

Agenda

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Corryong Council Chamber

Wednesday 26 April 2023

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

This information is available in alternative formats on request

**AGENDA FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT
TOWONG SHIRE COUNCIL CORRYONG OFFICE
ON WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2023 COMMENCING AT 10.30AM.**

Commonly Used Acronyms

ABBREVIATION	TITLE
Council Officers	
SAE	Senior Asset Engineer
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DIE	Director Infrastructure and Environment
DCP	Director Community and Planning
DCOD	Director Corporate and Organisational Development
MF	Manager Finance
Government/Organisation	
ACSUM	Alliance of Councils and Shires of the Upper Murray
CH	Corryong Health (formerly Upper Murray Health and Community Services)
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
HRGLN	Hume Region Local Government Network
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
NECMA	North East Catchment Management Authority
NERPEN	North East Regional Procurement Excellence Network
NEW	North East Water
NEWRRG	North East Waste and Resource Recovery Group
RCV	Rural Councils Victoria
RDA	Regional Development Australia
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
THS	Tallangatta Health Service
VGC	Victorian Grants Commission

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Opening Prayer.....	4
2	Councillor and Officer Presence at the Meeting	4
3	Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence	4
4	Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest	4
5	Confirmation of Minutes	6
6	Petitions and Joint Letters	6
7	Public Question Time.....	6
8	Informal Meetings of Councillors.....	7
9	Organisational Improvement.....	8
9.1	Corporate and Organisational and Development Report (06/01/0011-DCOD)	8
9.2	Annual Report 2021/22 (07/07/0001-CEO/Mayor).....	12
9.3	Leave Request Chief Executive Officer (CEO-Mayor)	18
9.4	Council Plan Priorities Report (07/05/0022-DCOD).....	19
9.5	Occupational Health and Safety (06/04/0212-DCOD).....	22
9.6	Action Sheet Report (06/06/0010-CEO).....	25
10	Bushfire Relief and Recovery	27
10.1	Bushfire Relief and Recovery Update (02/02/0013-DCP)	27
11	Community Wellbeing	27
11.1	Gender Equality Action Plan – LGBTIQ+ Actions (07/05/0007-DCP)	27
12	Asset Management	33
12.1	Asset Management Report (01/07/0004-DIE)	33
13	Land Use Planning	33
13.1	Land Use Planning Report (03/02/0003-DCP)	33
14	Environmental Sustainability.....	33
14.1	Environmental Sustainability Report (01/07/0004-DIE).....	33
14.2	Forestry Report (03/05/0000-DIE).....	38
15	Economic and Tourism Development	42
15.1	Economic Development Report (05/01/0164-DCP).....	42
16	Councillor Reports	46
17	Urgent Business	46
18	Committee Minutes	46
19	Council Policies (10/01/0007-CEO).....	46
19.1	Policies for Review and Adoption	46
20	Sealing of Documents	47
20.1	Section 173 Agreement –Towong Shire Council and Trevor W Jones & Family Pty Ltd and Samsons Gully Pty Ltd (DCP).....	47
21	Confidential.....	49

1 Opening Prayer

"Almighty God, we ask that you be present at this meeting to assist us in our service to the Community through Local Government.

We pray that our decisions will be wise and taken with goodwill and clear conscience.

Amen."

2 Councillor and Officer Presence at the Meeting

Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Scales, Anderson and Dikschei

In Attendance:	Title:
Ms Phelps	Chief Executive Officer
Ms Gadd	Director Infrastructure and Environment
Ms Pagan	Director Community and Planning
Mr Heiner	Director Corporate and Organisational Development

3 Apologies and Granting of Leave of Absence

4 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

Section 130 of the *Act* requires that a 'Relevant person' (which means a person who is a Councillor, a member of a delegated committee who is not a Councillor or a member of Council staff) disclose any conflict of interest in the manner required by Council's *Governance Rules* and exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to the matter including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting.

Council's *Governance Rules* state as follows:

A2 Obligations with regards to conflict of interest

Councillors, members of delegated committee, and Council staff are required to:

- a. Avoid all situations which may give rise to conflicts of interest;*
- b. Identify any conflicts of interest; and*
- c. Disclose or declare all conflicts of interest.*

A3 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:

A3.1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered; or

A3.2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer before the Council meeting commences a written notice:

A3.2.1 advising of the conflict of interest;

A3.2.2 explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and

A3.2.3 detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:

- a. name of the other person;*
- b. nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and*
- c. nature of that other person's interest in the matter, and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the Chief Executive Officer under this sub-Rule.*

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

5 Confirmation of Minutes

Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 March 2023.
Special Council Meeting held on 29 March 2023.

The minutes were circulated following the meetings.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes as circulated be confirmed for the Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 22 March 2023 and the Special Council Meeting held on 29 March 2023.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

6 Petitions and Joint Letters

Nil

7 Public Question Time

Public Question Time has now replaced the Open Forum section of the Council meeting.

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, all questions must be submitted to Council in writing by 2.00pm on the day prior to the Council meeting.

An online form is available on Council's website, and a hard copy of the form is available at both the Tallangatta and Corryong Council offices.

Public Notice of Public Question Time was included in the advertisement for the Council meeting.

The Chief Executive Officer will advise the meeting of the receipt of any questions.

8 Informal Meetings of Councillors

In accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*, a written summary of the matters discussed at each informal meeting of Councillors is to be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

The Meeting Records from the Informal Meeting of Councillors held on the following dates are attached at **Appendix 1**:

- 1 February 2023
- 8 February 2023
- 22 February 2023
- 8 March 2023
- 15 March 2023
- 22 March 2023

Recommendation:

That the information be noted.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

9 Organisational Improvement

9.1 Corporate and Organisational and Development Report (06/01/0011-DCOD)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Craig Heiner, Interim Director Corporate and Organisational Development.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide a quarterly update on the activities of the Corporate and Organisational Development area.

Summary:

The attached report provides an overview of activities within the Corporate and Organisational Development area between January and March 2023.

Following the resignation of the previous director, the primary focus of the interim director has been on supporting the finance team.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Appendix 2 – Corporate and Organisational Development Report.

Background/History:

The Corporate and Organisational Development Report is provided on a quarterly basis.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Corporate and Organisational Development activities and decisions have been made in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

The Communications and Engagement team has continued to support project managers and other officers across the organisation to ensure that the community is involved in determining the best outcomes in relation to decisions that impact them.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Successful recruitments into key finance team roles will support long term sustainability and mitigating key person risk.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The Communications and Engagement team continues to support numerous community engagement activities in relation to community-facing projects and activities across the organisation.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Progress continues on the upgrade to the firewall to ensure that we have a contemporary solution to monitoring and blocking viruses and malware and to provide for improved performance of internal IT networks.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Officers continue to collaborate with Alpine and Indigo Shire Councils, most notably in relation to the embedding of the new rates, property and receipting system and also in relation to the *Rural Councils Transformation Program* funded project to review planning and building systems and processes.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Significant time investments have been made in clearing the previous year's financial statements, current year budgets and preparation for the pending financial year-end.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

The activities of the Corporate and Organisational Development team during the quarter supported the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities:

6.1 Continue to improve awareness, engagement and involvement of the community in relation to matters that affect them – Facebook page followers, reach and engagement all continued to trend upwards and a new e-newsletter was successfully launched.

6.2 Continually improve the customer service experience across the organisation – MOU's were established between customer service and a number of internal departments to provide for clarity of roles and responsibilities and consistency of the customer experience.

6.3 Continually improve processes to support improved service delivery – ongoing improvements were made to the staff onboarding, offboarding and payroll processes.

6.8 Continue to seek opportunities to improve service delivery and achieve best value including further investigation of shared services – progress was made in relation to the *Rural Councils Transformation Program* funded project to review planning and building processes and systems, with a view to expanding the current shared service arrangement between Towong and Indigo Shire Councils to include Alpine Shire Council.

6.9 Continue to advocate for increased government funding support to ensure long term sustainability – advocacy work was undertaken in relation to reinstating government funding to support fixing country roads.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

The gaps in continuity of staff in key roles and reliance on external consultants have presented a number of challenges that continue to be worked through. Whilst this currently represents a challenging environment for the finance team, we will ultimately benefit from fresh perspectives reviewing historical practices.

Officer's View:

Following the successful recruitments into key finance roles the team now faces the uncertainty of a new director being recruited. Whilst recognising that change can present challenges, it is assessed that the team are highly supportive of each other and focused on the multitude of priorities they are working on.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

9.2 Annual Report 2021/22 (07/07/0001-CEO/Mayor)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Emma Woolaston, Director Corporate and Organisational Development and Interim Director Mr Craig Heiner.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officers did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to present the *Annual Report 2021/22*.

Summary:

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that councils prepare an Annual Report in respect of each financial year. This report must be presented by the Mayor at a Council Meeting open to the public. The *Annual Report 2021/22* has been prepared in line with legislative and regulatory requirements and is ready for presentation.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Mayor be thanked for his presentation of the Annual Report 2021/22; and
2. The Annual Report 2021/22 as presented be approved and made available to residents, ratepayers and the general public.

Attachment:

Appendix 3 – *Towong Shire Council Annual Report 2021/22*

Background/History:

Section 98 of *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires that a Council must prepare an Annual Report in respect of each financial year, containing a report of the operations of the Council, an audited performance statement, audited financial statements, and copies of the auditor's reports on the performance statement and financial statements.

Section 100 of the Act requires that the Mayor must report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report at a Council meeting open to the public within four months of the end of the financial year. It is noted that finalisation of this year's *Annual Report 2021/22* has been delayed due to resourcing challenges in the Finance team. External consultants were appointed to provide for a smooth end of financial year process and required time to familiarise with our accounts. Officers have collaborated with the auditors and the external consultants to ensure that timelines have been adjusted in a timely fashion to suit all parties, given that the auditor has also encountered resourcing challenges.

It is noted that an extension was sought from Local Government Victoria for the presentation of the Annual Report however none was granted due to there not being a provision in the Act allowing for one. At the same time the department communicated that there were no penalties for presenting the Annual Report late. The auditors agreed that it was preferred that we take the time required to work towards accurate financial statements rather than heightening the risk of inaccuracies to meet the deadline.

The content of the *Annual Report 2021/22* has been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and is now ready for presentation.

Operations of the Council

The 2021/22 period was another year of challenges with ongoing recovery from the 2019/20 bushfires and the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to impact communities and staff. Within this context, it is pleasing how communities across the Shire have pulled together and staff have been able to continue to deliver some excellent outcomes for the Shire.

The new *Council Plan 2021-25* and *Community Vision 2031* were adopted following a robust community engagement process, and ongoing advocacy efforts continued to pay off as \$13 million was secured towards projects in 2021/22 including:

- Lake Hume Masterplan
- Corryong Circuit Trail – Stage One
- Great River Road – Stage Two
- Walking track upgrades in Eskdale and Bellbridge

Nearly \$10 million was secured for projects in 2022/23 and beyond and some long term projects were completed including upgrades to the Tallangatta Holiday Park and Georges Creek Road. The final round of the Community Grants program was

delivered and bushfire recovery projects included community events, equipment purchases and community facility upgrades.

The Performance Statement and Financial Statements

The Performance Statement reflected the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on Council operations. While swimming pool utilisation was up from 0.89 visits per head of municipal population in 2020/21 to 1.12 in 2021/22, this was still considerably lower than 2018/19 levels of 1.92. Maternal and Child Health participation dropped from 85.5% to 75.8% despite an increase in the number of children enrolled.

There was a drop in satisfaction with Council decisions from 60 to 54 and a drop in satisfaction with sealed local roads from 57 to 50, however the level of satisfaction remained in line with the average for Small Rural Councils.

There was a reduction in expenses per head of population from \$4,046.71 in 2020/21 to \$3,543.06 in 2021/22 due to the cost of supporting bushfire recovery efforts in 2020/21. There was a commensurate reduction in own-source revenue from \$2,548.70 in 2020/21 to \$1,989.40 in 2021/22 due to the receipt of substantial reimbursements towards bushfire recovery costs from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and insurance claims in 2020/21. Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation increased from 129.41% to 204.37% due to a number of renewal projects being brought forward due to grant funding being available.

Following the repair of the Corryong landfill cell, which had been damaged in the 2019/20 bushfires, the amount of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill increased from 20.82% to 48.62%.

The Financial Statements reflected a surplus of \$10.5 million for the year ended 30 June 2021/22, compared to a budgeted deficit of \$1.2 million. The higher than anticipated result was primarily due to the early receipt of 75% (\$3.8 million) of the 2022/23 Financial Assistance Grants allocation; the receipt of an additional \$2.0 million in Bushfire Recovery funding over what had been included in the budget; reimbursements towards disaster recovery costs from Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (\$0.9 million); and lower than anticipated employee costs due to a number of positions being vacant throughout the year (\$0.9 million).

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Annual Report 2021/22* has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of sections 98 and 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government*

(Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and is ready for presentation by the Mayor in accordance with section 100 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

The *Annual Report 2021/22* outlines the achievements of the Council during 2021/22 in support of the best outcomes for the community, including progress on bushfire recovery objectives and infrastructure priorities, as well as the allocation of \$10 million in Federal and State Government grants in support of the delivery of community infrastructure and projects in 2022/23.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

The *Annual Report 2021/22* shows a surplus financial result which was largely due to funding received from State and Federal government sources. The unreliability of this funding presents risks and challenges for Council's financial sustainability going forward.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The *Annual Report 2021/22* is published on Council's website and the community will be notified through local newspapers, Council's eNewsletter and social media.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Upgrades to the Tallangatta Holiday Park, Georges Creek Road and the Bullioh and Cudgewa Netball Courts were completed and the Tallangatta Pool was refurbished. The Tintalra boat ramp was constructed and following ongoing advocacy efforts, it was announced that two new mobile towers would be built in Burrowye and Koetong.

Tallangatta Neighbourhood House was reactivated and childcare was expanded across the Shire. Building efficiency upgrades were delivered at Council offices and a shared service arrangement with Indigo Shire for statutory land-use planning services was trialed.

A new rates, property, receipting and animal management system was also implemented.

Almost all deliverables required by the *Local Government Act 2020* were completed, improving consistency and providing the opportunity to align to best practice across many governance, community engagement and financial processes.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

A new rates, property, receipting and animal management system was delivered through a collaborative approach to procurement and implementation across Indigo, Alpine and Towong Shire Councils.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

The *Annual Report 2021/22* demonstrated a surplus of \$10.5 million, however long term financial planning indicates sustainability risks unless further funding and support from Federal and State Governments can be secured.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

In line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Annual Report 2021/22* includes detailed information on the progress of implementation of the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

In line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council's Performance Statement and Financial Statement, as included in the *Annual Report 2021/22*, have been subject to independent audit and the oversight by the Audit and Risk Committee to mitigate the risk of reporting errors.

Officer's View:

Council's *Annual Report 2021/22* has been prepared in accordance with all relevant legislation and regulation and it is the officer's view that it is ready to be presented by the Mayor at this Council Meeting.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

9.3 Leave Request Chief Executive Officer (CEO-Mayor)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Cr Andrew Whitehead, Mayor.

At the time of preparation of this report, Cr Whitehead did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Chief Executive Officer to take Annual Leave over the period specified in this report and to appoint an Acting Chief Executive Officer for that period.

Summary:

The Chief Executive Officer has requested Annual Leave for the period 3 May – 12 May 2023 inclusive.

The Chief Executive Officer has recommended that Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning, be appointed Acting Chief Executive Officer for the leave period.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Chief Executive Officer's request for Annual Leave for the period 3 May – 12 May 2023 inclusive be approved; and
2. The appointment of Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning, to the position of Acting Chief Executive Officer for the period stated be approved.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council Meeting.

9.4 Council Plan Priorities Report (07/05/0022-DCOD)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Justin Troy, Governance Officer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

Summary:

In accordance with section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next four financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices. This report provides a quarterly update on the progress of the priorities in our 2021-2025 Council Plan.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Appendix 4 – Council Plan Priorities – January to March 2023

Background/History:

Each quarter Council officers provide an update to Council on the progress of the priorities listed in the Council Plan for information only.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

Council officers provide quarterly updates in relation to the Council Plan that has been set in accordance with section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies:

This is a quarterly report to provide an update on the progress of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* priorities.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

It is the Officer's view that good progress is being made across all departments on a significant number of the Council Plan priorities.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council Meeting.

9.5 Occupational Health and Safety (06/04/0212-DCOD)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Wayne Carter, Occupational Health and Safety Officer.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide a bi-monthly update on Occupational Health and Safety activities throughout the organisation.

Summary:

Major OHS activities conducted during the period included:

- Continued progress against the recommendations of the 2021 OHS Management System audit;
- Distribution of Rapid Antigen Tests to staff and the community;
- Completion of equipment inspections;
- Further risk and assessment and training in relation to the operation of the Corryong Aerodrome, particularly in relation to the new 24/7 refueling area;
- Review and action planning relating to the newly updated Child Safe Standards;
- Completion and submission of Insurance Renewal questionnaires; and
- Review of a number of procedures and associated forms.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Appendix 5 – Bi-Monthly Occupational Health and Safety Report.

Background/History:

The OHS report is provided on a bi-monthly basis to communicate the work being undertaken to ensure a healthy and safe work environment. The report highlights

progress in strengthening processes, procedures and practices across the organisation and details how emerging health and safety risks are being addressed.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

OHS activities are governed by the principles of health and safety protection in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*. Employees, Councillors, other persons at work and members of the public are given the highest level of protection of risks to their health and safety that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Community members have been offered access to Rapid Antigen Tests as part of Victorian State Government programs.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Activities are prioritised to best support sustainable health and safety outcomes for employees and the general community.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Progress continues to be made in relation to the 2021 Audit of Council's OHS Management System with nine actions complete and a further 25 in progress, out of a total 56 recommended actions.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Victorian State Government Council Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) Distribution Program allows free RATs to be distributed to all community members free of charge.

Council Plans and Policies:

OHS improvement activities support the following *Council Plan 2021-2025* priority:

6.2 Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment.

Activities also undertaken in accordance to the *Occupational Health and Safety Policy* and *Risk Management Policy*.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)) :

It is the officers' view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Activities are prioritised commensurate to the likelihood and impact of identified OHS risks.

Officer's View:

Progress continues to be made in relation to the actions stemming from the OHS Management System Audit. Risk assessments and subsequent follow-up actions to reduce risks have also been conducted relating to installing the weighbridge and truck wash at the Corryong Saleyards to ensure that the facility is safe for near term intended uses. The review of Council's obligations and requirements in accordance with the newly updated Child Safe Standards has also been a focus, as has understanding the implications of the Commission of Inquiry into Moira Shire Council.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council Meeting.

9.6 Action Sheet Report (06/06/0010-CEO)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Alison Noonan, Executive Assistant.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide monthly updates to Council on the progress of the action items from the previous Council meeting.

Summary:

At the Special Council meeting held on 8 March 2023, the Ordinary Council meeting held on 22 March 2023 and the Special Council meeting held on 29 March 2023, a number of resolutions were passed requiring action by Council officers. This report is provided to Council as an update on the progress of these actions.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Appendix 6 – Datascope Action Reports from the March 2023 Council Meetings.

Background/History:

Not applicable.

Relevant Law:

Not applicable.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Not applicable.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Not applicable.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Not applicable.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Not applicable.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Not applicable.

Council Plans and Policies/Related Council Decisions:

Not applicable.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

It is the officer's view that good progress has been made in relation to the actions arising from the Council meetings held during March 2023.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council Meeting.

10 Bushfire Relief and Recovery

10.1 Bushfire Relief and Recovery Update (02/02/0013-DCP)

The Bushfire Relief and Recovery Update is presented biannually and will be provided in July 2023.

11 Community Wellbeing

11.1 Gender Equality Action Plan – LGBTIQA+ Actions (07/05/0007-DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Amanda Pagan, Director of Community and Planning.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek a decision to ensure we meet our obligations outlined in the *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025*.

Summary:

Council met with representation from Rainbow Local Government to discuss undertaking a range of actions in relation to LGBTIQA+ community members. Rainbow Local Government is a non-partisan campaign created by the Victorian Pride Lobby.

Possible actions/activities discussed included:

- Flying the rainbow flag at Council locations;

- Celebrating IDAHOBIT Day (May 17, 2023) through talks, flying the rainbow flag, screening of relevant movies or other community events;
- Establishment of an LGBTIQA+ Community Advisory Group; and
- Undertaking Rainbow Accreditation.

Flying the Rainbow flag in support of IDAHOBIT is now common practice in Local Government and would allow Council to publicly express its support of our LGBTIQA+ community, as well as to actively discourage discrimination against gender and sexual diversity.

Recommendation:

That the following actions be undertaken:

1. Fly the rainbow flag at Council locations;
2. Celebrate IDAHOBIT Day (17 May 2023) through a small scale community event;
3. Establishment of an LGBTIQA+ Community Advisory Group; and
4. Officers provide a report in October 2023 regarding progress against these actions and consider possible further actions.

Attachments:

Nil.

Background/History:

The *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025* sets out the strategies and measures we will implement to promote gender equality in the workplace. It includes the findings of the workplace gender audit that we undertook in 2021, in line with the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. It also reflects feedback from our staff, including what they told us through the People Matter Survey 2021, a special edition of which the Victorian Public Sector Commission initiated to aid organisations in developing their Gender Equality Action Plans.

Strategy 5.1 of the Plan identifies the need to raise awareness and skills regarding gender equity practices. The strategy identifies the need for training and embedding understanding about the gender equality.

Strategy 5.4 of the Plan identifies the need to embed gender equality into Council policies. This includes the need to publicly affirm Council's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive community, irrespective of Aboriginality, age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion, race or sexual orientation.

Recently, representation from Rainbow Local Government met with Council to discuss undertaking a range of actions in relation to LGBTIQ+ community members. These actions included:

- Flying the rainbow flag at Council locations;
- Celebrating IDAHOBIT Day (17 May 2023) through talks, flying the rainbow flag, screening of relevant movies or other community events;
- Establishment of an LGBTIQ+ community advisory group; and
- Undertaking Rainbow Accreditation.

Flying the Rainbow flag in support of IDAHOBIT is now common practice in Local Government and would allow Council to publicly express its support of our LGBTIQ+ community, as well as to actively discourage discrimination against people's sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires defined entities, including public service bodies, universities and councils in Victoria with more than 50 employees, to consider and promote gender equality and to take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality. Specific obligations of the Act include:

- Developing and implementing a Gender Equality Action Plan;
- Publicly reporting on progress in relation to workplace gender equality; and
- Completing gender impact assessments in relation to policies, programs and services that impact the public.

Progress reports are to be submitted to the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner every two years, with the first progress report due on 31 October 2023. Progress reports must show that the organisation has made reasonable and material progress towards gender equality.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Ensuring Council makes good progress against the *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025* is vital and represents the best outcome of the community. As such, at least

some of the recommendations made by Rainbow Local Government should be adopted. There are a range of options provided below:

Option 1: Adopt all of the recommended actions from Rainbow Local Government, including:

- Flying the rainbow flag at Council locations;
- Celebrating IDAHOBIT Day (17 May 2023) through talks, flying the rainbow flag, screening of relevant movies or other community events;
- Establishment of an LGBTIQ+ community advisory group; and
- Undertaking Rainbow Accreditation.

It is worth noting that there are some limitations that may prevent us achieving these actions. These include:

- The flagpoles would need to be replaced and the gardens at our offices reconfigured to accommodate extra flag poles. As such, it is recommended that a temporary solution be sought for 2023;
- Consideration should be given to the flying of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags alongside the Rainbow flag. This will need to be discussed with traditional owner groups regarding their support for this;
- Resourcing may not be available to support large scale community events in 2023 but could be considered for 2024; and
- Resourcing may not be available to support undertaking Rainbow Accreditation.

Option 2: Adopt some of the recommended actions from Rainbow Local Government, including:

- Flying the rainbow flag at Council locations;
- Celebrating International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) Day (May 17, 2023) through a small scale community event; and
- Establishment of an LGBTIQ+ community advisory group.

This option could be expanded after 2023 to include more actions recommended by Rainbow Local Government.

Option 3: Do not adopt any of the recommended actions from Rainbow Local Government.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

It is Council's community vision that Towong Shire is *'The ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services relies on communities being welcoming and inclusive'*. As such, public affirmations regarding any aspects of gender and sexual diversity equality will contribute to the sense of inclusion within communities, thereby making them more sustainable.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

A community engagement process was not undertaken specifically for the above actions because of the state-wide consultation process undertaken as part of the *People Matter 2021 report*. Community engagement was undertaken during the preparation of the Council Plan, which includes Councils Community Vision.

Publicly affirming our support of the LGBTIQ+ community is important to ensure everyone feels safe in their communities. The proposed actions will not only signal to our communities our support for the LGBTIQ+ community but will also make staff feel more supported and safer.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

The proposed actions will support continuous improvement within the organisation and our communities by building awareness and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ community members.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

This report was developed in partnership with Rainbow Local Government.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

There will be a budgetary impact in relation to conducting events, procuring new flag poles and reconfiguring landscaping of the gardens at Council offices.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

- *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32*
- *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Action Plan 2020–22*

Council Plans and Policies:

The recommended actions aligns with the following plans:

- *Council Plan 2021-2025*, specifically:

2.11 Support our communities to ensure that Shire places are welcoming to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and LGBTIQ+ communities and are inclusive and connected.

6.7 Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment.

- *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*, specifically:

Goal 2: Our community is inclusive and tolerant of diversity, when people:

2.1. embrace diversity

2.2. recognise the need for gender equality in relationships

2.3. have their mental health and wellbeing well supported

- *Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025*

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council Meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

Publicly affirming our support of the LGBTIQ+ community is important to ensure everyone feels safe in their communities. This is equally important for our staff who may identify as being part of the LGBTIQ+ community. As such, it we will also need to raise staff awareness about this direction to ensure it is well understood and supported.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

12 Asset Management

12.1 Asset Management Report (01/07/0004-DIE)

The Asset Management Report is presented quarterly and will be provided in May 2023.

13 Land Use Planning

13.1 Land Use Planning Report (03/02/0003-DCP)

The Land Use Planning Report is presented quarterly and will be provided in June 2023.

14 Environmental Sustainability

14.1 Environmental Sustainability Report (01/07/0004-DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Rachael Gadd, Director Infrastructure and Environment.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to provide a quarterly update on Environmental Sustainability activities from January to March 2023.

Summary:

Council's environmental sustainability activities have been focused the delivery of the resource recovery station upgrade project, the development of a community education program to progress the waste and recycling transition process, a climate change action plan and leachate removal at the Corryong Landfill.

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Climate Change Action Plan and key recommendations be adopted as presented; and
2. The progress made in other areas of the Environmental Sustainability area be noted.

Attachments:

Appendix 7 – Draft Climate Action Plan

Background/History:

Climate change action plan

Iron Bark Sustainability were engaged to develop a climate change action plan for Council's operations. The report includes several recommendations for further investment to reduce Council's carbon emissions over the next 10 years. The plan is attached for Council's consideration and adoption. Council's decision at the March Council meeting to introduce food and organics collection is one of the key recommendations in the report.

Community recycling education program development

Council officers are currently developing a community information and education program for the upcoming waste and recycling transition. The development of this program is supported by State Government funding under the Kerbside Transition Program and will include information that can be displayed in the home and waste and recycle bins to assist with the correct separation of waste and recycling along with social and print media information. Where high levels of levels of contamination are regularly found in residential bins over the next nine months residents will be sent a reminder letter and may also receive a recycling education visit by a Council officer as the transition progresses.

Upgrade of Resource Recovery Centre facilities

A contractor has been engaged to complete a structural design of a new retaining wall at the Tallangatta Resource Recovery Centre. The new wall will include a modified configuration to accommodate additional skip bins. These new bins will

facilitate glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) drop off. This project is supported by the State Government's Transfer Station Upgrade Fund.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

All environmental sustainability activities have been undertaken in accordance with the service performance principles outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Environmental Protection Act 2017*.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic

The investment in future climate change actions will require an additional budget allocation. Further investigation is required in preparation for the 2024/2025 budget.

Social

The separation of glass will provide opportunities for community groups to use the 10c deposit scheme for fundraising.

Environmental

Actions undertaken to improve the recycling practices will mitigate the impact on the environment and the amount of material that goes to landfill.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The community education process for waste and recycling will engage all community members to help improve general knowledge of recycling separation. This is a new direction for waste services delivery in Towong Shire.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9 (2) (e)):

The Climate Change Action Plan charts a pathway for Towong Shire Council to reduce its emissions over the next decade. Landfill is the greatest source of emissions within Council's corporate inventory, accounting for 75% of total emissions. The

diversion of FOGO from landfill through a dedicated collection service has been estimated to achieve a 30% reduction in Council's waste emissions.

Collaboration (s.9 (2) (f)):

Officers are continuing to work with the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance in relation to environmental and sustainability activities.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

		Mar 2023 YTD (Actual) \$	Mar 2023 YTD (Budget) \$	Mar 2023 YTD (Variance) \$	Mar 2023 YTD (Variance) %	2022/23 Full Year (Budget) \$
	Note					
Income						
Kerbside collection	1	1,199,504	1,188,950	10,554	1%	1,188,950
Waste facilities management		517,973	492,081	25,892	5%	522,081
Total Income		1,717,477	1,681,031	36,446	2%	1,711,031
Expenditure						
Kerbside collection	2	360,968	466,833	105,865	23%	622,444
Waste facilities management	3	413,776	451,994	38,218	8%	602,658
Total Expenditure		774,744	918,827	144,082	16%	1,225,102
Net Income / (Expenditure)		942,733	762,205	180,528	24%	485,929

1. March 2023 YTD down by \$3,556 on December 2022 YTD due to supplementary valuations resulting in reduction to kerbside charges
2. Lower than anticipated recycling collection and garbage truck fuel expenses
3. Lower than anticipated landfill monitoring and bulk bin expenses

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Waste management activities are undertaken in accordance with the following regional and state plans:

- *Recycling Victoria - A New Economy 2020*
- *Regional waste and resource recovery implementation North East Plan 2017*

Council Plans and Policies:

All environmental sustainability activities are undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Sustainability objectives of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* including:

- 5.12 *Develop a climate change action plan (including actions to reduce carbon emissions, electric vehicle charging, etc).*
- 5.13 *Transition waste and recycling services operations as per Victorian Government Circular Economy Strategy to deliver a four bin system for waste and recycling collection including separation of glass, green waste and organics.*
- 5.14 *Invest in community education programs and a waste services survey to improve waste and recycling separation.*
- 5.15 *Investigate options for hardwaste, greenwaste and agricultural waste management e.g silage wrap.*
- 5.16 *Replace the retaining wall at the Tallangatta Transfer Station.*

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(I)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this report in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not Applicable.

Officer's View:

Good progress continues to be made in relation to the Environmental Sustainability priorities of the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

14.2 Forestry Report (03/05/0000-DIE)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Mr Stephen Sjoberg, Technical Officer Environment.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide a six-monthly update on forestry and related activities including a summary of timber harvesting that has been conducted on private land across the Shire.

Summary:

Throughout the Shire, there are significant areas of pine plantations located in state forests and on private land. Where timber harvesting operations occur on private land, Council is responsible for ensuring compliance, as timber production is a defined land use in the Victoria Planning Provisions and associated planning schemes.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachments:

Nil.

Background/History:

Council has a responsibility to ensure environmental compliance relating to forestry operations occurring on private land across the Shire. Compliance work involves inspecting and auditing forestry operations, liaising with forestry owners and the local community. Council has received 13 timber harvesting plans during the first half of the 2022/2023 financial year.

Due to the wet conditions, very little harvesting activity occurred. In the period 1 July to 31 December 2022, 551.5 ha of plantation have been harvested producing an

estimated 166,478 m³ of timber. Of this 146,233 m³ (87.8%) of the volume is clear fall and 20,245 m³ of the volume is thinning.

The inspections below were completed as part of Council's oversight of forestry operations:

- Four inspections of harvesting operations;
- 13 Timber Harvesting Plan reviews;
- Five post haulage road inspections.

Major harvesting operations include those conducted by Hancock Victorian Plantations in the Shelley Railway and Koetong (Emu) areas which commenced harvesting in June 2022 and August 2022 respectively and were completed in January 2023. Harvesting also commenced at Jingellic in September 2022 and is due to be completed in May 2023.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

All forestry activities were conducted in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014* (the Code). The Code outlines the environmental standards for planning and conducting commercial timber harvesting operations and is referenced by the Victorian Planning Provisions.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Not applicable.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

The presence of a viable private plantation industry contributes to the Shire's economic and environmental sustainability.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

The Towong Shire Plantations Committee meets twice yearly and provides a forum for forestry related community issues to be raised and discussed between plantation owners and community representatives. Council representatives have been attending these meetings.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

Not applicable.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

Council officers liaise with the following organisations and groups in relation to planned forestry activities:

- Towong Shire Plantation Committee
- Department Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
- Parks Victoria
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- D & R Henderson
- Agriwealth
- Hancock Victorian Plantations
- VicForests

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Not applicable.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Forestry activities are undertaken in accordance with the following regional, state and national plans:

- *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014*
- *North East Regional Catchment Strategy 2021 - 27*
- *NE Waterway Strategy 2014*
- *North East Community Support Plan 2017*

Council Plans and Policies:

All forestry activities are undertaken in accordance with the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

The Forestry area achieved good progress in relation to the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

15 Economic and Tourism Development

15.1 Economic Development Report (05/01/0164-DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide a quarterly update on Economic Development activities.

Summary:

The attached report provides an update on the activities of the Economic Development team under the Community and Planning Directorate for 1 October 2022 until 30 March 2023.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

Attachment:

Appendix 8 – Economic Development Report.

Background/History:

This report is provided bi-annually.

Relevant Law (s.9(2)(a)):

All economic development activities are undertaken in accordance with the service performance principles outlined in the section 106 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Options – Best Outcomes for the Community (s.9(2)(b)):

Economic development activities are aimed at supporting the economic prosperity of the community.

Sustainability Implications (s.9(2)(c)):

Economic development activities help to provide for the ongoing economic sustainability of the Shire.

Community Engagement (s.9(2)(d)):

Community and stakeholder engagement activities undertaken during this period include:

- Conducting expressions of interest processes for project steering groups for the Bellbridge Boathouse, Mount Elliot Adventure Park and delivery of a range of events; and
- Finalisation of the Agriculture Strategic Plan with the Agriculture Steering Group.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement (s.9(2)(e)):

During the reporting period the economic development team undertook various continuous improvement activities. These included:

- Development of a partnership arrangement with Riverine Plains to support producers to access key programs and research;
- Finalisation of the Mobile and Internet Communications Strategy to attract ongoing investment in improving all aspects of telecommunications;
- Planning for the upcoming Upper Murray Business and Tourism Expo to support local businesses; and
- Development of the new branding and website for the municipality.

Collaboration (s.9(2)(f)):

The team have collaborated with the following organisations throughout the quarter:

- Tourism North East to develop:
 - new road and gravel cycling maps;
 - gravel cycling product; and
 - the revised destination website.

- The Great River Road Artwork Reference Group to short list the artists for delivery of large-scale artwork along the Great River Road; and
- Start Up Shake Up to develop the 'Breaking into Ag Tech' program.

Financial Viability/Budget Impact (s.9(2)(g)):

Budget requirements and availability have been confirmed, grant funding has been sought where possible and all expenditure is being monitored and managed within agreed budget allocations.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies (s.9(2)(h)):

Activities are undertaken in accordance with the following:

- *Tourism North East: Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan 2013-2023*
- *North East Victoria Cycling Optimisation Plan*
- *The Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2010-20*
- *Hume Regional Growth Plan*
- *Victoria's High Country Destination Management Plan 2013-23*
- *Visit Victoria Visitor Economy Strategy Action Plan 2016-20*
- *Lake Hume Land and On-Water Management Plan*
- *Goulburn Murray Water Corporate Plan 2019-20 to 2023-24*
- *Regional Development Victoria: Ovens Murray Regional Partnership roadmap*
- *Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014*
- *Goulburn Murray Water, Corporate Plan 2021-22 to 2025-26*
- *Regional Development Victoria Ovens, Murray Regional Partnership 2019 – 20*
- *Victoria State Government, Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2021*

Council Plans and Policies:

Economic development activities are undertaken in line with Objective 3 of the of the *Council Plan 2021-2025 'Economic and Tourism Development'*.

In addition, activities are undertaken under the following Council plans and policies:

- *Procurement Policy*
- *Municipal Recovery Plan*
- *Our Bellbridge*
- *Towong Shire Economic Development Strategy*
- *Towong Shire Destination Management Plan*
- *Towong Shire Mountain Biking Strategy*

- *Towong Shire Strategic Plan for Agriculture*
- *Towong Shire Mobile and Internet Communications Strategy*
- *Towong Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan*
- *Upper Murray 2030 Masterplan*
- *Upper Murray 2030 Agriculture Statement*

Transparency of Decision (s.9(2)(i)):

It is the officer's view that it is appropriate to consider this matter in a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Risk Assessment:

Not applicable.

Officer's View:

The team is progressing well with the priorities outlined in the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

16 Councillor Reports

No Councillor reports had been received at the time of agenda preparation.

17 Urgent Business

18 Committee Minutes

There are no Committee Minutes for consideration.

19 Council Policies (10/01/0007-CEO)

19.1 Policies for Review and Adoption

The following policies are tabled for review at [Appendix 9](#). Comments should be provided to the nominated Council officer by 24 May 2023:

- Local Law No 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Community and Engagement
- Debt Collection Policy
- COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy

20 Sealing of Documents

20.1 Section 173 Agreement –Towong Shire Council and Trevor W Jones & Family Pty Ltd and Samsons Gully Pty Ltd (DCP)

Disclosure of Interests (S.130):

This report was prepared by Ms Amanda Pagan, Director Community and Planning.

At the time of preparation of this report, the officer did not have a general or material conflict of interest in any matter to which the report or advice relates.

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to sign and seal a Section 173 Agreement.

Summary:

Planning Permit 2021/023, issued on 1 June 2022, allowed for the subdivision of the land into nine lots in accordance with the endorsed plans at Lot 1 TP848660N (Volume 08853 Folio 601), CA 6 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04581 Folio 004), CA 7 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04177 Folio 229), CA 8 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04251 Folio 031) Trewella Road Talgarno.

Condition 4 of the permit requires:

“Before a statement of compliance is issued, the owner must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority under Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to provide for the following:

a. No buildings may be constructed outside of the building envelopes shown on the plans endorsed under this permit.

b. All wastewater disposal must be contained within the wastewater disposal envelopes shown on the plans endorsed under this permit.

c. The land must not be further subdivided so as to create any additional lots.

The owner must pay the costs of preparing, lodging, and registering the agreement and any subsequent amendment, removal or other dealing associated with the agreement. The agreement must be registered on the certificate of title for the land.

The Parties acknowledge and agree that this Agreement has been entered into for the following reasons:

- Towong Shire Council would not have consented to issue of Statement of Compliance without requiring this Agreement; and
- The Landowner has elected to enter into this Agreement in order to take the benefit of the Permit.

This agreement may be ended wholly or in part or as to any part of the land by the Responsible Authority (Council) and all persons who are bound by any covenant in the agreement. The agreement must run with the land so that all successors in title are bound by the agreement. This agreement will be prepared to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority and must be registered on title in accordance with Section 181 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The Agreement has been prepared accordingly and requires sealing.

