growth Area Master Plan. The need to confirm the area for Stawell's long term residential growth was identified in the Stawell Structure Plan 2021.

The Growth Area Master Plan will confirm the location of Stawell's long-term plan, by: Confirming suitability for long term growth (over 50 years of greenfield land supply); Confirming what we know where housing should (and should not) be built; Signaling opportunities and stimulating developer interest.; Creating a consolidated plan and clear staging of development, as opposed to piecemeal development.

Council completed Phase 1 and 2 of the project including:
Site analysis; Updated land supply and demand study; Information Gap assessment.
In 2023-24 the council will complete this work and seek to have in incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

Heritage Planning

Horthern Grampians Shire Council is committed to protecting key heritage assets. Significant historical assets help drive tourism and are key to the stories of our towns and communities. The multi-phase process of protecting heritage assets involves several rounds of evidence gathering and engagement.

The focus in the 2022-23 financial year was to deliver Phase 1, which involved reviewing the Environmental Thematic History chapters. Council worked with a heritage expert and engaged with local historical societies to identify any new and updated evidence, which may have arisen from 2004 onwards. Council acknowledges that there was a lack of information regarding Indigenous cultural history and heritage in the 2004 study. Council sought information from all relevant Aboriginal Land Councils to include in the revised edition. This provided an important opportunity to represent and to celebrate the cultural heritage of the shire.



St Arnaud Framework Plan

In 2022-23 the council continued to work with the community to prepare the St Arnaud Township Framework Plan. This will be a key document used to guide the future growth and development for the township of St Arnaud for the next 20 - 30 years. The St Arnaud Township Framework Plan will be a strategic planning document that sits within the context of a range of other council plans, state government policy, and regional strategies.

Following a comprehensive community engagement process regarding barriers and opportunities (involving 220 responses), the council commissioned specialist reports to better inform what, if any, action is currently needed to address the challenge and opportunities identified by the community including: Bushfire Risk Assessment; Industrial Land Supply and Demand Study; Agricultural Land Quality Assessment; Community Facilities and Open Space Gap Analysis.

Informed by stakeholder engagement and technical inputs, a Draft St Arnaud Township Framework Plan was delivered and the community were invited to comment. Council received 64 responses and amendments were made. The directions and actions contained in the Draft St Arnaud Township Framework Plan considers the unique rural character, the industrial significance, and the key role St Arnaud plays in the broader district. Council will decide on the final St Arnaud Township Framework Plan at the October 2023 Council Meeting.

Sport, Recreation and Open Space

Sport and Active Recreation Strategy

In 2022-23 the council commenced work on the municipal Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2023-33. This work is needed to assess who and how different spaces are used for sport and active recreation and what is needed over the next ten years to support their use. The strategy will help inform future council investment in sport and recreation infrastructure over the next ten years to meet the community's needs for sport and active recreation.

In 2022-23 the council undertook an audit of Northern Grampians Shire Council facilities, critical background research and stakeholder engagement, attracting 42 submissions from the community. In 2023-24, the council will release the draft strategy for comment prior to deciding on the final strategy.

Open Space and Active Transport Strategy

In 2022-23 the council commenced work on the municipal wide Open Space and Active Transport Strategy 2023-33. The strategy will be a ten-year municipal strategic plan and is needed to enable a strategic and outcomes-based approach to investment in the development of open space and active transport infrastructure within the shire. The project will ultimately facilitate positive health and wellbeing outcomes through better participation in open spaces and active modes of transport. In 2022-23 the council undertook an audit of Northern Grampians facilities, critical background research and stakeholder engagement, attracting 158 submissions. In 2023-24 the council will release the draft strategy for comment prior to deciding on the final strategy.





Walkers Lake

Walkers Lake
Recreational water continues to be a significant contributor to the social and economic wellbeing of rural communities. Walkers Lake continues to host many visitors for skiing, fishing, recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment.

The Walkers Lake Advisory Group has supported the delivery of the Walkers Lake Management Action Plan which continues to be delivered. The process also has involved engaging key stakeholders such as the Traditional Owners - Dja Dja Wurrung, VRFish, local Landcare groups and local community members to ensure that the lake continues to provide Recreational, Ecological and Cultural value to visitors and community.

Stawell Skate Park

Stawell Skate Park
Council has worked closely with a Stawell Skate Park working group including many young people and skate park enthusiasts to finalise the design of the skate park facilities. This project was a priority in the council Youth Strategy 2014 - 17 and provided substantial support as well as the Federal Government with funding through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund. Following the completion of the design in July 2022 and progressing to tender in September-October 2022, the council awarded the contract to Precision Skate Parks in December 2022 for construction expected to commence in July 2023.

Lord Nelson Park Sports Lighting Upgrade

Lord Nelson Park Sports Lighting Upgrade
The Lord Nelson Park Sports Lighting forms part of the council's ten-year plan for the Lord Nelson Park St Arnaud Precinct. The now completed upgrade has substantially improved the lux levels to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for Hockey, AFL with new potential for other users. This project has regional significance and the facility was completed in May 2023. It could not have been completed without the support from St Arnaud Harness Racing Club, Harness Racing Victoria and the main beneficiary clubs St Arnaud Football Club and St Arnaud Hockey Club. An official opening ceremony was held on Wednesday 5 July 2023 and was attended by Member for Ripon, Ms Martha Haylett MP.

Navarre Recreation Reserve Facility Upgrade

Navarre Recreation Reserve Facility Upgrade
A funding agreement was signed on 31 October 2022 with the State Government for \$600,000 investment towards the project. With a total budget of \$2.1M the design will progress in late 2023 in anticipation of construction to start in the 2024/25 financial year.

Great Western Recreation Reserve Pavillion Upgrade

Great Western Recreation Reserve Pavillion Upgrade
A funding agreement was signed on 31 October 2022 with the State Government for \$1.5M grant funding for this project. With a total budget of \$2.4M the council awarded the contract for design on 3 April 2023 and anticipates that the project will progress to construction in the later part of 2023. The design process is to commence in July 2023.





Central Park Female Friendly Changerooms Project

This project has been a priority for the council as a part of the Northern Grampians Shire Council 10 Year Capital Program and gained support from the State and Federal Governments. The State Government is providing \$800,000 and Federal Government \$655,000 with council and the community contributions towards this \$2M project. Following tenders closing in April 2023, Council awarded the contract in June 2023 for the construction. This project will be completed by Easter 2024 and will deliver upgraded female friendly changerooms and a lift to the first floor to improve access for all.

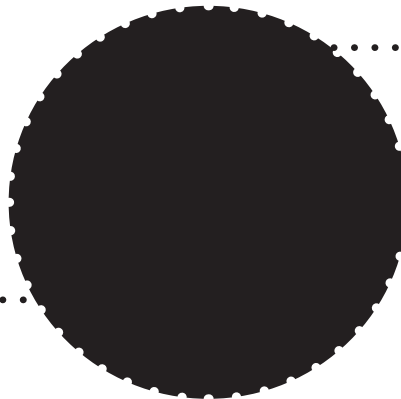
North Park Football Pitch Lighting Project

This project was supported by \$146,000 funding from the State Government, \$257,000 from the Federal Government and the balance from Council and the local soccer club. Following extensive design, development and cost challenges the project commenced construction in July 2023 following council awarding the Contract in June 2023. The now completed upgrade has achieved substantial improvements in the lux levels to provide a safe enjoyable environment for Football (Soccer) and Athletics with new potential for other users. This project has regional significance and the facility was completed in March 2023 and an official opening attended by Ms Jacinta Ermacora MLC Member for Western Victoria held on 30 March 2023.

Community Projects and Events

IDAHOBIT Day 2023 - 17 May

Northern Grampians Shire Council supported schools in the shire to deliver IDAHOBIT day activities in Stawell and St Arnaud. IDAHOBIT is internationally observed as a day to stand against homophobia, biphobia, interphobia and transphobia. Both towns observed a ceremonial rainbow flag raising observed by Councillors and staff.





Arts and Culture Action Plan 2022 - 25

AThe Arts and Culture Action Plan 2022 - 25 is based off the Arts and Culture Strategy which identified the three key themes of Participation, Profile and Place.

Under the Actions identified in the plan the council has:
Engaged with neighboring councils to investigate collaboration opportunities; Funded Arts and Culture projects through our grants programs; Partnered with under represented groups in the community, including the assisting in delivery of Stawell Community Carols; Advocated for and successfully received funding for larger projects such as Gatherings 2023, due for delivery in late 2023; Preparation and planning of Grampians Gatherings 2023 is well underway; Successfully worked with Wimmera Mallee Tourism to have the St Arnaud Silo Art project included on the Silo Trail; Established a new tourism focused media and communications channel where arts and culture related activities and events can also be promoted; Completed delivery of the Remembering Stella Young project.

Remembering Stella Young

R"I am not a snowflake. I am not a sweet, infantilising symbol of fragility and life. I am a strong, fierce, flawed adult woman. I plan to remain that way, in life and in death." Stella Young

The Remembering Stella Young project delivered a statue of Stella Young in her hometown of Stawell to celebrate, commemorate and remember her. The statue was officially unveiled by The Hon. Natalie Hutchins MP. on 30 March 2023. The project was funded by the Victorian Women's Public Art Program through the Office of Women. The artwork commemorates Stella as a contemporary woman who made a significant contribution to Victoria and aims to continue her legacy, to challenge and educate society and its perception of disability, and to strive for "a world where disability is not the exception, but the norm". The project team consisted of a Project Control Group, Project Support Team, Project Advisory Group, Creative Collective and Access Collective. The collectives, who were made up of women with the lived experience of disability, collaborated in the development of the design, site and all interactive elements to make sure it was created in line with Stella's legacy. The project was funded by the Victorian Women's Public Art Program through the Office of Women. The Victorian Women's Public Art Program seeks to address the gender inequity that exists in the arts and acknowledge that "women have played a critical role in the economic, social and cultural development of Victoria". An audit of public figure statues in Victoria found that only 9 out of 580 statues were female.

Stawell Pop Up Park Stella Young Mural

SThe Stawell Pop Up Park Stella Young Mural was undertaken as a part of the Remembering Stella Young Project. The mural was created in collaboration with three senior female students from Skene Street Specialist School.





Supporting Our Community Groups

Council is proud to provide financial contribution and support to the local community and not for profit groups, to enable ideas, initiatives, events and projects to flourish in our shire. Information sessions were provided throughout the year to support groups and organisations to develop their projects, learn about the grants and receive grant writing tips.

Projects that have benefited from council's funding in 2022-23 include: Community Grants (total of \$47,253.73 allocated); Stawell Riding for the Disabled to build safety fencing; Stawell and District U3A to purchase a laptop; Grampians Field and Game to purchase a Clay Target Trap; Stawell RSL to replace tables; Pebble Church Association Incorporated to develop a website; Stuart Mill Racecourse Reserve Riding Club to purchase a shipping container for storage; Stawell Railway Station Gallery Inc to purchase security cameras to prevent graffiti damage; St Arnaud Country Club to develop a Strategic Plan; Stawell Pioneers Soccer Club to purchase sporting equipment; Stawell Warriors Football and Netball Club to develop a Strategic Plan; St Arnaud St Patrick's Primary School to participate in the Energy Breakthrough Challenge 2023.

Arts and Culture Grants: (total amount allocated \$22,126.00)

Great Western Futures Committee is undertaking the project "Recognising Great Western wine history through sculpture" and will create an accessible art installation of wooden sculptures of prominent historical wine individuals displayed in Memorial Park in Great Western; Stawell West Primary School is creating a culturally respectful artwork; Stawell Primary School is delivering a high-quality Music education program to 280 students; Pebble Church Association Incorporated are preparing to host events through their 'Readiness for Arts & Culture Events' project which involves the supply of power and lighting for events; The Stawell Gospel Music Celebration Committee held the Multicultural Gospel Music Show at the Stawell Entertainment Centre.

Minor Grants: (total amount allocated \$5,551.00)

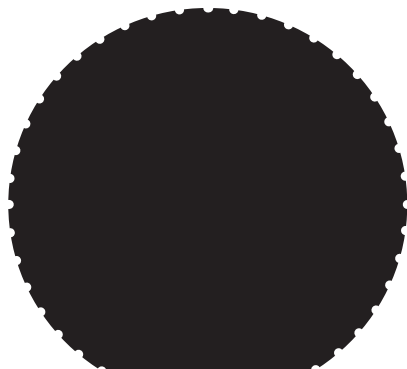
MStawell CWA held the Stawell Christmas Tree Festival at the Stawell Entertainment Centre; St Arnaud Community Kitchen will pay their insurance; Grampians Field and Game purchased uniforms; Stuart Mill Recreation Committee hosted a breakfast at Teddington Reservoir; Kooreh Memorial Hall hosted a Centenary event and purchased a plaque to commemorate its 100 years; Glenorchy Improvement Group purchased tennis court nets for the Glenorchy Tennis Courts; Joel Joel Public Hall purchased new blinds.