Recommendation:

That the use of the Common Seal be authorised in accordance with *Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties* for the purpose of signing the Section 173 Agreement, relating to the land described as Lot 1 TP848660N (Volume 08853 Folio 601), CA 6 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04581 Folio 004), CA 7 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04177 Folio 229), CA 8 Section D Parish of Berringa (Volume 04251 Folio 031) Trewella Road Talgarno has been drafted in accordance with the requirements of Planning Permit 2021/023.

Council Resolution:

To be resolved at the Council meeting.

21 Confidential

Section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020* declares that meetings are to be open to the public unless the following specified circumstances apply:

- (1) *A Council or delegated committee must keep a meeting open to the public unless the Council or delegated committee considers it necessary to close the meeting to the public because a circumstance specified in subsection (2) applies.*
- (2) *The circumstances are –*
 - (a) *the meeting is to consider confidential information; or*
 - (b) *security reasons; or*
 - (c) *it is necessary to do so to enable the meeting to proceed in an orderly manner.*
- (3) *If the circumstance specified in subsection (2)(b) or (2)(c) applies, the meeting can only be closed to the public if the Council or delegated committee has made arrangements to enable the proceedings of the meeting to be viewed by members of the public as the meeting is being held.*
- (4) *For the purposes of subsection (3), the arrangements may include provision to view the proceedings on the Internet or on closed circuit television.*
- (5) *If a Council or delegated committee determines that a meeting is to be closed to the public to consider confidential information, the Council or delegated committee must record in the minutes of the meeting that are available for public inspection –*
 - (a) *the ground or grounds for determining to close the meeting to the public by reference to the grounds specified in the definition of confidential information in section 3(1); and*
 - (b) *an explanation of why the specified ground or grounds applied.*

As defined in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* "confidential information" means the following information –

- (a) *Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released;*
- (b) *Security information, being information that if released is likely to endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person;*
- (c) *Land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values;*

- (d) *Law enforcement information, being information which if released would be reasonably likely to prejudice the investigation in an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person;*
- (e) *Legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies;*
- (f) *Personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;*
- (g) *Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that –*
 - (i) *relates to trade secrets; or*
 - (ii) *if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage;*
- (h) *Confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a);*
- (i) *Internal arbitration information, being information specified in section 145;*
- (j) *Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information, being information specified in section 169;*
- (k) *Information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information for the purposes of this definition; and*

Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.

There are no confidential items for consideration.

Informal Meetings of Councillors

Chapter 8 Section A1 of Towong Shire Council Governance Rules

Date	Names of all Councillors and Council Staff attending	Matters considered	Conflict of Interest disclosures made by a Councillor	Did disclosing Councillor leave the meeting?
1 February 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Woolaston Ms Pagan	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A
8 February 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Pagan Ms Curtis Ms Woolaston Ms Gadd Mr Cornea Mr Dufty	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A
22 February 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Pagan Ms Gadd	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A

8 March 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Pagan Ms Gadd	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A
15 March 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Curtis Ms Gadd	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A
22 March 2023	Cr Whitehead Cr Wortmann Cr Anderson Cr Scales Cr Dikschei Ms Phelps Ms Gadd	Councillor Workshop See attached	No	N/A

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 1 February 2023 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

11.00am Update on matters raised previously/Councillor questions

11.30am Special Council Meeting

12.30pm Lunch

1.00pm Councillor feedback/issues/questions (spreadsheet):

Cr Whitehead:

?date Rates land enquiries

Cr Wortmann:

?date Update on James Duff

?date Talgarno Tennis Courts

?date Jarvis rates issue

Cr Anderson:

Cr Dikschei:

25 Jan Creation of a bike path from Colac Colac to Cudgewa

25 Jan Walwa Recreation Reserve

25 Jan Closed sign at wayside stop Mt Mittamatite Caravan Park

25 Jan Parking in drop off zone at Corryong Post Office

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Cr Scales:

25 Jan Give It funding

2.00pm Director Corporate and Organisational Development
(Emma Woolaston)

Update on insurance claim

An update regarding the insurer's assessment of Council's claim for damages relating to the 2019/20 bushfires was provided.

Employment update

The Director informed the Councillors that she had resigned to take up a new role in Perth closer to family. She shared her appreciation for the Towong workplace and the leadership that the Councillors had provided.

2.30pm Director Community and Planning (Amanda Pagan)

Neighbourhood House year in review

A short film capturing the 2022 activities supported by Tallangatta Neighbourhood House was presented.

Trewalla Road subdivision

An update on the progress of the subdivision was provided.

Tankards Road subdivision

An update on the progress of the subdivision was provided.

3.30pm Chief Executive Officer (Juliana Phelps)

An update was provided in relation to:

- Staff matters
- Employee Recognition Policy
- CEO Leave request

4.00pm Councillor only time

4.30pm Close

Future items for Workshops:

Rainbow Local Government 22 February 2023

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 8 February 2023 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

11.30am Councillor only time

12.00pm Director Community and Planning (*Amanda Pagan*)

The Director presented the proposed distribution of the new Resilience and Recovery Fund through Emergency Recovery Victoria.

12.30pm Working lunch (continuation of discussion re: Bushfire recovery budget)

1.30pm Councillor feedback/issues/questions (spreadsheet):

Cr Whitehead:

Towong Hill Road 40km/hr speed limit request

Cr Wortmann:

7 Feb Cudgewa flooding issue

7 Feb Wisers Creek Road

7 Feb Matonga Street, Tallangatta

Granya Road bridge

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Cr Anderson:

Nil

Cr Dikschei:

Unused road reserve – purchase enquiry
Corryong airport – old plaque

Cr Scales:

7 Feb Dartmouth Progress Association issues:

1. Hall
 - Footpath grinding
 - Extras eg Cleaning Hall Gutters
 - Sewer
2. Trees (Recreation Reserve)
 - Trimming
 - Payment for watering of trees
3. Walking tracks, gutters and wash aways
4. Roadside tables at wayside stops
5. Mowing of wayside stops
6. Free camping on block below hall
7. Splash park consultation – when
8. Town maintenance contracts
9. Volunteers
10. Grant opportunity – Lake Banimboola – Building Permit

2.00pm **Communication** (*Georgina Curtis*)

An update was provided on:

- Budget consultation
- Facebook activity
- eNewsletter

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

2.30pm Director Corporate and Organisational Development

(Emma Woolaston)

An update was provided on:

- Dangerous dog declaration
- Approval process for new right of interment holder
- Financial statements and Annual Report

3.00pm Director Infrastructure and Environment *(Rachael Gadd)*

An update was provided on:

- Waste and recycling tender draft report *(Anthony Dufty)*
- Towong boardwalk draft report *(Vilfred Cornea)*
- Digouts map and funding approach
- Community info session - Cudgewa Planning Permit – Avenue of Honour

3.45pm Chief Executive Officer *(Juliana Phelps)*

An update was provided on:

- Colac Colac Caravan Park – kiosk/bike hub
- Staff update
- Policy review schedule
- Tallangatta parking
- Director recruitment

5.00pm Close

Future items for Workshops:

Rainbow Local Government 22 February 2023

CNC meeting with Council 22 February 2023

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 22 February 2023 - Corryong

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

09:30am Councillor only time

10:00am Rainbow Local Government

Virtual meeting with Dr Sean Mulcahy, Jan Farell (Victorian Pride Lobby's Rainbow Local Government Campaign), and Damien-Stevens Todd (Goulburn Valley Pride).

10.20am Ms Debbie Monteny

10.30am Council Meeting

12.30pm Lunch

1:00pm Councillor feedback/issues/questions (spreadsheet):

Cr Whitehead:

MFSRBF storage of toilet trailers
Corryong Airport Arch

Cr Wortmann:

01 Feb – Burrowye and Koetong mobile phone towers
15 Feb – Walwa Recreation Reserve CFA vehicle shed

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

15 Feb – Recovery and Resilience Funding for solar power/batteries/static water supply
 17 Feb - Georges Creek Road and Murray River Road intersection - Regional Roads
 20 Feb – Sealing of Wises Creek Road
 20 Feb – Firebrace Road Granya maintenance request
 21 Feb – Request for Council to meeting with Corryong Project Managers
 21 Feb – Update on Peekaboo Lease and Childcare
 21 Feb – LRCI Program Phase 4 money allocation

Cr Anderson:

17 Feb – Olson St Bethanga works and water issues
 17 Feb – Beardmore/Olson St Bethanga nature strip

Cr Dikschei:

Climate leaders forum 10 March
 Corryong airport – old plaque

Cr Scales:

Disability Support Pension – Concession rates

1.30pm

Corryong CNC

Meeting with Sara Jenkins and Board member Thea Newton

2.00pm

Councillor feedback/issues/questions (continued)

2.30pm

Director Community and Planning (Amanda Pagan)

Planning permit fee waiver

A summary of the recent request for a permit fee waiver was provided

Planning permit refusal – extension of time

Deferred to the next workshop, pending further advice.

Placemaking project

The timelines and community engagement activities were discussed.

Tallangatta Structure Plan

A brief summary on the progress against the Tallangatta Structure Plan development was provided.

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Country Football Netball grant round

An update on the latest CFNC grant round and prospective applications was provided.

Upper Murray Agricultural Field Day funding request

A summary of the recent request to support the Upper Murray Agricultural Field Day was discussed.

3.00pm **Director Infrastructure and Environment** (*Rachael Gadd*)

An update was provided in relation to:

- Triangles Irrigation Tender
- Triangles Toilet Block Tender
- Corryong CBD Tender
- Kerbside Waste Reform Report

3.45pm **Chief Executive Officer** (*Juliana Phelps*)

An update was provided in relation to:

- Director recruitment
- Grants Commission visit 10 March
- Distribution of policy list to determine frequency of policy reviews

4.00pm **Close**

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 8 March 2023 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below.

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

- 9.30am** **Update on matters raised previously/Councillor questions**
Councillor request spreadsheet
- 11.30am** **Place Making Project Meeting**
Meeting with Clarke Hopkins Clarke
- 12:30pm** **Working Lunch** (continuation of Place Making Project meeting)
- 1:30pm** **Special Council Meeting**
- 2.30pm** **Councillor feedback/issues/questions (spreadsheet):**
- Cr Whitehead:**
Bill Tilley - Bethanga meeting update
CFA Youth Group
- Cr Wortmann:**
28 Feb – Mobile phone tower planning permits
Drages Road
Granya Cemetery – thank you

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Cr Anderson:

1 Mar – Lane off Martin St Bethanga Road Reserve

Cr Dikschei:

21 Feb – Enforcement of chemical spraying and damage to native vegetation

Cr Scales:

Ownership of new amenities adjacent to Dartmouth Hall

3.30pm Tallangatta Structure Plan meeting

Meeting with Elke Cummins

4.00pm Chief Executive Officer (Juliana Phelps)

The CEO provided a verbal update on:

- Albury Wodonga Health - Hospital
- Laneway behind Akuna
- Enforcement matters
- Locality signage
- Organisation structure
- Director Recruitment and interim arrangements
- additional bins at Tallangatta showground
- Commission of Inquiry report – Moira Shire Council
- Staff update

4.20pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (Rachael Gadd)

The Director provided a verbal update on:

- Capital Works 2023/24
- Councillor vehicles
- Fish cleaning station – feedback
- Wises Creek Road dust strip
- Completion dates - Council Plan priorities
- Submission to Inquiry into the implications of severe weather events on the national regional, rural, and remote road network

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

4.40pm **Director Community and Planning** (*Amanda Pagan*)

The Director provided a verbal update on:

- Recovery funding allocation
- Planning permit turnaround times
- Draft Rainbow Local Government recommendations

5.00pm **Close**

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 15 March 2023 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below.

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

2.30pm Councillor only time

2.45pm Communications (*Georgina Curtis*)
An update was provided in relation to:
- Communications activities
- Budget consultation

3.30pm Councillor feedback/requests (spreadsheet)

Cr Whitehead:
Bill Tilley meeting
Corryong Early Years

Cr Wortmann:

Cr Anderson:
12 Mar – Medical procedures travel assistance

Cr Dikschei:
Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance – Climate Leaders Forum

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

13 Mar – Human Resources Information
13 Mar – Donaldson St Corryong retaining wall

Cr Scales:

7 Mar – Eskdale Coffee Van concrete slab
7 Mar – Insurance policy for Dartmouth Hall toilet block

4.00pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (*Rachael Gadd*)

The Director provided a verbal update on:

- Capital Works 2022/23
- Waste Reform
- Towong Boardwalk

5.30pm Chief Executive Officer (*Juliana Phelps*)

The CEO provided a verbal update on:

- Victorian Grants Commission visit
- Corryong Cemetery
- Peninsula Visit
- Staff leave

6.00pm Meal break

6.30pm Albury Wodonga Health meeting

Meeting with AWH Board Chair Mr Matt Burke OAM and CEO Mr Bill Appleby

7.30pm Close

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Meeting Record

Councillor Workshop

Wednesday 22 March 2023 - Tallangatta

Attendees: Crs Whitehead, Wortmann, Anderson, Scales and Dikschei
Juliana Phelps (Chief Executive Officer) and officers as listed below.

Apologies: Nil

Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest: Nil

12.00pm **Regional Waste Tender**

12.30pm **Working Lunch – Update on matters raised previously/Councillor questions**

1.30pm **Council Meeting**

2.30pm **Councillor feedback/requests (spreadsheet)**

Cr Whitehead:

Nil

Cr Wortmann:

19 Mar – Request for briefing on flood damage claim
Fire Prevention – FARS

Cr Anderson:

14 Mar – Talgarno School toilets
15 Mar – Bethanga Pub flood damage

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

15 Mar – Tallangatta history information

Cr Dikschei:

HR reporting

Exit interviews

Peakaboo meeting

Cr Scales:

14 Mar – Commission of Inquiry report - Moira Shire Council

3.00pm Albury Wodonga Health Hospital Development

Meeting with CEO Matt Hyde and Cr Ron Mildren

3.45pm Director Infrastructure and Environment (*Rachael Gadd*)

The Director provided Councillors with an update regarding the Cudgewa Avenue of Honour

4.00pm Chief Executive Officer (*Juliana Phelps*)

The CEO provided a verbal briefing on the following:

- Budget assumptions
- Understanding Finances training for Councillors with Alpine Councillors
- Strzelecki memorial review of decision

4.30pm Corryong Cemeteries Trust Meeting

5.30pm Close

Our Community Vision

Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: Welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

Quarterly Corporate and Organisational Development Report January – March 2023

Following the resignation of the former director an interim director was appointed in March 2023. The recruitment process is well underway; the candidate pool has been shortlisted and interviews scheduled to be completed by the end of April.

The focus in the interim has been finance focused, with our new finance manager and accountant working to clear the remaining issues from the audit for 2022 year-end, preparing the 2023/24 budget and preparing for 2023 year-end in the same time window. The compound effect of these significant tasks is driving a prioritisation of what can be achieved.

Information Technology

System security is being enhanced with a firewall upgrade project; the existing firewall has reached end of life and will no longer be supported for security updates. The firewall is essential to protect the security posture of the network. Firewalls are the first line of defence against unauthorised access and can prevent the spread of malware, viruses and other malicious attacks. Upgrading will provide several benefits, including increased functionality, improved performance and enhanced security features. Telstra was selected as the vendor for new hardware and professional services and their experts will be engaged to review the current configuration and assist in the deployment to the new hardware.

Planning is underway to replace our email server (MS Exchange V2013) which has also reached end of life and will no longer be supported or patched for security flaws. This public facing server upgrading will provide several benefits, including increased functionality, improved performance and enhanced security features. The newest version has been procured and planning is underway for the upgrade.

IT Security Audit –Dialogue is continuing with the Governance Officer on implementing the required policies/procedures and tighter security controls on a prioritised basis.

Governance and Strategy

Our new Governance Officer commenced with Council in January and has been focused on supporting the Director Corporate and Organisational Development and Chief Executive Officer in various governance and executive support matters. This has included reviewing Council's delegations and authorisations, updating internal

policies, overseeing Council's compliance with statutory obligations, as well as providing support in preparing reports for Council Meeting Agenda's.

The Council extended the term for an Audit and Risk Committee member for an additional year to provide continuity, as two of the Committee members are due to expire in the first quarter of the 2023/24 financial year. Recruitment for the new Committee members will commence over April/May.

Communications and Engagement

Across the quarter, the team developed and delivered communications and engagement activities across 60 projects and initiatives, including the adoption of the Agriculture Strategic Plan, site selection for the Corryong Skate Park and the development of the marketing and promotion plan for the Great River Road.

As a means of diversifying communications channels, we launched Council's e-newsletter with subscriber numbers almost doubling between launch in January and the end of March.

In terms of social media, followers of Council's Facebook page continued to grow, while overall reach and engagement remained stable.

Customer Service

Across the quarter, the team shifted focus from the documentation of processes to the development of training documentation to support these workflows. This training will ensure a consistent and optimal level of service for customer interactions across all service areas.

In addition, the delivery of internal training sessions commenced for all staff to build their knowledge and expertise of Council's Customer Relationship Management system.

Organisational Development

The focus for this quarter has been on our Evolve Leadership Program; we have 20 employees from all departments participating in a five month course and upcoming sessions for more staff next quarter. The course is a holistic approach to leadership and how you can be the best leader within yourself, with a focus on meditation. With three sessions held so far, it has been a wonderful and enriching experience with positive feedback from many attendees.

Finance

Our new finance manager and new accountant commenced in January, both hitting the ground running on the finalising the audit for year-end 2022 and associated financial statements, budget preparation for 2023/24, and preparation for year-end 2023. Both bring great skills and experience to the organisation as they navigate the gaps in corporate knowledge associated with extended vacancies. The reliance on external consultants is presenting challenges in meeting the desired timeframes for the finalisation of the previous audit. At the time of writing we are waiting for the final review by the Victorian Auditor General to achieve clearance to sign the 2022 year end accounts.

The new team are making strong inroads on both the headline tasks and a multitude of process improvements identified through fresh perspectives.

Local Laws

Following the departure of our second ranger who commenced in October we have completed another recruitment drive with success. Our new second ranger will commence at the start of May.

Animal registration renewal is underway and unfortunately, we saw a few technical errors on fees being charged. Through a proactive intervention, we have updated the system to reflect correct pricing and advised all those that have been impacted. Customers have been understanding of the billing errors, some musing over the miracle that may have been their pet 'recovering' from previous sterilisation surgery!

Annual Report

2021/22

Towong Shire...The ideal place to be.

Front cover image: taken from the Great River Road about 2kms east of the Wymah Ferry.

The Great River Road is set between two of Australia's most beloved landscape icons, the Murray River and the Snowy Mountains. Following the Murray River, the 153km road provides unique views of the Upper Murray mountains and valleys, with the spectacular Snowy Mountains as the backdrop.

Council's Great River Road Project aims to make the route a premier destination for drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, bushwalkers and campers, and is made possible by a \$5 million grant from the Victorian Government's *Bushfire Recovery Regional Economic Stimulus and Resilience Fund*.

Contents

Annual Report	1
Introduction.....	7
Welcome.....	7
About Towong Shire	8
Facts, statistics and characteristics	9
About our organisation	10
A message from the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer	11
The year in review.....	13
A snapshot.....	13
Major capital works.....	16
Financial summary	18
Our Council.....	21
Councillors.....	21
Our people.....	23
Management team.....	23
Organisational structure.....	24
Workforce statistics.....	25
Equal employment opportunity	25
Our performance.....	26
Planning and accountability framework.....	26
Reporting on delivery of the Council Plan.....	26
1. Asset management.....	27
2. Community wellbeing.....	33
3. Economic and tourism development.....	42
4. Land use.....	47
5. Environmental sustainability	52
6. Organisational improvement.....	58
Governance and management arrangements	65
Governance	65
Governance and management checklist.....	70
Statutory information	74
Performance Statement.....	77

Certification of the Performance Statement.....	107
Auditor General’s Report – Performance Statement	108
Financial Statements	109
Certification of the Financial Statements.....	109
Auditor General’s Report - Financial Statements.....	110
Comprehensive Income Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2022	112
Balance Sheet As at 30 June 2022	114
Statement of Changes in Equity For the Year Ended 30 June 2022	116
Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2022.....	118
Statement of Capital Work For the Year Ended 30 June 2022.....	119
Notes for the Financial Report	121

Contact Information

Tallangatta Customer Service Centre

32 Towong Street
Tallangatta VIC 3700

Corryong Customer Service Centre

76 Hanson Street
Corryong VIC 3707

Phone: 1300 365 222 (Mon-Fri 8.30am-5pm)

Email: info@towong.vic.gov.au

Post: PO Box 55 Tallangatta VIC 3700

Introduction

Welcome

Council is committed to transparent reporting and accountability to the community. This Annual Report provides a summary of Council's operations and performance for 2021/22, including a summary of financial performance as well as progress against the strategic objectives set out in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

1. Asset Management
2. Community Wellbeing
3. Economic and Tourism Development
4. Land Use
5. Environmental Sustainability
6. Organisational Improvement

This report also contains a snapshot of significant events, achievements and changes that occurred throughout the year together with audited financial statements, performance indicators and other information as prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Towong Shire Council acknowledges with appreciation the support of the Australian Government and the Victorian Government.



Australian Government



About Towong Shire



Towong Shire, in far North East Victoria, enjoys some of Australia's most pristine environments. Our unique wilderness areas, lakes, rivers and streams create diverse landscapes that are enjoyed by around 6,183* residents and many more visitors across an area of 6,675 square kilometres.

Our municipality includes many diverse townships and localities including Bellbridge, Bullioh, Berringama, Bethanga, Biggara, Burrowye, Corryong, Cudgewa, Dartmouth, Eskdale, Granya, Guys Forest, Koetong, Lucyvale, Mitta Mitta, Mt Alfred, Nariel, Old Tallangatta, Shelley, Talgarno, Tallandoon, Tallangatta, Tallangatta Valley, Thologolong, Tintaldra, Towong and Walwa.

The economy of the region revolves around a rich agricultural sector, tourism and timber production and processing. Approximately two-thirds of businesses in the Shire are in the agricultural and forestry industries.

*2021 Census

Facts, statistics and characteristics

Population (2021 census)	6,183
Area ¹	6,675 sq km
Property assessments	4,529
Roads and transport	
Council roads	1,183 km
Arterial roads	483 km
Number of registered vehicles ¹	7,342
Employed people who travel to work by car ¹	60.2%
Economy	
Businesses ²	925
Employment participation rate ¹	55.8%
Median weekly household income ¹	\$846
Individuals and households	
Median age ¹	52
Average household size ¹	2.2
Social and health	
Voluntary work through an organisation or group ¹	27.9%
Immunisation rates for children under 27 months ³	94%
Pre-school or kindergarten participation ⁴	100%
Proportion of adults who are sufficiently physically active ⁵	69%

Data sources:

¹ Census 2021, Australian Bureau of Statistics (<https://dbr.abs.gov.au>)

² Remplan; <https://www.remplan.com.au/economy/>

³ Murray Public Health Network, Australian Immunisation Register 2021

⁴ Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) 2021

⁵ Victorian Population Health Survey (VPHS) 2017

Unless otherwise indicated, statistics are taken from the latest year available. The statistics on this page are presented for information purposes and may differ from the data sources used for performance reporting purposes.

About our organisation

Towong Shire Council is led by the Community Vision, Council Mission and Council Values.

The Community Vision describes the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality over the next ten years and was developed based on comprehensive community engagement undertaken in 2021 as part of the development of the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

The Council Mission expresses the core purpose of the Council and guides our Councillors and staff in the pursuit of the Community Vision. It is underpinned by our Values which guide how we work with one another, our communities and stakeholders.

Community Vision	Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.
Council Mission	To provide strong leadership and to work with our communities to enhance their social, economic and environmental wellbeing.

Council Values

Respect	We will listen and consider other perspectives and treat each other with courtesy.
Integrity	We will be honest with strong moral principles.
Pride	We will always take care in what we do.
Teamwork	We will help others to achieve by being positive, enthusiastic and confident.

A message from the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer

It is with pleasure that we present the 2021/22 Annual Report.

2021/22 was once again a year of challenges, the storms of January 2022, along with ongoing recovery from the 2019/20 bushfires and the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted us all. We're proud to reflect on how our communities have pulled together and how our staff have been able to deliver some terrific outcomes for our Shire.

We were excited to adopt a new four-year *Council Plan* and Community Vision following a robust community engagement process.

*Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be:
welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities
with quality facilities and services.*

We continued to advocate strongly to the State and Federal Governments to support our priorities in pursuit of the Community Vision. As a small council, securing their financial support is essential to us being able to deliver our projects and programs while maintaining our financial viability. We play a key role in advocating for funding for both Council services as well as services provided by other agencies, often teaming our advocacy efforts with other local agencies and groups for the best chances of success. As a result of our ongoing advocacy efforts, we secured \$13 million towards projects in 2021/22 including:

- Lake Hume Masterplan
- Corryong Circuit Trail – Stage One
- Great River Road – Stage Two
- Walking track upgrade in Eskdale and Bellbridge

We also secured nearly \$10 million for projects in 2022/23 and beyond.

After almost two years of COVID-19 related delays, it was exciting to see the completion of some long-term projects including:

- Tallangatta Holiday Park - a project that has been in the works since 2014 with the development of the Tallangatta Holiday Park Masterplan
- Georges Creek Road - resulting in improved connectivity between the Talgarno and Bellbridge areas through to the Murray Valley Highway and Tallangatta.

We delivered the final round of our Community Grants program with support of the Federal Government's Bushfire Recovery Program and the State Government's Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Program. Across four rounds we were able to support bushfire recovery projects including community events, equipment purchases and community facility upgrades.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our community – your resilience, grit and sheer determination has never been more evident. It is these characteristics that drive us to continue our work in delivering your Vision.

Finally, a thank you to all staff for their commitment and dedication to delivering services and projects to our community, over what was yet another challenging 12 months. We look forward to continuing to support our community into the future.



Cr Andrew Whitehead
Mayor



Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer

The year in review

A snapshot

July 2021

New mobile towers for Burrowye and Koetong announced

We welcomed the news that two new mobile towers would be built in Burrowye and Koetong as part of the Australian Government's Mobile Black Spot Program.

Connectivity is vitally important across our municipality and this was a great result for our communities. Our thanks goes to Helen Haines MP for her ongoing efforts in supporting the work of Council and our communities in advocating for improved telecommunications in Towong Shire.

August 2021

Funding secured for Playles Hill, Corryong

Council was pleased to secure \$500,000 in funding from the State Government to support the redevelopment of Playles Hill in Corryong.

Driven by the Playles Hill Working Group the redevelopment will provide a place for locals and visitors to reflect and reconnect. Key elements of the redevelopment include visitor facilities, a viewing platform and shade structure, park furniture, walking tracks and signage.

September 2021

Community consultation on Sport and Recreation Strategy

We launched a project to develop a *Sport and Recreation Strategy* to guide the development of sport and recreation infrastructure and initiatives over the next 10 years. The project considered how Council can positively influence greater participation, active recreation and social connections.

Community consultation was undertaken with local sporting associations, clubs and community members through a survey, listening posts and onsite meetings.

October 2021

Adoption of our Community Vision

Following a comprehensive community engagement process resulting in over 500 individual pieces of feedback, we adopted our first Community Vision - Towong Shire will be the ideal place to be: welcoming, vibrant and diverse communities with quality facilities and services.

To help us deliver on this Vision we also adopted a series of key strategic documents that provide the roadmap for Council, including the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, *Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* and *Financial Plan 2021-2031*.

November 2021

Community grant recipients announced

We delivered the fourth and final round of our Community Grants program with the support of the Federal Government's Bushfire Recovery Program and the State Government's Community Recovery and Resilience Grants Program. Across the four rounds we were able to support bushfire recovery projects including community events, the purchasing of equipment and upgrading of community facilities.

December 2021

Refurbished Tallangatta Pool unveiled for the swimming season

With a \$200,000 grant from the Federal Government and a \$125,000 commitment from Council a refurbished swimming pool was ready for the summer season.

The refurbishment included an upgrade to the main pool to a modern 'wet deck' design with a flat edge, replacement of the raised concrete edge for improved visibility and leak protection, installation of a vinyl liner, and repairs to the filtration system.

January 2022

Australia Day

Council, in partnership with local community groups, recognised the achievements of community members at the Australia Day Community Award Ceremonies across the Shire on 26 January 2022.

The events were a welcome opportunity to come together and celebrate as a community after a challenging couple of years and gave an opportunity for communities to recognise some of their own.

February 2022

Funding announced to deliver the Lake Hume Master Plan

The Minister for Regional Development, the Hon Minister Mary-Anne Thomas and Minister for Emergency Services and Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes joined Cr Whitehead and Cr Anderson to announce \$120,000 in funding to deliver of the Lake Hume Master Plan.

A transformational project for Towong Shire, the Lake Hume Master Plan will provide the direction for future development on and around Lake Hume.

March 2022

Bluey and Bingo visit Corryong and Tallangatta

In possibly the highlight of the year for our youngest community members we welcomed Bluey and Bingo to Corryong and Tallangatta. It was a day of smiles and laughter only made possible by

the support of the CRCs from Berringama/Lucyvale, Corryong, Cudgewa, Nariel Valley, Thowgla, Tintaldra and Walwa, the Berringa Peninsula Community Network, Tallangatta Neighbourhood Centre, the Upper Murray Football Netball League and volunteers from Bushfire Recovery Victoria and Rotary.

April 2022

Corryong Circuit Trail construction commenced

Supported by \$750,000 in State Government and \$250,000 of Federal Government funding we commenced work on the Corryong Circuit Trail project.

The trail provides an all-abilities pathway for pedestrians and cyclists, providing valuable recreation options for residents and visitors. It also delivers wayfinding signage directing users off the circuit to places of significance.

May 2022

Welcome Baby Ceremony

We welcomed 35 new babies into the Upper Murray community at the Health and Wellness Fair delivered by Corryong Health. It was a day of family fun with pony rides, face painting, balloon creations and free car restraint checks, as well as community and health information.

June 2022

Economic Development Strategy and Destination Management Plan adopted

Following a robust community consultation process we adopted our *Economic Development Strategy* and *Destination Management Plan*.

The *Economic Development Strategy* provides strategic direction for future business development, investment attraction and sustainable growth in the municipality, while the *Destination Management Plan* guides development and growth of the visitor economy, supporting a prosperous local tourism industry.

Major capital works

Great River Road – Stage Two

\$2,055,263 (in 2021/22)

Works continued on the Great River Road – the premier touring experience along the Murray River. Stage two works saw construction commence on wayside stops with seating and viewing platforms as well as walking trails in Walwa, Jingellic and Tintalra. Preparatory works also commenced for the development of four sculptures as well as wayfinding and interpretive signage.

The project was funded by a \$5 million grant from the Victorian Government's Bushfire Recovery Regional Economic Stimulus and Resilience Fund.

Georges Creek Road Upgrades

\$1,022,387

The upgrades to Georges Creek Road were completed, including the widening and upgrading of approximately 1.8km of sealed surface from Murray River Road to the end of the existing seal, and an upgrade to the intersection at Murray River Road.

These works were supported by \$805,392 in State Government funding and marked the final stage of a project that has resulted in improved connectivity between the Talgarno and Bellbridge areas to the Murray Valley Highway and Tallangatta.

Tallangatta Holiday Park - Stage Two

\$660,890 (in 2021/22)

Stage two of the Tallangatta Holiday Park transformation was completed, providing a more relaxing and comfortable stay for families. Works included upgrades to internal roads, new lighting, improvements to the existing toilet block, a sealed walking path along the foreshore, replacement of the pine bollards on the park boundary with rock and chain, and new blinds for the camp kitchen.

The project was supported by \$500,000 in funding from the State Government and delivered the final stage of the Tallangatta Holiday Park Masterplan.

Corryong Circuit Trail – Stage One

\$362,904 (in 2021/22)

Supported by \$750,000 in State Government and \$250,000 of Federal Government funding, stage one of the Corryong Circuit Trail was completed. The trail provides an all-abilities pathway for pedestrians and cyclists, providing valuable recreation options for residents and visitors. It also delivers wayfinding signage directing users off the circuit to places of significance.

The trail extends around the outer streets of Corryong and connects Strezlecki Way to Galleon Park. The total cost of the project is \$1,250,000 with Stage two scheduled in 2022/23.

Bullioh and Cudgewa Netball Court Upgrades

\$236,695

Upgrades to the Bullioh and Cudgewa netball courts were completed with the contribution of \$100,000 in State Government and \$200,000 of Federal Government funding respectively.

In Cudgewa, works included the reconstruction of the netball courts, surfacing and line marking, new netball goal posts, lighting and fencing. In Bullioh, works included the reconstruction and surfacing of netball courts at the Wyebooboo Recreation Reserve.

Financial summary

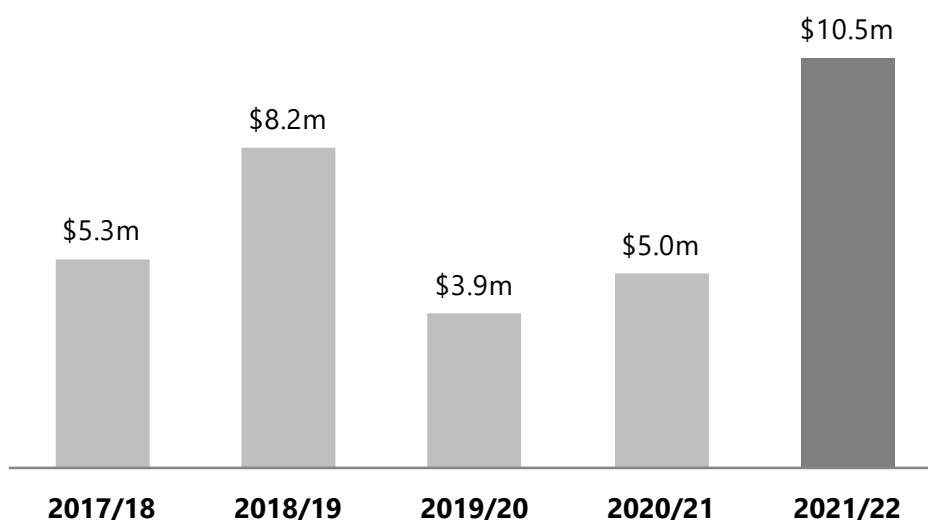
Operating result

Our Financial Statements for 2021/22 show that we achieved a surplus of \$10.5 million which was \$9.3 million higher than expected. This was primarily due to:

- the receipt of operating grants that were unanticipated at the time that the budget was prepared (\$7.4 million)
- the reimbursement of disaster recovery costs through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (\$0.9 million)
- lower than anticipated employee costs due to vacant positions throughout the year (\$0.9 million).

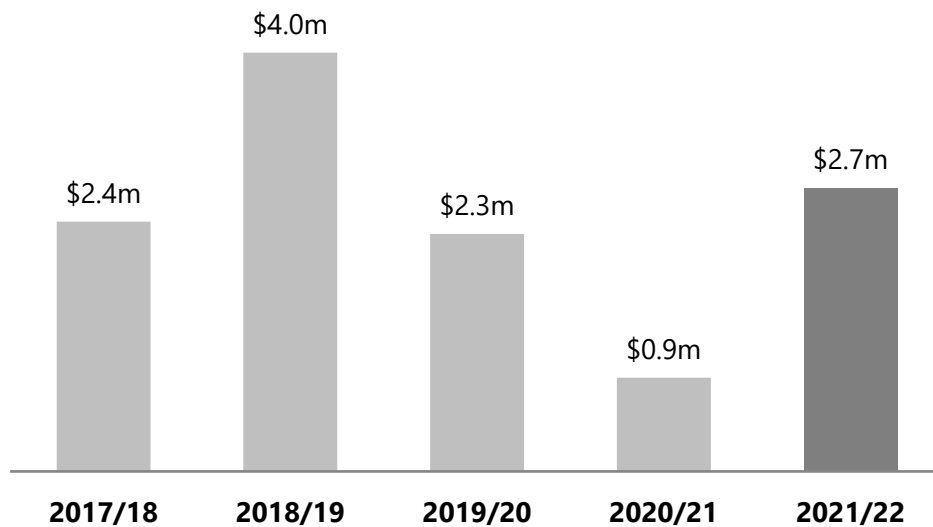
In relation to grants, major factors included the early receipt of 75% or \$3.8 million of the 2022/23 Financial Assistance Grants allocation, and the receipt of an additional \$1.9 million in Bushfire Recovery funding over what had been included in the budget.

A comparison of **operating results** from 2017/18 to 2021/22 is provided in the graph below.



Adjusted underlying result

The adjusted underlying result is Council's operating result less any capital grants. The adjusted underlying result is a measure of financial sustainability. A comparison of Council's **adjusted underlying result** from 2017/18 to 2021/22 is provided in the following graph.



The positive underlying result is primarily reflective of the impact of grants as described above, including the early receipt of \$3.8 million in Financial Assistance Grants funding. Financial Assistance Grants are a key source of funding for business-as-usual services and the early funds received will support the ongoing operation of the Council in 2022/23.

The rate capping environment

The Victorian Government introduced the Fair Go Rates System from 1 July 2016 to contain the cost of living for ratepayers, with annual rate increases limited by the 'rate cap' set by the Minister for Local Government. If a council has a strong requirement to raise rates in excess of the cap, an exemption request for a higher rate cap can be lodged to the Essential Services Commission for formal approval. The approval process is extremely rigorous and includes a consideration of community views and other funding options. There are no higher rate caps currently in place.

Financial sustainability challenges

Like other small councils across rural Victoria, Towong Shire's large geographic area and small population present significant challenges to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of community assets and deliver responsive services that meet the needs of the community. Low population, vast distances between communities and an economy that largely revolves around climatic conditions (particularly agriculture, forestry and tourism) are further factors which impact our financial capacity. In addition we do not have the option to raise revenue through other avenues like larger councils do, such as parking fees, development contributions and levies.

Recent rates levels

In 2016/17 we successfully applied for a higher rate cap of 5.55% on the basis of the severity of our financial sustainability challenges and implemented successive rate increases in excess of the standard rate cap between 2017/18 and 2019/20. We were able to withhold the proposed increase for 2020/21 as a result of receiving State Government-funded bushfire recovery support.

Council is no longer exempt from the standard rate cap. In assessing the capacity of ratepayers to pay, and in consideration of the fairness of continuing to impose high rate increases compared to the rest of the state, Council has not applied for a further exemption. Council believes that ratepayers should not be burdened with increases to the cost of living, particularly where the responsibility lies with State and Federal Governments. A rate increase of 1.5% in line with inflation and the annual rate cap was approved as part of the 2021/22 Budget process, and similarly a rate increase of 1.75% was approved as part of the 2022/23 Budget process in line with the current rate cap.

Sustainability outlook

There are certainly challenges in maintaining our services and infrastructure at the levels that our communities should be able to expect given that recent inflation levels have well exceeded the State Government's rate cap. We have worked very hard over a number of years to secure substantial grant funding to support a wide range of capital works for the benefit of our communities. Both Councillors and Council officers have advocated for the needs of our ratepayers and residents to be met, and many well-considered grant applications to both State and Federal Governments have been made. This work has paid off in the last couple of years, while we have substantial funds to support our communities, much of this funding is committed to specific, one-off projects. Reliance on one-off funding grants is not sustainable, and without the ongoing support of Federal and State governments, our ability to deliver on community needs into the future may be compromised.

We continue to lobby the State and Federal Governments for more reliable funding sources to support long term infrastructure renewal needs. We continue to meet directly with representatives, make formal submissions and undertake collaborative campaigns with other small rural councils. In lieu of more reliable funding being available, a reduction in services or a reduction in maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure may become required.

Long term response

Council's long term response to sustainability is to increase the number of people residing in communities throughout Towong Shire. This supports better utilisation of existing rural infrastructure and results in costs being spread over a larger ratepayer base. Council has demonstrated its commitment to this long term strategy with its continued delivery of a number of key strategic projects, including:

- Master planning exercises in key communities (Tallangatta Tomorrow, Our Bellbridge, Our Valley Our Future, UM2030 Vision Plan)
- Construction of new recreational facilities and multi-purpose centres throughout the Shire (Corryong, Cudgewa, Mitta Mitta, Tallangatta, Tallangatta Valley and Walwa)
- Construction of a new Library, Early Years and Community Centre in Tallangatta.

Other measures include a continued focus on opportunities to reduce the cost of service delivery, including the development of shared services with other councils.

If there is not adequate funding to provide basic services and infrastructure, people will relocate to larger shires and regional cities where they can access services and infrastructure that meet their needs. A reduction in the local population becomes a downward spiral for rural towns, as there are less residents to contribute to the community and to share the cost of local services and infrastructure. **This** in turn places greater financial pressure on rural councils.

Rates and charges

Rates and charges increased by \$207,000, reflecting a 1.5% increase in general rates and the municipal charge in line with the State Government mandated rate-cap, a 3% increase in kerbside collection charges, and an additional small increase due to supplementary development.

Fees and fines

Statutory fees decreased somewhat from \$316,000 to \$280,000 primarily due to a drop off in building permits, fees and charges. User fees remained steady at \$1.2 million.

Grant income

Grant income received was \$19.4 million, another substantial result following the prior year outcome of \$14.6 million. This was approximately \$7.4 million higher than anticipated in the Budget. Key factors included the early receipt of \$3.8 million in Financial Assistance Grants, and the receipt of \$1.9 million in unanticipated bushfire relief and recovery funding.

Other Income

Other income declined from \$4.1 million to \$1.7 million primarily due to substantial reimbursements from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements program in 2020/21 relating to the 2019/20 bushfires. \$3.0 million was received from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements in 2020/21 and a subsequent \$0.9 million was received in 2021/22.

Expenses

Expenditure fell from \$24.7 million to \$21.5 million, a result that was \$0.3 million lower than Budget. This included unanticipated one-off costs in 2020/21 related to bushfire recovery, including contractor costs of \$1.4 million, and garbage disposal costs of \$1.2 million due to the bushfire-damaged Corryong landfill being inoperable.

Capital expenditure

Capital works expenditure was \$9.5 million, which was significantly less than budgeted expenditure of \$25.6 million. This was primarily due to the ongoing disruption of COVID-19 resulting in project delays. Projects impacted included the Hanson Street Corryong upgrade, Colac Colac Caravan Park upgrades, the Stock Route (Corryong), the Mitta streetscape upgrade, the Towong Street East upgrade, Georges Creek Road – Section 3, Wises Creek Road, the Bridges replacement program, and various other planned infrastructure works that were carried forward to 2022/23.

Our Council

Councillors

The Councillors were elected for a four-year term at the elections held 24 October 2020. Cr Wortmann was elected as Mayor and Cr Dikschei as Deputy Mayor on 8 November 2020 for a one-year term. On

24 November 2021 Cr Whitehead was elected as Mayor and Cr Wortmann as Deputy Mayor for a one-year term.



Cr Andrew Whitehead | Mayor

Cr Andrew Whitehead was first elected to Council in October 2016. He was re-elected to Council on 24 October 2020 to serve his second term. After two terms as Deputy Mayor he now serves as Mayor. A resident of Towong Shire all his life, he lives with his wife on the family beef and sheep farm in Towong Upper where they are raising their four children.



Cr David Wortmann | Deputy Mayor

Cr David Wortmann was first elected to Council in November 2008. He was re-elected to Council on 24 October 2020 to serve his fourth term. Cr Wortmann has served six terms as Mayor and is now serving as Deputy Mayor. He has lived in Granya all his life and is married with two children. He runs a beef and sheep farm and also operates a school bus service.



Cr Denise Anderson

Cr Denise Anderson was first elected to Council on 24 October 2020. She has been a resident of Towong Shire for 22 years and has lived in the region all her life. Together with her husband Bill, she has three adult children. Cr Anderson has owned a small business, has experience in the banking and medical industries, and has been involved with a variety of school and community organisations.



Cr Peter Dikschei

Cr Peter Dikschei was first elected to Council on 24 October 2020 and was elected to the office of Deputy Mayor. He has retired to Towong after a respected career with the Victoria Police and lives there with his wife. He is a member of the Corryong Baptist Church and the SES, and is also a keen cyclist.



Cr Aaron Scales

Cr Aaron Scales was first elected to Council in October 2012. He was re-elected to Council on 24 October 2020 to serve his third term. He has served one term as Mayor. Cr Scales studied Law, Accounting and Hospitality/Tourism and has completed a Master of Business Administration. He was raised on his family's farm at Dartmouth and now lives in town with his two children, where he owns and manages the Dartmouth Hotel.

Our people

Management team

The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by Council to oversee the operations of the organisation. The Chief Executive Officer, together with a team of Directors ensures that the priorities identified in the Council Plan are achieved and that day-to-day responsibilities are effectively undertaken.

Juliana Phelps | Chief Executive Officer

Ms Phelps was appointed Chief Executive Officer in May 2009, having served as Council's Director Community and Corporate Services for a period of ten years. Juliana is a Chartered Accountant and holds a Masters of Business Administration as well as a Bachelor of Business Degree in Accounting and Economics. Juliana is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and in 2020 was recognised as one of the top 50 Public Sector Women in Victoria.

Rachael Gadd | Director of Infrastructure and Environment

Ms Gadd was appointed to the role of Director Infrastructure and Environment in October 2019. As Director of Infrastructure and Environment, Rachael is responsible for managing Council's assets, including the maintenance and construction of roads, buildings and storm water management to ensure public safety and the delivery of appropriate levels of service for the community. Rachael previously worked for Council in the position of Civil Asset Engineer and has a diverse background having worked in education, as a Geological Field Assistant and a Small Business Manager in the United Kingdom.

Amanda Pagan | Director of Community and Planning

Ms Pagan was appointed to the role of Director of Community and Planning in December 2019. As Director of Community and Planning, Amanda is responsible for the management and leadership of a range of areas including Land Use Planning, Community Wellbeing, Economic Development, Recreation, Arts and Culture, and Emergency Management. Amanda has had a diverse career working for private, not-for-profit and Government organisations, including Deloitte Consulting, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Australian Red Cross Blood Service and St Vincent's Hospital.

Emma Woolaston | Director of Corporate and Organisational Development

Ms Woolaston was appointed to the role of Director Corporate and Organisational Development in October 2020. As Director of Corporate and Organisational Development, Emma is responsible for managing the areas of Governance, Human Resources, Finance, IT, Customer Service, Communications and Engagement, Records Management and Local Laws. Emma brings to the role a wealth of experience in strategy, business development, operations and governance gained from over fifteen years in management consulting and corporate banking roles, including with the Commonwealth Bank.

Organisational structure

Chief Executive Officer Juliana Phelps	
Rachael Gadd Director Infrastructure and Environment	
Works Infrastructure maintenance Parks and open spaces Projects Construction and development Assets Asset management Capital projects	Regulatory control Building services Environmental health Environment Waste management Wastewater and water supply Forest industry support
Amanda Pagan Director Community and Planning	
Community Kindergartens Maternal and child health Recreation Youth, family and senior programs Emergency management Land use Planning	Economic and Tourism Development Business support Agricultural diversity Visitor information services Event support Recreation Arts and Culture Swimming Pools
Emma Woolaston Director Corporate and Organisational Development	
Finance Accounting Rates and property Payroll Communications and Media Communications Community engagement	Corporate Information technology Risk management and insurance Governance Customer service Human resources Records management Ranger & Local Laws
Jenelle Williamson Manager Relief and Recovery*	
Stakeholder engagement Municipality Recovery planning Economic Recovery Recovery projects	Relief coordination Communications Community engagement

*Temporary directorate established with funding from Bushfire Recovery Victoria in the immediate aftermath of the 2019/20 bushfires to coordinate relief and recovery services. From 1 July 2022 functions of the relief and recovery directorate have been incorporated into regular business activities across the organisation.

Workforce statistics

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) council staff, as at 30 June 2022, by key result area, employment type and gender is set out below.

Key Result Area	Full time		Part time		Casual		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Asset management	34.4	4.2	-	1.4	-	-	40.0
Community wellbeing	3.1	1.0	1.1	23.8	0.4	3.4	32.8
Economic and tourism development	-	1.1	0.4	2.4	-	-	3.8
Land use	-	1.1	-	-	-	-	1.1
Environmental sustainability	6.2	-	0.5	-	0.2	-	6.9
Organisational improvement	4.2	5.1	0.8	6.8	-	2.4	19.4
Relief and recovery	-	2.4	-	0.8	-	-	3.2
Executive	-	1.1	-	-	-	0.4	1.4
TOTAL	47.9	15.8	2.8	35.2	0.6	6.2	108.6

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) council staff, as at 30 June 2022, by employment classification and gender is set out below.

Employment Classification	Male	Female	Total
Band 1	-	-	-
Band 2	-	-	-
Band 3	18.1	4.5	22.6
Band 4	11.4	13.7	25.1
Band 5	4.4	13.0	17.4
Band 6	3.6	4.5	8.1
Band 7	7.3	3.6	10.9
Band 8	3.2	1.9	5.1
Band not applicable	3.3	16.1	19.4
TOTAL	51.3	57.3	108.6

Equal employment opportunity

Council has a Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying, Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity policy that is reviewed and adopted each year. The policy reflects our desire to enjoy a workplace free of discrimination where each person has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their abilities.

Discrimination relating to sex, marital status, parenthood, race, colour, national origin, physical or mental impairment, religious or political affiliation is not tolerated. Selection of individuals for employment is on the basis of merit and flexible arrangements are available to support employees to balance work and family responsibilities.

Our performance

Planning and accountability framework

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to prepare the following planning and reporting documents:

- A ten-year Community Vision;
- A ten-year Financial Plan;
- A ten-year Asset Plan;
- A four-year Council Plan;
- A four-year Revenue and Rating Plan;
- A four-year Workforce Plan;
- A Budget for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years;
- An Annual Report in respect of the prior financial year;
- A quarterly budget report in respect of each quarter of the financial year.

The following diagram shows the relationships between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the planning and accountability framework for local government, as well as other key strategic plans of Council. There are opportunities for community and stakeholder engagement at each stage of the planning and reporting cycle.

Planning			Reporting
Long term	Medium term	Short term	
Community Vision Asset Plan Financial Plan Place-Based Master Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tallangatta Tomorrow • UM2030 Vision Plan • Our Valley, Our Future • Our Bellbridge 	Council Plan Healthy Communities Plan Budget Revenue and Rating Plan Workforce Plan Planning Scheme	Annual Budget	Annual Report Council Plan Reporting Quarterly Budget Reporting 'Know Your Council' Website – Performance Reporting

Reporting on delivery of the Council Plan

The following pages detail Council's performance for the 2021/22 year against the six strategic objectives and the associated strategies and indicators detailed within the *Council Plan 2021-2025*.

1. Asset management

Strategic objective

Maintain and improve our Shire's infrastructure to meet the levels of service established in consultation with our communities.

Strategies

Deliver key projects to support economic, tourism and social development in the Shire.

Continue to develop services and facilities to support long term population growth.

Implement safety improvements across our roads and footpath networks.

Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Stage Two of the Tallangatta Holiday Park Upgrade. • Renewal of the Cudgewa and Bullioh Netball courts. • Construction of the Tintaldra boat ramp. • Delivery of building efficiency upgrades at Council offices. • Securing funding to seal an additional 2km of Georges Creek Road.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant increases in material and fuel costs. • Delays to capital works program and maintenance services due to COVID-19 impacts on staff and contractor availability. • Two large storm events in January 2022 which diverted resources from regular maintenance and construction activities.

This year we worked towards the delivery of one of Council's most ambitious capital programs. While significant inroads have been made, increased fuel and material costs combined with staff and contractor availability have impacted budgets and in some cases project delivery.

We saw the completion of some long-term projects including the Tallangatta Holiday Park upgrade - a project we started in 2014 with the development of the Tallangatta Holiday Park Masterplan; and Georges Creek Road - resulting in improved connectivity between the Talgarno and Bellbridge areas to the Murray Valley Highway and Tallangatta.

We began Stage two of the Great River Road project – the premier touring experience along the Murray River. This included construction of wayside stops with seating and viewing platforms as well as walking trails in Walwa, Jingellic and Tintaldra. Preparatory works also commenced for the development of four sculptures as well as wayfinding and interpretive signage.

Construction commenced on the redevelopment of the Corryong Saleyards including the establishment of a 24 hour self-service weighbridge and truck wash to service agricultural businesses of the Upper Murray. In addition, streetscape upgrades were undertaken for Mitta Mitta and Towong Street East in Tallangatta, shade sails were installed at the Bellbridge and Tallangatta foreshores, new public toilet blocks were built at Cudgewa, Playles Hill and Corryong, and the widening and realignment of a 5km section of Wises Creek Road began.

To support the delivery of current and future capital works we secured substantial Federal Government funding. This included \$1.17 million under phase three of the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure program to upgrade the walking tracks in Eskdale and Bellbridge, the construction of a splash park and pump track in Dartmouth as well as a contribution to the Sandy the War Horse Memorial Statue in Tallangatta. Funding was also secured under the Federal Government's Black Summer Fund to undertake work on the Cudgewa Streetscape including the Cudgewa Avenue of Honour, the construction of a new amenities block for the Walwa Recreation Reserve and a new skatepark in Corryong.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Sealed local road requests	Reduction in number of requests	22			Yes
Unsealed local road requests	Reduction in number of requests	83			N/A*
Requests per 100km of sealed local roads	Reduction in number of requests	5.73			Yes
Unsealed road condition	Improvement in condition	196			N/A*
Fatal and non-fatal crash statistics across the shire attributable to road safety	Improvement in crash statistics	0			Yes
Completion of annual capital works projects	100% complete	25%			No

* First year of measurement, reach of target will be assessed for the first time in 2022/23

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
ROADS					
Satisfaction of use					
<i>Sealed local road requests</i> [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	10.32	10.05	9.52	5.73	There were 22 requests for sealed local roads in 2021/22, compared to 36 in 2020/21 and 38 in 2019/20. Council has been more proactive in repairing damages, prior to receiving requests from the community.
Condition					
<i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards</i> [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	n/a	Due to damage caused by flooding in January 2022
Service cost					
<i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$0.00	\$45.49	\$59.02	\$59.58	
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$5.15	\$6.37	\$7.30	\$0.00	There were no sealed local roads resealed this year.
Satisfaction					
<i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	58.00	63.00	57.00	50.00	Council's performance in 2021/22 was in-line with the Small Rural Council average for the year of 50. Council's performance was slightly below the State average for 2021/22 of 53.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comments
1.1	Deliver 100% of the annual capital works program and bushfire recovery projects	In Progress	64 projects were included in the program for 2021/22; 56 projects are in progress and 8 are complete.
1.2	Deliver infrastructure projects that arise from place-based master planning	In Progress	Masterplan process underway for Cudgewa. Other towns planned for 2022/23.
1.3	Complete Stage Two Great River Road	In Progress	Construction is ongoing and the development of artworks and signage has commenced with community engagement.
1.4	Continue the upgrade of Georges Creek Road	Complete	Sections 1 and 2 have been sealed.
1.5	Complete upgrades of Hanson Street from Sugarloaf Road to Kiel Street	In Progress	Water and sewer designs are nearing completion and the final review of civil design is underway.
1.6	Complete the upgrade of the Stock Route in Corryong	In Progress	Land acquisition discussions are progressing with Department Environment, Land, Water and Planning, North East Water and private landholders.
1.7	Progressively deliver the upgrade of the unsealed sections of Lake Road	In Progress	Design phase is 80% complete.
1.8	Investigate upgrade options for Wisers Creek Road	In Progress	Construction has commenced.
1.9	Advocate for the upgrade of the Benambra Corryong Road from Staceys Bridge 40km South	Ongoing	Joint advocacy approach in development with East Gippsland Shire.
1.10	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of key transport routes and hazardous road alignments to improve efficiency and safety	Ongoing	Approval process with VicRoads is underway for Old Tallangatta intersection. Design finalised for Brooke Street/Murray River Road intersection.
1.11	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of load limited bridges on strategic transport routes	In Progress	Funding secured via Department Environment, Land, Water and Planning to upgrade bridges on

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comments
		Burrowye Road, Smythes Road and Little Snowy Creek Road.
1.13 Complete the upgrade of the Corryong CBD	In Progress	Construction scheduled for completion in 2022/23.
1.14 Complete streetscape upgrades in Dartmouth and Mitta Mitta	In Progress	<p>Construction of Stage One works in Mitta Mitta to commence in October 2022, funding being sought for Stage Two.</p> <p>Works in Dartmouth to be delivered as part of the construction of the splash park and pump track.</p>
1.15 Conduct planning for streetscape upgrades in Towong, Tintaldra and Cudgewa	In Progress	Planning has commenced on streetscape upgrades.
1.16 Continue to deliver the strategic footpath network improvement program in urban areas	Ongoing	Corryong Circuit Trail and Towong Street East streetscape (including footpaths) currently under construction. Contractors appointed to complete sealing of walking tracks in Bellbridge, Eskdale, Walwa/Jingellic, Tintaldra and Towong.
1.17 Address long vehicle and overflow parking issues in CBD areas	In Progress	Long vehicle parking signs installed in Tallangatta (Lord's Hut/Akuna Avenue), long vehicle parking to be delivered in Mitta Mitta and Corryong as part of streetscape works. Other locations to be considered as part of town master planning process in 2022/23.
1.18 Seek funding to deliver improved public toilets across the shire	In Progress	Playles Hill and Cudgewa toilet blocks under construction. Walwa Toilet block upgrades planned for July 2022. Tallangatta Triangles and Corryong CBD toilet block upgrades in design phase and Talgarno scheduled for

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comments
			2022/23. Funding being sought for Mitta Mitta.
1.19	Seek funding to deliver upgrades to town entrances and wayfinding signage across the shire	Not started	Future start date scheduled.
1.20	Seek funding to deliver an upgraded Corryong Integrated Community Centre	Not Started	Funding application pending the completion of the masterplan for the old Corryong Primary School site.
1.21	Increase the recreation opportunities for young families in Dartmouth	In Progress	Funding secured from the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program to deliver a pump track and splash park in Dartmouth.
1.22	Review and deliver the strategic parks and playgrounds upgrade program to completion	In Progress	Planning and design underway for splash park and pump track in Dartmouth and playground renewal at Bethanga.
1.23	Undertake upgrades at the Colac Colac Caravan Park to ensure long term viability of the park	In Progress	Eastern amenities and camp kitchen complete and two shade shelters installed. Kiosk/café under construction and planning underway for the western amenities block, playground and entrance upgrade.
1.24	Investigate options for additional boat ramps	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
1.25	Deliver the Corryong aerodrome 24 hour fuel project	In Progress	Under construction and due for completion in 2022/23.
1.26	Seek funding to deliver a rolling program for the maintenance of strategic limited access roads for improved emergency services access	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
1.27	Deliver annual asset inspection and renewal programs per asset management and road management plan requirements	Ongoing	Inspection undertaken as per program.
1.28	Implement the maintenance program for Council's buildings	Ongoing	Replacement of heating ventilation and air conditioning at Tallangatta Office completed.

2. Community wellbeing

Strategic objective

Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

Strategies

Encourage active lifestyles and facilitate access to activities that have meaning to our community members in order to improve wellbeing.

Support our communities to be inclusive, warm and welcoming.

Advocate for every person to have access to adequate housing, transport, education and care.

Support our communities to be more resilient and safer against future adverse events.

Support our communities in understanding and mitigating climate change risk.

Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactivation of the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House to support mental health and wellbeing, build resilience and foster community connectedness. • Successful delivery and expansion of childcare across the Shire. • Successful implementation of three-year-old kindergarten. • Establishment of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan in partnership with the Towong Alliance. • Delivery of extensive activities for young people across the Shire.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of educators and teachers to support growth and demand in Early Years Learning Services, across all service locations. • Recruitment and training of Lifeguards at Tallangatta and Corryong swimming pools. • Delivery of community services and programs during evolving COVID-19 restrictions.

We supported a wide range of community wellbeing initiatives throughout 2021/2022, despite the challenges of COVID-19. The strong engagement and appreciation of this work is demonstrated by the significant increase in participation in all activities.

Childcare services were delivered in Tallangatta, Bellbridge and Walwa with sites operating between 60-75% capacity because of staff availability due to COVID-19. Staff recruitment is an ongoing focus in order to increase centre capacities and reduce wait lists. This year, three-year-old kindergarten commenced and operated successfully alongside the four-year-old program in Corryong, Tallangatta, Bellbridge and Walwa.

Funding was secured for a range of improvements across Centres including installation of shade sails at the Corryong Preschool and Tallangatta Early Years Centres. These upgrades will provide sun smart play spaces that are inclusive and provide greater safety to users.

Following a review of Maternal Child Health needs across the Shire, the Maternal Child Health team was restructured to enable the delivery of weekly Maternal Child Health services in Mitta Mitta and Bellbridge. First Time Parents Groups, Mother Goose Programs and Support Playgroups continue to operate, with additional programs and locations identified for commencement in the future.

Funding was received for the delivery of the FReeZA youth program and the Tallangatta Neighbourhood House, resulting in a significant increase in community participation and engagement in programs and services.

The Tallangatta Neighbourhood House delivered programs to support mental health and wellbeing, build resilience and foster a sense of connectedness within the community. A total of 29 activities were delivered for the period, engaging over 1000 participants. Some activities delivered included:

- Emergency Preparedness Day
- Community Christmas Celebrations
- Family Movie Night
- Barefoot Bowling
- Standup Paddleboarding
- Author Talks
- Woodworking sessions
- Community Breakfast

Youth programs and services were undertaken to support the Towong Shire Council Youth Plan 2019-2023. Programs incorporated themes of leadership development, prevention programs and workplace readiness training and included The Resilience Project, Teacher wellbeing workshop, Green Bean Project and R U Okay? Day.

Council commenced the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in conjunction with Bushfire Recovery Victoria, Alpine Shire Council, local health services and traditional owner groups. A relationship with the Duduroa Dhargal traditional group has been facilitated and meaningful conversations are helping shape understanding and education as the RAP continues to be developed. Cultural Awareness Training Sessions were facilitated in Corryong and Tallangatta, supported by the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency.

Davis Cottage continues to provide a studio hub for a range of artists and local groups with a number of author talks, exhibitions and workshops delivered. Funding from Working for Victoria supported the development of a booking system and physical resources for the Davis Cottage space, as well as the facilitation of the Sounds Like Us project and music industry event.

Despite COVID-19 staffing challenges the pool season was successfully delivered at both the Corryong and Tallangatta pools. A range of events were supported across the season including swimming lessons, carnivals, social events and cinema nights.

As work continues on the *Sport and Recreation Strategy*, recurring themes have been identified throughout communities, including a desire for improved female-friendly facilities and improved lighting across reserves. Council will continue to work with Committees of Management to support the development of funding applications to help deliver on these and other priorities.

To support more cooperative and efficient emergency management practices we established the North East Hume Emergency Management Collaboration (NEHEMC) with Indigo and Alpine Shire Councils. This has resulted in the standardisation of Emergency Relief Centre Arrangements across all

three local government areas. Council has led the drafting of the 2022-25 Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and is developing the new Municipal Fire Management Plan as a sub-plan of the MEMP. Council also supported the formation of the Fire Planning Sub Committee of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee, led by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning with Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) sitting on this Committee.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Wellbeing	Improved wellbeing	↓14.3%			No
Community Resilience Plans	Plans developed	9			Yes
Sedentary behaviour	Reduction in sedentary behaviour	↑11.4%*			No
Family violence and suicide occurrences	Decrease in occurrences*	FV ↑ 50%** Suicide ↑ 6%			No
Participation in MCH, early education and early childcare services	Increased participation*	91.1%***			Yes
Participation in Council run social inclusion activities	Increased number of participants*	2,928			Yes

* Impact of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions is reflected in increased sedentary behavior.

**Instances of family violence often increase in the two-five year period following a natural disaster (this reporting period follows the Black Summer Bushfires). Additional community based resources to support those experiencing family violence often result in higher reporting rates.

*** Based on 2020/21 data and information.

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
AQUATIC FACILITIES					
Service standard					
<i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	A full facility inspection was to be completed this year, however delays to the completion of pool renovations led to the inspections being postponed. Once the renovations were completed, the inspectors from Melbourne were unable to travel due to COVID restrictions.
Utilisation					
<i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	1.92	1.78	0.89	1.12	Council operates two outdoor seasonal swimming pools. There were 6,783 visits recorded in 2021/22 compared to 5,455 in 2020/21; 10,732 in 2019/20 and 11,607 in 2018/19. Visitation rates were impacted by COVID-19 and the effects of lockdowns.
Service cost					
<i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	New in 2020	\$13.10	\$22.99	\$22.64	Council operates two outdoor seasonal swimming pools. Lower costs in 2019-20 reflected the impact of COVID-19 and closures. Visitation rates were impacted by COVID-19 and the effects of lockdowns.
LIBRARIES					
Utilisation					
<i>Physical library collection usage</i> [Number of physical library collection item loans / Number	1.51	1.12	0.98	0.90	There were 13,442 items loaned (with 14,980 items available for loan) in 2021/22. This compares to 14,281 loaned of 14,542 available items in 2020/21; 17,101 loaned of 15,276

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
of physical library collection items]					available items in 2019/20; and 22,310 loaned of 14,738 available items in 2018/19. This indicator highlights the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions.
<p>Resource standard</p> <p><i>Recently purchased library collection</i></p> <p><i>[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100</i></p>	38.64%	37.70%	36.43%	33.47%	The number of items purchased for the collection was slightly lower compared to previous years.
<p>Participation</p> <p><i>Active library borrowers in municipality</i></p> <p><i>[Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100</i></p>	10.56%	10.82%	9.16%	8.00%	Council operates two static libraries in its main centres of Corryong and Tallangatta. These libraries service our small dispersed population which is spread over 6,635 square kilometres. Many residents reside outside the two main centres where the static libraries are located and may access other library services in neighbouring municipalities. Library participation declined due to the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions.
<p>Service cost</p> <p><i>Cost of library service per population</i></p> <p><i>[Direct cost of the library service / Population]</i></p>	New in 2020	\$28.49	\$25.70	\$24.37	

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
<p>MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)</p> <p>Service standard</p> <p><i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i></p> <p>[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100</p>	100.00%	100.00%	102.08%	107.69%	More infants enrolled in the MCH service than the number of birth notifications received.
<p>Service cost</p> <p><i>Cost of the MCH service</i></p> <p>[Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]</p>	\$57.43	\$62.81	\$70.07	\$68.43	
<p>Participation</p> <p><i>Participation in the MCH service</i></p> <p>[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100</p>	81.31%	80.30%	85.50%	75.83%	There was an increase in both the number of children (273) attending the MCH service at least once as well as the total number of children (360) enrolled in 2021/22, though the proportion of children attending decreased for the year in comparison to previous years. There were 174 children who attended the MCH service at least once in 2020/21 compared to 163 in 2019/20 and 181 in 2018/19.
<p>Participation</p> <p><i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i></p> <p>[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100</p>	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	84.62%	There were 11 children who identify as having an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background who participated in MCH services out of a total of 13 children who registered with the service. This is double the number of children who registered and participated (6.5) in 2020/21 and

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
					also compares favourably to 3 in both 2019/20 and 2018/19.
Satisfaction					
<p><i>Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit</i></p> <p>[Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100</p>	New in 2020	102.17%	93.75%	100.00%	Every child born during 2021/22 received a 4-week Key Age visit.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
2.1 Undertake place-based master planning for the Peninsula including the investigation of options for early years and community facilities	In Progress	Scheduled to commence in July 2022.
2.2 Undertake place-based master planning for the Mitta Valley, Corryong and Tallangatta	In Progress	Scheduled to commence in July 2022.
2.3 Maintain a contemporary Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan (MHWP) which reflects our community priorities	In Progress	In conjunction with Tallangatta Health Service, Corryong Health and Walwa Bush Nursing a number of key priorities have been actioned to support our community to be safe, healthy, inclusive, adaptable and resilient. The MHWP Annual Review provides detailed updates on priorities.
2.4 Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages	In Progress	<i>Sport and Recreation Strategy</i> scheduled for adoption in July 2022 following extensive community engagement. Tallangatta Neighbourhood House programming included paddleboarding and barefoot bowling.
2.5 Review opportunities for communities to access library resources and connect through libraries	Ongoing	Community members assisted to connect with physical and digital library collections in Corryong and Tallangatta.

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comment
2.6	Develop a strategy for arts and cultural offerings across the Shire	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
2.7	Expand and improve early years services across the Shire to support young families	Ongoing	Upgrades to outdoor play space at Corryong Preschool completed and funding secured for Bellbridge Early Years Learning Centre.
2.8	Renew the Youth Plan to embed the 'youth voice' in all aspects of service delivery	Ongoing	Ongoing collaboration with service agencies and youth networks ensures informed and appropriate services are delivered and considered in forward planning. As <i>The Youth Plan 2019-2023</i> approaches renewal, work continues with these affiliates to develop an updated plan that reflects the diverse youth portfolio across the Shire.
2.9	Advocate for the development of a variety of housing options to match community needs, particularly for older people	Ongoing	Advocacy efforts have targeted securing the short term modular housing used for bushfire recovery for ongoing use as independent living units across the shire.
2.10	Encourage the establishment of innovative, sustainable transport solutions for remote communities	Ongoing	Conversations with Kirinari Support Services for the provision of transport services across the Shire. Transport options are also considered in developing viability plans for economic development projects such as Mitta Masterplan and Dartmouth Revitalisation.
2.11	Support our communities to ensure that Shire places are welcoming to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and LGBTIQA+ communities and are inclusive and connected	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
2.12	Build relationships and develop understanding of aboriginal people and consider the commitment to an ongoing reconciliation action plan process	Ongoing	Commenced the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), in conjunction with Bushfire Recovery Victoria, Alpine Shire Council, local health services and traditional owner groups. Building relationship with the Duduroa Dhargal Aboriginal Corporation.
2.13	Participate in key networks to support communities and key stakeholders on solutions to address family violence, suicide and mental health	Ongoing	Participation in Tallangatta and Corryong Family Violence Networks.

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
2.14 Support our communities to drive their recovery from bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic and improve their mitigation of and resilience to future adverse events	Ongoing	Supported the development of nine Community Emergency Management Plans across the Upper Murray.

3. Economic and tourism development

Strategic objective

Expand economic and employment opportunities across our Shire in a sustainable way.

Strategies

Strengthen the capacity of existing and new businesses to thrive.

Expand tourism offerings, promotion and experiences across the Shire.

Support the agriculture sector to increase resilience and grow to meet the future challenges of the sector.

Support the diversification of the Shire's economy.

Advocate for improvements to critical infrastructure: mobile connectivity, internet and power.

Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the <i>Economic Development Strategy</i> and the <i>Destination Management Plan</i>. • Delivery and support of various workshops for the agriculture sector. • Securing of State Government funding to update and renovate the Tallangatta pool. • Provision of assistance to small businesses to adapt and recover from COVID-19 and support for the development of Chambers of Commerce in Corryong, Tallangatta and the Berringa Peninsula.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with communities experiencing engagement fatigue following Black Summer Bushfires and COVID-19. • Limited ability to deliver events due to COVID-19.

In 2021/22 Council secured funding to deliver key projects such as the Lake Hume Masterplan and High-Country Rail Trail Masterplan as well as branding and marketing projects. The year also saw the endorsement of two key strategic documents, the *Economic Development Strategy* and *Destination Management Plan*. These documents will support Council's ongoing advocacy and engagement with all levels of government.

Development of artwork, interpretive signage, and marketing elements for the Great River Road project continued. Murray Arts is assisting in the development of the artwork and the Great River Road Artwork Project Steering Group have established a contextual vision for the creation and location of each art piece.

For the second consecutive year, the Upper Murray Tourism and Business Expo was delivered, attracting a range of entrepreneurs and business people from the Upper Murray and surrounds. Supported by The Man from Snowy River Tourist Association and Upper Murray Inc, it provided an informal networking opportunity to inspire and educate small business owners. Additional support to

small businesses was also delivered through a range of marketing and social media workshops supported by Tourism North East and Start-Up-Shake-Up.

Council continued to encourage the expansions of cycle tourism opportunities across the Shire with significant work undertaken to facilitate and support notable cycling events including Ride High Country, 7 Peaks, Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel and the Upper Murray Cycling Event.

Telecommunications remained a major focus across the municipality and development of a *Telecommunications Strategy* in conjunction with Alpine Shire Council and GravelRoad commenced. The *Strategy* will support ongoing advocacy to telecommunications providers and government for increased investment in key tower locations and other telecommunications solutions.

Additional staffing resources dedicated to agriculture have helped support the building of strong and collaborative relationships with key stakeholders including Agriculture Victoria, Alpine Valley Communities Dairies, North East Catchment Management Association and Ag Biz. The development of an *Agriculture Strategic Plan* has commenced and when complete will provide a comprehensive framework on growth and diversification within the industry.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Number of businesses	Increased number of businesses*	925			Yes
Shire GRP and per industry	Increased GRP*	\$310.992 Mil			Yes
Number of visitors	Increased number of visitors*	3,527,000			No
Spend per visitor	Increased spend per visitor	\$327.00			N/A**
Diversification of agriculture sector	Increased diversification*	5.37%			N/A**

* Based on 2020/21 data and information

** First year of measurement, reach of target will be assessed for the first time in 2022/23

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
3.1 Connect businesses to learning, development and networking opportunities to increase capacity	Ongoing	Delivery of Business and Tourism Expo and ongoing facilitation of connections between businesses.
3.2 Run a series of business expos to support local businesses	Ongoing	Delivery of Business and Tourism Expo and support to external agencies to host their own.

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
3.3 Develop a business assistance service for new businesses including accommodation providers in the shared economy	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
3.4 Support businesses to adapt to and recover from the impact of bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic	Ongoing	Provided support and facilitation of small business workshops and access to grants. Direct action in facilitating the establishment of Business Chambers of Commerce in Tallangatta, Corryong and Bellbridge.
3.5 Support businesses to expand adventure tourism offerings across the shire	Ongoing	Ongoing work in collaboration with Tourism North East towards the development of the region as a gravel riding destination. Sought funding to undertake planning for Mount Elliot Adventure Park and ongoing supporting Mitta Mountain Bike Park development.
3.6 Advocate for the development and broadening of the Pine Mountain experience	Ongoing	Development of Pine Mountain Interpretive Centre as part of the Great River Road project including large scale artwork.
3.7 Advocate for the development of adventure tourism opportunities at Mount Elliot	Ongoing	Sought funding for the development of Mount Elliot as an adventure tourism product and commenced initial planning should application be successful.
3.8 Develop and implement a masterplan for cycling across the Shire	Ongoing	Mountain Bike Masterplan completed. Road and gravel riding maps and High Country Rail Trail Masterplan in final stages.
3.9 Support Mitta Valley Inc to develop the Mitta Valley mountain bike park	Ongoing	Ongoing assistance provided to Mitta Valley Inc. and the Project Steering Group in form of secretariat support including procurement and permit preparation requirements.
3.10 Seek funding to complete the High Country Rail Trail	Ongoing	Funding opportunities continue to be sought.
3.11 Establish new annual cycling events in the Mitta Valley and Upper Murray	In Progress	Extensive planning has been undertaken to establish the Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel to be delivered in December 2022.

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
3.12 Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Great River Road, Omeo Highway, and the Benambra Corryong Road	Ongoing	Secured funding to deliver Stage Two of the Great River Road. Provided support to Snowy Valleys Council to upgrade and promote the Snowy Valleys Way. Continued joint advocacy with East Gippsland Shire Council for the Benambra Corryong Road. Developed documentation to seek funding to develop plans for the upgrade to the Omeo Highway.
3.13 Seek funding to develop a master plan for Lake Hume as a tourism destination including houseboats and the Narrows project	Ongoing	Funding successfully secured and project steering group formed. Community and stakeholder engagement commenced with preliminary findings documented.
3.14 Seek funding to develop and expand the tourism opportunities at Dartmouth Dam	Ongoing	Funding sought to deliver a Lake Banimboola Masterplan. Further funding being sought for destination water park project.
3.15 Capitalise on Tallangatta's status as a Notable Town	Ongoing	Funding sought to develop a museum/arts precinct in Tallangatta which celebrates Tallangatta's Notable Town Status. Plans in development for a Tallangatta Heritage Walk.
3.16 Secure control of the Tallangatta Caravan Park and seek funding to implement the adopted recommendations from Tallangatta Holiday Park Planning Study	Ongoing	Ongoing discussions with Goulburn Murray Water.
3.17 Deliver improved visitor information and experience across the Shire	Ongoing	Refresh of destination branding and brochure material delivered. Ongoing collaboration with Tourism North East to deliver new destination websites.
3.18 Expand the reach of tourism marketing and promotional materials	Ongoing	Developed new brochure material to reach niche audiences and promotion of product through digital channels.
3.19 Seek to support the growth of value-add product and/or diversification opportunities for the agriculture industry	Ongoing	Promoted and facilitated a range of workshops and programs, including Carbon for Towong Shire producers (Agrifutures), Incubator Cohort, Skills network (Startup Shakeup), Entrepreneurs program, Digital solutions, Farming in a low carbon

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
		environment (AusIndustry), Young Farmer Business Bootcamps (Agriculture Victoria), and the Young Dairy farmers network (Murray Dairy).
3.20 Facilitate the creation of a centre of excellence for innovation in agriculture	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
3.21 Seek funding to support efforts to attract and sustain new industries	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
3.22 Explore opportunities to activate the Corryong Aerodrome	Ongoing	Installation of 24 hour fuel commenced and scheduled for completion in November 2022. Preliminary planning commenced to identify future opportunities.
3.23 Work with Upper Murray Inc to deliver outcomes from the UM2030 Plan	Ongoing	Supported improvements to Upper Murray branding, implementation of the Town Trails Project and delivery of strategic documents to fulfill agricultural aspects of the UM2030 Plan. Will continue to seek funding to deliver tourism initiatives that leverage natural surrounds e.g. Mount Elliot development, High Country Rail Trail and Trestle Trolls Project.
3.24 Attract investment to address key weaknesses (connectivity and reliability) in critical infrastructure (mobile telecommunications, internet and power)	Ongoing	Funding was sought to deliver Fibre to the Premises in Bethanga and Bellbridge. Unfortunately the submission was unsuccessful.

4. Land use

Strategic objective

Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

Strategies

Deliver integrated statutory services to support community wellbeing, population growth, economic development, and the protection of the environment.

Maintain a contemporary Planning Scheme.

Support all users of Council's statutory services to have an excellent customer service experience.

Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secured funding for structure plans for Corryong, Bellbridge and Mitta Mitta. • Successfully operated the rebuild support service for properties impacted by the Black Summer Bushfires. • Trialed a shared services arrangement with Indigo Shire for statutory land-use planning services. • Completed an update of the bushfire management overlay. • Completed the Planning Policy Framework project to simplify the Planning Scheme.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of appropriately skilled planners in the region made staffing and service delivery challenging. • Limited opportunity to progress advocacy activities to support increased land supply and expansion of the rural living zone.