Community Events: (total amount allocated \$22,195.00)

CSt Arnaud ArtSpace held two art exhibitions, one at the St Arnaud Town Hall and the Raillery Hub; Concongella Primary School hosted the Concongella Primary School 150th Celebration Event at the school, the Concongella Community Hall and neighboring properties; St Arnaud Lions held their annual Christmas Parade in Napier Street, St Arnaud; Grampians Community Health held the event "Relive The Glory Days - Over 40's Football and Netball Match"; Stuart Mill Progress Association hosted a Community Christmas Party; The Stawell Community Carols committee held the Stawell Community Carols at Cato Park; The Slaty Creek Community hosted a Christmas BBQ; The St Arnaud Young Farmers hosted the St Arnaud Harvest Festival; Glenorchy Memorial Hall Committee Inc hosted the Festival of Small Halls Tour at the Glenorchy Hall.

Sponsorships and Contributions (Total of \$ 18,920.00 allocated)

SFunds from the Sponsorship and Contributions program contributed to:
FStawell Little Athletics for equipment and uniforms; Stawell Racing Club for Race Day sponsorship; Stawell West Primary School Grade 6 Graduation Academic Award; St Arnaud Tennis Club for sponsorship of the National Ranking Tournament; Stawell Primary School for Grade 6 Graduation Sponsorship; Stawell Harness Racing Club for sponsorship/naming rights to a race on Cup Day; St Arnaud Secondary College for Presentation Night Award Ceremony; The Fit to Drive Foundation sponsorship of the F2D Road Safety Workshops in St Arnaud and Stawell for Year 11; Eastern Grampians Tourism Association contribution to the printing of an A2 Tourist Map.





Community Plans

CThe 2021–25 Marnoo Community Action Plan and Navarre Community Planning Strategy continue to be delivered in partnership by council and the community. The plans were developed in consultation with the community and are reviewed annually for relevant actions for the coming financial year.

M^{arnoo}**K**ey initiatives and projects that were actioned included:
A qualified landscape architect was engaged to develop a streetscape design plan for Marnoo. The plans for each of the key areas identified by the community are complete and have been developed collaboratively with the community. The extent of the plan is from the Marnoo Hall to the wetland area in the Main Street.

N^{avarre}**K**ey initiatives and projects that were actioned include:
Installation of a shade sail at Navarre Park was completed in November 2022.

S^{tuart Mill}**T**he draft Stuart Mill Community Plan has been completed. Council worked with the Stuart Mill Progress Association ofr initial consultant then a broader community engagement session at the Stuart Mill Hall.

Carers Recognition Act 2012

Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*. Council has promoted the principles of the Act to people in care relationships who receive council services, people in care relationships and the wider community by:

Undertaking Home Support and home care assessments, including assessing the care and support which carers may need; Holding annual Seniors Day celebration events across the municipality, recognising the important role of carers and providing opportunities for carers to participate; Networking with, and providing information to, organisations that provide services and support to older people and their carers; Advocating for carers’ rights according to the Act in Community Care client newsletters; Council induction and training programs for staff, contractors and volunteers include information about the principles and obligations of the Act.



Data and Information Management

In line with both the council plan goal of ‘improving organisational effectiveness’ and the Business Transformation Strategy 2022-26, this year saw two major transformation projects, partially funded by the Rural Councils Transformation Program, undertaken in collaboration with the Southern Grampians Shire Council and the Borough of Queenscliffe, dominating business transformation services.

These two projects, branded the CORE project, to review and either renew or replace council’s enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, and the Better Records – Together project, to replace the classic ‘lift and shift’ records system with a modern ‘in-place’ records management system leveraging off council’s investment in the Microsoft platform, have seen considerable change across the whole organisation.

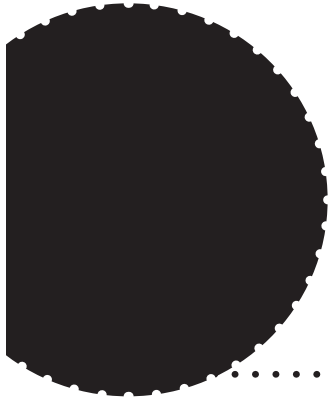
An extensive procurement process undertaken over the first half of the year resulted in the retirement of council’s enterprise resource planning (ERP) system of the last 14 years, being replaced with a suite of modern, integrated technologies.

This project has seen the migration of all of council’s core corporate systems to modern, web-based technologies, supporting improvement in the area of all three of the strategic priorities identified in the Business Transformation Strategy 2022-26, being accessibility, usability, and security. A significant change management and implementation program throughout the second half of the year has seen successful implementation of all new systems by the scheduled go-live date of 1 July, 2023.

Greenlight, the new planning and building software system, is anticipated to significantly improve the experience for customers applying for planning and building permits, with an online portal allowing customers to track the progress of their application in real time. A program of community engagement planned for the coming year will support customers to utilise the new system and benefit from the newly implemented functionality.

Going into the new financial year, phase two of both of these collaborative projects will be to continue to review and improve processes, and develop communities of practice to standardise and align processes further across the partnering councils, allowing for opportunities to share resources and services in the future. Work has been undertaken to develop a strategy to provide a robust framework to ensure that this goal can be achieved.

This year also saw work undertaken to develop an ICT specific business continuity and disaster recovery plan, and work has continued in the development and delivery of council’s Privacy Data Security Plan, in line with the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner’s Victorian Protective Data Security Standards.



Governance Management and Other Information

Governance

The Northern Grampians Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide good governance of its municipal district for the benefit and well-being of the municipal community. Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles:

Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law; Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations; The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted; The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making; Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued; Collaboration with other councils and governments and statutory bodies is to be sought; The ongoing financial viability of the council is to be ensured; Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making; The transparency of council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that council and its administration meet the community's priorities. The community has many opportunities to provide input into council's decision-making processes including community consultation, public forums and the ability to make submissions.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through council meetings. Council delegates the majority of its decision-making to council staff; these delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted council policies.

Council Meetings

Council meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 12.30pm and venues for meetings alternate between Stawell and St Arnaud. Any additional unscheduled meetings or changes to the council meeting timetable are publicised through local media avenues. Meetings are livestreamed, open to members of the community and Public Question Time is a regular feature at council meetings, giving residents the opportunity to ask questions on any council related matter. During 2022-23 there were 15 council meetings and 6 unscheduled council meeting.



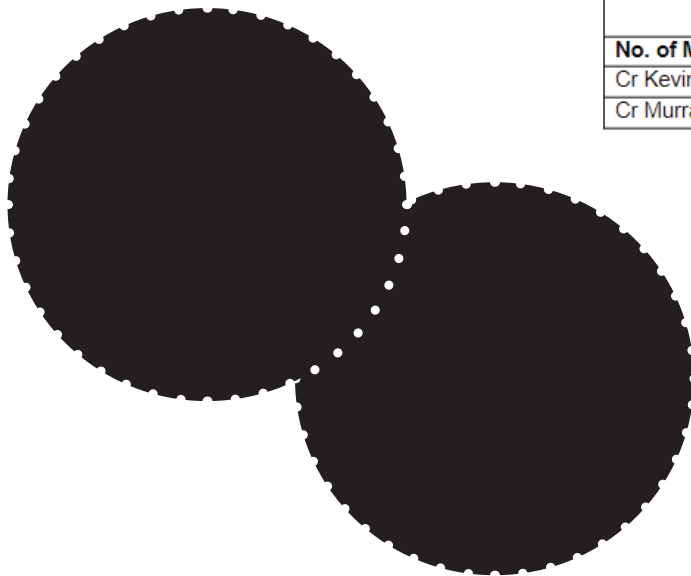
Councillor Briefings

Councillors and administration meet weekly, informally, for the purpose of discussing the business of council. In 2022-23 36 councillor briefings were held.

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The following table provides a summary of councillor attendance at these meetings for 2022-23.

	Council	Unscheduled Council	Briefings
No. of Meetings	15	6	36
Cr Lauren Dempsey	15	6	35
Cr Kevin Erwin	15	6	36
Cr Murray Emerson	15	6	35
Cr Trevor Gready	15	6	36
Cr Rob Haswell	15	6	35
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic	14	4	35
Cr Karen Hyslop (elected 11 November 2022)	6	4	22
Cr Tony Driscoll (vacated 31 July 2022)	1	0	1



	Audit and Risk Committee
No. of Meetings	4
Cr Kevin Erwin	4
Cr Murray Emerson	3

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Conflict of Interest

By its very nature, local government is close to the community and it must be clear that personal or private interests do not affect the way duties for council are performed or compromise the ability to act in the public interest. Councillors are elected by the residents and ratepayers to act in the best interests of the community and that is a position of trust that requires councillors to act in the public interest. When a council delegates its powers to a council officer or a committee, the committee or officer also needs to act in the public interest. The *Local Government Act 2020* defines the circumstances when there may be a conflict of interest and describes the actions that must be taken when a conflict exists. Council's Governance Rules set out the procedures by which conflicts of interest must be declared.

While the procedures vary depending on the particular role and circumstances, in general they involve disclosing the relevant interests in a specific way and then stepping aside from the relevant decision-making process or from the exercise of the public duty. A register is maintained to record all disclosed conflicts of interests. During 2022-23 four conflicts of interest were declared at council meetings and 13 conflicts of interest at informal meetings of councillors.

Councillor Allowances

Mayors and councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as an elected official. On 7 March 2022, in accordance with section 23A of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and *Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)*, the Tribunal made the Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022. The Determination applies to all Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors in all Victorian Councils and takes effect from 18 December 2021. The Determination sets a base allowance for each Council member and Northern Grampians Shire Council remains a Category 1 council.

Base allowance (\$ per annum)

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
Mayors	\$74,706	\$96,470	\$119,316	\$238,634
Deputy Mayors	\$37,353	\$48,235	\$59,659	\$119,317
Councillors	\$24,080	\$30,024	\$35,972	\$53,957

As at 30 June 2023.

The Determination provides for further scheduled annual increases to allowance values until 18 December 2025. The next increase will take effect 1 July 2023, with another scheduled on 18 December 2023. Councillors are also entitled to a Remote Area Travel Allowance.

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The Tribunal determined to:

Set a remote area travel allowance for a council member who normally resides more than 50km by the shortest practicable road distance from the location or locations specified for the conduct of ordinary, special or committee meetings of the council, or any municipal or community functions which have been authorised by council resolution for the council member to attend; Set the remote area travel allowance at \$45 for each day on which one or more meetings or authorised functions were attended by the council member up to a maximum of \$5,625 per annum.

Councillor Expenses

Councillors and delegated committee members are to be supported in undertaking their duties by assuring that reimbursement of expenses and access to resources and support are provided in an equitable manner to cater for their full participation in council business, while also recognising individual needs and circumstances. In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council’s Council Expenses Policy provides guidance on the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses and provision of support for councillors and members of delegated committees of council to enable them to perform their duties and to ensure that they are not financially or otherwise disadvantaged in undertaking their official council duties. Guidance is also included on entitlements, the process for reimbursement and reporting requirements.

The following table contains a summary of the allowances and expenses paid to each councillor during the year:

Councillors	Allowance \$	Remote Area Travel Allowance \$	Travel Reimbursement	Council paid expenses directly \$	Total \$
Cr Lauren Dempsey	25,185.55	177.00	333.44	11,386.49	37,082.48
Cr Kevin Erwin	63,175.91	221.00	0.00	20,240.71	83,637.62
Cr Murray Emerson	36,649.16	266.00	0.00	3,554.69	40,469.85
Cr Trevor Gready	25,168.70	177.00	0.00	1,815.30	27,161.00
Cr Rob Haswell	25,168.70	221.00	0.00	181.92	25,571.62
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD	25,168.70	177.00	0.00	2,065.85	28,341.55
Cr Karen Hyslop (elected 11 November 2022)	18,269.91	89.00	0.00	8,670.81	27,029.72
Cr Tony Driscoll (vacated 31 July 2022)	6,533.50	44.00	0.00	13.40	6,590.90
Total	225,320.13	2,302.00	333.44	47,929.17	275,884.75

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* require councils to detail councillor expenses in their Annual Reports in five distinct categories and the above summary of Council paid expenses amounting to \$47,929.17 is detailed below into these categories:

Councillors	Travel Expenses	Expenses to support the performance of the role		Professional development expenses
	Travel Expenses	Car Mileage	Information & Communication Technology	Conference & Training Expenses
Cr Kevin Erwin (Mayor November 2022 -)	0.00	19,305.29	178.16	757.26
Cr Murray Emerson (Mayor August 2022 – November 2022)	0.00	1,337.20	1,033.18	1,184.31
Cr Lauren Dempsey	0.00	630.61	0.00	10,755.88
Cr Trevor Gready	0.00	553.09	0.00	1,262.21
Cr Rob Haswell	0.00	0.00	178.16	3.76
Cr Eddy Ostarcevic PhD	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,065.85
Cr Karen Hyslop (elected 11 November 2022)	0.00	328.05	0.00	8,342.76
Cr Tony Driscoll (vacated 31 July 2022)	0.00	0.00	13.40	0.00
Total	0.00	22,154.24	1,402.90	24,372.03



Management

Council has implemented a number of statutory and better practice items to strengthen its management framework. Having strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by council. Council's Governance and Management Checklist results are set out in the section below.