Over \$500,000 in funding was secured to undertake much needed strategic projects around the townships of Corryong, Bellbridge and Mitta Mitta. These projects will support better township design and expand the boundaries to include additional land and support further housing development. Work also commenced on the development of the Tallangatta Structure Plan project to include additional land within the township boundary.

As a means to attract and retain qualified planners a shared service arrangement with Indigo Shire Council was trialed. Works continue to streamline processes to improve the community's experience and understanding of land use planning. We also secured funding under the State Government's Rural Councils Transformation Program to improve systems and processes. The intent is to expand the shared service between Indigo and Towong Shire Councils to incorporate Alpine Shire Council.

The rebuild support service continued to operate successfully for the second year. The service supports people who were impacted by the Black Summer Bushfires of 2019-2020 to rebuild all damaged buildings and structures. The service covers the fees of all permits associated with planning, building and septic, and provides advice on additional rebates that are available.

Significant effort has been placed on advocating for rezoning of parts of the rural activity zone to the rural living zone to support additional investment and housing. Advocacy will continue in recognition of housing supply issues across the Shire.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Customer satisfaction (post interaction)	Increased level of satisfaction*	N/A			N/A
Time taken to decide planning applications	Within Statutory Time Limits	74 Days			No
Residential building activity	Increased number of certificates of occupancy issued	41			Yes

* Data not yet available

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
STATUTORY PLANNING					
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i> [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	64.00	25.00	45.00	74.50	The median time taken to decide planning applications was affected by a number of lapsed permits for which insufficient information had been provided to complete the permit decision. A total of 127 Planning applications were decided in 2021/22 compared to 91 in 2020/21, 102 in 2019/20 and 83 in 2018/19.
Service standard					
<i>Planning applications decided within required time frames</i> [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100	56.63%	82.35%	75.82%	53.54%	The percentage of applications decided within required timeframes reduced in 2021/22 due to a number of lapsed permits for which insufficient information had been provided to complete the permit decision.

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
<p>Service cost</p> <p><i>Cost of statutory planning service</i></p> <p>[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]</p>	\$2,402.91	\$1,794.87	\$2,601.04	\$4,970.66	The cost of statutory planning increased in 2021/22 due to the use of planning consultants to assist with processing the large volume of rebuild applications following the 2019/20 bushfires.
<p>Decision making</p> <p><i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i></p> <p>[Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100</p>	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	There were no VCAT planning decisions for 2021/22 and one during 2020/21.
<p>FOOD SAFETY</p> <p>Timeliness</p> <p><i>Time taken to action food complaints</i></p> <p>[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]</p>	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	There was 1 food complaint received in 2021/22. This compares to 1 in 2020/21; 2 in 2019/20, and 2 in 2018/19.
<p>Service standard</p> <p><i>Food safety assessments</i></p> <p>[Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Act 1984] x100</p>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Food safety assessments have been undertaken for all registered premises across the reporting periods.

Service cost					
Cost of food safety service [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]	\$1,014.73	\$1,062.73	\$1,035.44	\$1,058.17	Towong Shire had 95 registered premises in 2021/22. This compared to 89 in 2021/21; 89 in 2019/20; and 88 in 2018/19. These premises are widely dispersed throughout the Shire (over 6,635 square kilometres).
Health and safety					
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	There were eleven critical or major non-compliance outcome notifications issued in 2021/22. This compares to one in 2020/21; three in 2019/20; and seven in 2018/19. All notifications were actioned.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comment
4.1	Support the rebuild process for fire impacted properties	Ongoing	Rebuild support services continue to operate on a reduced basis as the demand for reconstruction of dwellings and other structures, lost in the bushfires, nears completion.
4.2	Establish a Developer Contributions Policy and a Minimum Social Infrastructure Requirements Policy	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
4.3	Develop structure plans for Corryong, Tallangatta and Bellbridge and incorporate into the planning scheme	In Progress	Panel of consultants appointed to assist in strategic and statutory planning projects. RFQ for Bellbridge and Corryong was advertised. Tallangatta Structure Plan underway.
4.4	Review the Residential Settlement Strategy	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
4.5	Support population growth outside of key townships through appropriate amendments to the planning scheme	Ongoing	Investigation commenced to build on work completed in the C25 Amendment.
4.6	Review the Rural Land Use Study	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
4.7	Review the Schedule to the Rural Activity Zone	Not Started	Future start date to be scheduled.

4.8	Advocate for changes to the farming zone to allow for a second residence to enable succession planning	Ongoing	Consideration for the construction of a second residence continues with further consideration and action regarding the schedule to the zone to be made. Amendment VC202 (October 2021) introduces and modifies clauses with the farming zone to permit a planning exemption for use of land for rural worker accommodation for up to 10 persons.
4.9	Seek funding to extend the Heritage Study	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
4.10	Update planning scheme overlays including:		
4.10a	- Bushfire Management	Completed	Amendment C36 gazetted in June 2022.
4.10b	- Heritage	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
4.11	Review statutory service processes to ensure an excellent customer experience	Ongoing	Review of internal processes and external communications has highlighted improvement opportunities.

5. Environmental sustainability

Strategic objective

Integrate sustainable environmental management practices into all of our activities.

Strategies

Embed improvements to support environmental sustainability and climate change mitigation across Council's operations.

Support the community to improve environmental sustainability and encourage actions that mitigate the effects of climate change across the Shire.

Facilitate improved waste management and recycling practices.

<p>Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance and efficiency upgrades at Resource Recovery Facilities including new storage cages for cardboard recycling and chemical drums. • Securing \$44,000 in funding for an education and behaviour change program for kerbside recycling. • Registration of Corryong and Tallangatta Resource Recovery Centres with the Environmental Protection Authority as per the new Act.
<p>Challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased volumes of leachate at the Corryong Landfill due to continued heavy rainfall. • Increased regulatory requirements applied to the expansion plans for the Corryong Landfill. • Planning for kerbside recycling transition to include separated glass and organics.

A new *Environmental Protection Act 2017* came into effect on 1 July 2021 which included the General Environmental Duties (GED). The GED places increased importance on a proactive approach to environmental protection, requiring actions to prevent environmental contamination events before they occur.

As a result, Council faces increased regulatory environment requirements relating to waste management and recycling, domestic wastewater management, storage of combustible materials and underground fuel tanks. As part of these new obligations, the Resource Recovery Centres at Tallangatta and Corryong were registered with the EPA and preparatory works were undertaken to in preparation for new data collection requirements with reporting obligations due to commence in January 2023.

A successful kerbside waste and recycling service was delivered across the Shire with some increase in the number of bins collected. An audit of kerbside and public bins indicated that almost 50% of the waste bin's capacity consisted of food and other organics indicating that there would be some value

in the delivery of a community education campaign. Additionally, preparatory works were undertaken in advance of a transition to a four stream waste model – a mandate of the State Government.

Council continued to play an important role in the North East Waste and Resource Recovery Group. We participated in a collaborative procurement process for the processing of recyclable materials incorporating kerbside collection, bulk material drop off facilities and the bulk processing of recovered materials.

As an active member of the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance we worked hard to establish a network of electric vehicle charge stations across North-East Victoria. Council's annual carbon emissions were tracked across waste, fleet, stationary fuel, electricity, and consumables such as paper and water resulting in a total carbon emission of 5,569t CO₂.

Across the Shire there are significant areas of pine plantations located in state forest and on private land. Where timber harvesting operations occur in plantations and in native forests on private land, Council is responsible for ensuring the compliance of these activities, as timber production is a defined land use in the Victorian Planning Provisions and associated planning schemes.

Major harvesting operations by Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) were conducted in the areas surrounding Burrowye, Jingellic and in the Koetong and Callaghan's Creek Road areas. Operations delivered by D and R Henderson were also undertaken in the Tallangatta and Granya plantations.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Kerbside bin collection requests per 1,000 households	Reduced number of requests*	518			Yes
Kerbside collection bins missed per 10,000 households	Reduced number of bins missed*	Total = 36 116 records / 10,000 households			Yes
Organisational carbon emission	Reduced carbon emission**	5,569 tCO ₂			N/A***
Kerbside recycling separation quality (contamination)	Improved separation quality (reduced levels of contamination)	7.8%			No
Kerbside recycling separation participation rates (amount of recycling)	Increased participation rates (amount of waste recycled)*	26.4%			No
Increased use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects	Increased use of recycled materials*	780.4kg of reclaimed material (pine dust and plastic bottles).			N/A***

* Based on 2020/21 data and information

** Based on 2019/20 data

*** First year of measurement, reach of target will be assessed for the first time in 2022/23.

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
WASTE COLLECTION					
Satisfaction					
<i>Kerbside bin collection requests</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x1000	111.48	133.13	117.47	170.06	Bin collection requests for garbage and recycling collection were much higher in 2021/22 (518) than in 2020/21 (349).
Service standard					
<i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	1.72	2.42	2.53	1.52	There were 36 bins missed in 2021/22 compared 62 bins missed in 2020/21, 59 in 2019/20 and 42 in 2018/19. Council's kerbside collection service lifts approximately 240,000 individual bins each year.
Service cost					
<i>Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$199.15	\$212.12	\$222.77	\$261.55	Increased costs associated with alternative disposal arrangements due to the damaged Corryong landfill cell during the bushfires.
<i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$102.74	\$101.37	\$98.33	\$128.82	There were 169 additional bin collection requests in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21 which resulted in additional service costs.

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
<p>Waste diversion</p> <p><i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i></p> <p>[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100</p>	14.69%	25.75%	20.82%	29.31%	The total amount of garbage and recyclables collected in 2021/22 is low in comparison to 2020/21. Numbers reflect the diversion of waste to the Albury City Council landfill site due to the Corryong landfill cell being rendered inoperable by bushfires in 19/20 and 20/21.
<p>ANIMAL MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Timeliness</p> <p><i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i></p> <p>[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]</p>	3.37	3.30	1.95	2.54	Council has recently implemented a new Customer Request Management (CRM) system which has altered the approach to reporting customer enquiries. The data recorded is more accurate and reflects a higher average response time to animal management requests compared to 2020/21, but lower than 2019/20 and 2019/18.
<p>Service standard</p> <p><i>Animals reclaimed</i></p> <p>[Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100</p>	22.22%	28.57%	37.50%	54.55%	There were a total of eleven animals collected (6 reclaimed and 4 rehomed) in 2021/22. This compared to sixteen animals collected (6 reclaimed and 6 rehomed) in 2020/21, fourteen in 2019/20 (4 reclaimed and 8 rehomed) and nine animals collected (2 reclaimed) in 2018/19.
<p><i>Animals rehomed</i></p> <p>[Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x100</p>	New in 2020	57.14%	37.50%	36.36%	There were a total of eleven animals collected (6 reclaimed and 4 rehomed) in 2021/22. This compares to sixteen animals collected (6 reclaimed and 6 rehomed) in 2020/21, fourteen in 2019/20 (4

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
					reclaimed and 8 rehomed) and nine animals collected (2 reclaimed) in 2018/19.
Service cost					
Cost of animal management service per population [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	New in 2020	\$15.00	\$17.39	\$17.20	The cost of animal management has remained relatively unchanged from 2020/21 to 2021/22.
Health and safety					
Animal management prosecutions [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	New in 2020	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	There have been no animal prosecutions in 2021/22.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
5.1 Continue to investigate options for domestic waste water management in high risk towns including Eskdale, Mitta Mitta and Bethanga	Ongoing	Consultation with Mitta Mitta community and conversations with North East Water commenced. Integrated Water Management Forum funding application unsuccessful.
5.2 Advocate for reticulated potable water in Bethanga and Mitta Mitta	Ongoing	Consultation with Mitta Mitta community and conversations with North East Water commenced.
5.3 Continue to seek funding for integrated water management projects to maximise the use of recycled and raw water sources for public amenity and climate change mitigation	Ongoing	Streetscape upgrades in Corryong, Tallangatta and Mitta Mitta include design elements for water sensitive urban design.
5.4 Seek funding to explore options for the establishment of a recycling industry	In Progress	Future start date scheduled.
5.5 Improve the use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects eg crushed concrete, glass and rubber	Ongoing	New outdoor dining installed across the Shire included approximately 7500 recycled plastic milk bottles and

			405.4 kilograms of reclaimed pine dust.
5.6	Investigate and implement options for the management of roadside vegetation for fire mitigation	Not started	Additional resources appointed to provide dedicated focus on this initiative in 2022/23.
5.7	Advocate for the establishment of roadside clearances on arterial roads for emergencies	In Progress	Commenced discussions with VicRoads for use of stack sites on Murray Valley Highway.
5.8	Continue to implement noxious weed control and monitoring along roadsides within available funding	In Progress	Preparations commenced for 2022/23 roadside spray program.
5.9	Continue to implement the tree planting strategy to achieve 40% canopy coverage in urban streets by 2025	Ongoing	Trees planted at Tintalra. Planning for additional planting underway.
5.10	Explore the diversification of options for the establishment of native vegetation offset sites	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
5.11	Seek funding to establish a network of electric car charging stations	In Progress	Secured State Government funding for installation of an electric vehicle charge station in Corryong.
5.12	Develop a climate change action plan (including actions to reduce carbon emissions, electric vehicle charging, etc)	In Progress	Joint funding application submitted through Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance for risk mitigation assessment of Towong Shire infrastructure (bridges, roads, etc) and open spaces.
5.13	Transition waste and recycling services operations as per Victorian Government Circular Economy Strategy to deliver a four bin system for waste and recycling collection including separation of glass, green waste and organics	In Progress	Options review and Cost Benefit Analysis completed and community consultation scheduled for 2022/23.
5.14	Invest in community education programs and a waste services survey to improve waste and recycling separation	In Progress	Secured State Government funding to deliver waste and recycling education program.
5.15	Investigate options for hard waste, greenwaste and agricultural waste management e.g silage wrap	In Progress	Preparatory works commenced for waste review.
5.16	Replace the retaining wall at the Tallangatta Transfer Station	In Progress	Funding being sought via the State Government's Transfer Station Upgrade Fund.
5.17	Investigate options for the future of the Corryong Landfill	In Progress	Preparation for application has commenced.

5.18	Implement required measures to ensure management of closed landfills is compliant with EPA requirements	In Progress	Assessment of data to meet EPA's General Environmental Duty is in planning stage.
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6. Organisational improvement

Strategic objective

Maintain a high performing customer-centred organisation that works with the community to develop and deliver priorities.

Strategies

Engage with our communities to ensure that decision making is informed by community needs.

Promote Council activities that affect the community.

Advocate and collaborate with other agencies and stakeholders to progress priorities and activities.

Consistently deliver an excellent customer experience.

Provide a great place to work that supports a high performing organisation.

Provide good governance and actively manage evolving risks.

Continually review revenue sources and cost saving opportunities to improve our financial position.

Continually review expenditure to provide best value.

<h3>Highlights</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the <i>Council Plan 2021-25</i> and our <i>Community Vision</i>. • Adoption of the majority of deliverables required by the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, helping to continuously improve governance, financial and community facing practices. • Ongoing systems modernisation in collaboration with Alpine and Indigo Shire Councils, with the successful implementation of a new rates, property, receipting and animal management system. • Successfully advocating to obtain nearly \$10m in Federal and State government funding to support improvements in infrastructure and services across the municipality.
<h3>Challenges</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business continuity challenges and scarcity of skilled new recruits to fill key vacancies following the disruption caused by the summer 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

2021/22 was a year of renewed direction as the adoption of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* and *Community Vision* provided the foundation for the ongoing development of infrastructure and services across the Shire.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the associated environment continued to pose substantial challenges, making it difficult to fill staff vacancies, find skilled contractors and source materials. Teams continually prioritised work to focus on the most critical deliverables. Despite these challenges the year also featured a number of notable achievements, including securing nearly \$10 million in State and Federal funding to progress infrastructure and service priorities. A comprehensive Workforce Survey was conducted to identify cultural themes and improvement opportunities and teams have worked collaboratively across the year to improve communication after many months of remote working and to develop training to support new staff.

Pleasingly the majority of deliverables due under the *Local Government Act 2020* were completed with deliverables in 2021/22 including the adoption of the *Financial Plan 2021-2031*, *Workforce Plan 2021-2025*, a *Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy*, *Recruitment Policy*, *Recruitment Policy* and a revised *Procurement Policy* and *Employee Code of Conduct*. The *Asset Plan 2021-2031* is the final outstanding deliverable which is anticipated to be adopted in 2022/23. Other major plans delivered included the *Domestic Animal Management Plan* and *Gender Equality Action Plan*. Collectively the various plans, policies and structures put in place during the year provide a strong foundation to ensure that we are delivering on our mandate to provide good governance in the municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.

Work continued to continually improve systems and processes to support excellent service delivery. Following over twelve months of detailed preparatory work, a new Council website was launched with substantial improvements to site navigation, search, design and content. Ongoing enhancements to the new customer relationship management system were implemented across Towong and Alpine Shire Councils to make it easier for staff to handle customer enquiries. A new property, rates, receipting and animal management system was implemented across Towong and Indigo Shire Councils, having already been implemented at Alpine Shire Council in 2020/21. The ongoing benefit of joint implementations has been evident, ranging from initial procurement benefits, to project delivery savings, sharing of joint learnings across councils, and joint advocacy to vendors for system improvements.

Despite recruitment challenges, the Communications and Engagement team worked hard to improve the awareness and engagement of our communities in relation to matters that affect them. The team worked collaboratively with project managers across the organisation to develop robust and adaptable communications and engagement plans for every key project across Council's very substantial capital works program, strategic development agenda and bushfire recovery program. May was a particularly notable month with over 100 individual pieces of proactive collateral published, and social media reach and engagement more than doubled during the year.

Customer service was also a major focus and an independent review of the top customer facing issues was undertaken to determine process improvement opportunities across the organisation. The review was conducted in collaboration with customer facing staff across the organisation and a project officer was seconded from Indigo Shire Council to implement and embed the process recommendations.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 21/22	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Target Reached
Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	Increased level of satisfaction	54			No
Community satisfaction with Council decisions	Increased level of satisfaction	54			No
Community satisfaction with customer service	Increased level of satisfaction	58			No
Percentage of customer requests resolved within target service levels	Increased percentage	55.58%			N/A*
Number of business improvements	Five (5) improvements per annum	11			Yes
Percentage of staff who agree that Council is a great place to work	Increased percentage	45%			N/A*

* First year of measurement, reach of target will be assessed for the first time in 2022/23

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
<p>Governance</p> <p>Transparency</p> <p><i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i></p> <p>[Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a</p>	1.19%	0.92%	0.48%	2.37%	Council is committed to public decision-making at open Council meetings in the interest of open and transparent governance. Meetings are only closed to the public in accordance with s66 of the Local Government Act 2020. There were six resolutions made at meetings closed to the public in 2021/22 compared to

Indicator	Result 2018/19	Result 2019/20	Result 2020/21	Result 2021/22	Comments
delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100					one in 2020/21; two in 2019/20; and three in 2018/19.
Consultation and engagement <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	58.00	60.00	60.00	54.00	Council's performance is in line with the average for Small Rural Councils as well as the overall Statewide Council average for Victoria.
Attendance <i>Councillor attendance at council meetings</i> [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) × (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100	90.59%	90.67%	92.86%	97.65%	The result recognises Councillor attendance at Council meetings. Formal granting of leave of absence is obtained when a Councillor is unable to attend.
Service cost <i>Cost of elected representation</i>	\$37,601.04	\$40,947.60	\$35,454.78	\$39,043.23	Local Government elected officials received an allowance increase effective 18 December 2021 as per the Victorian Tribunal Determination 01/2022. The Determination provides for further scheduled annual increases to allowance values until 18 December 2025. The next increase will take effect on 18 December 2022.
Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	58.00	63.00	60.00	54.00	Council's performance is in line with the average for Small Rural Councils as well as the overall Statewide Council average for Victoria.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities	Status	Comment
6.1 Continue to improve awareness, engagement and involvement of the community in relation to matters that affect them	Ongoing	Key staff undertook Community Engagement training and substantial community engagement was undertaken in relation to the major plans and projects affecting the community. A new Council website was launched to improve site navigation, search, design and content. Facebook page reach increased from approximately 4,000 to over 10,000 monthly views between Nov 21 and June 22.
6.2 Continually improve customer service experience across the organisation	Ongoing	Achievements in 21/22 included the introduction of a Customer Service Officer knowledge base, a review of customer service enquiry types and resolution times, and enhancements to the Customer Relationship Management system to make it easier for staff to handle enquiries. Focus was placed on reducing the time to resolve customer enquiries and improving responsiveness to customer phone calls.
6.3 Continually improve processes to support improved service delivery	Ongoing	Several key internal processes were reviewed to mitigate risk, improve staff clarity and improve overall service delivery including the procurement process, recruitment process, staff exit process and the communications and engagement reporting process.
6.4 Deliver improved business technology - finance, rates, human resources	Ongoing	A new rates, property, receipting and animal management system was successfully implemented across Towong and Indigo Shire Councils.
6.5 Update the technology strategy to support the ongoing delivery excellent customer service	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
6.6 Develop and implement a People Plan to support the ongoing development of a high performing, adaptable,	In Progress	A comprehensive Workforce Survey was conducted to form the basis of our People Plan, and a number of actions were implemented to address

	resilient, engaged and cohesive organisation		the findings, including improving staff communication, launching training on processes and systems and reviewing Council's Values.
6.7	Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment	Ongoing	An independent audit of the OHS Management System was undertaken and implementation of the findings is ongoing. Substantial focus was placed on ensuring that staff remained safe and well informed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Mental Health First Aid training was provided to staff and Emergency Evacuation Diagrams were updated.
6.8	Continue to seek opportunities to improve service delivery and achieve best value including further investigation of shared services	Ongoing	Alpine, Indigo and Towong Shire Councils were successful in achieving funding under the Rural Councils Transformation Program to review planning and building systems and processes, with a view to expanding the current shared service between Towong and Indigo.
6.9	Continue to advocate for increased government funding support to ensure long term sustainability	Ongoing	Almost \$10 million in additional funding was announced in 2021/22 following ongoing advocacy efforts.
6.10	Investigate alternative revenue streams	Ongoing	Projects to install a weighbridge at the Corryong Saleyards and 24 hour fuel at the Corryong Airport made good progress and revenue streams are expected to commence during 2023.
6.11	Review the Revenue and Rating strategy	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
6.12	Consider options for the realisation of surplus Council assets	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
6.13	Continually improve the risk management and governance frameworks and practices	Ongoing	A review of all operational risk registers was completed by relevant officers across the organisation. The Audit and Risk Committee Charter was substantially updated and reviews of the Strategic Risk Register and Risk Management Action Plan commenced.

6.14	Provide ongoing support and development of Councillors in fulfilling their roles	Ongoing	Councillor briefing sessions were held at least twice monthly to support their ability to make informed decisions. A CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy and Committee was introduced to support the Councillors in managing the employment of the Chief Executive Officer.
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Governance and management arrangements

Governance

Towong Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 24 October 1996 and is a Body Corporate. Council's main office is located at 32 Towong Street, Tallangatta.

In accordance with Section 8 (1) of *Local Government Act 2020*, the role of Council:

is to provide good governance in the municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.

In accordance with Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

- (1) *A Council must in performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.*
- (2) *The following are the overarching governance principles:*
 - (a) *Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;*
 - (b) *Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;*
 - (c) *the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;*
 - (d) *the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making; (e) innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;*
 - (e) *collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;*
 - (f) *the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;*
 - (g) *regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;*
 - (h) *the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.*

Council recognises that effective governance is the key to ensuring that Council meets the community's priorities. Many formal decisions are made at Council Meetings, and some of Council's powers have been delegated to Council staff and are exercised in accordance with Council policies. The community has the opportunity to be involved in Council's decision-making processes through specific community engagement processes in line with our Community Engagement Policy, and 'Public Question Time' held in conjunction with Council's monthly meeting.

Council meetings

Council's ordinary meetings are held monthly, except for January when there may be no meeting if there is no business that needs to be addressed. These meetings are conducted in accordance with Council's *Governance Rules*.

For the 2021/22 year Council held the following meetings:

- Twelve (12) ordinary council meetings
- Five (5) special council meetings.

Committees

In 2020/21 Council had one Community Asset Committee, the Riverview Walwa Community Asset Committee, to provide and manage self-contained accommodation at Riverview Units, Walwa.

Councillor Code of Conduct

The Councillor Code of Conduct outlines the standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors in the course of performing their duties and functions as Councillors. The Council last adopted its Code of Conduct on 24 February 2021.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Councillor Code of Conduct is designed to:

- Provide for good governance and decision making across the municipality;
- Establish agreed high standards of behaviour and conduct;
- Create a common understanding of the different roles of Councillors and the administration;
- Clarify dispute resolution procedures; and
- Outline the treatment of breaches.

It provides a framework for robust debate in which legitimate differences in opinions, beliefs and values can be discussed constructively.

Councillor allowances

At 1 July 2021, Mayor and Councillor allowances were set in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Councils were able to set their allowances within the ranges determined by the Minister for Local Government. Ranges were set depending on the category of the council, as determined by the income and population of each council. Towong Shire Council allowances were set lower than the maximum allowable for a Category 1 Council, with an amount equivalent to the superannuation guarantee payable in addition to their allowance (10% in 2021/22).

In accordance with the new *Local Government Act 2020* the responsibility for determining allowances transitioned to the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal during the course of 2021/22. The Tribunal made their first Determination on 7 March 2022 with the new allowance levels effective 18 December 2021. The Determination sets a single allowance for each role and council category inclusive of a superannuation guarantee payment. Councils are required to pay the set allowance amounts with no ability to vary this at a council level. However individual Councillors may elect to receive the entire allowance, a specified part, or none of the allowance. The Tribunal also introduced a new allowance level for Deputy Mayors so that there are now separate allowance levels for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors.

Allowances applicable to Towong Shire Council as a 'Category 1' Council were as follows:

Role	1 July 2021 – 18 December 2021*	18 December 2021 – 30 June 2022
Mayor	\$69,017	\$74,706
Deputy Mayor	\$23,154	\$37,353
Councillor	\$23,154	\$24,080

*Inclusive of superannuation guarantee equivalent

As at 1 July 2021, Councillors could also claim a remote travel allowance of \$40 per day to attend meetings held more than 50km from their place of residence. The Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal increased this amount to \$44 per day.

All allowances were paid pro-rata for the part of the year where the allowance applied.

Councillor expenses

The Councillor Support and Expenses Policy establishes the resources, facilities and administrative support provided to Councillors. It provides for Councillors to have out-of-pocket expenses, incurred while performing their official duties as a Councillor or member of a delegated committee, either reimbursed or paid directly by the Council. The table below presents the expenses incurred by Council in 2021/22 on behalf of each Councillor.

Councillor	Conferences and Training	ICT*	Travel [^]	Childcare	Functions and Events	Other	TOTAL
Cr Aaron Scales	\$0	\$0	\$264	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$264
Cr Andrew Whitehead	\$0	\$394	\$527	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$921
Cr David Wortmann	\$0	\$1,191	\$2,424	\$0	\$0	\$43	\$3,658
Cr Denise Anderson	\$500	\$230	\$2,706	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,436
Cr Pete Dikschei	\$550	\$832	\$1,271	\$0	\$50	\$0	\$2,703
TOTAL	\$1,050	\$2,647	\$7,192	\$0	\$50	\$43	\$10,982

*Information and Communication Technology.

[^]Inclusive of mileage and accommodation.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit Committee was established by resolution of Council on 19 January 1998 as an independent advisory committee to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial reporting, management of risk, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.

It was re-established as the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* at the Council Meeting on 1 September 2020.

During 2021/22 the Audit and Risk Committee met quarterly to discuss Council's Budget, finance reports, Council priorities, external and internal audits, OHS, performance reporting, finance systems, legal and compliance actions, risk management and policy development.

During 2021/22, the Audit and Risk Committee considered:

Committee Governance

- Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan
- Audit and Risk Committee Chair and Membership
- Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter

Financial management and performance reporting

- Annual financial and performance statements
- Interim and annual external audits
- Budget development
- Quarterly financial reporting
- Long term financial plan

Risk management

- Strategic Risk Register
- Significant operational changes
- Risk management framework and appetite
- Risk Management Action Plan
- Business Continuity Plan
- Emergency management planning and response
- Fraud controls
- Occupational health and safety
- Bushfire and COVID-19 response
- Insurances
- Human resources

Internal Audit

- Internal audit plan
- Records management audit
- OHS management system audit
- Local government investigations

Compliance

- Local Government Act 2020 implementation
- Gender Equality Act 2020 implementation
- Other legislative and regulatory reforms
- Council Plan development
- Councillor expense reimbursements
- CEO credit card expenditure
- Gifts register
- Procurement exemptions
- Policy reviews.

Audit and Risk Committee Members

In 2021/22 the Audit Committee was comprised of the Mayor and four independent external members until October 2021, at which time the term of Mr Rob Lees expired. While the minimum number of external members was still satisfied it was agreed to replace Mr Lees and a new member will commence in 2022/23. The external members were as follows:

Mr Robert Lees (Chair until 27 October 2021)

Mr Lees was first appointed to the Audit Committee in March 2015 and his appointment was extended in July 2019, with his term expiring on 31 October 2021. He has had a varied local and international career in commercial development, commodity trading, procurement and operations management. Mr Lees has significant experience in corporate governance, procurement, strategic planning, lean manufacturing, and general management. He has positions on the boards of Hume Employment Services Limited, Belmere Pty Ltd and Tallangatta Health Service and is also a member of the Rotary Club of Bellbridge Lake Hume. Mr Lees has lived in the Shire for most of his life and currently lives in Bellbridge.

Mrs Kira Bryant

Mrs Bryant was first appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee in 2019. She grew up in the local area attending Tallangatta Secondary College. From there, Mrs Bryant completed a Bachelor of Rural Business with the University of Melbourne. After living in Ararat, in Western Victoria for a short time, she returned to the North East with her young family. Over the last 12 years Mrs Bryant has gained extensive experience in banking, finance, and agriculture. During this time, she also completed a Diploma of Financial Planning. Mrs Bryant is currently working as an Agribusiness Credit Assessment Manager at Rural Bank.

Mr Spencer Rich (Chair from 27 October 2021)

Mr Rich was appointed to the Audit Committee in July 2019. He has over 20 years of experience in occupational health and safety management, risk management and corporate governance, including nearly 10 years with Wodonga Council in roles spanning these fields. Mr Rich holds a Diploma of Occupational Health and Safety and an Advanced Diploma of Governance, Risk and Compliance. Spencer is currently an Inspector with SafeWork NSW.

Ms Jessica Campbell

Ms Campbell was appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee in September 2019. She has had an extensive local legal career and continues to practice in the area of personal injury law. She has had positions on local sporting groups, agricultural discussion groups and school boards. Ms Campbell has lived in the Shire for most of her life and currently lives in the local area. Her children also attend a local school and kindergarten. She is currently a Solicitor at Harris Lieberman Solicitors.

External audit

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). For the 2021/22 financial year the annual external audit of Council's financial statements and performance statement was conducted by VAGO's representative, Crowe Australasia. The external auditors engage with Council's Audit and Risk Committee to present their independent audit report. The external audit management letter and responses are also provided to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Risk management

Council is committed to taking a best practice approach to managing risk. We recognise that risks are inherent in all our functions and understand that all systems and processes exhibit variability, impacting on predictability and performance.

Managing risk is not about finger pointing when things go wrong, rather it is a conscious decision to improve Council's systems and processes. The objectives of our risk management policy are to:

- Ensure we appropriately deal with risk;
- Safeguard our assets: people, financial, information and property;
- Create an environment where all our employees will assume responsibility for managing risk;
- Preserve our ability to deliver policy and performance objectives in a timely, efficient and effective manner; and
- Implement transparent and responsible risk management processes, which align with accepted best practice.

Governance and management checklist

Governance and management items	Assessment	Result
1 Community engagement policy Policy required by section 55 of the Act outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest	Adopted 24 February 2021	Yes
2 Community engagement guidelines Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community	Adopted 24 February 2021	Yes
3 Financial Plan Plan required by section 91 of the Act describing the resources required to give effect to the Council Plan	Adopted 27 October 2021	Yes
4 Asset Plan Plan required by section 92 of the Act describing information about each class of infrastructure under the control of Council	Updated Plan targeted for adoption in 2022/23 based on prior plans adopted in 2016	No
5 Revenue and Rating Plan Plan required by section 93 of the Act describing Council's funding sources	Adopted 23 June 2021	Yes
6 Annual Budget Required by section 94 of the Act including the financial statements, services and initiatives to be funded, and how much is to be raised by rates and charges	Adopted 22 June 2022	Yes
7 Risk policy Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations	Current policy in operation 27 April 2022	Yes

<p>8 Fraud policy Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud</p>	<p>Current policy in operation 9 December 2020</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>9 Municipal emergency management plan Plan under section 60ADB of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> for emergency mitigation, response and recovery</p>	<p>Prepared and maintained in accordance with section 60ADB of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i> 3 December 2019</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>10 Procurement policy Policy under section 108A of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to the purchase of goods and services</p>	<p>Adopted 22 June 2022</p>	<p>Yes</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>Current plan in operation 30 July 2018</p>	<p>Yes</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>Current plan in operation 30 July 2018</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>13 Risk management framework Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations</p>	<p>Current framework in operation 23 February 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>14 Audit and Risk Committee Advisory committee required by section 53 of the Act to monitor compliance with the Act, to monitor financial and performance reporting, to advise on risk management and fraud controls, and to oversee audit functions</p>	<p>Established 1 September 2020</p>	<p>Yes</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 auditors engaged to perform OHS audit and records management audit. Note that Council does not have a single internal auditor, rather relevant technical experts are conducted to conduct audits of high-risk exposures on a case by case basis, to ensure that Council utilises the best expertise relevant to the audit in question.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>16 Performance reporting framework A set of prescribed indicators required by section 98 of the Act measuring financial and non-financial performance</p>	<p>Current framework in operation 1 July 2020</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>17 Council Plan reporting Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators</p>	<p>Current report 23 February 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>18 Financial reporting Quarterly report required by section 97 of the Act comparing actual and budgeted results to date with an explanation of variances</p>	<p>Conducted quarterly</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>19 Risk reporting Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies</p>	<p>Reported bi-monthly</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>20 Performance reporting Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance</p>	<p>Reported quarterly</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>21 Annual report Annual report required by section 98 of the Act containing a report of operations of the Council, and audited performance and financial statements</p>	<p>Presented at a meeting of Council 15 December 2021</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>22 Councillor Code of Conduct Code required by section 139 of the Act including the standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors</p>	<p>Reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> 24 February 2021</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>23 Delegations A document setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff</p>	<p>Reviewed 24 March 2021</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>24 Meeting procedures Governance Rules required by section 60 of the Act outlining the conduct of Council meetings</p>	<p>Adopted 1 September 2020</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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



Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer

Date:



Cr Andrew Whitehead
Mayor

Date:

Statutory information

Documents available for public inspection

The opportunity to access information about Council operations is a vital part of open and accountable government. Council's Public Transparency Policy outlines the documents that are available for public inspection in accordance with section 57 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Best value

Council seeks to achieve best value for its communities across all of its activities, by taking a proactive and systematic approach to keeping costs as low as possible while striving to deliver services to the standard expected by the community.

Council has been recognised as a leader in procurement and process efficiency in the local government sector. Council is also recognised for its innovative shared services arrangements which have resulted in improved service delivery and reduced costs through collaboration with neighbouring councils. Shared services have been established for the following services:

- Planning services
- Building control
- Environmental health
- Rates and property
- Immunisations

Other best value initiatives include the implementation of a shared digital platform with Alpine Shire Council and Indigo Shire Council. The program aims to provide a frictionless customer experience and drive internal efficiencies across all three Councils. The collaborative approach has aided in driving best value in procurement and implementation of the program, and continues to provide a strong foundation for further collaborative initiatives between the Councils.

Carers recognition

In accordance with the *Carers Recognition Act 2012* Council is required to report annually on its care management obligations under Section 11 of that Act. 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, to people in care relationships, and to the wider community by:

- distributing printed material through relevant council services
- providing information to organisations represented in Council/community networks.

Council has taken all practicable measures to ensure staff, council agents and volunteers working for Council are informed about the principles and obligations of the Act.

Council has taken all practicable measures to review and modify policies, procedures and supports to include recognition of the carer relationship.

Contracts

1 July – 15 December 2021

Prior to the adoption of the Procurement Policy in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* on 15 December 2021, Council did not enter into any contracts valued at \$150,000 or more without first engaging in a competitive process. However, it is noted that a relationship with a supplier was entered into resulting in cumulative expenditures in excess of \$150,000 over a period time crossing 2020/21 and 2021/22, that should have been treated as a single procurement exercise. Controls have been reviewed and staff training has been conducted to mitigate the risk of such breaches in the future.

15 December 2021 – 30 June 2022

Following the adoption of the Procurement Policy in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* on 15 December 2021, Council did not enter into any contracts valued at \$150,000 or more without first engaging in a competitive process.

Disability Action Plan

In accordance with Section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*, Council has prepared a *Disability Action Plan* (known as the *Towong Shire Access and Inclusion Plan*). During the year a number of improvements were made to improve swimming pool accessibility, and to assist Corryong Health to undertake a review of their disability services.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Council adopted its *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* in November 2021. Its development was guided by the following principles:

- The belief that pets contribute to quality of life
- A requirement to balance the needs of those who own pets and those who do not
- Valuing responsible pet ownership
- Proactive animal management and education within the community
- Protection of the environment from any negative impacts of dogs and cats
- Working in partnership with others to achieve positive outcomes for the community
- Local Government plays a leadership role in animal management.

Council's *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025* includes an Action Plan to assist Council to achieve the Plan's objectives over a four-year period. During the year many of the ongoing actions in the Plan were completed including:

- Officer training in relation to relevant topics
- Animal registration reminders and follow-ups
- Issuance of barking dog information packs to assist in resolution of complaints
- Investigation of and response to dog attacks
- Declaration of menacing and dangerous dogs as appropriate.

Food Act Ministerial Directions

In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, Council is required to publish a summary of any ministerial directions received during the financial year in its Annual Report. No such ministerial directions were received by Council during the financial year.

Freedom of Information (Fol)

In accordance with section 7(4AA)(a) and 7(4AA)(b) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, Council is required to publish certain statements in their Annual Report or separately (such as on its website) concerning its functions and information available.

Access to documents may be obtained through written request to the Freedom of Information Officer, as detailed in Section 17 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and in summary as follows:

- It should be in writing
- It should identify as clearly as possible which document is being requested
- It should be accompanied by the appropriate application fee (the fee may be waived in certain circumstances)

Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made (e.g. photocopying, search and retrieval charges). Further information regarding Fol can be found at www.foi.vic.gov.au or on Council's website.

Public Interest Disclosures Procedures

In accordance with Section 69 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, Council must include in their Annual Report information about how to access the procedures established by the Council. It is also required to provide certain information about the number and types of public interest disclosures complaints investigated during the financial year.

The purpose of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* is to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures in relation to the improper conduct of Council and its employees and to provide protection for persons making disclosures against detrimental action. Procedures on how to make a disclosure are publicly available on Council's website.

During the 2021/22 year 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* 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.

Performance Statement

Description of municipality

Towong Shire is located in far north-eastern Victoria and possesses some of Australia's most pristine environment. Wilderness areas, lakes, rivers and streams create diverse landscapes that are enjoyed by around 6,000 residents and many more visitors across an area of 6,600 square kilometres.

The economy of the region revolves around a rich agricultural sector, tourism and timber production and processing. Approximately two-thirds of businesses located in the Shire are in the agriculture and forestry industries.

Like many rural areas, Towong Shire's small population and vast geographic area presents Council with a significant challenge to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of community assets. Council is taking actions to address this situation through strategies that promote economic and population growth as well as by implementing innovative methods to reduce costs wherever it can. Council is confident that this approach delivers best value to the community and will secure a long-term future for the organisation.

Operational summary

A number of varying circumstances has influenced the year's performance results. Towong Shire was significantly impacted by the 2019/20 bushfires in the Upper Murray from late December 2019 into January 2020 with Council continuing relief and recovery efforts in 2021/22.

This has been compounded by the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) which has affected the utilisation of Council services, as well as the availability and cost of materials, contractors and staff. A number of results in this report were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in some way, often as the result of some operations being closed and scheduled community events being cancelled. However, nearly all actions and services were able to continue through a shift to remote delivery.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Sustainable Capacity Indicators - for the year ended 30 June 2022					
<i>Indicator/measure</i>	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
Population <i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i> [Total expenses / Municipal population]	\$2,450.12	\$3,975.33	\$4,046.71	\$3,543.06	Total expenses were \$21.517 million in 2021/22 compared to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$24.693 million in 2020/21. - \$24.007 million in 2019/20; and - \$14.833 million in 2018/19. Expenses were considerably higher in 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 than in 2018/19 due to the costs incurred in appointing contractors and staff to support bushfire recovery efforts, and the cost of garbage disposal due to the bushfire-damaged Corryong landfill being inoperable.

<p><i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i> [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]</p>	\$30,768.09	\$31,036.42	\$30,924.94	\$36,556.23	<p>The variability over time of the results for this indicator depend on the levels of capital works carried out each year in renewing or upgrading Council assets, as well as the level of depreciation and impacts of asset revaluations.</p>
<p><i>Population density per length of road</i> [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]</p>	5.12	5.11	5.16	5.13	<p>Changes in the result of this indicator are due to fluctuations in population.</p>

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Sustainable Capacity Indicators - for the year ended 30 June 2022					
<i>Indicator/measure</i>	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
					The length of road has not changed over the reporting period.
Own-source revenue <i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i> [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	\$1,904.53	\$1,989.40	\$2,458.70	\$2,071.96	This indicator exceeded historical averages in 2020/21 due to the receipt of substantial disaster recovery funding in relation to the 2019/20 bushfires. Disaster recovery funding was also received in 2021/22 however less than in 2020/21.
Recurrent grants <i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	\$944.17	\$1,139.07	\$1,211.90	\$1,375.10	75% of the 2022/23 Financial Assistance Grants were received early in 2021/22 resulting in an increase in this result compared to prior years.
Disadvantage <i>Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage</i> [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	5	5	5	5	

<p>Workforce turnover</p> <p><i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100</p>	14.1%	15.4%	24.4%	25.9%	<p>Staff turnover increased in 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to the impacts of the 2019/20 bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Sustainable Capacity Indicators - for the year ended 30 June 2022					
<i>Indicator/measure</i>	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations

Sustainable Capacity Indicator definitions

"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than:

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

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

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

"population" means the resident population estimated by council.

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

"relative socio-economic disadvantage", in relation to a municipality, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipality is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (Catalogue Number 2033.0.55.0001) of SEIFA.

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

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

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Service Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
Aquatic Facilities Utilisation <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	1.96	1.92	0.89	1.12	Council operates two outdoor seasonal swimming pools. There were 6,783 visits recorded in 2021/22 compared to 5,455 in 2020/21; 10,732 in 2019/20 and 11,607 in 2018/19. Visitation rates were impacted by COVID-19 and the effects of lockdowns.
Animal Management Health and safety <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions]	New in 2020	0%	0%	0%	There have been no animal prosecutions in 2021/22.

Food Safety					
<i>Health and safety</i>					
<i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Service Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100					There were eleven critical or major non-compliance outcome notifications issued in 2021/22. This compares to one in 2020/21; three in 2019/20; and seven in 2018/19. All notifications were actioned.
Governance Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	58	63	60	54	Council's performance is in line with the average for Small Rural Councils as well as the overall Statewide Council average for Victoria.

<p>Libraries</p> <p>Participation</p> <p><i>Active library borrowers in the municipality</i></p> <p>[Sum of the number of active library borrowers in the last three years / the sum of the municipal population for the last three years] x100</p>	10.56%	10.82%	9.16%	8.05%	<p>Council operates two static libraries in its main centres of Corryong and Tallangatta. These libraries service our small, dispersed population which is spread over 6,635 square kilometres. Many residents reside outside the two main centres where the static libraries are located and may access other library</p>
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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Service Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022					
<i>Service/indicator/measure</i>	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
					services in neighbouring municipalities. Library participation declined due to the impact of COVID-19 and associated restrictions.
Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	81.31%	80.30%	85.50%	75.83%	There was an increase in both the number of children (273) attending the MCH service at least once as well as the total number of children (360) enrolled in 2021/22, though the proportion of children attending decreased for the year in comparison to previous years. There were 174 children who attended the MCH service at least once in 2020/21 compared to 163 in 2019/20 and 181 in

					2018/19.
<p>Participation</p> <p><i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i></p> <p>[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100</p>	66.67%	100.00%	100.00%	84.62%	There were 11 children who identify as having an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background who participated in MCH services out of a total of 13 children who registered with the service.

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Service Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022					
<i>Service/indicator/measure</i>	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
					This is double the number of children who registered and participated (6.5) in 2020/21 and compares favourably to 3 in both 2019/20 and 2018/19.
Roads Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	58	63	57	50	Council's performance in 2021/22 was in-line with the Small Rural Council average for the year of 50. Councils' performance was slightly below the state average for 2021/22 of 53.
Statutory Planning Decision making <i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	There were no VCAT planning decisions for 2021/22 and one during 2020/21.

Waste Collection					
Waste diversion					
<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i>	14.69%	25.75%	20.82%	48.62%	

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT					
Service Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2018/19	Results 2019/20	Results 2020/21	Results 2021/22	Material Variations
[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100					The total amount of garbage and recyclables collected by Council in 2021/22 (1,365t) is low in comparison to 2020/21 (3,347t). Prior years may have included estimates of tonnages as Council's waste management facility did not record weights and estimates were used to calculate tonnages based on average bin lifts.

Service Performance Indicator definitions

“**Aboriginal child**” means a child who is an Aboriginal person

“**Aboriginal person**” has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

“active library member” means a member of a library who has borrowed a book from the library

“annual report” means an annual report prepared by a council under sections 131,132 and 133 of the Act

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

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

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

“food premises” has the same meaning as in the Food Act program established under the Agreement entered into 1984

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

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

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

“population” means the resident population estimated by Council

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT									
Financial Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022									
Dimension/ <i>indicator/measure</i>	Results				Forecast				Material Variations
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	
Efficiency									

<p>Expenditure level</p> <p><i>Expenses per property assessment</i> [Total expenses / Number of property assessments]</p>	<p>\$3,304.30 \$5,359.60 \$5,467.89 \$4,754.09</p>	<p>\$5,255.33 \$4,755.78 \$4,928.67 \$5,030.22</p>	<p>Variation is primarily due to lower than budgeted materials and services as a result of extensive weather disruptions which have reduced the planned works program.</p>
<p><i>Average rate per property assessment</i> [General rates and municipal charges revenue / Number of rateable property assessments]</p>	<p>New in 2019/20 \$1,721.65 \$1,713.24 \$1,745.91</p>	<p>\$1,792.89 \$1,836.22 \$1,884.89 \$1,935.11</p>	<p>Council adopted a 1.5% increase to the general rate and municipal charge in 2021/22 as per the Victorian Government's Fair Go Rates System. Rate increases are limited to the projected inflation increase for the year ahead unless an application is made to the Essential Services Commission for a variation.</p>

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT									
Financial Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022									
Dimension/ <i>indicator/measure</i>	Results				Forecast				Material Variations
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	
Liquidity									
Working capital									
<i>Current assets compared to current liabilities</i> [Current assets / Current liabilities] x100	939.94%	611.10%	388.23%	488.06%	358.20%	227.37%	120.14%	132.59%	Council is currently holding a significant amount of cash due to receiving payments in advance for approximately 75% of the 2022/23 allocation of Financial Assistance Grants as well as funding for a number of significant projects including bushfire recovery and carry forward capital works that are forecast to be completed in 2022/23. Significant weather and unavailability of materials and contractors have contributed to this deferred expenditure.
Unrestricted cash									
<i>Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities</i> [Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100	717.14%	570.66%	207.10%	178.75%	327.14%	192.92%	86.92%	99.48%	Council is currently holding a significant amount of cash due to receiving payments in advance for approximately 75% of the 2022/23 allocation of Financial Assistance Grants as well as funding for a number of significant projects including bushfire recovery and carry forward capital works that are forecast to be completed in 2022/23.
Obligations									

<p>Loans and borrowings <i>Loans and borrowings compared to rates</i> [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100</p>	3.48%	0.04%	0.04%	0.00%	0.66%	0.07%	0.00%	0.00%	<p>Council entered into a finance lease for the purchase of a garbage truck in 2018 and had \$4,000 of borrowings as at 30 June 2021 which was paid out in 2021/22. The lease is expected to be fully paid off in the first quarter of 2022/23.</p>
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PERFORMANCE STATEMENT									
Financial Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022									
Dimension/indicator/measure	Results				Forecast				Material Variations
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	
<i>Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates</i> [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	0.90%	0.95%	0.18%	0.18%	0.80%	0.77%	0.22%	0.15%	Council entered into a finance lease for the purchase of a garbage truck in 2018 and had \$4,000 of borrowings as at 30 June 2021 which was paid out in 2021/22. The lease is expected to be fully paid off in the first quarter of 2022/23.
Indebtedness <i>Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> [Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100	10.24%	9.80%	7.13%	7.79%	10.15%	9.77%	11.24%	11.07%	The increase in non-current liabilities compared to source revenue between 2020/21 & 2021/22 is due to a decrease in other income (\$4,105K) in 2020/21 & (\$1,469K) in 2021/22. The decrease in other income is due to less disaster recovery related income being received in 2021/22 than in 2020/21. Substantial disaster recovery related income was received in 2020/21 due to the 2019/20 bushfires.
Asset renewal and upgrade <i>Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation</i> [Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x 100	New	121.37%	129.41%	120.04%	503.38%	241.35%	180.24%	81.87%	In the past three years asset renewal and upgrade levels have been higher than 100% as a number of renewal projects have been brought forward due to grant funding being available. Council's asset renewal strategy is typically to renew 100% of assets that fall below intervention levels. The levels are set based on community expectations.
Operating position									

Adjusted underlying result									
<i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i>	21.27%	12.41%	7.82%	15.08%	(48.62%)	(10.14%)	(12.41%)	(12.73%)	The significant variability in results is due to the timing of payments of the Financial Assistance Grants. Payments in advance of approximately 75% of the 2022/23 allocation were received by Council in
[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100									

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT									
Financial Performance Indicators – for the year ended 30 June 2022									
Dimension/ <i>indicator/measure</i>	Results				Forecast				Material Variations
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	
									2021/22. These payments in advance result in significant variability in this measure over time.
Stability									
Rates concentration									
<i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	46.82%	33.56%	34.44%	37.56%	62.73%	52.44%	53.02%	53.49%	The significant variability in results is due to the timing of payments of the Financial Assistance Grants.
Rates effort									
<i>Rates compared to property values</i> [Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100	0.57%	0.56%	0.52%	0.56%	0.38%	0.38%	0.39%	0.40%	The small increases in the forecast figures is due to the assumption of a forecast rate increase of 2.10% from 2021/22 and Capital Improved Values (CIV) remaining constant.

Financial Performance Indicator definitions

"adjusted underlying revenue" means total income other than—

- (a) Non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and

- (b) Non-monetary asset contributions; and
- (c) contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to in paragraphs (a) and (b)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"population" means the resident population estimated by Council

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

Retired measures

Service/indicator/measure

	Results				Comment
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2021/22	
Animal management Health and safety <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions]	0	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	This measure was replaced by Animal management prosecutions (%) for 2020.
Efficiency					

Retired measures					
Service/indicator/measure					
	Results				Comment
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2021/22	
Revenue level <i>E1 – Average residential rate per residential assessment</i> [Residential rate revenue / Number of residential property assessments]	\$1,504.89	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	This measure was replaced by Average rate per property assessment for 2020.
Obligations Asset renewal O1 - Asset renewal compared to depreciation [Asset renewal expense / Asset depreciation] x 100	126.02%	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	Retired in 2019/20	This measure was replaced by Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation for 2020.

Basis of preparation

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

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

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

The forecast figures included in the Performance Statement are those adopted by Council in its Budget on 23 June 2022. Detailed information on the actual financial results is contained in the General Purpose Financial Statements. The 2022/23 Budget can be obtained by visiting Council's website www.towong.vic.gov.au or is available for viewing at the Tallangatta or Corryong offices.

Certification of the Performance Statement

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

Ms Juliana Phelps
Principal Accounting Officer
Date: 26 April 2023

In our opinion, the accompanying Performance Statement of Towong Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2022 presents fairly the results of Council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

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

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

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

Andrew Whitehead
Mayor
Date: 26 April 2023

David Wortmann
Deputy Mayor
Date: 26 April 2023

Ms Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer
Date: 26 April 2023

Auditor General's Report – Performance Statement

Financial Statements

Certification of the Financial Statements

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

Ms Juliana Phelps

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 26 April 2023

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Towong Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2022 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

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

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

Andrew Whitehead

Mayor

Date: 26 April 2023

David Wortmann

Deputy Mayor

Date: 26 April 2023

Ms Juliana Phelps

Chief Executive Officer

Date: 26 April 2023

Auditor General's Report - Financial Statements

<INSERT VAGO REPORT - PAGE 1>

<INSERT VAGO REPORT - PAGE 2>

Comprehensive Income Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Income			
Rates and charges	3.1	9,434	9,227
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	280	316
User fees	3.3	1,158	1,217
Grants - operating	3.4	11,579	10,586
Grants - capital	3.4	7,778	4,059
Contributions - monetary	3.5	64	-
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	13	101
Fair value adjustments for investment property	6.3	43	37
Other income	3.7	1,655	4,105
Total income		32,004	29,648
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	9,280	8,834
Materials and services	4.2	7,531	11,479
Depreciation	4.3	4,341	4,155
Amortisation - right of use assets	4.5	-	26
Bad and doubtful debts	4.6	120	-
Borrowing costs	4.7	17	17
Finance costs - leases	4.8	6	8
Other expenses	4.9	222	174
Total expenses		21,517	24,693
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		10,487	4,955
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6.1	30,211	-
Total other comprehensive income		30,211	-
Total comprehensive result		40,698	4,955

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

Balance Sheet As at 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1(a)	6,274	5,942
Other financial assets	5.1(b)	35,532	31,533
Trade and other receivables	5.1(c)	1,743	2,022
Inventories	5.2(a)	308	302
Other assets	5.2(b)	36	85
Total current assets		43,893	39,884
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1(c)	46	58
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	6.2	43	78
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	236,052	200,731
Right-of-use assets	5.8	286	286
Investment property	6.3	1,175	1,132
Total non-current assets		237,602	202,285
Total assets		281,495	242,169
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3(a)	1,169	384
Trust funds and deposits	5.3(b)	443	880
Unearned income/revenue	5.3(c)	5,538	7,246
Provisions	5.5	1,715	1,701
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	-	4
Lease liabilities	5.8	127	58
Total current liabilities		8,992	10,273
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.5	979	943
Lease liabilities	5.8	-	127
Total non-current liabilities		979	1,070
Total liabilities		9,971	11,343
Net assets		271,524	230,826
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		125,380	114,893
Reserves	9.1	146,144	115,933
Total Equity		271,524	230,826

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

Statement of Changes in Equity For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	Note	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000
2022				
Balance at beginning of the financial year		230,826	114,893	115,933
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		10,487	10,487	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	6.1	30,211	-	30,211
		271,524	125,380	146,144
Balance at end of the financial year		271,524	125,380	146,144

		Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000
2021				
Balance at beginning of the financial year		225,872	109,938	115,933
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		4,955	4,955	-
		230,826	114,893	115,933
Balance at end of the financial year		230,826	114,893	115,933

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

Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	2022	2021
Note	Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000	Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Rates and charges	9,225	8,295
Statutory fees and fines	280	316
User fees	1,158	1,217
Grants - operating	11,578	10,586
Grants - capital	6,071	4,059
Interest received	212	280
Other receipts	1,060	3,192
Net GST refund/payment	295	266
Employee costs	(9,266)	(8,681)
Materials and services	(6,326)	(6,611)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(437)	(17)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	13,850	12,902
	9.2	
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(9,544)	(5,714)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	106	103
Purchase of or proceeds from sale of other financial assets	(3,999)	(8,011)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(13,437)	(13,621)
	6.1	
Cash flows from financing activities		
Finance costs	(17)	(17)
Interest paid - lease liability	(6)	(8)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(58)	(56)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(81)	(81)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	332	(800)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	5,942	6,742
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6,274	5,942
	5.1	
Financing arrangements	5.6	
Restrictions on cash assets	5.1	

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

Statement of Capital Work For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Property			
Buildings		3,285	1,290
Total buildings		3,285	1,290
Total property		3,285	1,290
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		917	783
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		1	-
Computers and telecommunications		136	97
Library books		25	27
Total plant and equipment		1,079	907
Infrastructure			
Roads		2,795	1,425
Bridges		151	808
Footpaths and cycleways		6	99
Kerb & Channel		-	17
Drainage		-	81
Waste management		168	339
Parks, open space and streetscapes		2,060	737
Other infrastructure		-	11
Total infrastructure		5,180	3,517
Total capital works expenditure	6.1	9,544	5,714
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		4,333	337
Asset renewal expenditure		1,827	4,109
Asset upgrade expenditure		3,384	1,268
Total capital works expenditure		9,544	5,714

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

Notes for the Financial Report

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

Towong Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 18 November 1994 and is a body corporate. The Council's main office is located at 32 Towong Street, Tallangatta, Victoria.

Statement of compliance

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

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

Significant accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

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

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

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

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The

amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

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

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to

- the determination, in accordance with *AASB 16 Leases*, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in
- whether or not *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* is applicable
- other areas requiring judgements

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives. Figures in the financial statements may not equate due to rounding.

(b) Impact of Covid-19

During 2021/22 the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact on Council's operations. Council has noted the following significant impacts on its financial operations:

- The following grant funding was received to support our communities through the pandemic:
 - \$396,000 in support of the Working for Victoria program to support temporary additional staff in 2020/21 to conduct activities of value for our communities;
 - \$200,000 for the COVID Safe Outdoor Activation Fund to assist local businesses to operate outdoors;
 - \$30,000 to provide support to assist local businesses to apply COVID-safe practises;
 - \$26,000 in Kindergarten Support funding to assist in providing fee relief to parents;
 - \$18,000 to support ventilation and airflow measures across early years services.
- There has also been a noted impact of COVID-19 on supply-chains and the availability of materials as well as skilled resources which resulted in delays on projects and service delivery of some programs.

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of the lower of ten percent (10%) or \$100,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

Positive variances are favourable to Council's financial position whilst negative variances are unfavourable to Council's position.

The Budget figures reported below were adopted by Council on 23 June 2021 and reflect the assumptions that were relevant at the time of the budget adoption. Council sets guidelines and parameters for revenue and expense targets in order to meet Council's planning and financial targets for both the short and long-term. The budget did not reflect any changes to equity resulting from asset revaluations as their impact was not able to be reliably estimated at that time.

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

2.1.1 Income and expenditure

	Budget 2022 \$'000	Actual 2022 \$'000	Variance \$'000	Variance %	Ref
Income					
Rates and charges	9,409	9,434	25	0%	
Statutory fees and fines	185	280	95	51%	1
User fees	937	1,158	221	24%	2
Grants - operating	4,162	11,579	7,417	178%	3
Grants - capital	7,825	7,778	(47)	-1%	
Contributions - monetary	-	64	64	0%	4
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	13	13	0%	5
Fair value adjustments for investment property	-	43	43	0%	
Other income	535	1,655	1,120	209%	6
Total income	23,053	32,004	8,951	39%	
Expenses					
Employee costs	10,141	9,280	861	8%	7
Materials and services	7,124	7,531	(407)	-6%	8
Depreciation	4,360	4,341	19	0%	
Bad and doubtful debts	-	120	(120)	0%	
Borrowing costs	39	17	22	56%	9
Finance costs - leases	-	6	(6)	0%	
Other expenses	199	222	(23)	-12%	10
Total expenses	21,863	21,517	346	0	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,190	10,487	9,297	781%	

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance	Item	Explanation
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Ref

1	Statutory Fines & Fees	There has been a significant increase in all fees in comparison to budgeted figures for planning permits (\$32,000), building permits (\$45,000), land information certificates (\$7,000) and animal permits (\$6,000), in part due to the ongoing rebuild efforts following the 2019/20 bushfires.
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Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
2	User Fees	Childcare fees were \$69,000 higher than budget due to greater than anticipated levels of service utilisation. Resource Recovery Centre fees were \$35,000 higher than budget due significant income generated from steel recycling. General Income received was significantly higher than expected with additional funds received for trainees (\$16,000), Centrelink payments relating to child care subsidies and paid parental leave (\$23,000), Australia Day (\$20,000) and Victorian Electoral Commission Penalties (\$10 000)
3	Grants Operating	Council received a total of \$6.3 million in Financial Assistance Grants consisting of: \$2.7 million being 52% of the balance of 2021/22 Grant Allocation (Total 2021/22 \$5.2 million) and prepayment of the 2022/23 Grant Allocation \$3.8 million which is 70% of the 2022/23 allocation. Council also received an additional \$1.9 million in Bushfire Recovery funds compared to budget.
4	Contributions Monetary	Council does not budget for monetary or non-monetary contribution income unless contributions have been confirmed.
5	Net gain / (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Council does not budget for gains or losses on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment.
6	Other Income	Council received \$863,000 in reimbursements for natural disasters during the year which were not budgeted, as well as an additional \$153,000 in interest income compared to budget.
7	Employee Costs	There were savings in employee costs due to a number of vacant positions throughout the year.
8	Materials and Contracts	Council incurred additional unbudgeted maintenance costs for roads, bridges, parks, open space, and other infrastructure maintenance due to major flooding events in January 2022.
9	Borrowing Costs	Council anticipated entering new loan arrangements of \$500,000 in 2021/22 for the Colac Colac Caravan Park, which did not occur. The savings in budgeted borrowing costs was \$18,000.
10	Other Expenses	Councillors received an increase in allowances for 2021/22 which resulted in a \$22,000 variance in comparison to budget.

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2022 2 \$'000	Actual 2022 \$'000	Variance \$'000	Variance %	Re f 1
Building improvements	4,740	3,285	(1,455)	-31%	
Total buildings	4,740	3,285	(1,455)	-31%	
Total property	4,740	3,285	(1,455)	-31%	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	995	917	(78)	-8%	
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	1	1	0%	
Computers and telecommunications	480	136	(344)	-72%	2
Library books	31	25	(6)	-19%	3
Total plant and equipment	1,506	1,079	(427)	-28%	
Infrastructure					
Roads	12,403	2,795	(9,608)	-77%	4
Bridges	1,300	151	(1,149)	-88%	5
Footpaths and cycleways	155	6	(149)	-96%	6
Waste management	72	168	96	133%	7
Parks, open space and streetscapes	5,378	2,060	(3,318)	-62%	8
Total infrastructure	19,308	5,180	(14,128)	-73%	
Total capital works expenditure	25,554	9,544	(16,010)	-63%	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	6,160	4,333	(1,827)	-30%	
Asset renewal expenditure	5,056	1,827	(3,229)	-64%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	14,338	3,384	(10,954)	-76%	
Total capital works expenditure	25,554	9,544	(16,010)	-63%	

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Building Improvements	Delays were incurred across a number of projects due to COVID-19 related impacts on the availability of materials and contractors, with the majority of budgeted works commenced. Variances included Colac Caravan Park \$490,000, Corryong Airport \$524,000 and Corryong Landfill Machinery Shed \$450,000. Actual expenditure also included new grant funded works which commenced during the year.
2	Computers & Telephones	The wireless infrastructure project \$300,000 and the balance of the finance system project \$60,000 were delayed and will be carried forward into
3	Library Books	Under expended \$6,000.

4	Roads	Delays due to extreme weather conditions and COVID-19 impacts, with variances including Hanson Street Corryong upgrade \$3.4 million, Corryong Stock Route \$2.5 million, Corryong CBD revitalisation \$1.5 million, Towong Street East \$635,000, Mitta Streetscape \$419,000, Lake Road upgrade \$343,000, Lake Road Blackspot \$239,000, Georges Creek Road upgrade \$567,000, Yabba Road upgrade \$237,000.

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
5	Bridges	Delays to the DELWP Bridge Replacement Program primarily due to extreme weather. It is expected that there will be progress on design, and works are being tendered for the program in 2022/23.
6	Footpaths & Cycleways	Under expended due to weather and availability of contractors on the Strategic Pathway Links program \$95,000 and the Eskdale Walking Path upgrade \$42,000.
7	Waste Management	Higher than anticipated cost to deliver Landfill Cell 3 \$85,000 due to increased EPA compliance requirements for land studies and ground water modelling.
8	Parks, Open Space & Streetscapes	Delays were incurred across selected projects due to COVID-19 related impacts on the availability of materials and contractors, with the majority of projects in progress. Variances include Great River Road Stage 2 \$2.2 million, Great River Road Western End \$160,000, Bellbridge Walking Path \$85,000 and Bethanga Streetscape \$29,000; off-set by additional grant funded expenditure on Circuit Trail \$113,000.

Note 2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs:

2.2.1 Asset Management

Maintain and improve our Shire's infrastructure to meet the levels of service established in consultation with our communities.

Community Wellbeing

Encourage and support all people in our Shire to be healthy, happy, connected and resilient.

Economic and Tourism Development

Expand economic and employment opportunities across our Shire in a sustainable way.

Land-use Planning

Ensure that Council's planning, building and environmental health services support all aspects of liveability and sustainable population growth.

Environmental Sustainability

Integrate sustainable environmental management practices into all of our activities.

Organisational Improvement

Maintain a high performing customer-centred organisation that works with the community to develop and deliver priorities.

Relief and Recovery

Coordinate services to meet the relief and recovery needs of our communities following the 2019/20 bushfires.

Summary of income, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

	Income	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income	Total assets
2022	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Asset Management	12,881	10,131	2,750	12,597	211,934
Community Wellbeing	2,752	2,433	319	1,833	12,615
Economic & Tourism Development	299	878	(579)	201	8,142
Land-use Planning	273	596	(323)	195	-
Environmental Sustainability	1,739	1,205	534	68	1,724
Organisational Improvement	12,685	3,986	8,699	3,986	47,017
Relief & Recovery	1,375	2,288	(913)	477	63
	32,004	21,517	10,487	19,357	281,495

	Income	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income	Total assets
2021	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Asset Management	6,985	10,659	(3,674)	6,658	180,122
Community Wellbeing	2,739	2,330	409	1,930	10,818
Economic & Tourism Development	521	581	(60)	421	6,705
Land-use Planning	79	374	(294)	-	-
Environmental Sustainability	1,818	2,351	(533)	11	1,691
Organisational Improvement	12,126	3,607	8,518	3,515	42,744
Relief & Recovery	5,380	4,791	589	2,110	88
	29,648	24,693	4,955	14,645	242,169

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services**2022** **2021**
\$'000 **\$'000****3.1 Rates and charges**

Council uses capital improved values (CIV) as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The CIV of a property is the value of the land and capital improvements on the land.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2021/22 was \$2.072 million (2020/21 \$1.759 million). The 2021/22 rate in the CIV dollar was 0.3046 cents to 1.2182 cents (2020/21 0.3500 cents to 1.4000 cents).

Residential general rates	1,274	1,382
Business general rates	146	167
Rural residential general rates	1,039	1,084
Rural general rates	4,078	3,759
Undeveloped residential general rates	119	122
Municipal charge	1,246	1,223
Kerbside collection charge	1,080	1,040
Waste facilities management charge	400	399
Revenue in lieu of rates	52	51
Total rates and charges	9,434	9,227

The date of the latest general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2022, and the valuation will be first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2022.

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

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Land information certificates	14	11
Health registration fees	32	39
Permits	152	185
Town planning fees	82	81
Total statutory fees and fines	280	316

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

3.3 User fees

Children's program fees	835	772
External private works	3	9
Refuse disposal fees	132	276
Saleyard dues	14	11
Septic tank fees	13	11
Swimming pool fees	27	28

Other fees and charges	134	110
Total user fees	1,158	1,217
User fees by timing of revenue recognition		
User fees recognised at a point in time	1,158	1,217
Total user fees	1,158	1,217

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

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
3.4 Funding from other levels of government		
Grants were received in respect of the following :		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	9,450	8,157
State funded grants	<u>9,907</u>	<u>6,488</u>
Total grants received	<u>19,357</u>	<u>14,645</u>
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants - General Purpose	3,871	3,367
Financial Assistance Grants - Local Roads	2,456	1,861
Recurrent - State Government		
Family and children	657	769
Community	118	114
Emergency services	60	73
School crossing supervisors	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>
Total recurrent operating grants	<u>7,174</u>	<u>6,196</u>
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Family and children	221	325
Recreation - 2022	-	40
Economic development	-	95
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Community	314	111
Family and children	720	591
Infrastructure	55	1,052
Environment	37	49
Corporate	444	15
Information technology	-	77
Recreation	54	51
Waste	30	-
Bushfire relief and recovery	2,004	1,658
Economic development	<u>526</u>	<u>326</u>
Total non-recurrent operating grants	<u>4,405</u>	<u>4,390</u>
Total operating grants	<u>11,579</u>	<u>10,586</u>
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	<u>1,177</u>	<u>1,199</u>
Total recurrent capital grants	<u>1,177</u>	<u>1,199</u>
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Infrastructure	1,645	1,270
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Other infrastructure	<u>4,956</u>	<u>1,590</u>
Total non-recurrent capital grants	<u>6,601</u>	<u>2,860</u>
Total capital grants	<u>7,778</u>	<u>4,059</u>

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000

(c)
Recognition of grant income

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

- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- determines the transaction price
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Council applies *AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities*.

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

Income recognised under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities		
General purpose	7,504	6,280
Other specific purpose grants	9,536	1,793
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers		
Specific purpose grants	2,317	6,572
	19,357	14,645

3.5 Contributions

Monetary	64	-
Total contributions	64	-

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

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

Proceeds of sale	106	103
Written down value of assets disposed	(93)	(3)

Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	13	101
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The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

Interest	212	228
Interest on rates	83	-
Community contributions	-	21
Other rent	107	110
Shared services	158	144
Insurance reimbursement - 2019/20 bushfires	35	404
Disaster recovery funding arrangements - 2019/20 bushfires	863	2,964
Other	197	234
Total other income	1,655	4,105

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

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

	2022	2021
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	\$'000	\$'000
--	--------	--------

Note 4 The cost of delivering services

4.1 (a) Employee costs

Wages and salaries	7,296	7,113
WorkCover	193	104
Annual leave and long service leave	1,000	889
Superannuation	771	716
Fringe benefits tax	20	12
Total employee costs	9,280	8,834

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	28	42
	28	42
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	-	-

Accumulation funds

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	262	249
Employer contributions - other funds	478	419
	740	668
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	115	-

Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Materials and services	3,500	5,295
Contract payments	1,763	4,254
Maintenance-buildings, towns, parks and gardens	1,335	1,017
Plant and equipment maintenance	754	767
Utilities	179	146
Total materials and services	7,531	11,479

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

4.3 Depreciation

Property	855	821
Plant and equipment	738	611
Infrastructure	2,748	2,723
Total depreciation	4,341	4,155

Refer to note 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation charges and accounting policy.

4.4 Amortisation - Intangible assets

Total Amortisation - Intangible assets

-	-
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4.5 Amortisation - Right of use assets

Total Amortisation - Right of use assets

-	-
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2022 **2021**

\$'000 **\$'000**

4.6 Bad and doubtful debts

Other debtors	120	-
Total bad and doubtful debts	120	-

Provision for doubtful debt is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historic and forward looking information in determining the level of impairment.

4.7 Borrowing costs

Bank fees	17	17
Total borrowing costs	17	17

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

4.8 Finance Costs - Leases

Interest - Lease Liabilities	6	8
Total finance costs	6	8

4.9 Other expenses

Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	35	29
Councillors' allowances	187	145
Total other expenses	222	174

Note 5 Our financial position

5.1 Financial assets

(a) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash on hand	1	1
Cash at bank	605	2,241
Money market call accounts	5,668	3,700
Total cash and cash equivalents	6,274	5,942

(b) Other financial assets

Term deposits - current	35,532	31,533
Total other financial assets	35,532	31,533
Total financial assets	41,806	37,475

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

- Trust funds and deposits (Note 5.3)	443	880
Total restricted funds	443	880
Total unrestricted cash and cash equivalents	5,831	5,062

Intended allocations

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

- Unspent conditional grants received	19,455	15,319
- Cash held to fund carried forward capital works	16,010	5,426
- Cash held to fund future defined benefits call	500	500
Total funds subject to intended allocations	<u>35,965</u>	<u>21,245</u>

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of three to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
(c) Trade and other receivables		
Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates debtors	1,019	810
Walwa Waste Water Supply Debtors scheme	22	22
Eskdale Water Supply scheme debtors	-	3
Fire Service Property Levy debtors	143	198
<i>Other debtors</i>		
Sundry Debtors	131	1,135
Net GST receivable	428	(146)
Total current trade and other receivables	<u>1,743</u>	<u>2,022</u>
Non-current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Walwa Waste Water Supply Debtors scheme	46	58
Total non-current trade and other receivables	<u>46</u>	<u>58</u>
Total trade and other receivables	<u>1,789</u>	<u>2,080</u>

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. At balance date, sundry debtors representing financial assets were past due but not impaired. These amounts relate to a number of independent customers for whom there is no recent history of default. The ageing of Council's trade receivables (excluding statutory receivables) was:

(d) Ageing of Receivables

The ageing of the Council's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:

Current (not yet due)	70	663
Past due by up to 30 days	12	13
Past due between 31 and 180 days	49	320
Past due between 181 and 365 days	-	139
Total trade and other receivables	<u>131</u>	<u>1,135</u>

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
5.2 Non-financial assets		
(a) Inventories		
Inventories held for distribution	308	302
Total inventories	308	302

Council maintains inventories of gravel, crushed concrete and fuel to support operations. Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential.

(b) Other assets		
Prepayments	9	45
Accrued income	27	40
Total other assets	36	85

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and unearned income/revenue

(a) Trade and other payables		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
Trade payables	542	(1)
Accrued wages	132	112
Accrued expenses	204	205
Other payables	157	68
PAYG payable	134	-
Total trade and other payables	1,169	384

(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Refundable deposits	41	39
Fire Services Property Levy	176	683
Retention amounts	226	158
Total trust funds and deposits	443	880

(c) Unearned income/revenue

Unearned income/revenue represents contract liabilities and reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of funding received in relation to special performance grants. Unearned income/revenue are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Purpose and nature of items

Fire Services Property Levy - Council is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a quarterly basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the State Government in line with that

Retention Amounts - Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities		
Current		
Borrowings	-	4
	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities at initial recognition.

5.5 Provisions

	Employee \$ '000	Landfill restoration \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2022			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,785	859	2,644
Additional provisions	808	-	808
Amounts used	(758)	-	(758)
Balance at the end of the financial year	<u>1,835</u>	<u>859</u>	<u>2,694</u>
2021			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,683	859	2,542
Additional provisions	815	-	815
Amounts used	(713)	-	(713)
Balance at the end of the financial year	<u>1,785</u>	<u>859</u>	<u>2,644</u>

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
(a) Employee provisions		
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		0
Annual leave	546	565
Long service leave	110	108
Flexi time	73	57
	729	730
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Long service leave	986	971
	986	971
Total current employee provisions	1,715	1,701
Non-current		
Long service leave	120	84
Total non-current employee provisions	120	84
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	1,715	1,701
Non-current	120	84
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	1,835	1,785

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if the Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	3.69%	1.49%
- inflation rate	3.85%	2.95%

(b) Landfill restoration	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
Non-current	859	859
	859	859

Council is obligated to restore the Corryong Landfill site located on Sugarloaf Road, Corryong to an agreed standard. The forecast life of the site is based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the site to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	3.69%	1.49%
- index rate	3.85%	2.95%

5.6 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June.

Master lease	400	400
Credit card facilities	25	25
Total facilities	<u>425</u>	<u>425</u>
Used facilities	<u>127</u>	<u>190</u>
Unused facilities	<u>298</u>	<u>235</u>

5.7 Commitments

The Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

(a) Commitments for expenditure

2022	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Operating					
Landfill site lease	40	41	44	-	125
Recycling management	240	40	-	-	280
Total	280	81	44	-	405
Capital					
Buildings	760	-	-	-	760
Roads	1,786	-	-	-	1,786
Drainage	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2,546	-	-	-	2,546
2021	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Operating					
Landfill site lease	38	40	85	-	162
Total	38	40	85	-	162
Capital					
Georges Creek Road	780	-	-	-	780
Colac Colac Caravan Park	889	-	-	-	889
Tallangatta Swimming Pool	231	-	-	-	231
Total	1,900	-	-	-	1,900

(b) Operating lease receivables *Operating lease receivables*

The Council has entered into commercial property leases on its investment property, consisting of surplus freehold office complexes. These properties held under operating leases have remaining non-cancellable lease terms of between 1 and 10 years. All leases include a CPI based revision of the rental charge annually.

5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, all entities would assess whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- the contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- the customer has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use
- the customer has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Council has elected to apply the temporary option available under *AASB 16 Leases* which allows not-for-profit entities to not measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Council did not have any peppercorn leases for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 reporting periods.