Audit and Risk Committee

Council must establish an Audit and Risk Committee, an independent advisory committee to council, established to:

Monitor the compliance of council policies and procedures with overarching governance principles and relevant legislation; Monitor council financial and performance reporting; Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls. A Committee Charter sets out the appropriate authority, composition, meeting requirements and responsibilities of the committee to ensure good practice and compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and is supported by council's Audit Committee Guidelines. The Audit and Risk Committee consists of three independent members and two councillors. Sitting independent members are Mr Peter Knights (Chair), Mr Tony Roberts and Mrs Lynn Jenz. Independent members are appointed for a three year term with the appointment of each staggered to ensure that only one new appointment is made in any one year. The Audit and Risk Committee meets at least four times a year and has authority to convene additional meetings, as circumstances require.

The Chair is paid an annual allowance of \$2,544 and the independent members a remuneration of \$255 per meeting attended.

Audit and Risk Committee Independent Members	Remuneration
Mr Peter Knights	\$2,544.00
Mr Tony Roberts	\$0.00 (Donates time)
Mrs Lynn Jenz	\$765.00
Total	\$3,309.00

Records Management

Council has particular responsibilities under the *Public Records Act 1973* and has a current Records Management Policy which establishes a council wide consistency in the management of records and a framework for the creation, capture, access, management, storage and disposal of records of all agency functions, irrespective of format, within the council. Council also has a current Records Digitisation Policy which establishes a framework for the conversion of hard copy documents (source records) to digital format and the subsequent disposal of the source records. It is mandatory for all Victorian government agencies that are digitising physical records with the view to disposing of the physical source records to comply with Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) Digitisation Specifications. In 2023 work commenced work to implement a new records management system that will see council replace its Electronic Document Records Management System with management of records 'in place' directly in Microsoft M365 Teams. This project is being undertaken in partnership with Southern Grampians, West Wimmera and the Borough of Queenscliffe Councils providing procurement savings and group purchasing power and the opportunity to create a platform of similar systems and process that can enable shared services into the future. Each council was successful in obtaining Regional Council Transformation Program (RCTP) Round 2 grant funding towards this project.

Organisational Risk Management

Council has focused on risk assurance and mitigating high risk areas throughout the year. An audit plan has been developed to capture these assurance activities and ensure recommendations on risk mitigation improvements are monitored to completion. Some areas of identified high risk include:

Procurement and contract management (gap analysis audit undertaken); Climate Change Adaption Planning (inclusion in Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Asset Management Plan); Cemetery Trust legislative compliance (resource allocated to undertake review); *Native Title and Aboriginal Heritage Act* compliance (training undertaken for relevant staff); *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* compliance (training undertaken for relevant staff); Cyber security (maturity assessment undertaken); Occupational Health and Safety (arrangements made to undertake system compliance audit in 2023-24); *Environmental Protection Act* – general environmental duty (arrangements made to undertake gap analysis audit in 2023-24).

These initiatives were conducted alongside the council's regular annual audit program which includes areas such as financial reporting, pool safety assessments and aged care quality standards.



Information publicly available under the *Local Government Act 2020* or any other Act

Council is required to provide in its Annual Report a summary of the information which is publicly available for the purposes of the council's Public Transparency Policy and the ways in which that information can be accessed by members of the municipal community.

The following documents are made available for public inspection in a number of formats including the council's website. On the website there is a list of all documents council makes available including public registers; alternatively by contacting the council's Governance Team on 03 5358 8700. All documents for which council has a legislative requirement to make available to the public are also listed in the council's FOI Part II Statement on our website.

No	Act / Section	Description	Manner
Building Act 1993			
1.	s 11(2)	Notice of the fact that a regulation under Part has ceased to have effect in the municipal district or part of it	Newspaper circulating in municipal district
2.	s 31	Register of building permits	Available for inspection by any person during normal office hours
3.	s 74	Register of occupancy permits and temporary approvals/amendments	Available for inspection by any person during normal office hours
4.	s 126	Register of emergency orders, building notices or building orders	Available for inspection by any person during normal office hours
5.	s 192A(8)	Copy of the most recent map given to council under subsection (7)	Available for inspection at the council's office during office hours free of charge
6.	s 230	Register of exercise of powers of entry	Made available for inspection by the Authority on request
Building Regulations 2018			
7.	r 50	Copy of any documents submitted with an application for a building permit	On request of an owner/mortgagee of the building/land or person authorised in writing by such person
8.	rr 51 & 52	Certain information on request	On request and payment of a fee
9.	r 149(4)	Copy of each designated special area map applicable	Available for public inspection at the council office during office hours free of charge
Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994			
10.	s 22I(1)	Approved roadside weed and pest animal management plan	Copy made available for inspection at council's office during normal office hours at and published on website as soon as practicable after the plan is approved
11.	s 22M(1)	Consolidated version of approved roadside weed and pest animal management plan	Copy made available for inspection at council's office during normal office hours at and published on website as soon as practicable after the plan is approved
Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003			
12.	ss 60(1) and 70(2)	Council as a Cemetery Trustee has a duty to make information in records available to the public for historical or research purposes and plans of existing place of interment available to the public.	Available for public inspection
Country Fire Authority Act 1958			
13.	s 50E(4)	Municipal Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan	Make available at Council's office for public inspection and website

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Development Victoria Act 2003			
14.	s 56E(3)	Register of Certificate	Made available for inspection by Development Australia or any other interested person
Domestic Animals Act 1994			
15.	s 10A(3)(a)	Resolution made by council under s 10A	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district
16.	s 10C(5)	Resolution made by council under s 10C	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district
17.	s 10D(6)	Resolution made by council under s 10D	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district
18.	s 18	Register of all registered dogs and cats	Made available for inspection at the council's office
19.	s 25(3)	Orders made by council under s 25(3)	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district
20.	s 26(3)	Orders made by council under s 26(3)	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district
21.	s 68A(3)	Publish an evaluation of its implementation of the domestic animal management plan	Annual Report
Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020			
22.	r 10(6)	Electrical Line Clearance Management Plan	Available on website
Emergency Management Act 2013			
23	s 60AI(ab)	(Municipal) Emergency Management Plan	Published on Council's internet site
Filming Approvals Act 2014			
24.	Sch 1	Film permits issued and any other relevant	Made available on council's website
Food Act 1984			
25.	s 7E(6)	Direction by the Minister	Annual Report
26.	s 19	Order made relating to food premises	Made available by notice published in a newspaper or by any means
27.	s 19U(4)	The method of determining the reasonable costs of an audit payable under subsection (2) and the criteria fixed under subsection (3)	Available for public inspection
28.	s 19UA(5)	The method of determining a fee under subsection (3)(a) and the considerations that apply under subsection (4)	Available for public inspection
29.	s 43	Records of registrations, renewals and transfers in relation to a particular food premises, including details of any relevant orders	Available free of charge on request
Freedom of Information Act 1982			
30.	Part II	Information concerning functions etc and documents available for inspection and purchase	In the Annual Report (can be website)
Gender Equality Act 2020			
31.	s 12(3)(a)	Gender Equality Action Plan	Made available on council's website
32.	s 13(3)	A report or other document taken to be a Gender Equality Action Plan	Made available on council's website
33.	s 15(2)(B)	Amended Gender Equality Action Plan	Made available on council's website
34.	s 20	Progress Report	Made available on council's website

Infringements Act 2006			
35.	s 9	Enforcement Agency Guidelines and Policies	Council's discretion
Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986			
36.	ss 19 and 23	Notice declaring interest in land to be acquired	Government Gazette and newspaper circulating in municipal district (Copy published in newspaper as soon as practicable after publication in the Government Gazette)
Local Government Act 2020			
37.	s 11(8)	Public register of delegations	Unspecified
38.	s 18(1)(d)	Mayor must report on implementation of the Council Plan	Must report to the municipal community at least once a year
39.	s 41(1)	Expenses policy in relation to reimbursement of <u>out of pocket</u> expenses	Unspecified
40.	s 45 (4)	CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy	Unspecified
41.	s 47(7)	Register of CEO's delegations	Unspecified
42.	s 48	Recruitment policy for members of council staff	Unspecified
43.	s 49	Code of Conduct for members of council staff	Unspecified
44.	s 57	Public Transparency Policy	Unspecified
45.	s 60	Governance Rules	Unspecified
46.	s 63	Terms of Reference to Delegated Committee	Unspecified
47.	s 64	Terms of Reference to Joint Delegated Committee	Unspecified
48.	s 65	Terms of Reference to Community Asset Committee	Unspecified
49.	s 66(5)	Must record in the minutes reasons for closing a meeting	Minutes made available for public inspection
50.	s 73	Proposing a local law	Made available for inspection at council's office and website (Publish notice of proposed local law until made or altered)
51.	s 74(4)	Making a local law	Copy made available for inspection at council's offices and website
65.	s 114(2)	Selling or exchanging land	Publish notice 4 weeks prior to leasing on website and in any other manner prescribed by the regulations

65.	s 114(2)	Selling or exchanging land	Publish notice 4 weeks prior to leasing on website and in any other manner prescribed by the regulations
66.	s 115	Lease of land	Unspecified (If lease not included in budget, must engage community engagement process in accordance with community engagement policy)
67.	s 130(2)	Register of disclosure of conflicts of interest at meetings	Unspecified (In accordance with Governance Rules)
68.	s 135(3)	Summary of personal interest returns	Made available for inspection at council's office and website
69.	s 138	Councillor Gift Policy	Unspecified
70.	s 139	Councillor Code of Conduct	Unspecified
71.	ss 307 and 308	Summary of each election campaign donation return Copy of election campaign donation return	Summary made available on council's website until the close of the roll for the next election Copy made available for inspection at council's office for 4 years
Local Government Act 1989			
72.	s 157(2)	Notice of change to valuation system	Publish public notice – can be via website as per definition
73.	s 161(3)	Differential rates	Made available for inspection at council's office and website
74.	s 163(1B)	Special rate and special charge – public notice	Available for public inspection at the council office for at least 28 days after the publication of the notice
75.	s 223(1)(a)	Right to make a submission	Publish public notice – can be via website as per definition
76.	s 224(1A)	Register of Authorised Officers	Unspecified
78.	Sch 10 Cl 2(3)	Deviation of roads – publish notice	Government Gazette
79.	Sch 10 Cl 8(3)	Narrow or widen roads – publish notice	Government Gazette
Planning and Environment Act 1987			
<p>For the purposes of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> council makes a document available in accordance with the <i>public availability requirements</i> in s.197A if council makes the document or register available-</p> <p>a. In person at council offices during office hours b. Both electronically s.197E; and c. On request to inspect at council offices during office hours.197D</p> <p>A document or register made available in accordance with the requirements set out in this section must be made available free of charge unless otherwise provided by this Act.</p>			
80.	s 4H(1) and (2)	Copy of approved amendment	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements during the inspection period for 2 months after the amendment comes into operation (inspection period) Made available for in person inspection (s 197B) after the inspection period on payment of the prescribed fee
81.	s 4I	Copy of the Victoria Planning Provisions incorporating all amendments to them and of all documents lodged with those amendments	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
82.	s 18	Amendment, the explanatory report, any document applied, adopted or incorporated in the amendment and any accompanying agreement	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements until the amendment is approved or lapses

83.	s 21	Copy of every submission	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements until the end of two months after the amendment comes into operation or lapses Made available for in person inspection free of charge at council's office during office hours
84.	s 26	Panel hearing reports	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements during the inspection period – until the end of two months after the amendment comes into operation or lapses Made available in person (s 197B) any time after receiving the panel's report
85.	s 41(1) and (2)	Copy of approved amendment lodged under s 40 and any documents lodged with it	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements for 2 months after the amendment comes into operation and after that period on payment of the prescribed fee (inspection period) Made available for in person inspection (s 197B) after the inspection period on payment of the prescribed fee
86.	s 42	Copy of the planning scheme incorporating all amendments to it and of all documents lodged with those amendments	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
87.	s 49	Register of all applications for planning permits and decisions/determinations relating to permits	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
88.	s 51	Copy of every application and the prescribed information supplied in respect of it	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements until: (a) The end of the latest period during which an application for review may be made under ss 77, 79, 80 or 82 in relation to the application or the permit; or (b) If an application for review is made to VCAT within that period, the application is determined by VCAT or withdrawn
89.	s 56A	Register of applications referred to council (as referral authority)	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
90.	s 57(5)	Copy of objection to planning permit	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements until the end of the period during which an application may be made for review of a decision on the application
91.	s 70	Copy of every permit issued	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
92.	s 96C(8A)	Copy of proposed permit when amendment to a planning scheme requested	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
93.	s 97G(6)	Copy of every permit issued under s 97F	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements
94.	s 179	Copy of agreement	Made available in accordance with the public availability requirements