<i>Right-of-Use Assets</i>	Vehicles	Total
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at 1 July 2021	286	286
Additions	-	-
Amortisation charge	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2022	286	286

<i>Lease Liabilities</i>	2022	2021
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Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows	\$'000	\$'000
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:	127	185
Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June:		
Current	127	58
Non-current	-	127
Total lease liabilities	127	185

Short-term and low value leases

Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than existing capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of AUD\$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Note 6 Assets we manage

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2021	Additions	Contributions	Revaluation	Depreciation	Disposal	Write-off	Transfers	Carrying amount 30 June 2022
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	33,102	-	-	5,757	(854)	-	-	1,645	39,650
Plant and equipment	3,520	978	-	-	(738)	(94)	-	-	3,666
Infrastructure	162,147	-	-	24,454	(2,748)	-	-	1,629	185,482
Work in progress	1,963	8,565	-	-	-	-	-	(3,274)	7,254
	200,731	9,543	-	30,211	(4,340)	(94)	-	-	236,052

Summary of Work in Progress

	Opening WIP	Additions	Write-off	Transfers	Closing WIP
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	830	3,285	-	(1,645)	2,470
Plant and equipment	-	100	-	-	100
Infrastructure	1,133	5,180	-	(1,629)	4,684
Total	1,963	8,565	-	(3,274)	7,254

(a) Property

	Land - specialised	Land - non specialised	Total Land & Land Improvements	Buildings - non specialised	Total Buildings	Work In Progress	Total Property
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
At fair value 1 July 2021	7,236	4,791	12,027	35,267	35,267	831	48,125
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2021	-	-	-	(14,192)	(14,192)	-	(14,192)
	7,236	4,791	12,027	21,075	21,075	831	33,933
Movements in fair value							
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	3,285	3,285
Revaluation	2,019	-	2,019	6,255	6,255	-	8,274
Transfers	-	-	-	1,645	1,645	(1,645)	-
	2,019	-	2,019	7,900	7,900	1,640	11,559
Movements in accumulated depreciation							
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	(854)	(854)	-	(854)
Revaluation increment / decrement	-	-	-	(2,517)	(2,517)	-	(2,517)
	-	-	-	(3,371)	(3,371)	-	(3,371)
At fair value 30 June 2022	9,255	4,791	14,046	43,167	43,167	2,471	59,684
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2022	-	-	-	(17,563)	(17,563)	-	(17,563)
Carrying amount	9,255	4,791	14,046	25,604	25,604	2,471	42,121

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant machinery and equipment	Fixtures fittings and furniture	Computers and telecomms	Library books	Total plant and equipment
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
At fair value 1 July 2021	7,821	29	538	177	8,565
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2021	(4,528)	(23)	(429)	(65)	(5,045)
	3,293	6	109	112	3,520
Movements in fair value	917	1	36	25	979
Additions	(414)	-	-	-	(414)
Disposal	503	1	36	25	565
	(663)	(1)	(52)	(23)	(739)
Movements in accumulated depreciation Depreciation and amortisation Accumulated depreciation of disposals	321	-	-	-	321
	(342)	(1)	(52)	(23)	(418)
	8,324	30	574	202	9,130
	(4,870)	(24)	(481)	(88)	(5,463)
At fair value 30 June 2022	3,454	6	93	114	3,667
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2022 Carrying amount					

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads	Bridges	Footpaths and cycleways	Drainage	Kerb & Channel	Waste Management	Parks open space and streetscapes	Other Infrastructure	Work In Progress	Total Infrastructure
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
At fair value 1 July 2021	178,744	24,129	2,944	9,343	8,352	543	2,261	309	1,132	227,757
	134,883									
Movements in fair value										
Additions	-									
Revaluation	30,535	13,749	1,783	5,303	4,236	69	1,943	18	1,132	163,279
								1		
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,180	5,180
		4,122	-	(151)	-	-	-	-	-	34,506
Transfers	1,140	38	6	-	-	295	150	-	(1,629)	-
	31,675	4,160	6	(151)	-	295	150	-	3,551	39,686
Movements in accumulated depreciation										
Depreciation and amortisation	(2,177)	(205)	(44)	(78)	(93)	(8)	(120)	(23)	-	(2,748)
Revaluation increment / decrement	(7,494)	(1,774)	-	(784)	-	-	-	-	-	(10,052)
	(9,671)	(1,979)	(44)	(862)	(93)	(8)	(120)	(23)	-	(12,800)
At fair value 30 June 2022	210,419	28,289	2,950	9,192	8,352	838	2,411	309	4,683	267,443
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2022	(53,532)	(12,359)	(1,205)	(4,902)	(4,209)	(482)	(438)	(151)	-	(77,278)
Carrying amount	156,887	15,930	1,745	4,290	4,143	356	1,973	158	4,683	190,165

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

	Depreciati -on Period	Threshold Limit (\$)
<i>Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods</i>		
buildings	50 years	5,000
Plant and Equipment		
vehicles and mowers	5 years	1,000
utilities	8 years	1,000
trucks - less than 3.5t	12 years	1,000
trucks - greater than 3.5t	15 years	1,000
plant and equipment	9 -15 years	1,000
minor tools	3 years	1,000
office furniture and telecommunications	3 years	1,000
library	8 years	1
Infrastructure		
roads - sealed pavements	70 years	10,000
roads - unsealed pavements	30 years	10,000
footpaths	68 years	10,000
roads - kerb, channel and minor culverts and other	90 years	10,000
bridges - deck and substructure	119 years	10,000
bridges - added features	80 years	10,000
drainage underground	100 years	10,000

Land under roads

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in

those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life. Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings was undertaken by a qualified independent valuer Marcus Hann, 62901, of LG Valuation Services Pty Ltd, ABN 77 095 763 625, as at 30 June 2017. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Valuation of specialised land was undertaken by a qualified independent valuer, Marcus Hann, 62901, of LG Valuation Services Pty Ltd, ABN 77 095 763 625, as at 1 January 2018. Specialised land and land under roads are valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2022 are detailed in the table below. An indexed based valuation was conducted in the current year. This valuation was based on indexation values determined by the Valuer General, taking into account previous independent land and buildings valuations conducted in prior years.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation
Land	-	1,011	3,780	Jun-17
Land Under Roads	-	-	9,255	Jan-18
Buildings	-	2,653	22,951	Jun-17
Total	-	3,664	35,986	

Valuation of infrastructure

Valuation of Council's roads, footpaths, bridges and kerb and channel assets has been determined in accordance with an independent valuation undertaken by Peter Moloney, Moloney Asset Management Systems. The effective date of the valuation is 1 August 2017, for all infrastructure assets other than drainage assets. The valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation at the date of valuation.

Council's drainage assets were revalued as of 30 June 2022 and were independently assessed and valued by Robert Uebergang (BE (Civil); BSc (Geol); Dip URP; IPWEA Professional Certificate in Asset Management Planning; IPWEA Professional Certificate in Infrastructure Financial Management; Registered Professional Engineer Victoria

(PE0005344); Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (RPEQ 20728) from Azura Keys Pty Ltd. The valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation at date of valuation.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2022 are detailed in the table below. An indexed based valuation was conducted in the current year. This valuation was based on indexation values determined using ABS indices, taking into account previous independent infrastructure valuations conducted in prior years.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation
Roads	-	-	156,887	Aug-17
Bridges	-	-	15,930	Aug-17
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	1,745	Aug-17
Drainage	-	-	4,290	Jun-22
Kerb and Channel	-	-	4,143	Aug-17
Parks, open space and streetscapes	-	-	1,973	Jun-16
Landfill	-	-	356	Jun-19
Other infrastructure	-	-	158	Jun-16
Total	-	-	185,482	

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land and land under roads is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 75% and 95%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between

\$1,800 and \$318,500.

Specialised buildings are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated per building and ranges from

\$4,000 to \$3,186,000. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 5 years to 50 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the depreciated replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 11 years to 120 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Reconciliation of specialised land		
Land under roads	9,255	7,236
Total specialised land	<u>9,255</u>	<u>7,236</u>

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries		
(a) Investments in associates		
MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd		
MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd		
<i>Background</i>		
Council has a 50% interest is held in MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd		
Fair value of Council's investment in MomentumOne Shared Services P/L	-	-
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	78	78
Share of surplus(deficit) for year	(35)	-
Carrying value of investment at end of year	43	78

Investments in joint arrangements are classified as either joint operations or joint ventures depending on the contractual rights and obligations each investor has, rather than the legal structure of the joint arrangement.

Interests in joint ventures are accounted for using the equity method. Under this method, the interests are initially recognised in the consolidated balance sheet at cost and adjusted thereafter to recognise Council's share of the post-acquisition profits or losses and movements in other comprehensive income in profit or loss and other comprehensive income respectively.

MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd was established in 29 October 2015 as a joint venture between Apline Shire Council and Towong Shire Council with each Council holding a 50% share in the company and will share 50% of the post-acquisition gains or losses.

Committees of management

All entities controlled by Council that have material revenues, expenses, assets or liabilities, such as committees of management, have been included in this financial report. Council has a Community Asset Committee, however transactions are not considered material and have not been included in this financial report.

6.3 Investment property

Balance at beginning of financial year	1,132	1,095
Fair value adjustments	43	37
Balance at end of financial year	1,175	1,132

Investment property is held to generate long-term rental yields. Investment property is measured initially at cost, including transaction costs. Costs incurred subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefit in excess of the originally assessed performance of the asset will flow to the Council. Subsequent to initial recognition at cost, investment property is carried at fair value, determined annually by independent valuers. Changes to fair value are recorded in the comprehensive income statement in the period that they arise.

Valuation of investment property

Valuation of investment property has been determined in accordance with an independent valuation by Marcus Hann, LG Valuation Services Pty Ltd, ABN 77 095 763 623 who has recent experience in the location and category of the properties being valued. The valuation is at fair value, based on the current market value for the properties as at 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2022.

Note 7 People and relationships

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties

Parent Entity

Towong Shire Council is the parent entity.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Details of persons holding the position of Councillor or other members of key management personnel at any time during the year are:

Councillors

Cr David Wortmann - Mayor (1 July 2021 - 24 November 2021)
 Cr Andrew Whitehead - Mayor (24 November 2021 - 30 June 2022)
 Cr Denise Anderson
 Cr Peter Dikschei
 Cr Aaron Scales
 Juliana Phelps - Chief Executive Officer
 Rachael Gadd - Director Infrastructure and Environment
 Amanda Pagan - Director Community and Planning
 Emma Woolaston - Director Corporate and Organisational Development

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Total Number of Councillors	5	7
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	4	6
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	9	13

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term benefits	915	934
Long-term benefits	5	6
Post employment benefits	69	76
Total	989	1,016

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
\$0 - \$9,999	-	2
\$10,000 - \$19,999	-	2
\$20,000 - \$29,999	3	2
\$40,000 - \$49,999	-	1
\$50,000 - \$59,999	2	1
\$70,000 - \$79,999	-	1
\$90,000 - \$99,999	-	1
\$130,000 - \$139,999	1	-
\$150,000 - \$159,999	-	1
\$160,000 - \$169,999	2	1
\$250,000 - \$259,999	1	1
	9	13

	2022	2021
	\$'000	\$'000
7.2 Related party disclosure		
(a) Transactions with related parties		
During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.		
Income		
Fees and charges to entities controlled by KMP	-	1
Grants received from entity controlled by KMP (1)	8	-
Investment dividend received from joint arrangements (2)	35	-
Total Income	43	1
Expenses		
Grants paid to entities controlled by KMP (3)	5	-
Purchases of materials or services from joint arrangements	-	85
Purchases of materials or services from entities controlled by KMP (4)	271	217
Employee costs for close family members of KMP	-	76
Total Expenses	276	378
Total Transactions	319	379

(1) Grants received from entity jointly controlled by key management personnel

\$7,747 was received from the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) for grants including a) funding to plan for activities supporting the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence; b) funding to support Maternal and Child Health services to support child sleep and settling; and c) funding to undertake tobacco control activities. These grants were in line with funding provided to councils across Victoria. Councillor Aaron Scales has been a board member of MAV since March 2021.

(2) Investment dividends received from joint arrangements

A \$35,100 investment dividend was received from MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd. Council has a 50% shareholding in the company and has appointed Chief Executive Officer, Ms Juliana Phelps, as a Director. Refer Note 6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries.

(3) Grants paid to entities controlled by KMP

A \$5,000 community recovery grant was paid to the Granya Cemetery Trust, of which Councillor Wortmann is the Chairperson. The grants process involved an application by each community group and an assessment of each application against established grant criteria, and conflicts of interest were managed by the relevant Councillor leaving the room when the relevant grants were discussed or decided upon.

(4) Purchases of materials or services from joint arrangements

\$1,000 was paid to the Corryong Recreation Reserve for the hire of the Upper Murray Events Centre for various workshops and programs. Councillor Andrew Whitehead is the Chairperson of the Corryong Recreation Reserve Committee of Management.

\$45,308 was paid to the Dartmouth Community Progress Association of which Councillor Aaron Scales is the Treasurer. This included

\$41,504 for regular town maintenance services, \$1,046 for town beautification services, \$2,459 for tree maintenance services and \$300 in catering for an Agricultural Strategy meeting.

\$347 was paid to the Blue Wren Cabin, Towong of which Councillor Peter Dikschei is a part owner. The purchase was for staff accommodation on work related business.

\$2,663 was paid to the Dartmouth Pub Pty Ptd, of which Councillor Aaron Scales is the owner, for the annual provision of public toilets. Due to the lack of standalone public toilet facilities in Dartmouth a contract has been negotiated to make the external toilet facilities at the pub available for public use throughout the year.

\$185,812 was paid to Tourism North East of which the Chief Executive Officer, Ms Juliana Phelps, is a Director. The Board comprises CEOs of all participating councils as well as a number of independent directors. Payments included a membership fee of \$38,000 which is payable by all councils with a membership; \$67,812 for various tourism promotional activities; and \$80,000 to conduct the Upper Murray Brand Inc. and Towong Shire Tourism Brand Project.

\$36,449 was paid to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), of which Councillor Aaron Scales is a Board member. Payments included annual memberships for 2021/22 and 2022/23 of \$17,425 per annum, which are paid by all councils; Councillor training of \$200; and optional reference group memberships of \$1,399.

(b) *Outstanding balances with related parties*

Towong Shire Council did not have any outstanding balances with related parties.

(c) *Loans to/from related parties*

No loans have been made to or received from a related party by Towong Shire Council.

(d) *Commitments to/from related parties*

Towong Shire Council has no outstanding commitments to or from related parties.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties**8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities**

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

Operating Lease Receivables

Council has a commercial property lease on its investment property, consisting of a freehold office. This property held is under an operating lease which is due to expire in January 2023. It is unknown if the current tenant will exercise its option of a 12-month extension.

Future minimum rentals receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023	2022
Not later than one year	20	14
	20	14

Bushfire Recovery Insurance Claim

During the 2020 Bushfires a number of Council's assets incurred significant damage one of which as the Machinery Shed at the landfill site. The assessment by Council's insurer has been ongoing as repairs have been completed and a progress payment of \$500,000 towards repairs has been requested.

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
 - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Future Superannuation Contributions

The expected contribution to be paid to Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2022 is \$28,000.

Landfill

Council operates a landfill. Council will have to carry out site rehabilitation works in the future.

At balance date Council is unable to accurately assess the financial implications of such works.

Insurance claims

There are currently no major insurance claims that could have a material impact on Council's future operations.

Legal matters

There are currently no major legal matters that could have a material impact on Council's future operations.

Liability Mutual Insurance

Council is a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further

contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

(c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

Council provides a guarantee for a loan to the Corryong Neighbourhood Centre. The nominal value of the loan was \$250,000 over seven years, and was initially drawn down in February 2019.

(d) Support for Joint Arrangements

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic Towong Shire Council and Alpine Shire Council have guaranteed financial support for the entity MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd as joint owners, to ensure they can continue to operate as a going concern. This support is for a period of twelve months from the date of the adoption of the MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd Financial Statements.

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2022 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2022 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2023 that are expected to impact Council.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank borrowings. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of Council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

(c) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council does not hold any interest bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value, and therefore has no exposure to fair value interest rate risk. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes Council to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the Council's year end result.

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- Council has a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities Council transact with;
- Council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- Council only invest surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in Council's investment policy. Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the Council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when Council provide a guarantee for another party. Details of Council's contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of Council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- has a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- has readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- has a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of + 1.35% and +3.5% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 0.85%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities

Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 2 to 5 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts.

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increments are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increment reverses a prior year decrement for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increment is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decrements are recognised as an expense except where prior increments are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrement is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increments. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increments and decrements within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

Towong Shire Council has been impacted by the Victorian Floods commencing 6 October 2022. The Victorian State Government has confirmed that Council has been included in the notification to the Commonwealth for the Victorian Floods. The Federal Government has provided advice that this disaster has been given the Australian Government

Reference Number (AGRN) 1037 under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). This provides funding to Council for the provision of emergency response and recovery assistance to the community and emergency work and immediate reconstruction works on public assets.

At the time of certification of the financial statements flood impact assessments are yet to be completed. Council is therefore currently unable to accurately measure the financial impact on Council owned assets.

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period	Increment (decrement)	Balance at end of reporting period
(a) Asset revaluation reserves	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2022			
Property			
Land and land improvements	9,998	2,019	12,017
Buildings	5,226	3,738	8,964
	<u>15,224</u>	<u>5,757</u>	<u>20,981</u>
Infrastructure			
Roads	80,827	23,041	103,868
Bridges	10,085	2,348	12,433
Footpaths and cycleways	944	-	944
Drainage	5,003	(935)	4,068
Kerb and channel	3,850	-	3,850
	<u>100,709</u>	<u>24,454</u>	<u>125,163</u>
Total asset revaluation reserves	<u>115,933</u>	<u>30,211</u>	<u>146,144</u>
2021			
Property			
Land and land improvements	9,998	-	9,998
Buildings	5,226	-	5,226
	<u>15,224</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,224</u>
Infrastructure			
Roads	80,827	-	80,827
Bridges	10,085	-	10,085
Footpaths and cycleways	944	-	944
Drainage	5,003	-	5,003
Kerb and channel	3,850	-	3,850
	<u>100,709</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>100,709</u>
Total asset revaluation reserves	<u>115,933</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>115,933</u>

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	10,487	4,955
Profit/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(13)	(101)
Depreciation	4,341	4,155
Amortisation	-	26
Financing activities included in operating result	23	25
Fair value adjustments for investment property	(43)	(37)
<i>Change in assets and liabilities:</i>		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	288	(1,351)
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	48	163
Increase/(decrease) in inventories	6	(8)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	884	(578)
(Decrease)/increase in unearned income /revenue	(1,708)	5,568
(Decrease)/increase in trust funds and deposits	(437)	(17)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	(26)	102
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	13,850	12,902

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2022, this was 10.0% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2021: 9.5%)).

Defined Benefit

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Towong Shire Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

Funding arrangements

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

As at 30 June 2021, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.

The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer was 109.8%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns
4.75% pa Salary
information 2.75% pa Price
inflation (CPI) 2.25% pa.

As at 30 June 2022, an interim actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is expected to be completed by 31 October 2022.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2022 was 102.2%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2022 VBI during August 2022 (2021: August 2021). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.5% pa

Salary information 2.5% pa to June 2023 and 3.5% thereafter
Price inflation (CPI) 3.0% pa.

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2021 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2021 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2022, this rate was 10.0% of members' salaries (9.5% in 2020/21). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2020 triennial valuation

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above

the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

(b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 97%.

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2021 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2021 and the last full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2020.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2021 (Interim)	2020 (Triennial)
	\$m	\$m
- A VBI Surplus	214.7	100.0
- A total service liability surplus	270.3	200.0
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	285.2	217.8

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2021.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2021.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2021.

Council was notified of the 30 June 2021 VBI during August 2021 (2020: August 2020).

The 2022 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2022 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2022. Council was notified of the 30 June 2022 VBI during August 2022 (2021: August 2021).

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2022 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000
Vision super	Defined benefits	10.0% (2021:9.5%)	28	42
Vision super	Accumulation	10.0% (2021:9.5%)	262	249

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2022.

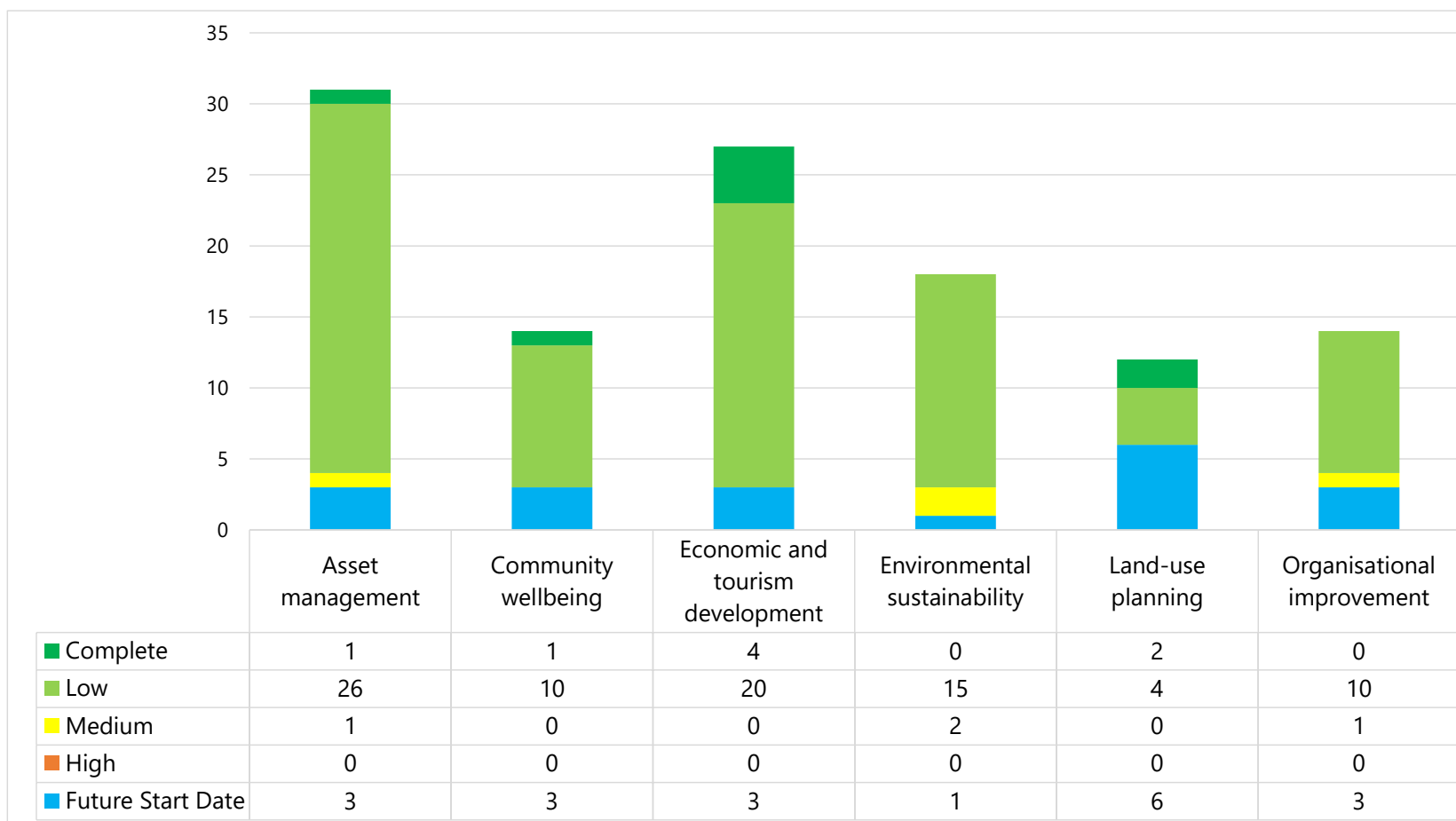
The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2023 is \$28,000.

Note 10 Change in accounting policy

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2021/22 year.

There are no pending accounting standards that are likely to have a material impact on council.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (1 January to 31 March 23)



Future start date	High	Medium	Low	Complete
Priority is not due for commencement	Milestones are not being met. There is high risk that the project will not be completed within advised timeframes or to satisfaction.	Strategy milestones are not being met. There is medium risk that the strategy will not be completed within advised timeframes.	Milestones are being met. There is low risk that the project will not be completed within advised timeframes.	The project has been completed.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (1 October to 31 Decemer 22)

Responsible Officer	Position	Person
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	Juliana Phelps
CACC	Co-ordinator Advocacy, Communications, and Customer Service	Georgina Curtis
CDO	Community Development Officer	Katherine Lanigan
CED	Co-ordinator Economic Development	Laura Carmen
CFS	Co-ordinator Family Services	Ebony Ablett-Johnstone
CLO	Customer Liaison Officer	Sandra Dower
CRAC	Co-ordinator Recreation, Arts and Culture	Joe Calvert
DCP	Director Community and Planning	Amanda Pagan
DIE	Director Infrastructure and Environment	Rachael Gadd
DCOD	Director Corporate and Organisational Development	Craig Henier
EPM	Engineer/ Projects Manager	Various Staff
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator	Sven Erikson
ITO	IT Officer	Chris Rootsey
MF	Manager Finance	Dylan Howard
MIA	Manager Infrastructure Assessment	Dolf Abbruzzese
NHC	Neighbourhood House Coordinator	Katherine Lanigan
OHS	OHS and Risk Officer	Wayne Carter
TLCS	Team Leader Customer Service	Jayne Merbach
SMT	Senior Management Team	CEO and Directors
YO	Youth Officer	Renee Carkeek

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
Asset management						
Maintain and improve our Shire's infrastructure to meet agreed levels of service.						
1.1	Deliver 100% of the annual capital works program and bushfire recovery projects	DIE	2021/22	Medium	63 projects are included in the program for 2022/23, of which 52 are in progress, 11 have been completed.	Information to be provided at a later date due to Director and Deputy Director being on leave when report was prepared.
1.2	Deliver infrastructure projects that arise from place-based master planning	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Consultant engaged to undertake placebased masterplanning in late 2022. Community consultation to begin in early 2023. Projects expected to be included in 2024-25 budgets and beyond.	Master planning currently underway for Corryong, Bellbridge, Mitta Mitta, Tallangatta, Tintaldra, Towong and Cudgewa.
1.3	Complete Stage 2 Great River Road	DIE	2022	Low	Pedestrian bridge construction is complete in an storage off site with installation planned by March 2023. Track repair contract in place and works have commenced. Track sealing also contract in place for when repairs are complete.	Pedestrian bridges are on site and under installation. Track repair and construction is progressing across all Great River Road projects.
1.4	Continue the upgrade of Georges Creek Road	DIE	2022	Low	Section 3 construction work ongoing.	Section 3 construction work ongoing.
1.5	Complete upgrades of Hanson Street from Sugarloaf Road to Kiel Street	DIE	2022/23	Low	Hanson Street project out to tender.	Corryong CBD and Hanson Street tender is complete. Contract negotiations are underway.
1.6	Complete the upgrade of the Stock Route in Corryong	DIE	2022/23	Low	Construction contract awarded, planned started date early February 2023.	Construction has commenced.
1.7	Progressively deliver the upgrade of the unsealed sections of Lake Road	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	No further progress due to flood damage priorities.	Designs are nearing completion
1.8	Investigate upgrade options for Wisers Creek Road	DIE	2022/23	Low	Construction work ongoing.	Construction works ongoing.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
1.9	Advocate for the upgrade of the Benambra Corryong Road from Stacey's Bridge 40km South	SMT	2022 -2025	Low	Ongoing.	Approval process for Lake Road/ Murray River Road intersection lights is ongoing.
1.10	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of key transport routes and hazardous road alignments to improve efficiency and safety	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Approval process ongoing.	Approval process for Lake Road/ Murray River Road intersection lights is ongoing.
1.11	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of load limited bridges on strategic transport routes	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Construction contract signed.	Construction contract and works programmed to commence for Smythes Road and Little Snowy Creek Road Bridges. Major culvert replacement with bridge at Sandy Creek Road completed as flood damage recovery.
1.12	Continue to deliver the upgrade of unsealed streets in urban areas program	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	To be delivered in the 2023/24 budget.	To be delivered in the 2023/24 budget.
1.13	Complete the upgrade of the Corryong CBD	DIE	2022/23	Low	Corryong CBD project out to tender.	Corryong CBD and Hanson Street tender is complete. Contract negotiations are underway.
1.14.1	Complete streetscape upgrades in Dartmouth	DIE	2022/23	Low	Ongoing.	Designs for the pump track and splash park at Dartmouth are in progress.
1.14.2	Complete streetscape upgrades in Mitta Mitta	DIE	2022/23	Low	Stage 1: out to tender due to contractor withdrawal. Stage 2: Funding application unsuccessful	Contract in place and construction to commence in April 2023.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
1.15.1	Investigate and plan for upgrades at Tintaldra	DIE	2023	Low	Consultant engaged to undertake streetscape planning in late 2022. Community consultation to begin in February 2023. Sealing of walking track planned for early 2023.	Community engagement ongoing and draft plans complete for future streetscape works
1.15.2	Investigate and plan for upgrades at Towong	DIE	2024	Low	Consultant engaged to undertake streetscape planning in late 2022. Community consultation to begin in February 2023. Boardwalk design plans progressing.	Community engagement ongoing and draft plans complete for future streetscape works
1.15.3	Investigate and plan for upgrades at Cudgewa	DIE	2022	Low	Consultant engaged to undertake streetscape planning in late 2022. Community consultation to begin in February 2023. Planning application for avenue works submitted.	Community engagement ongoing and draft plans complete for future streetscape works. Planning permit submitted for Cudgewa avenue replacement.
1.16	Continue to deliver the strategic footpath network improvement program in urban areas	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Stage 2 Towong Street East footpath under in design phase. Final section of Circuit Trail awaiting cultural heritage assessment.	Cultural heritage assessment is ongoing
1.17	Address long vehicle and overflow parking issues in CBD areas	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Long vehicle parking continues to be considered as a priority as part of the streetscape design process for all towns.	Long vehicle parking continues to be considered as a priority as part of the streetscape design process for all towns.
1.18	Seek funding to deliver improved public toilets across the shire	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Funding Application for Mitta Mitta toilet block improvement unsuccessful. Cudgewa toilets nearing completion. Tallangatta Triangles toilet block out to tender. Corryong CBD and Talgarno toilet block in design phase. COMPLETE - Playles Hill and Walwa toilet block	Cudgewa Toilet block COMPLETE , Playles Hill Toilet Block COMPLETE , Walwa Toilet block COMPLETE , Triangles toilet block at contract stage. Corryong CBD and Talgarno toilet block in design phase.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
1.19	Seek funding to deliver upgrades to town entrances and wayfinding signage across the shire	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Future start date.	Preliminary designs are in development
1.20	Seek funding to deliver an upgraded Corryong Integrated Community Centre	DIE	2023	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
1.21	Increase the recreation opportunities for young families in Dartmouth	DIE	2022/23	Low	Consultant engaged for project development and delivery	Designs for the pump track and splash park at Dartmouth are in progress.
1.22	Review and deliver the strategic parks and playgrounds upgrade program to completion	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Play equipment for Bethanga playground has been ordered and is scheduled to be installed by March.	Exercise equipment - Bellbridge Foreshore COMPLETE , Playles Hill mountain bike track COMPLETE , Bethanga Playground in contract stage, Roy William Park works planned for April/May.
1.23	Undertake upgrades at the Colac Colac Caravan Park to ensure long term viability of the park	DIE	2022/23	Low	Kiosk/cafe construction complete and in storage off site until peak season finishes.	Kiosk/Cafe installed on site
1.24	Investigate options for additional boat ramps	DIE	2022 -2025	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
1.25	Deliver the Corryong aerodrome 24 hour fuel project	DIE	2021/22	Completed	Onsite construction is complete	COMPLETE
1.26	Deliver a rolling program for the maintenance of strategic limited access roads for improved emergency access	DIE	2022 -2025	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
1.27	Deliver annual asset inspection and renewal programs per asset management and road management plan requirements	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Ongoing.	Road, bridge, footpath, building, playground, recreation and open space asset inspection are ongoing throughout the year.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
1.28	Implement the maintenance program for Council's buildings	DIE	2022 -2025	Low	Market responses received for external painting of Shire Offices in Corryong and Tallangatta. Technical Officer developing a maintenance plan for delivery.	Building inspections have commenced and contractors engaged for immediate repairs. Contract in draft for external painting of Tallangatta and Corryong Council buildings
Community wellbeing						
Assist all residents to attain a high level of health and safety, resilience and connectedness to their communities.						
2.1	Undertake place-based master planning for the Peninsula including the investigation of options for early years and community facilities	DCP	2023	Low	Detailed planning has been undertaken for place visits. Initial visits were conducted in December 2022.	Staff vacancy has caused a delay in the delivery.
2.2	Undertake place-based master planning for the Mitta Valley, Corryong and Tallangatta	DCP	2023	Low	Detailed planning has been undertaken for place visits. Initial visits were conducted in December 2022.	Ongoing
2.3	Maintain a contemporary Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan which reflects our community priorities	DCP	2021	Completed	Plan was reviewed and annual report provided to Council at end of 2022.	No further action this quarter due to storm damage recovery taking priority.
2.4	Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	All draft masterplans are complete and ready for community feedback except Corryong Rec Reserve, Bethanga Rec Reserve, Tallangatta Showgrounds and Granya. These plans are still undergoing detailed community consultation to finalise plans.	No response received from Regional Roads at this time. Request was raised at meeting in February.
2.5	Review opportunities for communities to access library resources and connect through libraries	DCP	2023	Future	NEED EMMA TO COMMENT.	Roadside weed spraying program is underway.
2.6	Develop a strategy for arts and cultural offerings across the Shire	DCP	2023	Future	No further action this period, however a number of creative workshops were held throughout the quarter.	Street tree replacement in Wheeler Street, Corryong is underway.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
2.7	Expand and improve early years services across the Shire to support young families	DCP	2022 -2025	Future	A finalised agreement and valuation was sent to Peekaboo to lease their building and establish a new Corryong child care.	Future start date.
2.8	Renew the Youth Plan to embed the 'youth voice' in all aspects of service delivery	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Successful delivery of the school holiday program and afterschool workshops including Evolve Festival in Corryong.	Contract signed for the Corryong EV Charge station.
2.9	Advocate for the development of a variety of housing options to match community needs, particularly for older people	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Further advocacy undertaken with DELWP to justify the release of addtinal housing.	Draft plan to be presented to Council at April 2023 meeting
2.10	Encourage the establishment of innovative, sustainable transport solutions for remote communities	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No action in this quarter.	Council resolution passed to transition to contracted service in 2024.
2.11	Support our communities to ensure that Shire places are welcoming to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and LGBTIQA+ communities and are inclusive and connected	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No action in this quarter.	Community education program under development and to be delivered between July and December 2023
2.12	Build relationships and develop understanding of aboriginal people and consider the commitment to an ongoing reconciliation action plan process	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Ongoing meetings with staff throughout the quarter. Currently scheduling cultural awareness training for early 2023.	Council resolution passed to transition to contracted service in 2024 for food and garden organics kerbside collection service.
2.13	Participate in key networks to support communities and key stakeholders on solutions to address family violence, suicide and mental health	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Participation in Tallangatta and Corryong Family Violence Networks. Planning is underway for Welcome to Baby ceremonies for Mitta Valley.	The replacement of the Tallangatta RRC retaining wall is in design phase - delayed due to staff vacancy

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
2.14	Support our communities to drive their recovery from bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic and improve their mitigation of and resilience to future adverse events	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Successfully secured funding for the next stage of the North East Hume Emergency Management Collaboration to test the community emergency management plans. As a member of the Towong Multi Agency MEMPC, Council has led the drafting of the 2022-25 MEMP which is now being reviewed by the REMPC Assurance Subcommittee. we have also supported the formation of the Fire Planning Sub Committee of the MEMPC which is chaired and led by DEWLP.	Council resolution passed to Close Corryong Landfill operations at end of 2023.
Economic and tourism development						
Expand employment and economic opportunities whilst continuing to maintain and promote our natural environment and the lifestyle our municipality offers.						
3.1	Connect businesses to learning, development and networking opportunities to increase capacity	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Ongoing support of Start Up Shake Up and promotion of the program. Ran a number of networking and industry nights to encourage new businesses to expand their knowledge and skills.	Ongoing support of Start Up Shake Up and promotion of the program. Ran a number of networking and industry nights to encourage new businesses to expand their knowledge and skills.
3.2	Run a series of business expos to support local businesses	DCP	2021-2022	Low	Social media workshop was held in Bethanga and Tallangatta; Online presence training held in Upper Murray and Mitta Valley.	Worked on development of a new expo in May for the Upper Murray.
3.3	Develop a business assistance service for new businesses including accommodation providers in the shared economy	DCP	2022	Low	No action in this quarter.	Continued to welcome and support new businesses. Held Pub Tucker month to encourage visitation to Towong.
3.4	Support businesses to adapt to and recover from the impact of bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic	DCP	2022	Low	Grant information has been made available businesses to assist with recovery, particularly for those impacted by recent floods.	Grant information has been made available businesses to assist with recovery, particularly for those impacted by recent floods.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
3.5	Support businesses to expand adventure tourism offerings across the shire	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Lake Hume Masterplan due to be presented to Council for public exhibition in early 2023. Mt Elliot masterplan project steering group established.	Lake Hume Masterplan due to be presented to Council for public exhibition in May 2023. Mt Elliot masterplan project steering group established and community engagement is underway. Secured funding for development of the Bellbridge Boathouse
3.6	Advocate for the development and broadening of the Pine Mountain experience	DCP	2022	Low	Engage with arts group regarding content of signage and brief for artists.	Commissioned aboriginal artist to develop art piece at Pine Mountain.
3.7	Advocate for the development of adventure tourism opportunities at Mount Elliot	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Finalised funding agreement; Mt Elliot masterplan project steering group established.	Successfully secured a consultancy to develop the brief. Community engagement activities have commenced.
3.8	Develop and implement a masterplan for cycling across the Shire	DCP	2022	Completed	Released HCRT masterplan on public exhibition.	HCRT masterplan adopted.
3.9	Support Mitta Valley Inc to develop the Mitta Valley mountain bike park	DCP	2022/23	Low	Ongoing assistance provided to MVI and PSG.	Ongoing assistance provided to MVI and PSG.
3.10	Seek funding to complete the High Country Rail Trail	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Released HCRT masterplan on public exhibition.	HCRT masterplan adopted.
3.11.1	Establish new annual cycling events in the Mitta Valley	DCP	2022 -2025	Completed	Mitta Gravel Unravel was held in December 2022. The event was very successful.	Successfully delivered event.
3.11.2	Establish new annual cycling events in the Upper Murray	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	The event was cancelled due to flooding.	Officers investigating future opportunities for the event.
3.12.1	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Great River Road	DCP	2022 -2025	Completed	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.12.2	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Omeo Highway	DCP	2023 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
3.12.3	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Benambra Corryong Road	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.13	Seek funding to develop a master plan for Lake Hume as a tourism destination including houseboats and the Narrows project	DCP	2022	Completed	Final Lake Hume plan to be presented to Council and put on public exhibition in early 2023.	Final masterplan due to be presented in May.
3.14	Seek funding to develop and expand the tourism opportunities at Dartmouth Dam	DCP	2023 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.15	Capitalise on Tallangatta's status as a Notable Town	DCP	2023	Low	No further action this quarter.	Currently developing a self guided history walk. Community engagement regarding the walk completed during this quarter.
3.16	Secure control of the Tallangatta Caravan Park and seek funding to implement the adopted recommendations from Tallangatta Holiday Park Planning Study	DCP	2022 -2025	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.17	Deliver improved visitor information and experience across the Shire	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Successful summit held in Corryong. The event was well received.	A familiarisation tour was held during the quarter for all volunteers.
3.18	Expand the reach of tourism marketing and promotional materials	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Completed branding; commenced work in new websites and procuring consultant to do website design and content. Continued to support the development of the tourism and marketing plan for Great River Road Stage 2.	Website design is ongoing. Marketing and development plan for Great River Road is nearing completion.
3.19	Seek to support the growth of value-add product and/or diversification opportunities for the agriculture industry	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	Agriculture Strategic Plan was adopted by Council. Officers worked ShartUpShakeUP to develop a Agriculture specific program.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
3.20	Facilitate the creation of a centre of excellence for innovation in agriculture	DCP	2022 -2025	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.21	Seek funding to support efforts to attract and sustain new industries	DCP	2022 -2025	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.22	Explore opportunities to activate the Corryong Aerodrome	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
3.23	Work with Upper Murray Inc to deliver outcomes from the UM2030 Plan	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Continued work with UMI to deliver the Local Development Strategy.	Continued work with UMI to deliver the Local Development Strategy.
3.24	Attract investment to address key weaknesses (connectivity and reliability) in critical infrastructure (mobile telecommunications, internet and power)	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	Final mobile and internet communications strategy presented to Council for public exhibition in November 2022.	Strategy was adopted by Council. Officers continue to advocate for improved connectivity through the Regional Connectivity Fund. Officers are working with CbConnect to deliver 'last mile' connectivity in the valleys.
Land-use planning						
Implement a strategic and sustainable long-term land-use direction for the Shire based on an integrated approach to the natural and built environment.						
4.1	Support the rebuild process for fire impacted properties	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	RSS has been extended and continues to support rebuild of all destroyed dwellings.	RSS has been extended and continues to support rebuild of all destroyed dwellings.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
4.2	Establish a Developer Contributions Policy and a Minimum Social Infrastructure Requirements Policy	DCP	2022/23	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
4.3	Develop structure plans for Corryong, Tallangatta and Bellbridge and incorporate into the planning scheme	DCP	2022/23	Low	Detailed planning undertaken with consultant. Draft opportunities papers developed for Bellbridge and Corryong.	Final drafts for structure plans complete. DTP (formerly DELWP) have provided final boundaries for both structure plans. We continue to advocate for Bellbridge to have an expanded boundary.
4.4	Review the Residential Settlement Strategy	DCP	2022-2024	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
4.6	Review the Rural Land Use Study	DCP	2022/23	Future	Staff met with DELWP again to discuss the ongoing issues with land availability across the shire. DELWP proposed that the immediate land around Bellbridge be included in the structure plan and no additional land around the peninsula is to be included.	Officers have been working with Regional Planning Hubs and the regional DTP (formerly DELWP) planning team to address housing shortage. The current position of DTP is to now allow any further work to be undertaken beyond the current minimal structure plan boundaries.
4.7	Review the Schedule to the Rural Activity Zone	DCP	2022/23	Future	Staff met with DELWP again to discuss the ongoing issues with land availability across the shire. DELWP proposed that the immediate land around Bellbridge be included in the structure plan and no additional land around the peninsula is to be included.	
4.8	Advocate for changes to the farming zone to allow for a second residence to enable succession planning	DCP	2022/23	Completed	No further action this quarter.	Rural worker accommodation changes were adopted in the planning scheme in 2022.
4.9	Seek funding to extend the Heritage Study	DCP	2022/23	Low	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
4.10.1	Update planning scheme overlays including: Bushfire Management	DCP	2022-2024	Completed	BMO overlays were updated through a joint project with DELWP.	