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008			
95.	s 26(7)	Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (unless s 27 applies)	Made available for inspection at the places at which the current Council Plan is available
Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012			
96.	s 59(4)	Procedures	Unspecified
97.	s 91ZZE(3)	Criteria for eligibility for the provision of housing if relevant	By notice published in the Government Gazette
Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations 2020			
98.	r 17	Register of caravan parks	Unspecified <i>Suggestion publication</i>
Road Management Act 2004			
99.	s 19	Register of public roads	Available for inspection by any person during normal office hours at a place or premises determined by council
100.	s 22(4)	Copy of summary of Ministerial direction	Annual Report
101.	s 54	Procedure for making or amending a road management plan	By notice published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the roads to which the road management plan applies are situated
102.	s 55	Availability of road management plan	By notice published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the road management plan is to apply are situated
103.	s 86	Register of exercise of powers of entry	Unspecified <i>Suggested publication</i>
104.	Sch 2 Cl 5(1)	Notice of the making, amending or revoking of a declaration made under s.42	Government Gazette
Road Management (General) Regulations 2016			
105.	r 9(2)	Written report of review of road management plan	Available for public inspection at council offices during office hours and on website
106.	r 9(4)	A notice under r 9(3) that review of road management plan completed and notice under r 10 is not required	Published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the roads to which the road management plan applies are situated
107.	r 10(2)	A notice to amend a road management plan that relates to the determination of a standard of construction, inspection, maintenance or repair under s 41 of the Act	Published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the roads to which the road management plan applies are situated
108.	r 13	Availability of amendments to road management plans	Published in the Government Gazette and in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the roads to which the amended road management plan is to apply are situated
Sex Work Act 1994			
109.	s 81(1)(a)	Notice of the making of the declaration made under s 80	Published on two days in a newspaper generally circulating in the area in which the premises is situated
Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2021			
110	r 33(4)	Register of subdivision permits	Available during office hours for any person to inspect free of charge
Water Act 1989			
111.	s 32H	Copy of approved management plan	Available for public inspection at the Council office during office hours free of charge

Contracts

In accordance with section 10(d)(i) of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the following table is a list of contracts entered into by council valued above the contract value at which the council must invite a tender or seek an expression of interest under its Procurement Policy (i.e. \$150,000 for goods and services, \$200,000 for works):

Contract description	Contractor
Stawell Skate Park	Precision Skate Parks Pty Ltd
Plant Replacement Program	Midland Pty Ltd
Asphalting Works Queen St St. Arnaud	Centre State Asphalting
LNP Sports Oval Lighting Upgrade	De'Araugo & Lea Electrical Contractors

In accordance with section 10(d)(ii) of the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the council did not enter any contracts valued above the contract value at which the council must engage a competitive process under its Procurement Policy but for which the council did not invite a tender or seek an expression of interest and which did not meet the conditions for the council to purchase goods or services without inviting a public tender or seeking an expression of interest.

Freedom of Information

In accordance with section 7(4AA)(a) and 7(4AA)(b) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* the council is required to publish certain statements in its annual report.

The *Freedom Of Information Act 1982* provides the opportunity for public access to council documents and establishes a legally enforceable right for the community to access information in document form held by council. The officer with authority to make a decision in relation to a request for access to documents under the Act is Mary Scully, Manager Governance. All requests for information must be in writing and require the payment of an application fee. Council received eight requests under the *Freedom Of Information Act 1982* for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. There were no applications for review of a decision made and no disciplinary action taken against any person in respect of the administration of the Act. \$244.80 fees were collected or waived by council. A report of the operation of the Act is prepared each year and a copy of each report is available for public inspection during ordinary business hours at council's Customer Support Centre at the Stawell Town Hall. Publications under Section 7 and 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* are available to the public and can be obtained by contacting the Freedom of Information Officer.

Public interest disclosures

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (the Act) aims to ensure openness and accountability in government by encouraging people to disclose improper conduct within the public sector and provide protection for people who make disclosures.

In accordance with section 69 of the Act a council must include in their Annual Report information about how to access the procedures established by the council under Part 9 of that Act.

Procedures on how to make a disclosure are publicly available on council's website. Council is also required to provide certain information about the number and types of protected disclosures complaints investigated during the financial year. During 2022-23 no disclosures were notified to council officers appointed to receive disclosures, or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC).

Road Management Act Ministerial Direction

In accordance with section 22 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, the council must publish a copy or summary of any ministerial direction in its Annual Report. No such ministerial directions were received by council during the financial year.

Australia Day Awards 2023

In 2023, Northern Grampians Shire marked Australia Day with celebrations in Stawell, St Arnaud, Marnoo and Stuart Mill. All events were well attended and Stawell and St Arnaud had the pleasure of hosting Australia Day ambassadors Neil Soullier OAM and Professor Paul Komesaroff.

Kara Kara Ward

Citizen of the Year – Kyle Torney; Senior Citizen of the Year – Joy Bryce; Young Citizen of the Year - Rogan Hando; Community Event of the Year – St Arnaud Community Kitchen

Stawell, Central and South West Wards

Citizen of the Year – Jess Maffescioni; Local Hero - John Pye; Young Citizen of the Year – Tyler Winberg; Community Event of the Year – Concongella Primary School 150th Celebration

Governance and Management Checklist

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

Governance and Management Items	Assessment	
1. Community engagement policy (policy under section 55 of the Act outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption: 1 March 2021	✓
2. Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Date of commencement of current guidelines: 1 March 2021	✓
3. Financial Plan (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act. Date of adoption: 25 October 2021	✓
4. Asset Plan (plan under section 92 of the Act setting out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act. Date of adoption: 5 September 2022	✓

<p>5. Revenue and Rating Plan (plan under section 93 of the Act setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)</p>	<p>Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act. Date of adoption: 23 May 2022</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>6. Annual Budget (plan under s.94 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required)</p>	<p>Adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act. Date of adoption: 26 June 2023</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>7. Risk Policy (policy outlining council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)</p>	<p><i>Risk Management Policy</i> Date of commencement of current policy: 6 May 2019</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>8. Fraud Policy (policy outlining council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)</p>	<p><i>Fraud Prevention Policy</i> Date of commencement of current policy: 6 March 2023</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>9. Municipal emergency management planning (participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee)</p>	<p>Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year Dates of MEMPC meetings attended: 14 September 2022, 8 March 2023</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>10. Procurement Policy (policy under section 108 of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to the purchase of goods and services by the Council)</p>	<p>Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act. Date of adoption: 15 August 2022</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>11. Business continuity plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)</p>	<p><i>Business Continuity Management Plan</i>, currently being reviewed. Date of commencement of current plan: 18 February 2014</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>12. Disaster recovery plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)</p>	<p>Included in the <i>Business Continuity Management Plan</i>. Date of approval: 18 February 2014</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>12A. Complaint policy (policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints)</p>	<p>Developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act Date of commencement of current policy: 5 December 2022</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>12B. Workforce plan (plan under section 46 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning for current and future workforce requirements)</p>	<p><i>Strategic Workforce Plan 2021-25</i> Developed in accordance with section 46 of the Act Date of commencement of current plan: 6 December 2021</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p>12C. Payment of rates and charges hardship policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates)</p>	<p><i>Personal Financial Hardship Policy</i> Date of commencement of current policy: 1 June 2017</p>	<p>✓</p>
<p></p>	<p><i>COVID –19 Financial Support and Hardship Policy</i> Date of commencement of current policy: 28 June 2021</p>	<p>✓</p>

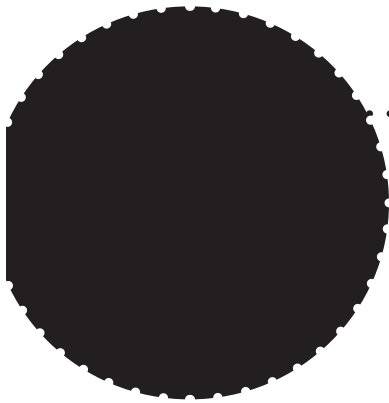
64.

<p>13. Risk Management Framework (framework outlining council's approach to managing risks to the council's operations)</p>	<p><i>Risk Management Framework</i></p> <p>Date of commencement of current framework: 13 June 2023</p>	✓
<p>14. Audit and Risk Committee (see sections 53 and 54 of the Act)</p>	<p>Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act.</p> <p>Date of establishment: Scheduled for 15 August 2022</p>	✓
<p>15. Internal audit (independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)</p>	<p>Internal audit projects are selected from items identified within the council's Risk Register and appropriately qualified persons/organisations engaged to undertake the audit. Accounting professionals are employed when the project is relevant to their skill set.</p>	✓
<p>16. Performance reporting framework (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)</p>	<p><i>Performance Reporting Procedure</i></p> <p>Date of adoption by Senior Leadership Team: 25 August 2015</p>	✓
<p>17. Council Plan report (report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first 6 months of the financial year)</p>	<p><i>Council Action Plan Report</i> provides the key actions that Northern Grampians Shire Council will deliver over the next 12 months to accomplish the strategic objectives set out in the Council Plan. Revised Council Plan 2021-25 was adopted by Council on 27 June 2022. CAMMS software is populated to track the Council Plan objectives, strategies and actions for 2021-25.</p> <p>Date of report: 27 June 2022</p>	✓
<p>18. Quarterly budget reports (quarterly reports to the Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)</p>	<p>Reports presented to council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act</p> <p>Dates reports presented: 5 September 2022, 5 December 2022, 6 March 2023, 5 June 2023</p>	✓
<p>19. Risk reports (monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)</p>	<p>Risk reporting is understood to be an important area for Local Government. The Audit & Risk Committee monitors strategic and operational risks and reports to the Executive Leadership Team monthly and to each Audit & Risk Committee meeting to provide the opportunity to comment on Council's direction and operational management of risk.</p> <p>Dates of reports: 14 September 2022, 14 December 2022, 8 March 2022, 14 June 2023</p>	✓
<p>20. Performance reports (six month reports of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)</p>	<p>Performance reporting legislation progress report provided to council for the six months ended 31 December 2018.</p> <p>Date of reports: 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2018 reported to council 9 April 2018</p>	✓
<p>21. Annual Report (annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)</p>	<p>Presented at a meeting of the Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act.</p> <p>Date statements scheduled to be presented: 25 September 2023 23 October 2023</p>	✓

22. Councillor Code of Conduct (code under section 139 of the Act setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters).	Reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act. Date reviewed and adopted: 1 February 2021	✓
23. Delegations (documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act)	Reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act. Date of review under section 11(7): 6 March 2023	✓
24. Meeting procedures (Governance Rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act Date Governance Rules adopted: 15 August 2022	✓

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

Brent McAlister Chief Executive Officer Dated: 30 June 2023	Cr Kevin Erwin Mayor Dated: 30 June 2023
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Environment and Community Safety Initiatives

Domestic Animal Management Plan

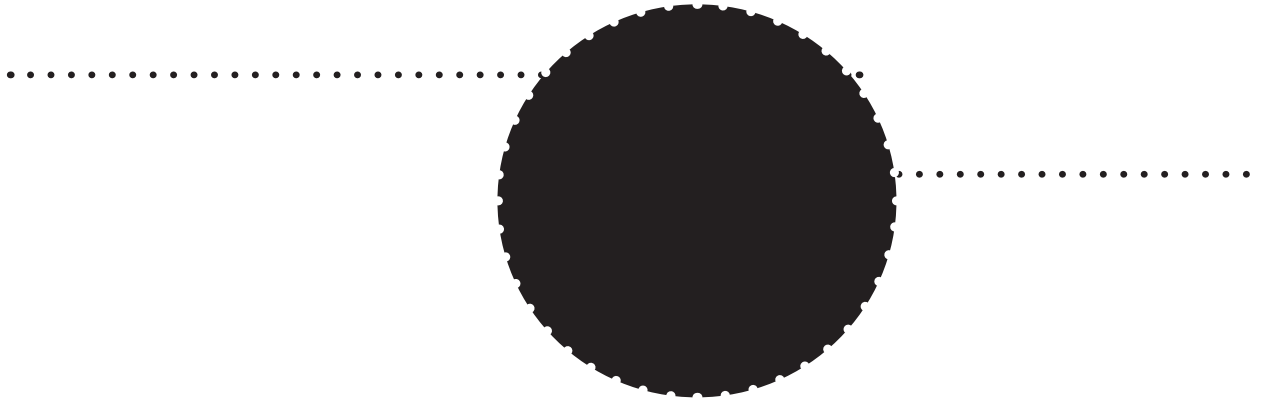
Din accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan at four yearly intervals and evaluate its implementation in the annual report. Council adopted the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-25 on 8 November 2021. The purpose of the DAMP is to:

Document current processes and practices under NGSC animal management responsibilities; Increase compliance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*; Increase pet owners' knowledge of the principles of responsible pet ownership; Enhance community safety and awareness; Assist the Bureau of Animal Welfare (AgVic) to achieve its stated objectives of reducing the numbers of dogs and cats being euthanised. This is an ongoing problem which the council is constantly trying to address; Maximise the numbers of dogs and cats that are registered in the NGSC municipality; Take community views on animal management matters into account; Comply with the relevant provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Areas of success from the 2021-25 DAMP

Aofficers attended a range of training including Annual Animal Management Officer training, dog and cat bite training, aggressive persons training and POCTA training; Over 90% of animal registrations renewed with all outstanding and known unregistered animals being followed up by way of a Notice to Comply; Increased number of feral cats trapped across the shire; Dogs off leash in recreational open spaces was targeted - planned patrols of "hot spots" provided an opportunity to educate the community on legislative requirements for dogs in public spaces; the council's *General Local Law* was reviewed with dog control laws being removed with the council resolving to make an order specifying where dogs can be walked off leash; Local social media pages monitored for awareness of current animal issues; Relationships developed and improved with St Arnaud Vet and Victoria Police to assist the community with animals after hours; St Arnaud pound reopened as a temporary holding facility to ensure dogs can be secured whilst officers are unavailable.





Service Improvements

Souncil have commenced an upgrade of the Stawell Pound to meet compliance under the Code of Practice for Pounds and Shelters and to increase capacity in times of an emergency. Further improvements and additions will be implemented throughout 2022-23 in order to provide suitable isolation areas, cat housing and enrichment spaces in accordance with the Code of Practice requirements.

A targeted and proactive approach was implemented in the St Arnaud area to reduce the number of feral cats in that location, resulting in a large number of feral cats being trapped. St Arnaud Veterinary clinic was also engaged to assist the council with treatment, rehoming and euthanising animals from the St Arnaud area.

Council has also re-opened the old St Arnaud pound to be used as a temporary holding facility for dogs when officers are not able to attend St Arnaud in a reasonable time, including after hours. Council is also working with Victoria Police and the local vet to ensure assistance can be provided whilst officers are unavailable.

Food Act Ministerial Directions

Fin accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, council is required to publish a summary of any ministerial directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, council is required to publish a summary of any ministerial directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received during the financial year.



Financial Sustainability Initiatives



Keeping Financials In Check

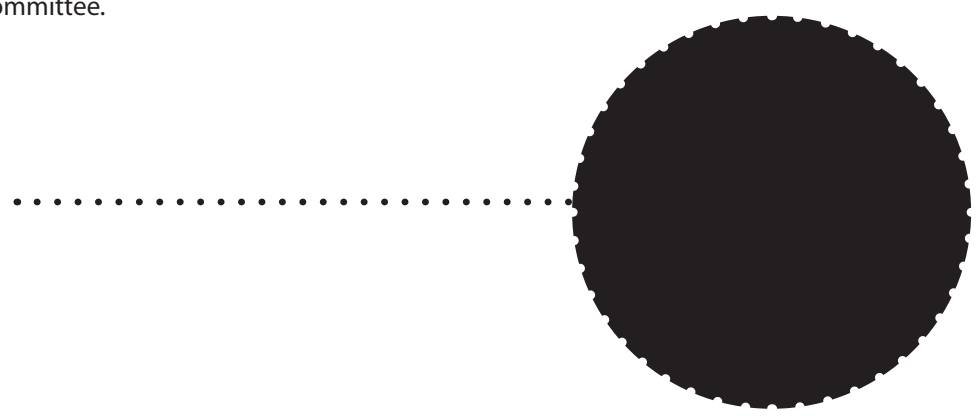
Council continues to meet its reporting and accountability requirements. The Audit and Risk Committee, consisting of two councillors and three external representatives, meet four times each financial year as set out in the Audit and Risk Committee Charter. The committee's role is to focus on identified risks to the organisation, risk management, financial and governance responsibilities and to review processes to provide assurance regarding the council's performance. Work towards long term sustainability is ongoing. Council maintains a 10 year Financial Plan which provides the context for resource allocation decisions and is the base of each year's budget.

Internal Audit

The internal audit function is designed to provide independent and objective assurance that the appropriate processes and controls are in place across council. Internal audit projects are selected from items deemed to be of inherently high risk and appropriately qualified persons/organisations are engaged to undertake the audit. Third party audits and inspections by WorkSafe are reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee and progress on addressing any issues raised is monitored. Council completed a review of the internal audit function during the 2022-23 year and has a work plan in place for the 2023-24 year.

External Audit

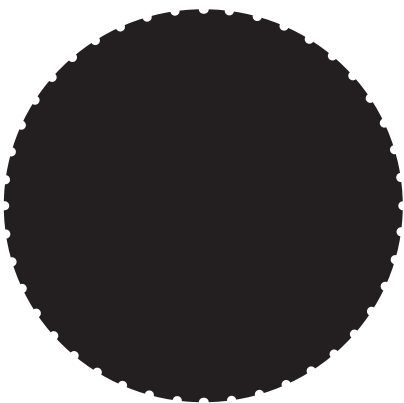
Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General. For the 2022-23 year the annual external audit of the council's Financial Statements and Performance Statement was conducted by the Victorian Auditor-General's representative. The external auditors attend the September Audit and Risk Committee meeting to present the annual Independent Audit Report. The external audit management letter and responses are also provided to the Audit and Risk Committee.

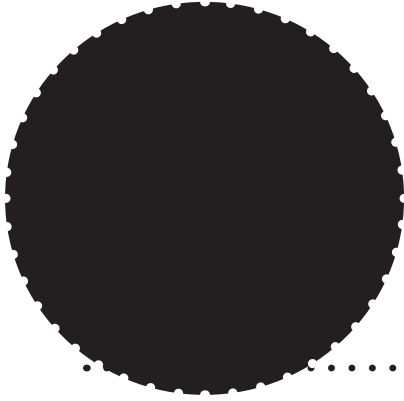




Report of Operations

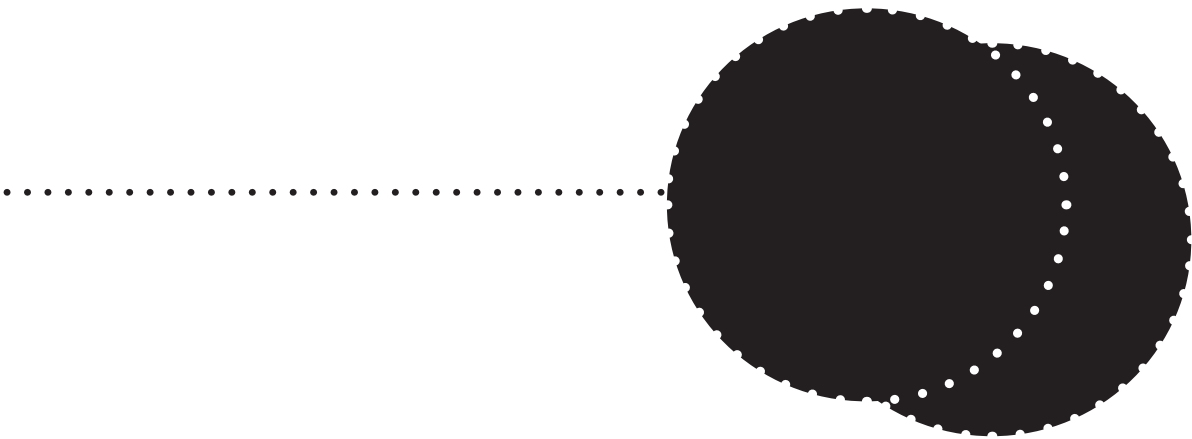
Financial Statements



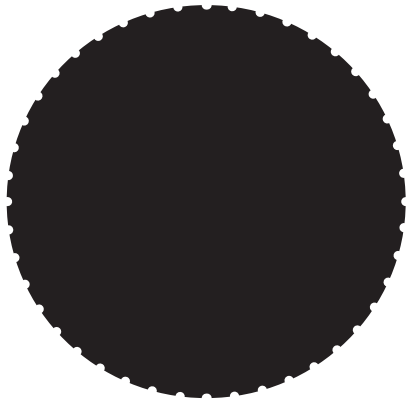


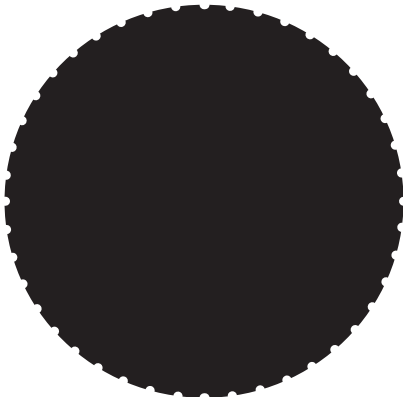
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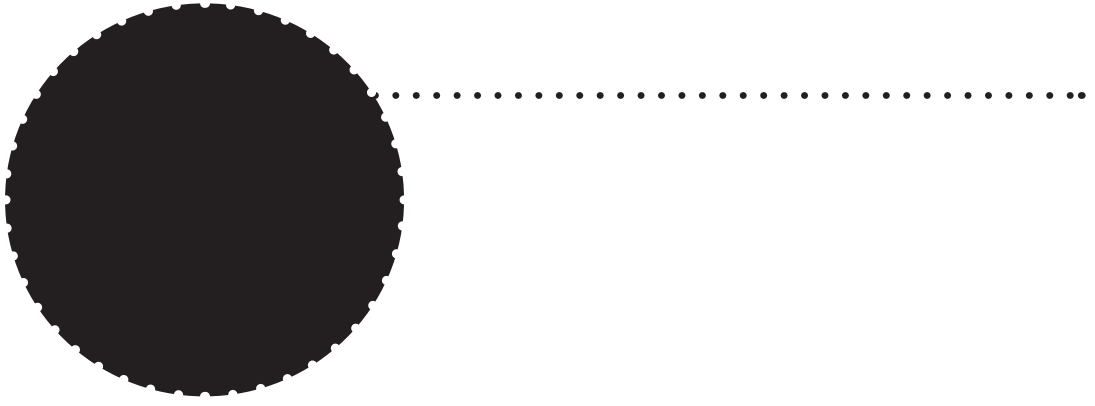
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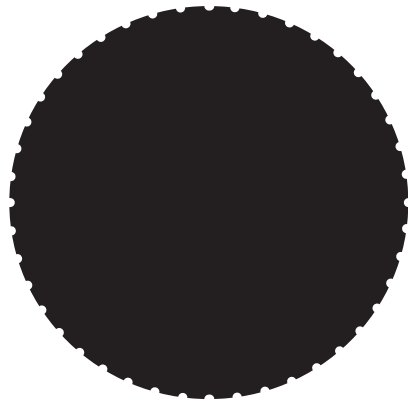


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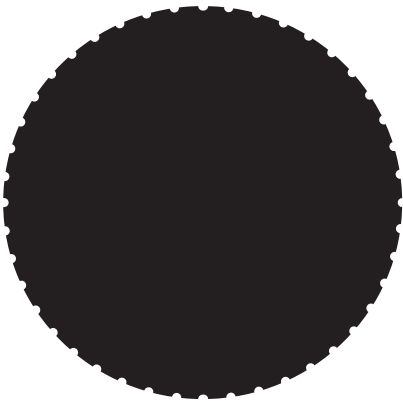


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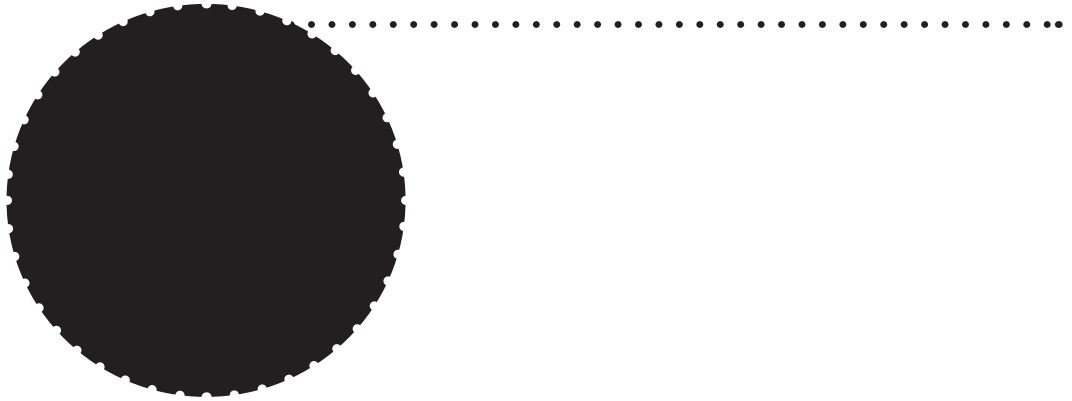
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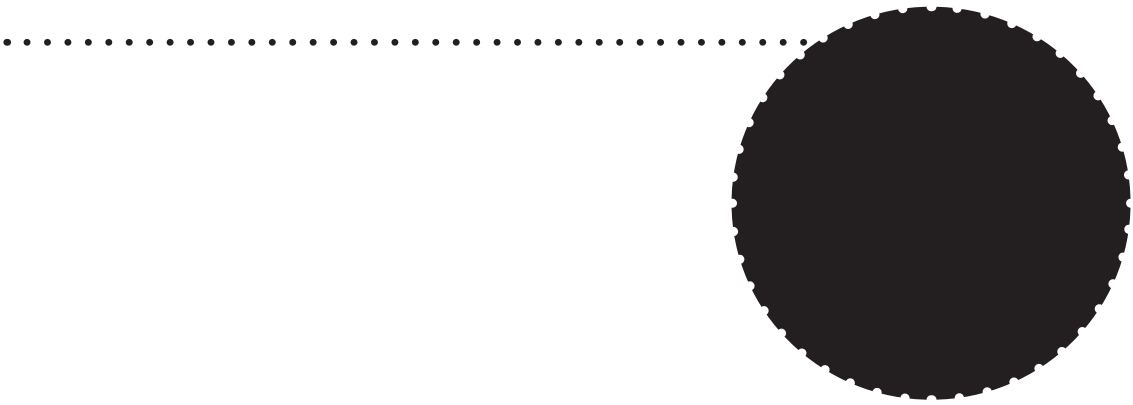