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
4.10.2	Update planning scheme overlays including: Heritage	DCP	2022-2024	Future	No further action this quarter.	No further action this quarter.
4.11	Review statutory service processes to ensure an excellent customer experience	DCP	2022 -2025	Low	No further action this quarter.	Ongoing monitoring of processes and improvements continue to occur. Officers are working towards streamlining Section 173 agreements.
Environmental sustainability						
Integrate sustainable environmental management practices into all of our activities.						
5.1	Continue to investigate options for domestic waste water management in high risk towns including Eskdale, Mitta Mitta and Bethanga	DIE	2023-2025	Low	Funding opportunity identified to review the domestic waste water management plan under the new EPA Act.	Funding application submitted
5.2	Consider the options available for reticulated potable water in Bethanga and Mitta Mitta	DIE	2022-2025	Medium	NE Water have advised that the cost of reticulation would be high compared to the population of the town. Council to lead the community conversation.	Ongoing
5.3	Continue to seek funding for integrated water management projects to maximise the use of recycled and raw water sources for public amenity and climate change mitigation	DIE	2022-2025	Low	Officers are actively participating in integrated water management forum activities to develop joint projects for funding across the region	Ongoing
5.4	Explore options for the establishment of a recycling industry	DIE	2022-2024	Medium	A consultant's brief is under preparation for an options analysis and business case development.	Staff vacancy has caused a delay in the delivery.
5.5	Improve the use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects eg crushed concrete, glass and rubber	DIE	2022-2025	Low	All tenders now request contractors to prioritise and report on the use of recycled materials in project delivery.	Ongoing

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
5.6	Investigate and implement options for the management of roadside vegetation for fire mitigation	DIE	2023-2025	Low	No further action this quarter due to storm damage recovery taking priority.	No further action this quarter due to storm damage recovery taking priority.
5.7	Advocate for the establishment of roadside clearances on arterial roads for emergencies	DIE	2022-2025	Low	An assessment of stacksites along the Murray Valley Highway is complete. A meeting with Regional Roads is planned for February 2023.	No response received from Regional Roads at this time. Request was raised at meeting in February.
5.8	Continue to implement noxious weed control and monitoring along roadsides within available funding	DIE	2022-2025	Low	Procurement is complete and contracts are under preparation.	Roadside weed spraying program is underway.
5.9	Continue to implement the tree planting strategy to achieve 40% canopy coverage in urban streets by 2025	DIE	2022-2025	Low	54 sites for new trees have been identified through inspections with planting to commence in Autumn.	Street tree replacement in Wheeler Street, Corryong is underway.
5.10	Explore the diversification of options for the establishment of native vegetation offset sites	DIE	2023	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
5.11	Seek funding to establish a network of electric car charging stations	DIE	2022-2025	Low	Corryong EV Charge station in planning stage.	Contract signed for the Corryong EV Charge station.
5.12	Develop a climate change action plan (including actions to reduce carbon emissions, electric vehicle charging, etc)	DIE	2023	Low	Draft action plan under review.	Draft plan to be presented to Council at April 2023 meeting
5.13	Transition waste and recycling services operations as per Victorian Government Circular Economy Strategy to deliver a four bin system for waste and recycling collection including separation of glass, green waste and organics	DIE	2023-2025	Low	Regional tender assessment underway.	Council resolution passed to transition to contracted service in 2024.
5.14	Invest in community education programs and a waste services survey to improve waste and recycling separation	DIE	2022-2025	Low	Community education program under development.	Community education program under development and to be delivered between July and December 2023

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
5.15	Investigate options for hard waste, green waste and agricultural waste management e.g silage wrap	DIE	2022-2025	Low	No further action this quarter due to commitments with landfill leachate management and recycling tender evaluation.	Council resolution passed to transition to contracted service in 2024 for food and garden organics kerbside collection service.
5.16	Replace the retaining wall at the Tallangatta Transfer Station	DIE	2022	Low	The replacement of the Tallangatta RRC retaining wall is in design phase.	The replacement of the Tallangatta RRC retaining wall is in design phase - delayed due to staff vacancy
5.17	Investigate options for the future of the Corryong Landfill	DIE	2022/23	Low	Works approval application submitted to EPA for final approval.	Council resolution passed to Close Corryong Landfill operations at end of 2023.
5.18	Implement required measures to ensure management of closed landfills is compliant with EPA requirements	DIE	2022-2025	Low	Ongoing.	Ongoing.
Organisational improvement						
Embed organisational excellence into our governance and management processes in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents and ratepayers.						
6.1	Continue to improve awareness, engagement and involvement of the community in relation to matters that affect them	SMT	2022-2025	Low	Facebook page engagement continued to trend upwards with particular interest in our storm related posts. A new e-newsletter has been in development and a 'Half way point' communication was launched to reflect on Council achievements over the first half of the current term. Communications and engagement continued in relation to major capital works projects and other events and activities.	The launch of our e-newsletter in January 2023 has been positively received with subscriber numbers in January of 166 increasing to 280 by the end of the quarter. Communication materials were distributed across 60 projects and initiatives, while our Facebook following rose from 4,178 to 4,623 across the quarter.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
6.2	Continually improve customer service experience across the organisation	SMT	2022-2025	Low	MOUs are now in place between customer service and a number of Council departments to provide for increased clarity as to roles and responsibilities and an improved customer service experience. A 'How Do I?' campaign has been under development to pre-empt common community enquiries.	Training documentation is continuing to be developed and training has commenced to ensure customer service staff build confidence in referring customer requests to the appropriate responsible area.
6.3	Continually improve processes to support improved service delivery	SMT	2022-2025	Low	The staff onboarding checklist was expanded to provide additional coverage of induction topics and further centralised oversight was introduced to ensure a smooth offboarding process from IT systems.	Commenced fortnightly information and training sessions on our customer relationship management system - 'Data scape'. The focus of these session is to improve staff knowledge and skills in managing customer enquiries.
6.4	Deliver improved business technology - finance, rates, human resources	DCOD	2022-2025	Low	Project governance has been established to support the introduction of a new planning and building system. The recruitment of a project manager is near complete.	The new project manager (based at Indigo Shire) has commenced.
6.5	Update the technology strategy to support the ongoing delivery excellent customer service	DCOD	2022/23	Future	Future start date.	Future start date. Currently not resourced, may require re-prioritisation once the new director is recruited.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
6.6	Develop and implement a People Plan to support the ongoing development of a high performing, adaptable, resilient, engaged and cohesive organisation	DCOD	2022-2025	Medium	A new leadership program has been introduced to the organisation's key leaders to underpin their leadership effectiveness and ability to support a flourishing culture. A further introductory version of the program will be rolled out to additional staff later in the year.	The Griffith Evolve leadership program is being rolled out with positive feedback being received from participants. The development of the People Plan has been delayed due to the inability to fill the role of Coordinator People and Culture. We will undertake a new round of recruitment for the role once we have filled the Director Corporate and Organisational Development role.
6.7	Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and staff in a continually evolving environment	CEO	2022-2025	Low	Risk assessments and action plans have been underway at the Corryong Saleyards and Aerodrome to ensure that the sites are safe for intended uses. A review of Council's requirements against the newly updated Child Safe Standards has also been underway.	Refer to Occupational Health and Safety Report presented to the April Council Meeting.
6.8	Continue to seek opportunities to improve service delivery and achieve best value including further investigation of shared services	SMT	2022-2025	Low	The recruitment of a project manager to lead the grant-funded review of planning and building systems and processes is near complete. The end goal of the project is to expand the current shared service between Towong and Indigo to encompass Alpine Shire Council.	As per 6.4 The new project manager (based at Indigo Shire) has commenced.

Council Plan Priorities - Progress Report (01 Jan to 31 Mar 2023)

Ref	Priority	RO	When	Status	Progress - Previous Period	Progress - Current Period
6.9	Continue to advocate for increased government funding support to ensure long term sustainability	CEO	2022-2025	Low	Advocacy was conducted in relation to reinstating government funding to support fixing country roads.	A submission was made to the Federal Parliament's Inquiry into the implications of severe weather events on the national regional, rural, and remote road network. Commenced planning for a visit to Canberra to advocate for priorities including telecommunications infrastructure, Lake Hume Boathouse and an intergrated community centre in Corryong.
6.10	Investigate alternative revenue streams	SMT	2022-2025	Low	Projects to install a weighbridge at the Corryong Saleyards and 24 hour fuel at the Corryong Airport have been under completion with revenue streams commencing in 2023.	Projects to install a weighbridge at the Corryong Saleyards is nearing completion and the 24 hour fuel at the Corryong Airport is now operational.
6.11	Review the Revenue and Rating strategy	DCOD	2022-2025	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
6.12	Consider options for the realisation of surplus Council assets	SMT	2022-2025	Future	Future start date.	Future start date.
6.13	Continually improve the risk management and governance frameworks and practices	DCOD	2022-2025	Low	Mechanisms are being put in place to embed operational risk registers and audit actions more directy into each department's management mechanisms and individuals' workplans.	Development of individual department action trackers has continued this quarter to support director oversight of outstanding actions within their area of responsibility.
6.14	Provide ongoing support and development of Councillors in fulfilling their roles	CEO	2022-2025	Low	The leadership program being rolled out to the organisation's leaders will also be rolled out in a suitable format to the Councillors.	The Griffith Evolve leadership program will be presented to Councillors in May 2023.

Occupational Health and Safety Report – February and March 2023

Occupational Health and Safety Management System

Following the audit of Council’s Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) against the standard *AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems* it was found that Council’s OHSMS practises are generally sound with no major shortcomings identified. Altogether 46 management actions and 10 opportunities for improvement were identified of which nine have been completed and 25 are currently in progress. No actions were completed during this period due to the focus on insurance renewals and other activities listed below.

Major actions in progress include:

- Reviewing the process for setting objectives and targets, and documenting this process in the Integrated Management System Compliance Manual (this comprises the two high priority items identified during the audit);
- Reviewing the Skills Matrix and Training Plans;
- Reviewing key elements of the Risk Framework including the Strategic Risk Register and Risk Management Action Plan;
- Reviewing individual Workplans to ensure alignment with Council Plan and OHS Improvement Plan;
- Ensuring that building inspections are conducted annually on Council owned or managed buildings for insurance purposes – this is in addition to annual Essential Safety Measure inspections conducted by the Building Surveyor against Building Code requirements;
- Reviewing the incident reporting form and Incident Register to classify event types as a hazard, near miss or incident; and
- Reviewing immunisation requirements and processes.

Action Status Tracking

Status	Priority			Total
	L	M	H	
Not started	1	21	0	22
In progress	1	22	2	25
Completed	4	5	0	9
TOTAL	6	48	2	56

WorkCover Incidents

There were no new WorkCover claims for this period. There is one open WorkCover claim, and we continue to work closely with the employee and our WorkCover agent to manage the claim.

Public Liability Incidents

There were six new Public Liability incidents reported for this period, three of which related to minor incidents at the Swimming Pools. There are no outstanding Public Liability incidents awaiting action.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

The pandemic declaration came to an end on 12 October 2022, however organisations are still required to keep current COVIDSafe Plans at all workplaces. Council's COVIDSafe Plans have been updated and distributed and will be reviewed again at the end of April 2023. OHS and Human Resources officers continue to respond to staff enquiries regarding the appropriate course of action in their individual circumstances, in accordance with state recommendations.

Officers received a second batch of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) from the state government for distribution to staff, Councillors and community members. Officers continue to closely manage the supply and distribution of these RATs, and to complete the required reporting to the State Government.

Insurance Claims

There is currently one Liability claim in progress relating to damage caused to a retaining wall in a private residence in 2015. Repairs are mostly completed and it is expected this claim will be finalised by the end of April 2023.

A query relating to a potential claim dating back to an incident in August 2020 where a child allegedly suffered injuries in a public space owned/managed by Council resulted in officers undertaking a title search of the land in question and providing a response to our Insurers that Council are indeed the correct respondents to the claim, if a claim is forthcoming.

Further progress has been made in relation to Council's insurance claim relating to damage caused by the 2019/20 bushfires. The claim progress has been lengthy due

to complexities involved in its resolution, such as the large number of transactions and expense types being claimed for and the fact that some insurable costs were not incurred until more than 18 months after the bushfires taking place. Following submission of the claim by our insurance agent Marsh, the insurer has made an initial assessment indicating that the claim has been approved, however the components of the landfill cell are yet to be fully assessed.

As part of this process, the bushfire-related insurance claim with the Corryong Men's Shed has been settled, giving them closure and much needed funds.

Corryong Saleyards

A review of the safety of the Corryong Saleyards and the construction of the weighbridge installation was conducted in the lead-up to the Man From Snowy River Bush Festival to ensure the safety of users of the dump point and potable water point. A further risk assessment will be undertaken following the completion of the weighbridge installation.

Corryong Aerodrome

A new 24/7 refuelling area has been constructed at the Corryong Aerodrome. Training has been conducted to support officers to sample and test the fuel and to maintain the site to a safe standard. An interim risk assessment has been completed of the area and potential risks are currently being addressed. Associated procedures are also being documented.

Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme

The State Government introduced seven Child Safe Standards in 2016 to protect children and young people from harm and abuse.

Changes have been made to the Standards in order to increase protection for children and young people and provide clarity for organisations that must comply with them. From 1 July 2022, 11 Standards replaced the original seven and include requirements to:

- Involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe;
- Provide greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people; and
- Manage the risk of child abuse in online environments.

Work has been undertaken by Early Years teams to meet the new standards and work will be conducted to assess any further requirements across the broader organisation. The induction process and any additional training, policy and monitoring requirements continue to be reviewed.

Working Alone

A review of the Working Alone procedure is underway with particular focus on ensuring workers who travel around the Shire by themselves do so with their safety as the highest priority. These workers include, among others, outdoor workers, Maternal and Child Health nurses, project managers, Coordinator Asset Inspections and rangers.

The review includes ensuring that officers are provided with appropriate first aid kits, fire extinguishers, an emergency backup plan documented in a Safe Work Method Statement and where required may include access to a UHF radio, Personal Locator Beacon and/or an in-vehicle Dash-Cam.

Equipment inspections

Test and Tag inspections were completed on all portable electrical equipment at all Council workplaces during this period. Testing and tagging is completed at Depots every six months and all other workplaces every 12 months and involves checking the safety of portable electrical appliances firstly by a visual inspection and then by electrically testing it with a portable appliance tester. The testing and tagging ensures the safety of the people in the workplace coming into contact with the appliance, whilst also minimising the risk of an electrical hazard. All testing and tagging complies with the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 3760 *"In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment and RCD's"*.

Testing of all lifting equipment at the Depots was also completed during this period. Lifting equipment includes chains, slings, lifting devices, eyebolts and shackles etc. Inspections comply with the requirements of a number of Australian Standards and are completed annually by a third party. Defective or non-compliant equipment is automatically replaced as part of this process.

Councils Calibration Record which includes all equipment that needs to be routinely tested or inspected has been updated with this information.

Review of Procedures and associated paperwork and forms

Reviews continue on a number of documents and related forms, including:

- Contractor Management
- Working Alone

- Document Control and Records Management

Reviews have been completed on:

- Firewood Collection Procedure and Permit
- Before You Dig Procedure and Permit
- Roadside Spraying and chemical usage

Commission of Inquiry Report - Moira

The CEO is leading the review of the Commission of Inquiry report to ensure all short comings identified at Moira do not occur at Towong Shire Council. A report will be provided to Council and the Audit and Risk Committee as soon as possible.

Risk Assessments

Officers continue to work together to complete risk assessments for a number of events including movie nights, mountain bike course/training, proposed billy cart event and the Strategy for Agriculture. Risk assessments are an important part of the event planning process. The main purpose for the risk assessment is to ensure the safety of everyone on site by identifying all potential risks that may arise from holding the event and then putting controls in place to eliminate or minimise those risks.

Insurance renewal

Councils insurance renewal for 2023-24 has been completed and submitted to our insurers for consideration. We expect to receive further information from our insurer in the next six weeks including an overview of the market and a conservative estimate of movement in the insurance market for budgetary purposes. This should be followed by a renewal report and proposal around mid to late June.

MAV workshops and webinars

During this period officers have attended a number of MAV Workshops and joined online webinars on various topics including:

- Contractor management
- Volunteer risk management
- Follow-up to the Moira report
- Road Management Plans
- Victorian Workers Compensation and OHS
- Fundamentals of Managing Incidents and Potential Claims
- Psychosocial hazards and regulation

Key take-aways and learnings from these workshops and webinars are passed on to appropriate staff.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATASCAPE/ COMPLETE
5	<p>Confirmation of Minutes</p> <p>Ordinary Council Meeting 25 January 2023</p> <p>Update on website/Dropbox</p>	EA	No SR required
7.1	<p>Strategic Plan for Agriculture (05/01/0166-DCP)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The <i>Strategic Plan for Agriculture</i> as presented be adopted; and 2. Council Officers look at opportunities of where we can capture and sequester carbon throughout the Towong Shire. 	DCP	SR 27575
7.2	<p>Great River Road Stage Two Artwork Commission (05/02/0162-DCP)</p> <p>That the Panel's recommendation to commission John Wood, Glennys Briggs and Xavier Pinard to deliver artwork as detailed in their submissions, be adopted.</p>	DCP	SR 27576
8.2	<p>The Triangles Irrigation System Upgrade – Tender Evaluation – Contract No. 2022/23-058 (01/04/0144-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract No. 2022/23-058 for The Triangles – Irrigation system upgrade be awarded to Ocee Pty Ltd trading as Think Water Albury for the lump sum of \$75,445.83 excluding GST; 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign Contract No. 2022/23-058; and 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve 	DIE	SR 27577

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 8 MARCH 2023 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

	contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget.		
8.3	<p>The Triangles Toilet Block Upgrade – Tender Evaluation – Contract No. 2022/23-048 (01/03/0052-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contract No. 2022/23-048 for Tallangatta Triangles Toilet Block Upgrade be awarded to Barton St. Developments Pty Ltd for the lump sum of \$297,959 excluding GST; Council approve \$90,000 to be re-allocated from the building renewal 2022/2023 budget to support the completion of Tallangatta Triangles Toilet Block Upgrade; The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2022/23-048 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and <p>The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget.</p>	DIE	SR 27578

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATASCAPE/ COMPLETE
5	<p>Confirmation of Minutes</p> <p>Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 February 2023. Special Council Meeting held on 8 March 2023.</p> <p>Update on website/Dropbox</p>	EA	No SR required
7.1	<p>Public Question Time Submitter: Mrs Glenys Bruce</p> <p>1. Condition of the road as a result of the quarry trucks.</p> <p><i>The CEO advised in regard to the road and volume of quarry trucks, that there had been an increased number of trucks that Council was aware of, primarily due to road construction activity occurring on Georges Creek Road and Wisers Creek Road. A planning permit is in place in relation to the operation of the Georges Creek Quarry, with conditions in relation to truck volumes, however the permit does not restrict other trucks from travelling on that road in order to conduct the road works that is within the area. A written response will be provided to Mrs. Bruce.</i></p>	CEO	No SR required
7.2	<p>Public Question Time Submitter: Dr Sean Mulcahy</p> <p>1. Thank you for taking the opportunity to meet with the Rainbow Local Government team. Will Council fly the rainbow flag on 17 May this year to mark International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex discrimination and Transphobia ("IDAHOBIT"), even if from a temporary flagpole?</p> <p>2. Will Council establish an LGBTIQA+ community advisory group that can work with Council to incorporate LGBTIQA+ diversity and inclusion within existing budgeted activities (for example, a pride film in the movie night series or a morning tea to mark IDAHOBIT at the Tallangatta or Corryong library)?</p>	CEO	No SR required

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

	<p><i>The CEO advised Council that Dr Mulcahy spoke with Council at the last Council Meeting and talked about the various activities that Council could partake in. The CEO also advised Council that the Director of Community and Planning had been in touch with Dr Mulcahy following his meeting with Council on 22 February 2023 and Dr Mulcahy was advised that a report would be presented at the next possible Council meeting. The CEO advised Council that the intention is to provide that report to the next possible meeting of Council. A written response will be provided to Dr Mulcahy.</i></p>		
7.3	<p>Public Question Time Submitter: Ms Debbie Monteny</p> <p>1. Update on cleaning up - yes stove has gone and skips are not sitting on road but we still have hot water systems - 44 gallon drums (behind bus depot) full on unspecified rubbish and now being covered by weeds, broken furniture behind motel and loose small bits of corrugated iron behind pub still. Please advise on progress.</p> <p>2. The invasion of hairy caterpillars in Tallangatta on a yearly basis at this time of the year. What is councils plan to rid of us of these dangerous? grubs. We can only do our gardens but the council trees ang gardens need to be sprayed.</p> <p><i>The CEO advised in relation to the lane progress update, that Council's Ranger had made contact with a number of the businesses who back onto the lane and also prepared some correspondence that will be going out shortly.</i></p> <p><i>The question in relation to the Hairy Caterpillars was taken on notice. A written response will be provided to Ms. Monteny.</i></p>	CEO	No SR required
9.2	<p>Audit and Risk Committee Appointment Extension (07/07/0010-CEO)</p> <p>That Mr Spencer Rich's term with the Audit and Risk Committee be extended by one year, ending on 7 September 2024.</p>	CEO	No SR required

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

	Letter from CEO to advise.		
12.1	<p>Towong walking track and boardwalk project (05/02/0162-DIE)</p> <p>That the project be staged as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stage 1: Proceed with the design and tender of a walking track with an alignment which includes a fill pavement between the edge of the billabong and Brooke Street at a level lower than the road; and 2. Stage 2: Subject to the amount of funding remaining in the project budget after assessment of tenders from Stage 1, conduct further consultation with the Towong Community regarding the type and location of viewing platform to be installed, in conjunction with the location of the Brolga sculpture, and if necessary, consider a future budget allocation. 	DIE	SR 26762
12.2	<p>Towong Street East Streetscape Upgrade – Tender Evaluation – Contract No. 2022/23-059 (01/01/0478-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract No. 2022/23-059 for Footpath Construction - Towong Street East be awarded to PDC Contracting Pty Ltd. for the lump sum of \$165,605 (excluding GST); 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2022/23-059 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; and 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget. 	DIE	SR 26763

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

<p>12.3</p>	<p>Corryong CBD and Hanson Street Upgrade – Tender Evaluation Contract No. 2022/23-040 (02/11/0046-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract No. 2022/23-040 for the Corryong CBD and Hanson Street Upgrade, be awarded to Excell Gray Bruni Pty Ltd. for the lump sum of \$4,240,306 (excluding gst); 2. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to sign and seal Contract No. 2022/23-040 in accordance with Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties; 3. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to approve contract variations up to the value of the total allocated project budget; and 4. Council be provided with monthly updates on progress once construction commences. 	<p>DIE</p>	<p>SR 26768</p>
<p>12.4</p>	<p>Kerbside Waste Reform (01/07/004-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The following waste collection arrangements be implemented effective no earlier than 1 January 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A 240L kerbside bin for food organics and garden organics collected weekly b. A 140L kerbside waste bin collected fortnightly c. A 240L comingled recycling bin collected fortnightly d. Drop off glass facilities at Council’s Resource Recovery Centres and recycling sheds 2. Rural property residents be allowed to opt out of the kerbside food organics and garden organics bins, provided that evidence of an appropriate 	<p>DIE</p>	<p>SR 26769</p>

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

	<p>onsite management system is in place;</p> <p>3. A Community waste education program be delivered over the period July – December 2023; and</p> <p>4. The report from the Tender Evaluation Panel of the Resource Recovery Collective – Hume be noted and a decision be made on its preferred tenderers at Item 22.1 in a confidential business for the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Kerbside collection services for waste, comingled recyclables and food organics and garden organics b. Comingled recyclables processing c. Food organics and garden organics processing d. Glass collection and processing e. Resource Recovery Centre collection, transport and processing f. Waste disposal to landfill 		
12.5	<p>Corryong Landfill Report (01/07/004-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <p>1. The closure of the Corryong Landfill operation by 30 June 2024 or earlier as required, be approved; and</p> <p>2. Council continue to operate the Resource Recovery Centre and waste transfer station in Corryong, with hours of operation as they currently are.</p>	DIE	SR 26770

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

<p>12.6</p>	<p>Corryong Skate Park Project and Former Corryong Primary School Site (02/08/0110)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council confirm its support for the future use of the former Corryong Primary School site to be based on the community aspirations included in the 2022 Community Consultation Report, and include a range of community services and facilities, and community recreation opportunities; 2. The positive feedback from the recent community engagement and survey supporting the new Skate Park being sited at the former Corryong Primary School site be noted; 3. The support from the Department of Education and Training for the construction of a new skate park at the former Corryong Primary School site be acknowledged; 4. The use of the secured funding of \$880,000 be approved for the development of the new skate park at the former Corryong Primary School site; 5. Approval be granted to progress the project to the Design and Documentation phase; and 6. The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to finalise and execute an amended lease with the Department of Education and Training covering the entire former Corryong Primary School site until at least 30 June 2028. 	<p>CEO</p>	<p>SR 26778</p>
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**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 22 MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

13.2	<p>Section 173 Agreement – Towong Shire Council and Patricia Margaret Sheather, David John Sheather, Leslie Marie Tyrell and Robert Bruce Sheather P/N 174150 (DCP)</p> <p>That the use of the Common Seal be authorised in accordance with <i>Local Law 1 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties</i> for the purpose of signing the Section 173 Agreement, relating to the land described as Lot 1 TP829246, Lot 1 TP385156, Lot 1 TP829219, Lot 1 TP829236 (148 Hamilton Lane Corryong) that has been drafted in accordance with the requirements of Planning Permit 2022/044.</p>	DCP	SR 26779
18.1	<p>Audit and Risk Committee (07/07/0010-DCOD)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The unconfirmed minutes of the audit and risk committee meeting held on Thursday 17 February 2023 be noted; and 2. The recommendations from the audit and risk committee meeting held on Thursday 17 February 2023 be considered. 	CEO	SR 26780

**DATASCAPE ACTION SHEET
FROM 29 MARCH 2023 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING - TALLANGATTA**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATASCAPE/ COMPLETE
5.1	<p>Road Discontinuance and Sale of Section of Road 1\TP329264 (01/01/0429-DIE)</p> <p>That:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It be noted that; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirements of section 189 of the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> have been met in relation to the proposal to sell section of Road 1\TP329264; and a. No submissions were received in relation to the proposed sale; 2. The Discontinuance and Sale of approximately 612m2 of road 1\TP329264 as shown on the attached Stock Route, Corryong Discontinuance Plan, to the adjacent landowner at 201 Thomas Lane, Corryong by private treaty, be approved; and 3. The publishing of the gazettal plan for the discontinuance of the above section of road be approved. 	DIE	SR 26971

Towong Shire Council Climate Change Action Plan



Prepared for

Towong Shire Council

Version	Author	Date	Description of changes
v0a-b	Sophie Beard	16/12/2022	Drafting Process
v0c	Cecilia Hyslop	11/01/2023	Review
v1a	Sophie Beard	13/01/2023	Draft Issue to Council
v1b	Sophie Beard	17/01/2023	Updates following council review

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About Ironbark Sustainability

Ironbark Sustainability is a specialist consultancy that works with government and business around Australia by assisting them to reduce energy and water usage through sustainable asset and data management and on-the-ground implementation.

Ironbark has been operating since 2005 and brings together a wealth of technical and financial analysis, maintenance and implementation experience in the areas of building energy and water efficiency, public lighting and data management. We pride ourselves on supporting our clients to achieve real action regarding the sustainable management of their operations.

Our Mission

The Ironbark mission is to achieve real action on sustainability for councils and their communities.



Ironbark is a certified B Corporation. We have been independently assessed as meeting the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose

Contents

Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	8
1.1 Background	8
1.2 Climate Change Action Plan	8
2. Council’s Corporate GHG Inventory	9
2.1.1 Corporate GHG Inventory - 2021/22.....	10
2.1.2 Inventory Comparison.....	10
2.1.3 Inventory Gaps	11
2.1.4 Emissions Projections to 2032/33	12
3. Emissions Reduction Actions and Opportunities	13
3.1 Actions Completed	13
3.2 Waste	14
3.2.1 Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection	14
3.3 Fleet Transition	15
3.3.1 Global and National EV trends	15
3.3.2 Fleet Transition Plan	16
3.3.3 Passenger Vehicle Transition	17
3.3.4 Utility Vehicle Transition	18
3.3.5 Charging Station Installation.....	18
3.3.6 Heavy Vehicle Transition	20
3.4 Stationary Fuels	20
3.5 Electricity	21
3.5.1 Electricity Procurement	21
3.5.2 Behind the Meter Solar.....	22
3.5.3 Public lighting	22
3.6 Concrete and Asphalt	23
4. Emissions Reduction Pathway Analysis	24

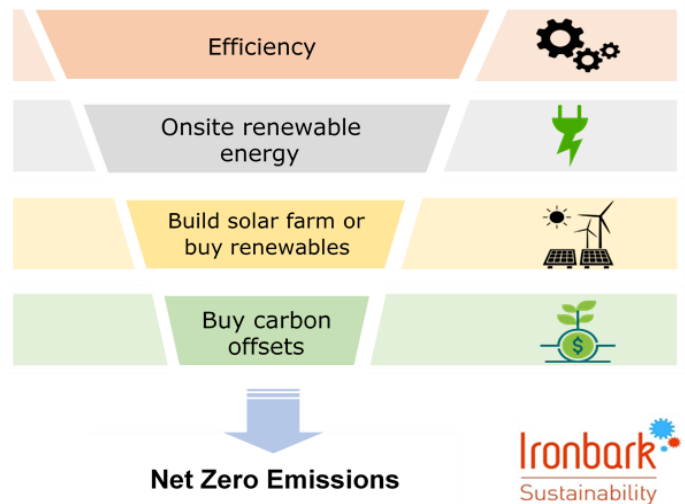
Executive Summary

This Climate Change Action Plan presents Towong Shire Council’s (TSC) progress towards reducing their corporate greenhouse gas emissions and maps out a practical pathway for Council to further reduce their emissions over the next ten years. Emissions from the broader community are excluded from this document.

The plan reviews TSC’s current emissions and actions taken since 2018, based on data collected by Council for FY 2021/22. The action plan sets out emissions reduction and offsetting opportunities for Council utilising the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction hierarchy (Figure 1) and will result in significant cost savings and emissions reductions over the lifetime of the assets.

It is recommended that this document is reviewed and updated at least every four years to take advantage of the emergence of new technologies and opportunities that may allow for faster and more cost-effective emissions reduction.

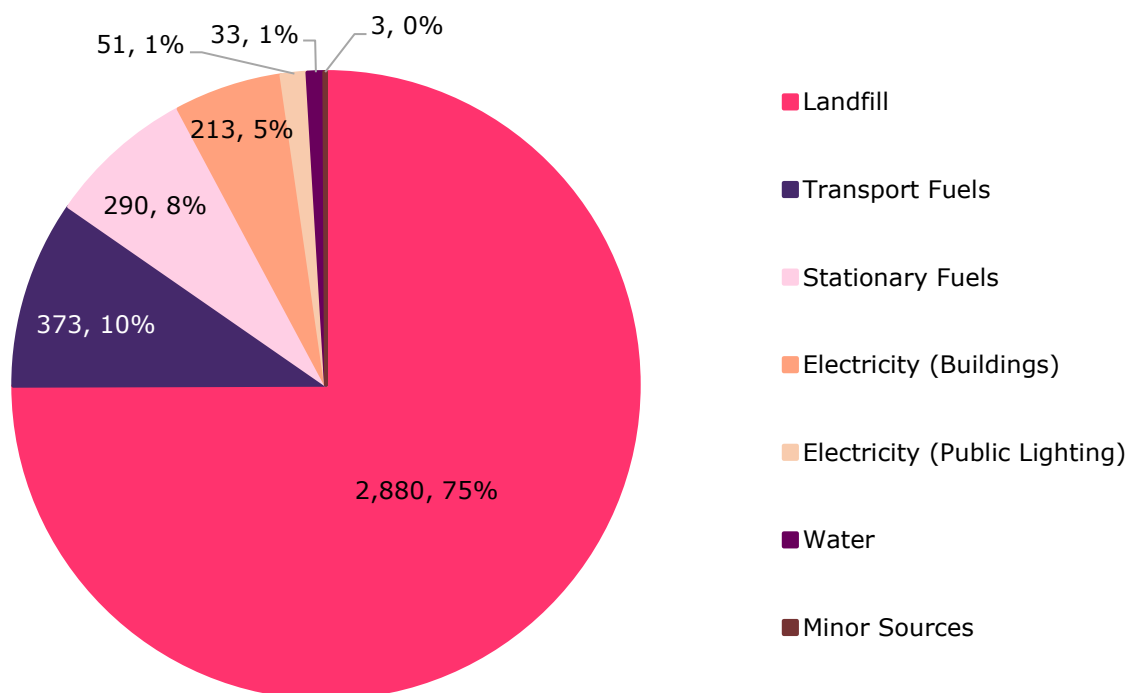
Figure 1: GHG Emission Reduction Hierarchy



Corporate Emissions Summary

Council’s total emissions for the 2021/22 financial year have been calculated to be 3,842 tonnes CO₂-equivalent (tCO₂-e). Emissions reduction measures employed by Council since 2018 include installing behind the meter solar PV systems at 12 Council owned facilities, conducting Type 1 and Type 2 building audits at 15 buildings and upgrading lights to LED bulbs at 10 sites.

Figure 2: TSC Emissions Inventory 2020/21 (tCO₂-e)



Emissions Reduction Pathway







To develop a pathway of emissions reduction for Towong Shire Council, Ironbark analysed opportunities against key emissions sources within Council’s inventory. Opportunities were assessed against total emissions abatement, cost of implementation (above BAU capital expenditure) and potential lifetime savings. Actions were prioritised where a meaningful reduction in emissions could be made at an acceptable return on investment (ROI), typically less than 10 years.

The following actions are proposed for TSC to implement to establish an emissions reduction trajectory:

- Introduce weekly municipal Food Organics and Garden Organics collection
- Procure 100% renewable energy electricity for council facilities and public lighting
- Develop a Transition Plan to prepare for fleet electrification
- Procure Electric Vehicles (EVs) to replace petrol and diesel passenger vehicles at their end of life
- Procure EVs to replace diesel utility vehicles at their end of life
- Install charging infrastructure to support EV procurement
- Monitor emergence of viable electric or hydrogen alternatives for heavy fleet and plant
- Procure electric alternatives for stationary plant at end of life (where viable)
- Complete upgrade of all public lighting to LED
- Upgrade gas BBQs to electric (where viable)
- Update infrastructure specifications to require use of recycled and low emissions materials in capital works projects

Table 1 provides the cost-benefit analysis results of several of the recommended actions over the next ten years. The impact of these actions has been modelled to 2032/33. The lifetime savings for each action represents financial savings across the expected lifespan of each action.