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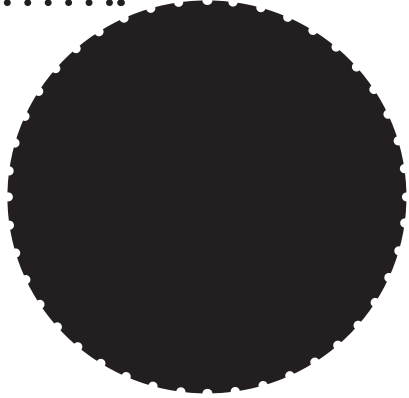
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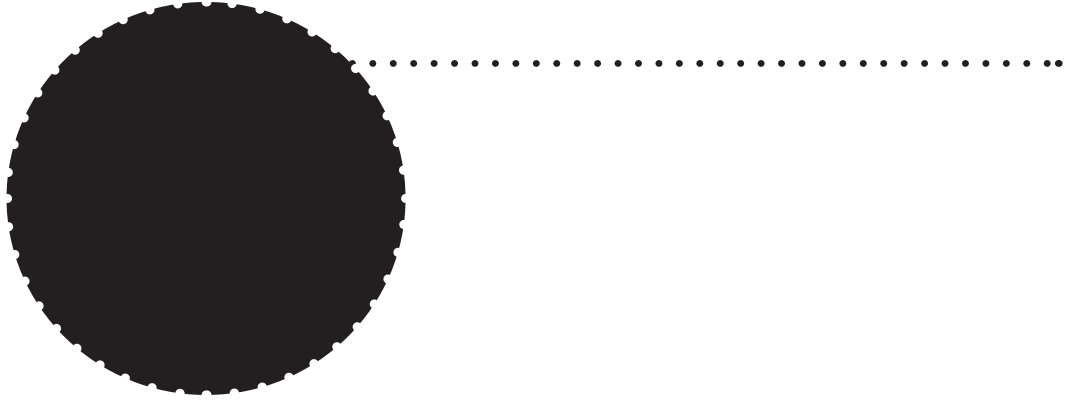


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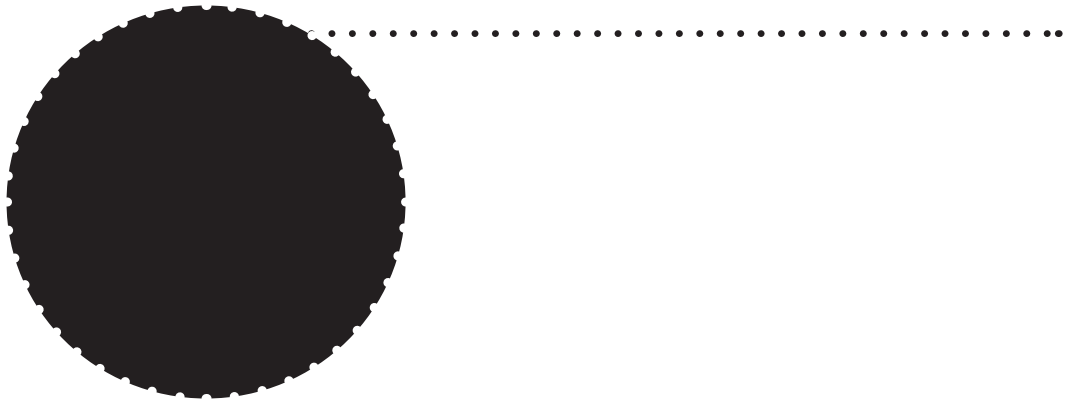


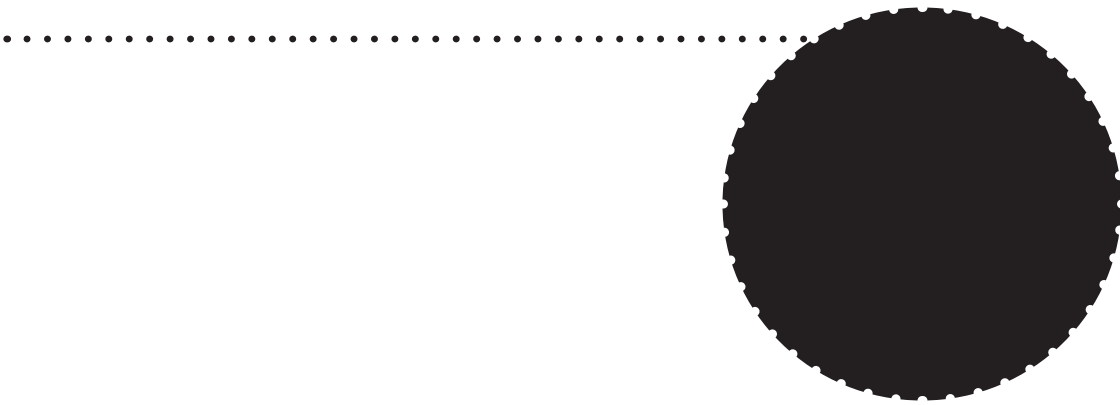
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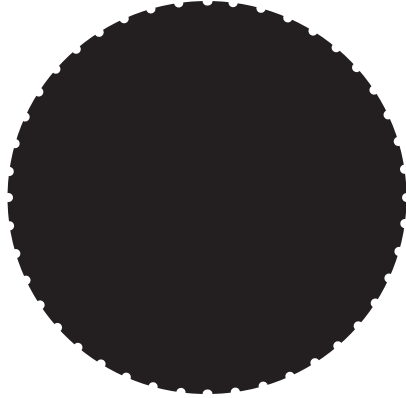
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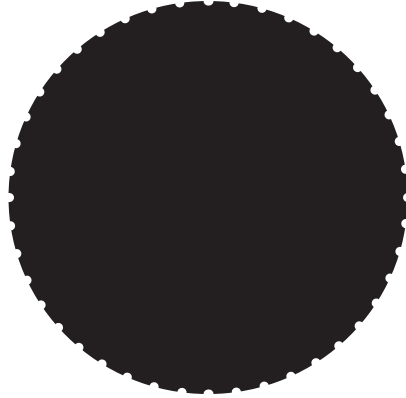


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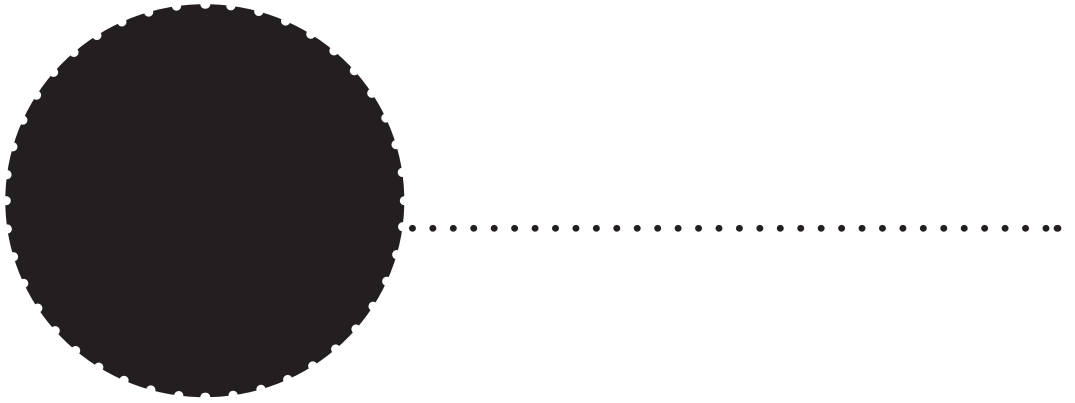
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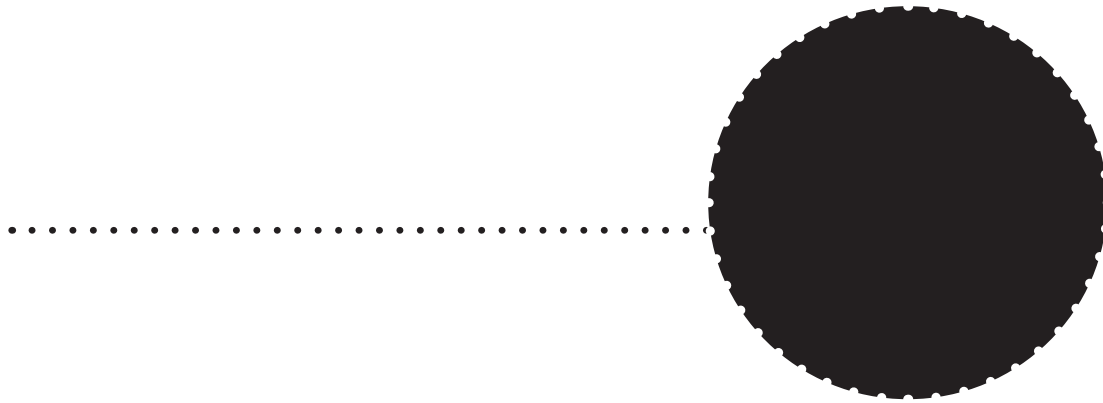


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3.2. Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Activity Report

Author/Position: **Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services**

Purpose

To table the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Activity Report as per the requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Summary

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Audit and Risk Committee must prepare a biannual report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee, and also undertake an annual assessment of its performance.

Copies of these reports are provided to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

The biannual report has been prepared by the Audit and Risk Committee Chair, Mr Peter Knights.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the six months to 30 June 2023 and the annual performance assessment.

RESOLUTION

That Council receives and notes the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the six months to 30 June 2023 and the annual performance assessment.

Moved: Cr Murray Emerson

Seconded: Cr Rob Haswell

Carried

Background/Rationale

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is an independent advisory committee to Council, established to assist in the effective conduct of Council's responsibilities for good governance, the management of risk, financial reporting and maintenance of reliable systems and internal controls in order to facilitate the achievement of its organisational objectives in an efficient, effective and ethical manner.

Section 54 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires the ARC to prepare a biannual report that describes the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and provide a copy of the report to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

Section 54 also requires the ARC to undertake an annual assessment of its performance against the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020 – Section 53 and 54.

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

That Council receives and notes the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the six months to 30 June 2023 and the annual performance assessment. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council does not receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report for the six months to 30 June 2023 and the annual performance assessment. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

There are no procurement implications.

Community Engagement

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter provides a comprehensive description of the functions of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Collaboration

Not applicable.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Audit and Risk Committee Activity Report - June 23 **[3.2.1 - 1 page]**
2. Audit and Risk Committee Annual Performance Assessment 2023 **[3.2.2 - 1 page]**

Northern Grampians Shire Council

AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
for the 6 months to 30 June 2023

1. Attendance and Meetings

The Northern Grampians Shire Council Audit Committee has met twice since last report. The composition of the Committee has is unchanged external members attended either in person or online. We welcomed CEO Brent McAlister to our meetings as well.

2. Activity

The VAGO appointed external auditors RSD Chartered Accountants presented their audit strategy at the March meeting. Mr Mahesh Silva has replaced the retiring Phil Delahunty as lead audit partner and he explained and the committee reviewed, their audit strategy, with key focus areas identified as Building and Land valuations, the change of reporting standards impacting grant receipts timing and reporting. Further, calculation & reporting of Employee benefits and the status of flood restoration works program & funding were also noted as key focus items. An interim management letter was presented at the June meeting noting outstanding items for review and comment prior to year end reporting.

As identified in December, a detailed report was presented at our March meeting on the activity of the ICT team towards, and the ramifications of the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards and Annual Information Security Performance Indicators. It was pleasing to see a proactive approach to compliance and integration to Council's systems with key priorities identified within this project.

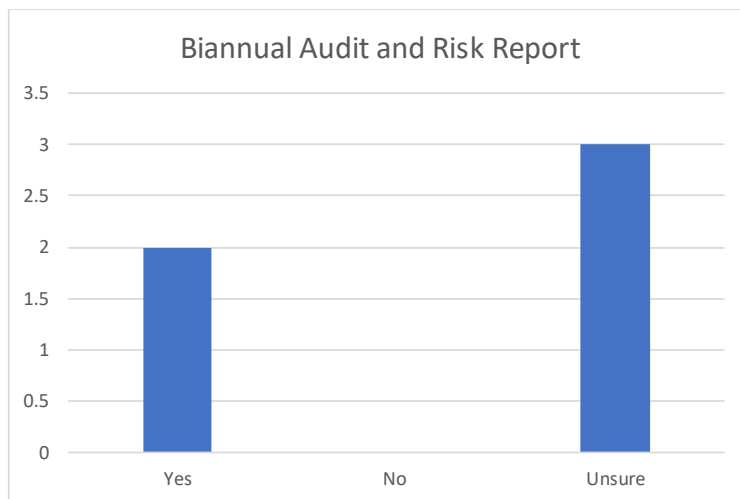
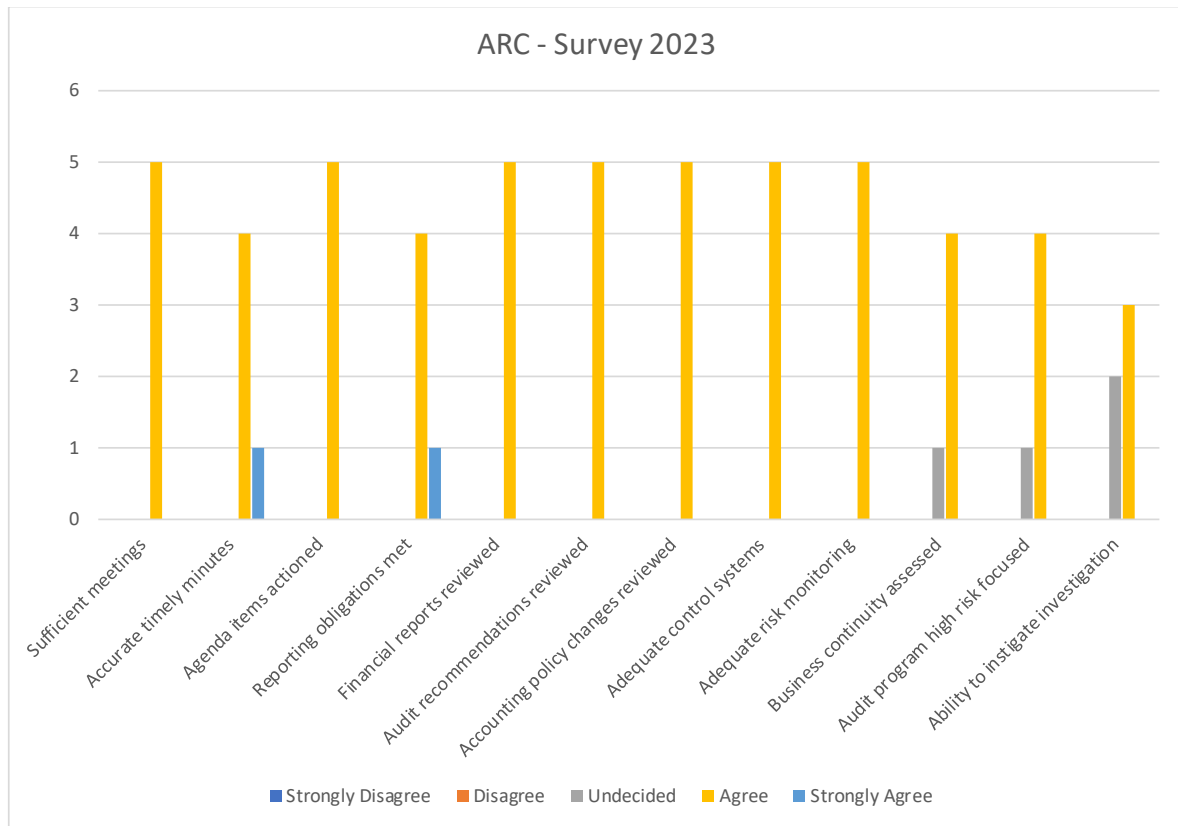
The Finance Team compiled quarterly reporting for both meetings and were presented by Graham Haylock and reviewed in detail by the committee. The committee are complimentary of the format and content of these reports. The committee received updates on the progress of internal audit items of Procurement and EPA compliance with the final reports to be reviewed at the next meeting. Thank you to the Governance, Compliance and Finance team and to my fellow members of the committee for their contribution.

Peter Knights FCPA
Chair
Northern Grampians Shire Council Audit Committee

September 8th 2023

Audit And Risk Committee Survey 2023

These are the results of the self-assessment survey. All 5 members of the committee responded.



Comments

I think the ARC could do better in relation to identifying high risk areas for internal audit and not just rely on management to ascertain what internal audits are undertaken.

3.3. Quarterly Finance Report

Author/Position: **Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services**

Purpose

To advise Council of the Financial Report for the fourth quarter which ended 30 June 2023.

Summary

The Financial Report for the period ending 30 June 2023 shows the interim, pre-audited end of year results for the current financial year, and as such, it should be noted they may differ from the final annual financial results included in the 2022-23 Annual Report.

Council ended the year with \$26.6 million in cash.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Financial Report for the fourth quarter which ended 30 June 2023.

RESOLUTION

That Council notes the Financial Report for the fourth quarter which ended 30 June 2023.

Moved: Cr Karen Hyslop
Seconded: Cr Trevor Gready

Carried

Background/Rationale

As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer is required to provide Council with a financial report, comparing the actual and budgeted results to date and an explanation of any material variations.

This report is the fourth financial report for the 2022-23 financial year that will assess Council's performance against the adopted budget.

The report shows the interim end of year result for the current financial year, together with percentage variations to the adopted budget.

Legislation, Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 2020

Council Plan 2021-25 – Improve Organisational Effectiveness

Options

Option 1

That Council notes the Financial Report for the fourth quarter which ended 30 June 2023, without amendments. **[recommended]**

Option 2

That Council notes the Financial Report for the fourth quarter which ended 30 June 2023, with amendments. **[not recommended]**

Implications

The subject matter has not raised any sustainability issues (economic, social, environmental or climate change) or heritage/cultural, amenity, human rights/gender equality, privacy, risk management, budgetary and asset management implications.

Procurement

The report does not raise any procurement agreement matters.

Community Engagement

No community engagement was required.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

This report incorporates the impact of new accounting standards and better practice reporting.

Collaboration

No collaboration was required in completing this report.

Officer's Declaration of Interest

All officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Graham Haylock, Manager Financial Services

In providing this advice as the author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Attachments

1. Quarterly Finance Report - June 2023 **[3.3.1 - 12 pages]**

Financial Report

30 JUNE, 2023



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Operating Statement.....	4
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Executive Summary as at 30 June, 2023

It should be noted that this report only reflects spending to 30 June, 2023.

Council ended the period with \$26.6M cash.

Cash Flow Statement as at 30 June, 2023

	Actuals to June, 2023 \$ '000	Budget 2022-23 \$ '000	Variations to Budget Fav (Unfav) \$ '000
Operating Activities			
Revenue			
Rates & Charges	(19,550)	(19,367)	183
Operating Grants	(15,982)	(10,753)	5,229
Statutory Fees & Fines	(458)	(356)	102
User Fees	(2,082)	(2,023)	59
Contributions	(86)	(49)	37
Other Revenue	(98)	(749)	(651)
Total Revenue	(38,256)	(33,297)	4,959
Expenses			
Employee Costs	18,282	18,427	145
Materials & Services	11,884	10,843	(1,041)
Borrowing Costs	303	73	(230)
Other Expenses	654	941	287
Total Expenses	31,123	30,284	(839)
Net Operating	(7,133)	(3,013)	4,120
Investing Activities			
Capital Expenditure	13,585	11,644	(1,941)
Capital Grants	(7,267)	(6,210)	1,057
Capital Income	70	(90)	(160)
Capital Contributions	(508)	(10)	498
Proceeds from investment in associates	(121)	-	121
Repayment of Loans & Advances	-	(5)	(5)
Net Investing Activities	5,759	5,329	(430)
Financing Activities			
Principal Repayments	97	97	(0)
Net Financing Activities	97	97	0
Net Movements for Year	(1,276)	2,413	3,689
Opening Cash	25,347	21,277	(4,070)
Closing Cash	26,623	18,864	(6,394)

Operating Statement as at 30 June, 2023

100% through the year

	YTD Committed Actuals \$000's	Adopted Budget \$000's	% Actuals to Budget %
Revenue			
Rates & Charges			
Residential	(8,548)	(8,494)	101%
Farm/Rural	(5,495)	(5,488)	100%
Commercial	(793)	(766)	104%
Industrial	(428)	(402)	106%
Cultural & Recreational	(12)	(12)	100%
Municipal Charge	(1,008)	(1,003)	100%
Garbage Charge	(2,876)	(2,848)	101%
Rates in Lieu	(357)	(355)	101%
Rates & Charges	(19,518)	(19,367)	101%
Grants Capital			
Capital Grants	(7,267)	(6,985)	104%
Grants Capital	(7,267)	(6,985)	104%
Grants Operating			
Aged & Disability Services Grants	(757)	(809)	94%
Child Care Grants	(1,149)	(791)	145%
Environmental Grants	(92)	(75)	123%
Untied Grants	(11,651)	(8,718)	134%
Operating Grants	(2,088)	(237)	882%
Public Safety Grants	(244)	(123)	198%
Grants Operating	(15,982)	(10,752)	149%
User Fees			
Aged and Disability Service Fees	(452)	(399)	113%
Building Fees	(1)	0	
Child Care Fees	(231)	(336)	69%
Leisure Fees	(657)	(716)	92%
Local Law Fees	(142)	(120)	119%
Other Fees	(136)	(160)	85%
Public Health Fees	(113)	(87)	130%
Rental Income	(145)	(153)	95%
Private Works Infrastructure	(47)	(21)	223%
Waste Management Fees	(60)	(22)	281%
User Fees	(1,985)	(2,013)	99%
Statutory Fees and Fines			
Building Fees	(157)	(182)	86%
Local Law Fees	(11)	(4)	282%
Other Fees	(101)	(30)	332%
Planning Fees	(189)	(149)	127%
Statutory Fees and Fines	(458)	(365)	125%
Contributions			
Contributions to Capital	(508)	(85)	597%
Contributions Other	(86)	(49)	175%
Contributions	(594)	(134)	442%
Other Revenue			
Interest Income	(192)	(151)	127%
Other Revenue	(851)	(599)	142%
Other Revenue	(1,043)	(749)	139%
Revenue	(46,846)	(40,367)	116%
Revenue (excl Rates & Charges)	(27,328)	(21,000)	130%

Operating Statement as at 30 June, 2023

100% through the year

	YTD Committed Actuals \$000's	Adopted Budget \$000's	% Actuals to Budget %
Expenses			
Employee Benefits			
Salary & Wages	16,799	15,866	106%
Superannuation	1,742	1,781	98%
LSL Provision Movement	0	463	0%
Fringe Benefit Tax	4	33	11%
WorkCover	346	359	96%
Training	0	0	
Employee Benefits	18,890	18,502	102%
Materials & Services			
Advertising	144	119	121%
Audit Fees	47	55	85%
Bank Fees	56	58	97%
Catering	16	28	56%
Communications	89	133	67%
Professional Advice	451	474	95%
Contractors	3,381	3,304	102%
Contributions - Reciprocal	820	365	224%
Cost of Goods Sold	225	175	129%
Equipment Mtc & Repair	675	680	99%
Fuel	700	509	138%
Insurance	882	715	123%
Leases	407	387	105%
Legal Expenses	94	102	91%
Memberships & Subscriptions	225	266	85%
Minor Equipment	165	125	132%
Office Supplies	14	9	162%
Other Materials and Services	930	1,665	56%
Postage & Freight	31	36	88%
Printing	34	58	58%
Recruitment & Retention Expenses	21	21	98%
Security Expenses	46	66	69%
Software Costs	1,386	1,765	79%
Uniforms & Protective Clothing	159	88	180%
Utilities	383	438	87%
Apprentice Reimbursements	389	483	80%
Materials & Services	11,770	12,124	97%
Depreciation			
Depreciation	14,455	14,139	102%
Depreciation	14,455	14,139	102%
Amortisation			
Amortisation	146	86	170%
Amortisation	146	86	170%
Finance Costs			
Borrowing Costs	43	70	61%
Lease Costs	260	3	8650%
Finance Costs	303	73	414%
Other Expenses			
Contributions - Non Reciprocal	168	388	43%
Councillor Allowances	227	233	97%
Other Expenses	260	277	94%
Other Expenses	654	898	73%
Bad & Doubtful Debts			
Other Debtors	(97)	0	
Bad & Doubtful Debts	(97)	0	

Operating Statement as at 30 June, 2023

100% through the year

	YTD Committed Actuals \$000's	Adopted Budget \$000's	% Actuals to Budget %
Expenses	46,121	45,822	101%
Expenses (excl Depreciation)	31,520	31,597	100%
Other Income Statement Items			
Proceeds of Asset Sales	70	(90)	-78%
Written Down Value of Assets Sold	1,130	-	
Other Income Statement Items	1,200	(90)	-1334%
Operating Statement	476	5,365	9%

Capital & Project Expenditure Summary

Programs	Actuals \$000's	Forecast \$000's	% Complete	Remaning
Major Emergency Restoration	1,224	153	800%	0%
Roads	5,501	6,468	85%	15%
Bridges	554	2,123	26%	74%
Building	2,299	2,650	87%	13%
Drainage	71	107	67%	33%
Open Spaces	2,234	6,144	36%	64%
Land & Land Improvements	667	579	115%	0%
IT	77	69	113%	0%
Plant, Vehicles & Equipment	1,577	1,100	143%	0%
Projects	918	1,189	77%	23%
Total Capital & Projects	15,122	20,582	73%	27%

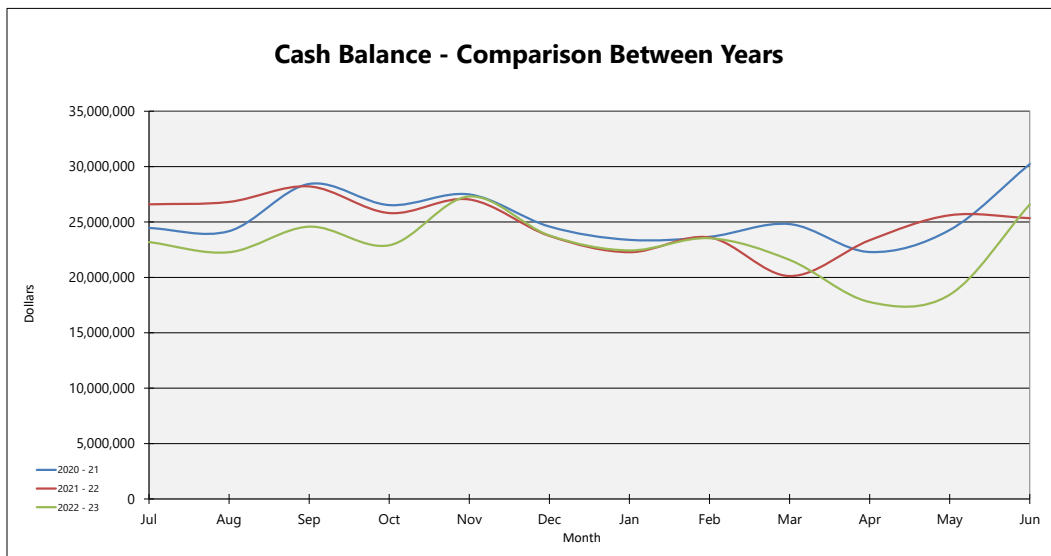
Capital & Project Expenditure Summary as at 30 June, 2023

Capital and Projects	Forecast	Adopted Budget	Variation
02 - Capital			
1112 - B - Roads - Aerodrome Program	375,734	300,000	75,734
1101 - B - Roads - Final Seal Program	321,890	328,000	(6,110)
1110 - B - Roads - Footpaths Program	191,205	228,000	(36,795)
1100 - B - Roads - Kerb & Channel Program	600,372	503,000	97,372
1102 - B - Roads - Major Rural Roads Program	746,153	406,984	339,169
1104 - B - Roads - Resealing Program	1,179,487	1,205,000	(25,513)
1105 - B - Roads - Resheeting Program	1,047,800	948,000	99,800
1106 - B - Roads - Rural & Residential Program	345,000	245,000	100,000
1111 - B - Roads - Streetscapes	228,304	0	228,304
1107 - B - Roads - Town Street Sealing Program	21,646	84,000	(62,354)
1108 - B - Roads - Transport Dev Program	920,810	416,000	504,810
1109 - B - Roads - Urban Rd Improvement Program	82,000	84,000	(2,000)
1103 - B - Roads - Rehabilitation Program	404,000	254,000	150,000
1113 - C - Bridge & Major Culverts Program	2,122,713	1,066,000	1,056,713
1114 - C - Floodway Program	0	0	0
1115 - D - Building Program	2,650,082	680,000	1,970,082
1116 - E - Drainage Program	106,980	78,000	28,980
1122 - F - Open Spaces Program	6,144,159	3,960,000	2,184,159
1120 - G - Land & Land Improvement Program	578,845	0	578,845
1119 - H - IT Program	68,500	68,500	0
1118 - H - Plant, Vehicles & Equipment Program	1,099,638	790,000	309,638
1121 - J - Projects	1,189,249	0	1,189,249
Total 02 - Capital	20,424,566	11,644,484	8,780,082
04 - Emergency Capital			
0257 - 11/19 Bushfire Recovery	153,020	0	153,020
Total 04 - Emergency Capital	153,020	0	153,020
Grand Total	20,577,586	11,644,484	8,933,102

Capital & Project Revenue Summary as at 30 June, 2023

Capital and Projects	Forecast	Adopted Budget	Variation
02 - Capital			
1112 - B - Roads - Aerodrome Program	(300,000)	(300,000)	0
1101 - B - Roads - Final Seal Program	(219,000)	(157,000)	62,000
1110 - B - Roads - Footpaths Program	0	0	0
1100 - B - Roads - Kerb & Channel Program	0	(270,000)	
1102 - B - Roads - Major Rural Roads Program	(212,000)	0	212,000
1104 - B - Roads - Resealing Program	(955,000)	(880,000)	75,000
1105 - B - Roads - Resheeting Program	(532,984)	(520,984)	12,000
1106 - B - Roads - Rural & Residential Program	(100,000)	0	
1111 - B - Roads - Streetscapes	0	0	0
1108 - B - Roads - Transport Dev Program	(392,000)	(208,000)	184,000
1109 - B - Roads - Urban Rd Improvement Program	(51,000)	0	51,000
1103 - B - Roads - Rehabilitation Program	0	(140,000)	(140,000)
1113 - C - Bridge & Major Culverts Program	(510,000)	(160,000)	350,000
1114 - C - Floodway Program	0	0	0
1115 - D - Building Program	(973,000)	(620,000)	353,000
1116 - E - Drainage Program	0	0	0
1122 - F - Open Spaces Program	(3,461,427)	(2,953,927)	507,500
1120 - G - Land & Land Improvement Program	0	0	0
1118 - H - Plant, Vehicles & Equipment Program	(90,000)	(90,000)	0
1121 - J - Projects	(390,000)	0	390,000
Grand Total	(8,186,411)	(6,299,911)	2,056,500

Cash and Investments as at 30 June, 2023



Total Cash Balance at Month End												
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
2019 - 20	18,642,143	18,424,373	20,885,437	20,496,673	22,711,437	22,520,759	21,226,659	23,831,676	21,993,073	19,771,946	25,394,596	27,206,212
2020 - 21	24,458,405	24,173,971	28,436,358	26,525,969	27,490,366	24,592,324	23,388,847	23,663,702	24,811,535	22,290,630	24,280,838	30,230,677
2021 - 22	26,594,594	26,813,020	28,211,375	25,807,441	27,033,930	23,750,045	22,274,406	23,607,188	20,121,050	23,354,913	25,609,380	25,346,744
2022 - 23	23,190,093	22,271,414	24,579,815	22,898,950	27,307,669	23,789,682	22,432,629	23,536,006	21,579,899	17,776,702	18,436,519	26,586,002

Restricted Cash required as at 30 June, 2023

\$ 5,681,000

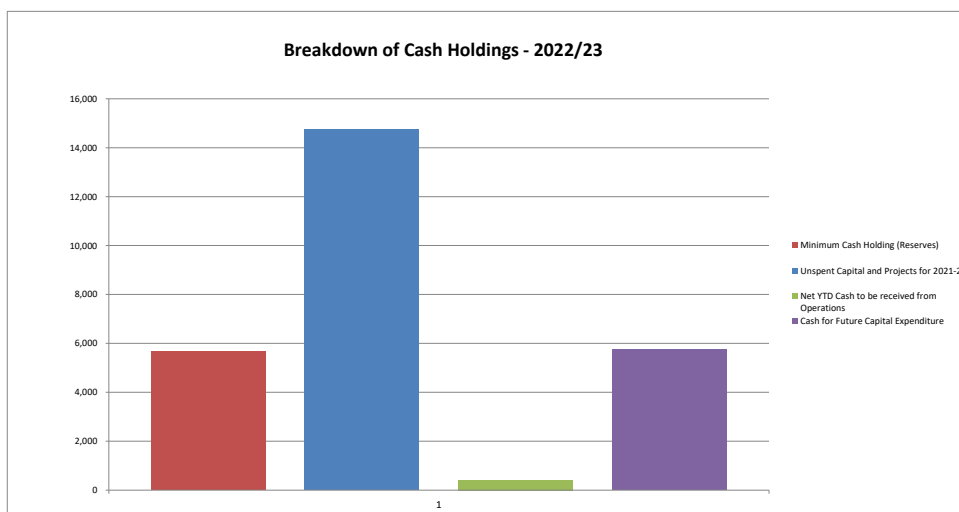
Available Cash as at 30 June, 2023

\$ 20,905,002

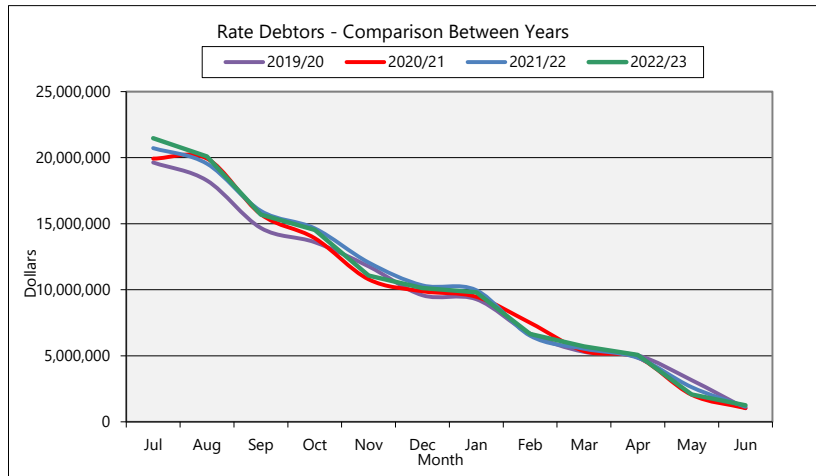
\$ 26,586,002

Breakdown of Cash Holdings

	\$000's
Minimum Cash Holding (Reserves)	5,681
Cash for Future Capital Expenditure	5,752
Unspent Capital and Projects for 2021-22	14,739
Net YTD Cash to be received from Operations	414
Total Cash held as at 30 June, 2023	26,586



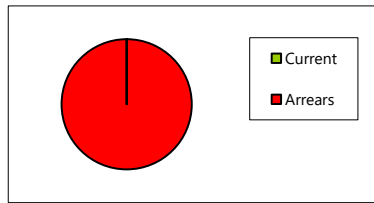
Debtors Reports as at 30 June, 2023



Rates Debtors YTD

Current
Arrears
Total

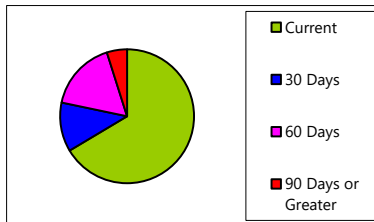
	\$	%
Current	0	0%
Arrears	1,251,638	100%
Total	1,251,638	100%



Sundry Debtors YTD

Current
30 Days
60 Days
90 Days or Greater
Total

	\$	%
Current	1,065,760	66.4%
30 Days	190,176	11.9%
60 Days	269,910	16.8%
90 Days or Greater	78,346	4.9%
Total	1,604,192	100%



Details:

Current	This balance includes a couple of grants that are not due and June GST reimbursement
30 days	This balance includes a couple of grants that have subsequently paid.
60 days	This balance includes a invoice for the Dept of Transport of \$264,000 now paid
90 Days or Greater	Balances outstanding on a few sundry debtors including \$61k due from Stawell Cemeteries.

Loan Report - Budget 2022/23

Borrowing Principles:

Indebtedness

Our level of debt will not exceed 60% or \$11.6 million of rates and charges revenue.

Indebtedness Calculation Check 5.1% ✓

Debt Servicing Costs

Our level of annual debt servicing costs (principal plus Interest) will not exceed 5% or \$1.7 million of our total operating revenue.

Debt Servicing Calculation Check 0.4% ✓

Loans Budgeted 2022/23

Principal

	\$000's
Loans Outstanding as at 30 June, 2022	1,097
Add proposed new loans 2022/23	-
Less scheduled repayments 2022/23	(97)
Loans Outstanding as at 30 June, 2023	1,000

Expiry of Existing Loans

	Expiry	Current Balance \$000's
Loan 16	Jun-23	0
Loan 20	Jun-26	1,000
		1,000

4. Close

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 12.37pm.

Confirmed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Erwin', written in a cursive style.

CR KEVIN ERWIN
MAYOR

Date: 2 October 2023