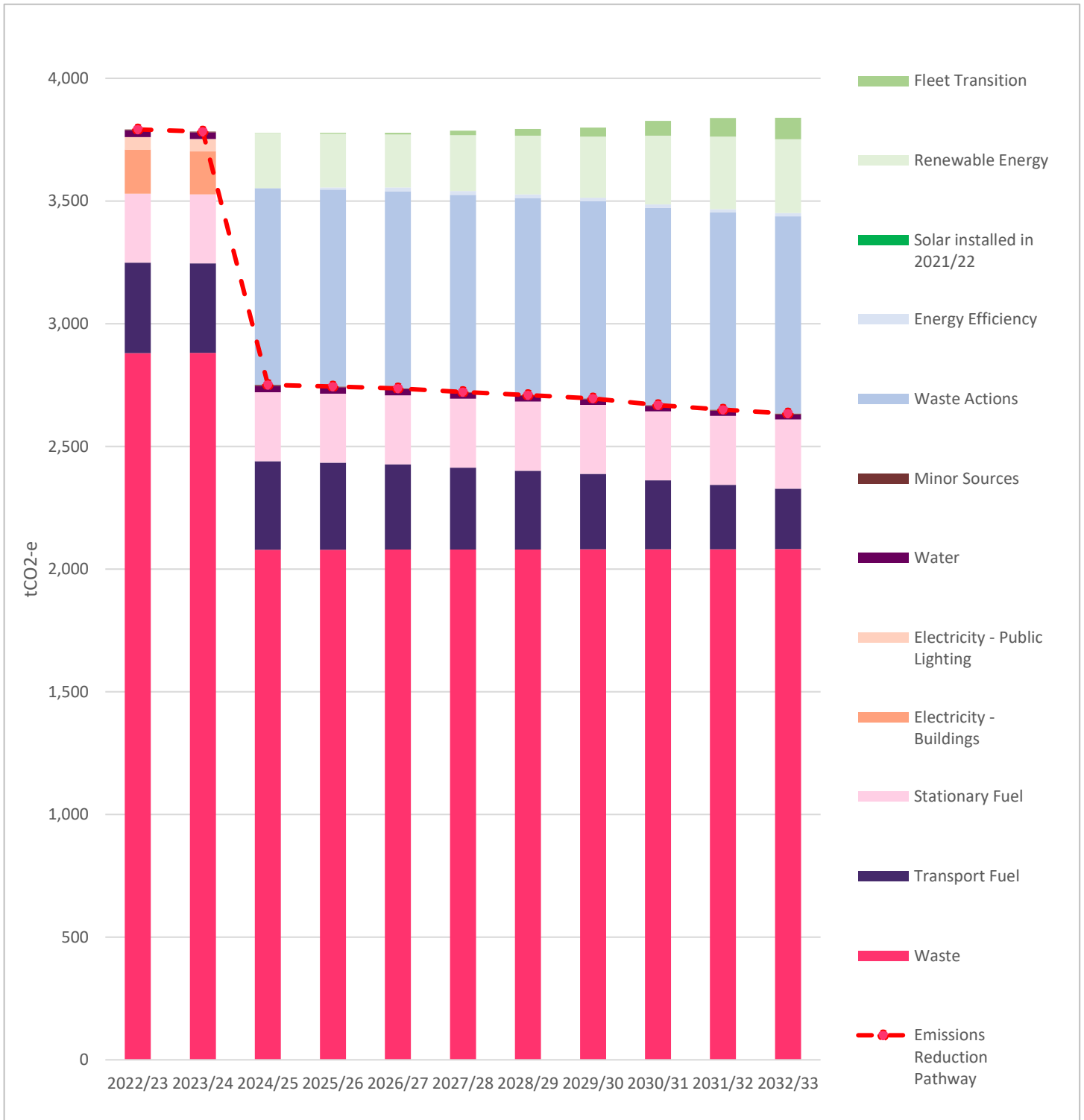
Table 1: Cost-Benefit Summary of Recommended Actions

Action	Refer to Section	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2030/31 (tCO ₂ -e)	Total Cost	Lifetime Savings
 Introduce Food Organics Garden Organics collection	3.2.1	2024/25	900	Not modelled	
 Develop Fleet Transition Plan	3.3.2	2023/24	N/A	\$15,000	Nil
 Transition all passenger vehicles to EVs by 2032/33.	3.3.3	2024/25	100	\$70,500	\$460,000
 Transition all utility vehicles to EVs by 2032/33	3.3.4	2026/27	115	\$18,000	\$570,000
 Install sufficient charging stations for passenger and utility EVs	3.3.5	2024/25	N/A	\$365,000	\$0
 Replace all public lights with LED	3.5.3	2025/26	15	\$130,000	\$130,000
Total			1,130	\$598,500	\$1.16 m

If all the actions listed in Table 1 are implemented, Towong Shire Council is estimated to be able to abate 1,130 tCO₂-e per year by 2032/33 compared to BAU emissions projections. A further 300 tCO₂-e can be abated through the procurement of 100% renewable energy.

Taking all of these factors into account, Council's residual emissions in 2032/33 are estimated to be approximately 2,600 tCO₂-e, representing a 31% reduction in GHG emission compared to 2021/22 levels, the trajectory of which is shown in Figure 3.

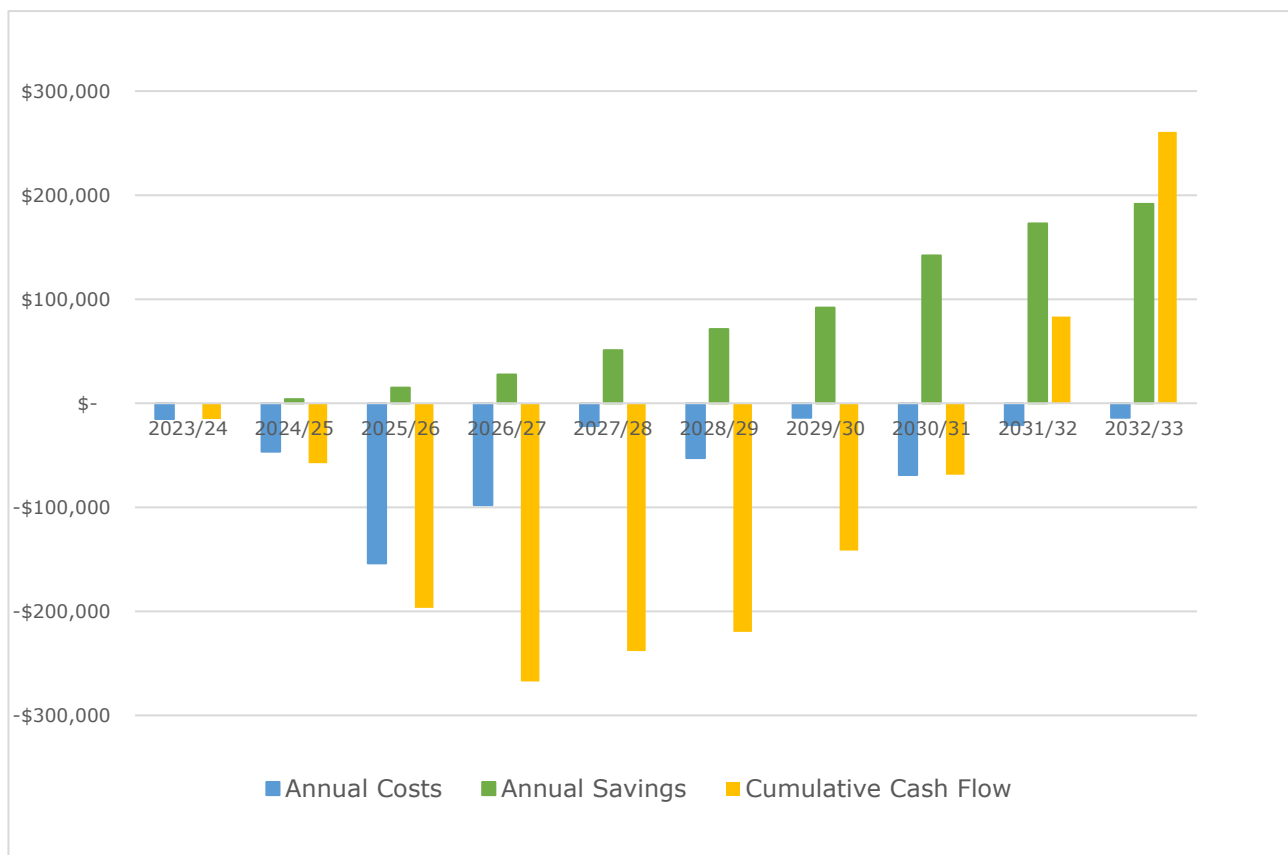
Figure 3: Emissions Reduction Pathway to 2032/33



A cash flow analysis has been undertaken, which shows the anticipated cash flow of actions implemented in accordance with the proposed phasing presented in Table 1. Figure 4 shows the results of this analysis, which includes the following key takeaways:

- The cumulative cash flow (yellow bar) in each year is the cumulative savings minus total costs incurred between 2023/24 and that year. A negative cumulative cash flow indicates total costs to date are greater than savings. A positive cumulative cash flow shows a net saving has been achieved across all implemented actions
- First four to five years of implementation are a period of larger capital expenditure and investment (blue bars, showing negative cash flow)
- Annual savings ramp up as actions are completed, resulting in over \$170,000 saved each year from 2031/32 (green bars, showing positive cash flow)
- High expenditure in the early years results in a cumulative cash flow deficit until 2030/31 (yellow bars, showing negative cash flow)
- As annual savings from emissions reduction actions accumulate, there is an overall plan break-even point in 2031/32 (yellow bars show positive cash flow from this year)
- By 2032/33 the cumulative cash flow shows savings of \$260,000, which will continue to increase into the future

Figure 4: Cash Flow Pathway



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In early 2018, Ironbark Sustainability developed a Greenhouse Reduction Plan and Inventory for Towong Shire Council (TSC) as part of the Local Government Energy Saver Program. Since then, TSC has implemented several major projects to reduce their corporate emissions. Council's emissions reducing achievements to date include:

- Installation of 370kW of rooftop solar PV on Council buildings
- Energy efficiency audits
- LED upgrades and equipment optimisation at Council facilities

1.2 Climate Change Action Plan

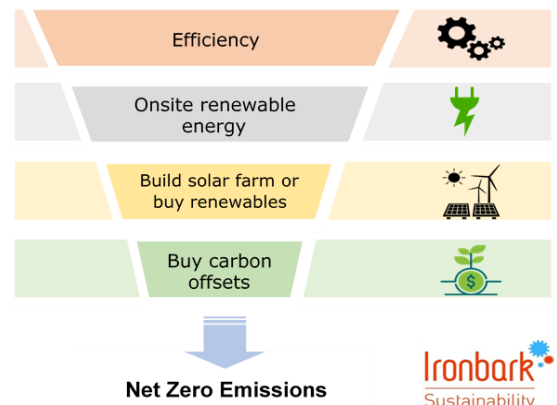
This 10-year Climate Change Action Plan is a continuation of the work commenced in 2018 to reduce TSC's corporate emissions. The plan charts a pathway for TSC to continue to reduce its emissions over the next decade.

Underlying the action plan is an inventory of Towong Shire Council's corporate greenhouse (GHG) gas emissions. This has been generated using Council's operational data of energy and emissions in financial year 2021/22, as collated by reporting software Trellis. This emissions inventory is summarised in Section 2, along with a comparison to Council's 2016/17 emissions.

Sections 3 and 4 present the emissions reduction and offsetting opportunities for Council to implement over the next ten years and establishes an emissions reduction trajectory for Council. The trajectory is presented as a practical pathway, utilising the greenhouse emissions reduction hierarchy shown in Figure 5 and resulting in net cost savings for Council as well as significant emissions reductions over the lifetime of the investments.

Actions have been included out to 2032/33, however it is recommended that TSC review and update this document at least every four years to ensure ongoing actions are guided by updated information and take advantage of emerging technologies that could accelerate emissions reduction in different areas of council operations.

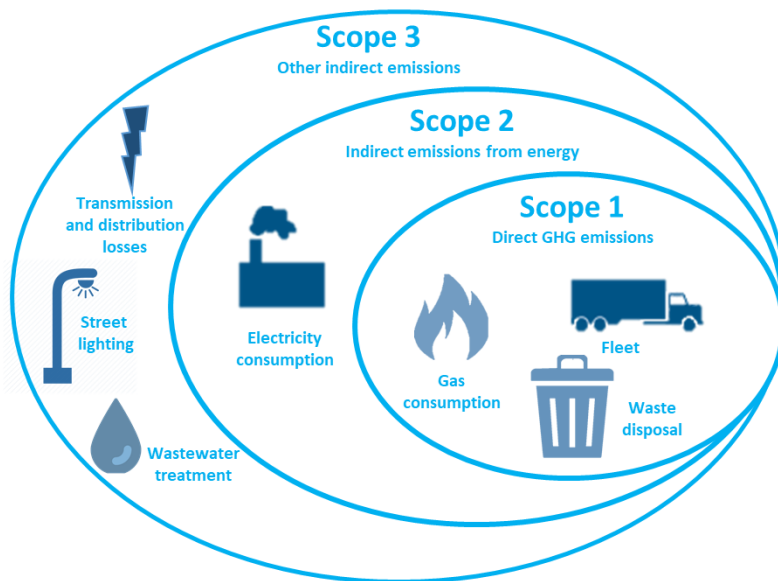
Figure 5: GHG Emission Reduction Hierarchy



2. Council’s Corporate GHG Inventory

As part of this climate change action plan, Ironbark has reviewed TSC’s GHG emissions inventory for Council’s corporate operations for the 2021/22 financial year. This represents the baseline year from which this action plan will determine a pathway of emissions reduction. The operational boundary for TSC was defined using the scopes framework, which divides corporate emissions into three scopes as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Emissions scope summary



- **Scope 1** emissions are defined as “direct emissions from owned or controlled sources” and are emissions created when Council burns a fuel in an owned asset such as fleet burning diesel or petrol, or a building using natural gas. Emissions from Council-owned landfill sites also fall into scope 1.
- **Scope 2** emissions are defined as “indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy” and include electricity purchased for Council-owned and operated assets.
- **Scope 3** emissions are defined as “all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting entity (Council)” these include electricity purchased for Council-owned but not occupied buildings, electricity purchased for street lighting, emissions associated with water use and emissions from the extraction and production of fuels (including diesel, E10 or petrol, natural gas and electricity).

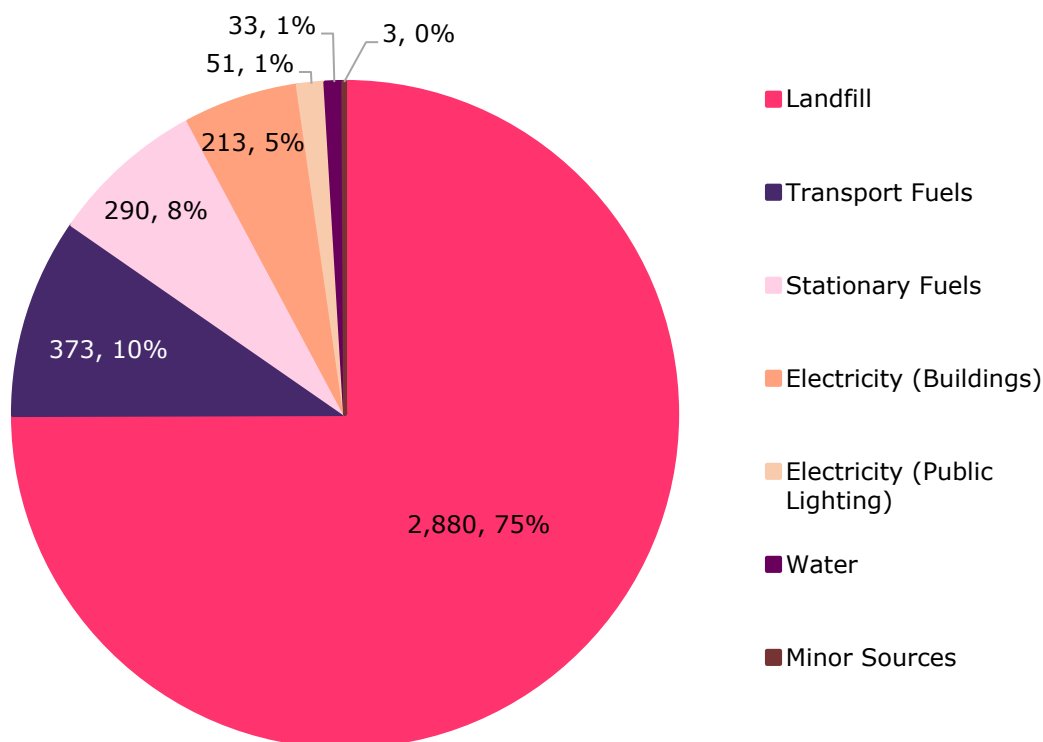
2.1.1 Corporate GHG Inventory - 2021/22

Council’s total emissions (Scope 1+2+3) for the 2021/22 financial year have been calculated to be 3,842 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent (tCO₂-e).

Figure 7 provides an overview of Corporate GHG Emissions for Towong Shire Council by sector. Emissions from Landfill account for the majority of Council’s emissions at 75% or 2,880 tCO₂-e. Transport fuels and stationary fuels are the next most significant sources, contributing 10% and 8% respectively. Electricity usage accounts for 5% or 213 tCO₂-e, with an additional 51 tCO₂-e contribution from Street Lighting. Water accounts for 1%, and minor sources contribute less than 1% in total. Minor sources include office paper and cleaning services.

This inventory is based on a review of Council’s activity data collated by reporting software Trellis over the 2021/22 financial year.

Figure 7: Greenhouse emission profile by sector 2021/22 (tCO₂-e)



2.1.2 Inventory Comparison

Ironbark Sustainability conducted an inventory for TSC in 2018 for their GHG emissions in 2016/2017. The results of this inventory in comparison to the 2021/22 inventory is presented in Table 2. TSC’s total emission for 2016/2017 was 1,214 tCO₂e, based on activity data collected by Council. Although this is just under one third of Council’s current emissions inventory, this does not necessarily mean there has been an increase in emissions in real terms.

The most significant increase in emissions is due to Council’s Corryong Landfill, which was only opened in 2016. As landfill emissions only fall within Council’s corporate emissions boundary when Council operates the facility, this means that in the 2016/17 inventory landfill was a

relatively small proportion of emissions. With an increase in the quantity of waste disposed in Corryong Landfill, this emissions source has grown considerably.

Most other emissions sources have reduced when compared to 2016/17 levels, including electricity for buildings and public lighting, and stationary fuel. Transport fuel emissions have increased; however this may be due to data gaps in 2016/17.

Table 2: Inventory Comparison 2016/17 and 2021/22 (tCO₂-e)

Sector	2016/17	2021/22
Waste Disposal	105	2,880
Transport Fuels	151	373
Stationary Fuels	515	290
Electricity (Buildings)	314	213
Electricity (Public Lighting)	67	51
Water	62	33
Office Paper	-	3
Cleaning and Chemicals	-	0.1
Total	1,214	3,842

2.1.3 Inventory Gaps

In reviewing Council's current inventory a number of data gaps were identified. Many of these are expected to be minor, including lubricant use, fugitive emissions from HVAC and business travel. Other sources could be significant and should start to be monitored and accounted for in future inventories. The most potentially significant emissions sources that have not been captured are contractor fuel, and concrete and asphalt.

Contractor fuel is the fuel consumption that contractors and service providers utilise when carrying out services paid for by Council and is classified as a scope 3 emissions source. Depending on the level of outsourcing undertaken by Council for service delivery and maintenance of assets, contractor fuel use could be significant. While Council does not control the day-to-day fuel usage, it does have significant scope to set terms of contractual arrangements and make decisions about which services to deliver in house and which to outsource, which can have a significant impact on emissions produced or reduced.

Council maintains a large infrastructure network within the shire. Maintenance of this network and construction of new roads and footpaths to meet the needs of the community requires large volumes of cement and asphalt to be used annually. Cement is one the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions globally, accounting for approximately 8% of global emissions.

Council should continue to improve its data collection processes to ensure the development of more complete emissions inventories in the future.

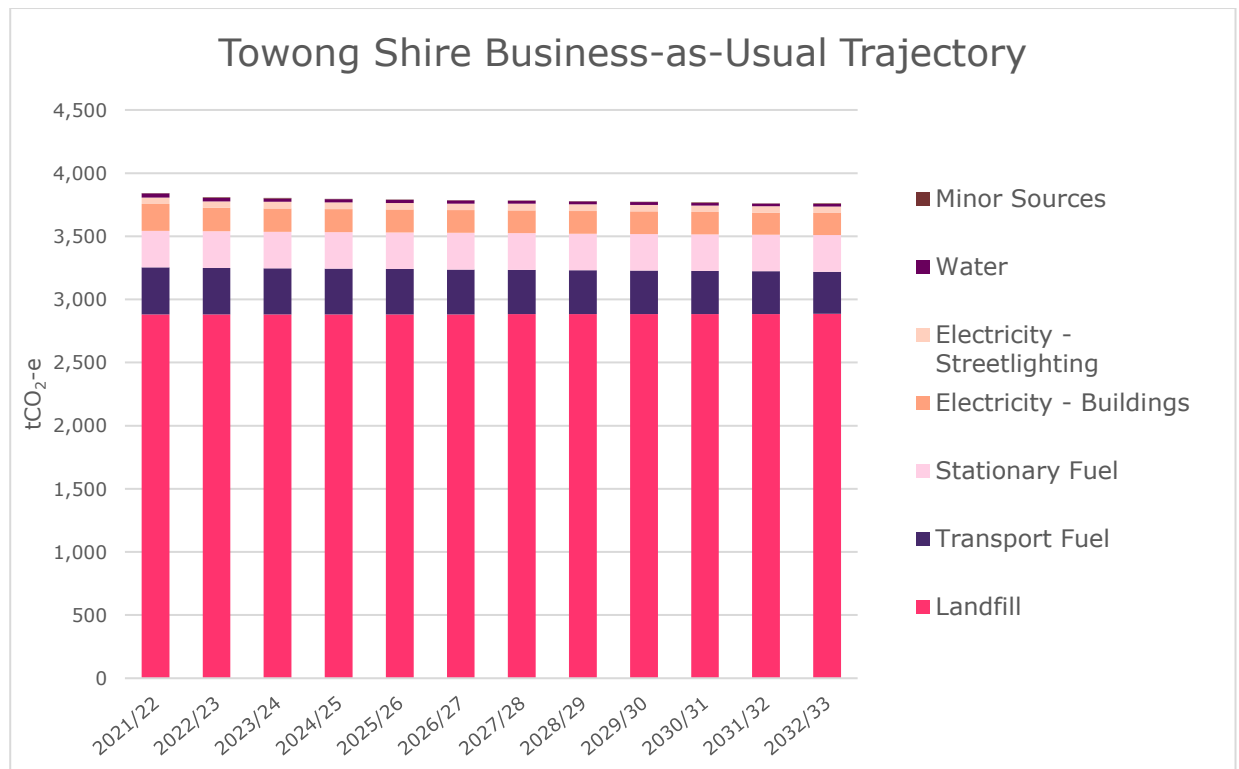
2.1.4 Emissions Projections to 2032/33

The business-as-usual (BAU) trajectory for TSC’s corporate emissions has been modelled in Figure 8 to provide an understanding of Council emissions if no further action is taken to reduce emissions.

With a history of low population growth in the shire, it is not expected that TSC’s provision of services will increase over the next decade, keeping Council’s emissions relatively stable. A reduction in the emissions intensity of grid supplied electricity and standardised improvements to energy efficiency in buildings and vehicle design result in a slight decrease in BAU emissions over this time.

It is important to note that this BAU trajectory does not include the impacts of any actions that have been modelled as part this action plan, even if they have already been confirmed to be implemented.

Figure 8: Business-as-usual trajectory for TSC’s corporate emissions



3. Emissions Reduction Actions and Opportunities

This section outlines the key actions to be undertaken by Council to achieve the goal, targets and objectives outlined in this plan. The actions have been broken down into key sectors, as follows:

- Waste
- Transport Fuels
- Stationary Fuels
- Electricity

A cost-benefit analysis has been prepared that explores the costs, savings and abatement opportunity for the key opportunities outlined in this Plan. The metrics used to analyse the projects are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Cost benefit analysis metrics summary

Impact in 2032/33 (tCO ₂ -e)	This is the annual emissions abatement in 2032/33 resulting from implementation of the relevant action.
Total Cost	This is the cost of implementing each action, including capital costs and maintenance costs across the lifetime of the action.
Lifetime Savings	This is the total savings over the lifetime of the investment. Asset lifetimes assume: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings: 50 years • Plant and Equipment: 8-15 years • LED lighting: 20 years

3.1 Actions Completed

Implementation of the 2018 Greenhouse Reduction Plan has seen a number of emissions reducing actions implemented by TSC. This has included the installations of 370 kW of solar PV on Council buildings, which reduces Council’s electricity emissions by approximately 400 tCO₂-e per year. Energy efficiency audits have also been undertaken at 15 Council facilities, resulting in LED lighting upgrades and equipment optimisation works.

Council has estimated projects implemented over the past four years have reduced emissions by up to 36% compared to the 2016/17 inventory.

3.2 Waste

Landfill is the greatest source of emissions within TSC’s corporate inventory with 2,880 tCO₂-e produced in 2021/22; accounting for 75% of total emissions.

3.2.1 Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection

Organic materials have a higher emissions factor than non-organic waste due to the high production of methane as organics decompose. Reducing the volume of organic materials entering landfill can have a very large impact on reducing corporate emissions.

In line with the Victorian Government’s standardisation of household waste and recycling services, TSC is exploring the introduction of dedicated food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collection as part of its kerbside waste services in 2024.

The diversion of FOGO from landfill through a dedicated collection service has been estimated to achieve a 30% reduction in waste emissions for TSC. This equates to nearly 900 tCO₂-e of avoided emissions each year by 2032/33, a significant proportion of Council’s current emissions.

According to a cost-benefit analysis prepared by Bajwa EnviroConsult in 2022, the annual cost to Council of implementing weekly municipal kerbside FOGO collection will be approximately \$100 per household, including a reduced general waste collection service. Implementing FOGO will reduce the quantity of waste entering the Corryong landfill, so construction of new cells will be needed less frequently. As FOGO currently constitutes approximately one third of waste by mass entering the landfill, it is possible a new cell will only be required every three years instead of the current two. This could save Council over \$30,000 per year.



Action	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2032/33 (tCO ₂ -e)	Annual Cost	Annual Savings
Introduce Food Organics Garden Organics collection	2024/25	900	\$310,000	\$30,000

3.3 Fleet Transition

Transport fuel currently contributes 10% of Council’s total emissions, making it the largest emissions source after landfill. Replacing an internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle with an electric vehicle (EV) can lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and overall operational costs over the course of the vehicle’s lifetime. Due to the advancement in EV technology vehicles can travel up to 500km on a single charge and access to public fast charging infrastructure is growing around the country.

3.3.1 Global and National EV trends

The transition to electric vehicles is gathering momentum around the world. At least 25 countries have introduced future bans on the sale of Internal Combustion Engine Vehicles (ICEV). This includes large economies such as the United Kingdom, Germany and India, all of whom have banned the sale of any ICEVs by 2030.

This economic shift will lead manufacturers to increase production of EVs which may see them cease producing ICEVs altogether. Already 18 of the largest vehicle manufacturers have set targets or committed to increasing the proportion of electric vehicles they produce. Ford and Volvo, for example, have committed to phasing out all ICEV production for the European market by 2026 and 2030, respectively¹. General Motors also announced in January 2021 that it would stop manufacturing petrol and diesel cars by 2035². Figure 9³ shows the rapid increase in global market share of electric vehicles since 2010.

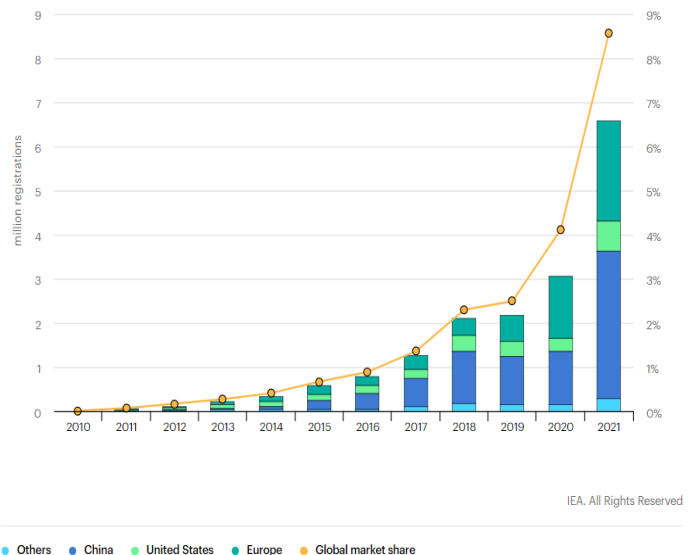


Figure 9: Global sales and market share of electric cars, 2010-21

Governments at the domestic level are also introducing targets for EV sales and commitments to transition their own fleets. The federal government, for example, has introduced a target of 75% of new government fleet to be electric by 2025 and is aiming for 3.8 million EVs on the road by 2030. The government has also committed to build a national charging network with charging stations at least every 150 km across the country.

The global trends in EV production and transition mean that the electrification of local government fleets across Australia is inevitable. To help with this transition there are an array of subsidies and incentives from both state and federal governments. It is important that

¹ <https://www.iea.org/reports/global-ev-outlook-2021/trends-and-developments-in-electric-vehicle-markets>

² <https://www.reuters.com/business/sustainable-business/gm-aims-end-sale-gasoline-diesel-powered-cars-suvs-light-trucks-by-2035-2021-01-28/>

³ https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/charts/global-sales-and-sales-market-share-of-electric-cars-2010-2021?mc_cid=4b95980c83&mc_eid=c2e0f870eb

Council acknowledge the implications of these trends and incorporates them into motor vehicle and fleet policies and strategy documents. This will ensure that the transition can occur efficiently and effectively, and that TSC is not left with stranded assets as ICE technology becomes obsolete.

3.3.2 Fleet Transition Plan

The transition to EVs can seem a daunting undertaking to councils unfamiliar with the technology. It will require a raft of changes across Council from staff behaviour and internal corporate policies to the installation of charging infrastructure and development of new maintenance capacity. In addition, some Council sites may need to be upgraded in order to support the required EV charging points.

To begin this process, it is recommended that Council develops and implements a detailed Fleet Transition Plan. A well-developed plan will help TSC to determine a trajectory for its timely transition to EVs by aligning upgrades with the existing asset replacement cycle and in accordance with technical and financial viability. It will also ensure the appropriate supporting infrastructure and policy settings are in place to enable the transition. Council should also review its salary sacrificing scheme to ensure inclusion of electric vehicles as an option for staff.

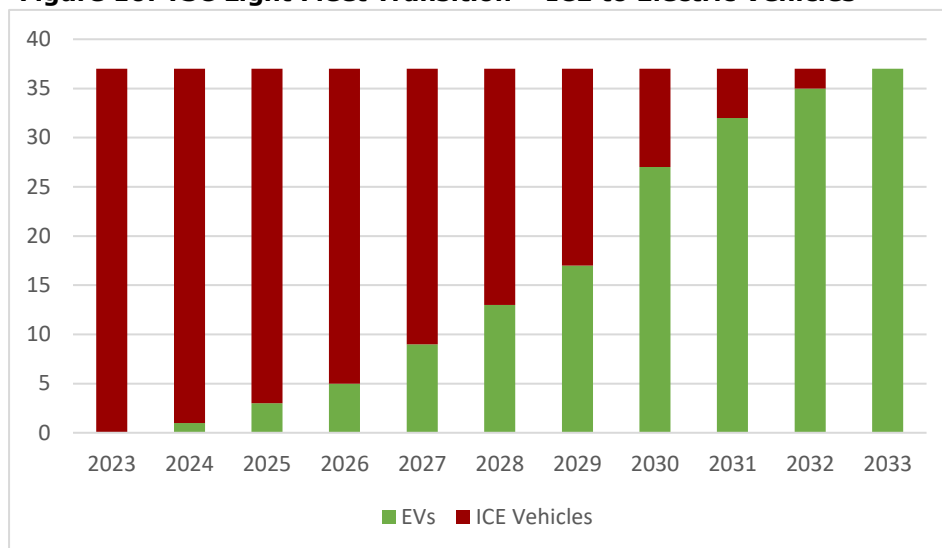
Recommended actions for consideration in the plan include:

- The establishment of a target for the transition of all passenger and utility vehicles to EVs.
- An assessment of the required number and location of charging stations for each vehicle asset class.
- Development of a phased EV charging station installation plan for each site, correlating to the planned uptake of EVs.
- Assessments of identified charging locations to determine if electrical upgrades are required to support charging infrastructure.
- Requirement for all new builds and renewals to consider charging infrastructure in the design.
- Identification of policies that need to be revised to enable EV transition.
- Initiatives to increase staff familiarity and comfort with EVs and charging stations.
- Incentives for early adopters.
- Identification of opportunities for the incorporation of EVs into the heavy vehicle fleet where feasible.

Implementing a phased move to electric vehicles will minimise the financial impact by limiting the amount of additional capital expenditure and spreading this expenditure over a ten-year period. Aligning this with TSC's normal asset replacement cycle (5 years) will prevent the need to write off assets and allow for the gradual installation of charging infrastructure as electric vehicles are added to the fleet. This phasing will also allow Council to purchase the majority of EVs after cost parity between internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEV) and EVs is expected to be reached, reducing additional capital costs on the purchase of new EVs.

Figure 10 is an illustration of what Council’s EV transition could look like for its Light Fleet (including passenger vehicles and utes), showing a gradual replacement of ICE vehicles with EVs over the next ten years. This transition is based on Council’s current Light Fleet and designates replacement of each asset in accordance with its expected lifecycle.

Figure 10: TSC Light Fleet Transition – ICE to Electric Vehicles



3.3.3 Passenger Vehicle Transition

Council currently has 18 passenger vehicles within its fleet, as summarised in Table 4. This table also shows suggested EV replacements for each vehicle type within Council’s passenger vehicle fleet based on current availability within the Australian market. EV alternatives have been selected for their similar type, size, range and features.

Table 4: Electric vehicle alternatives for passenger vehicle types

Current TSC ICE Fleet			Available EV Alternative		
Car Type	Fuel Type	No. in fleet	EV Make & Model	Current Cost	Expected Year of Cost Parity
Sedan/Hatch	Unleaded	7	Hyundai IONIQ Electric	\$37,600	2029/30
SUV	Unleaded	7	BYD Atto 3	\$40,350	2027/28
SUV	Diesel	4			

Table 5 compares the fuel costs per 100 km of two common electric and petrol passenger vehicles currently available on the Australian market. Based on TSC’s current electricity tariff, the estimated cost of fuelling an EV is 30% of the cost of fuelling a standard petrol vehicle. A recent study has also found that EVs are on average 30% cheaper to service over the first three years⁴ while other assessments already put EVs at price parity with ICEVs when considering total lifetime costs⁵.

⁴ <https://www.businessinsider.com/electric-car-cost-less-service-maintenance-than-gas-cars-study-2021-10?r=AU&IR=T>

⁵ <https://thedriven.io/2020/07/23/lifetime-cost-of-electric-cars-already-lower-than-comparable-ice-vehicles/>

The cost of installing appropriate infrastructure to charge the fleet has been calculated separately, as described below in Section 3.3.5.

Table 5: Comparison of electric and ICE vehicle running costs

Vehicle	Energy use per 100km	Energy Cost	Approximate electricity/fuel cost per 100 km
Hyundai Ioniq Electric	13.8 kWh	\$0.31 per kWh	\$4.28
Hyundai i30 Active	7.4 L (ULP)	\$1.90 per L ⁶	\$14.06

Modelling of the transition to a fully electric passenger fleet has assumed vehicle replacement in line with the existing 5-year asset replacement cycle for council-owned cars. This means the cost to implement this action only considers the cost difference between purchasing a new EV or a new ICE vehicle. Based on current market predictions, price parity for all equivalent passenger EVs should be reached by FY 2029/30.

Table 6 presents the financial and emissions results of modelling the passenger fleet transition. Lifetime savings for EV fleet transition has been calculated based on the estimated lower running costs of EVs compared to ICE vehicles.

3.3.4 Utility Vehicle Transition

TSC owns 19 diesel utes, which are used for Council services and operations. EV ute alternatives are not currently available in Australia, however based on international markets this is expected to change within the next few years⁷.

The modelling for this action has assumed EV utes will enter the Australia market by 2025, and that price parity is reached by 2030. Adopting a similar approach to the phased transition of passenger vehicle, Council should be able to transition the entire utility fleet by 2034 as part of the normal replacement cycle. Once all vehicles currently on the asset register have undergone an upgrade to EV, it is assumed that the purchase of EV becomes business as usual, and no costs are modelled for subsequent replacement cycles.

3.3.5 Charging Station Installation

The installation of EV charging stations has been modelled in line with the phased introduction of EVs to Council's fleet. Phasing the installation of charging points across the full ten years of the transition helps to reduce the additional capital expenditure that is required each financial year.

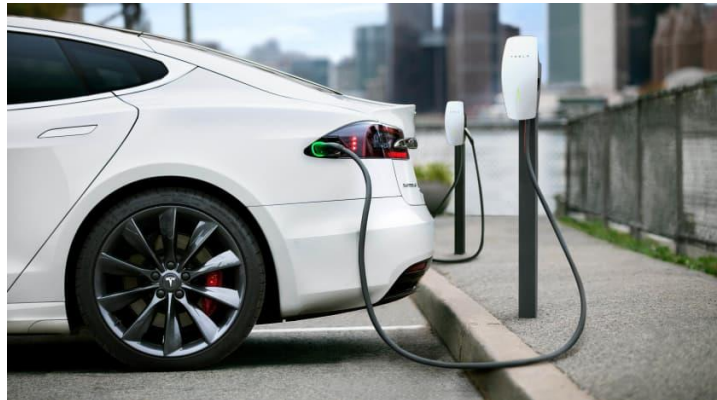
The cost of installing EV charging stations will depend on the type of station required. Prices (including installation) range from \$7,000 for a basic two car Type 2 charging station to \$29,000 and \$60,000 for two car 25kW and 50kW DC rapid charging stations, respectively. Modelling results presented in Table 6 have assumed all charging will be conducted via type 2

⁶ Average unleaded petrol price for Victoria between 03 Oct 2022 and 09 Jan 2023, https://www.globalpetrolprices.com/Australia/Victoria/gasoline_prices/. Accessed on 10 Jan 2023

⁷ *Electric utes: What's available, and those coming soon*, <https://www.whichcar.com.au/news/electric-utes-available-and-coming-soon>. Accessed 21 September 2022

charge overnight. Where the majority of charging is completed at employees' houses overnight, the cost of this infrastructure may be slightly reduced by installing at-home EV charging points (approximately \$1,000 per unit incl. installation) instead of Type 2 chargers. However, savings may be offset depending on employee turnover. Council's preferred approach can be determined as part of its Fleet Transition Plan.

Council should also consider the installation of EV charging to both support Council's fleet transitions and service demand from community. TSC can do this by installing fast chargers at Council sites for both Council and public use, for example at libraries, leisure centres and parks. This analysis can be undertaken as part of the fleet transition planning (refer Section 3.3.2).



The capital cost of these fast charging stations in public areas may be offset through grant funding from the State and Federal Government. For example, the Victorian Government recently announced a \$1.5 million in grants for EV Charging for Business Fleets (EVCBF). Other funding opportunities will likely emerge as the state works towards its target of 50% of all new light vehicle sales to be zero emissions vehicles by 2030. Further details can be found at: <https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/grants/ev-charging-business-fleets>.

Table 6: Impact of fleet transition actions

Actions	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2032/33 (tCO ₂ -e)	Total Cost	Lifetime Savings
Develop Fleet Transition Plan	2023/24	N/A	\$15,000	Nil
Transition all 18 passenger vehicles to EVs by 2032/33	2024/25	100*	\$70,500	\$460,000
Transition all 19 utes to EVs by 2032/33	2026/27	115*	\$18,000	\$570,000
Install sufficient charging stations for all EVs	2024/25	N/A	\$270,000	Nil

* Assumes electric vehicles charged by 100% renewable energy, for example, through a 100% renewable PPA. If charged from standard grid supplied electricity emissions saving from passenger vehicle transition would be approximately 40 tCO₂-e per year and 45 tCO₂-e per year for ute transition.

3.3.6 Heavy Vehicle Transition

A significant proportion of TSC's transport emissions come from heavy vehicle fleet and plant equipment, including waste trucks, graders, tractors and mowers.

The electrification of heavy vehicle fleet and plant is trailing that of passenger and utility vehicles in Australia, with the technology largely only used in trial programs at some local governments. High costs in the order of two or three times that of equivalent diesel vehicles are the primary barrier to electric truck take up, although fuel and maintenance savings could deliver payback within the life of the vehicle depending on usage.



Hydrogen is another low carbon alternative that may be particularly important for heavy fleet transition. Fleet transition to hydrogen-fuelled vehicles would be similar to that for EVs but would require consideration of refuelling and distribution infrastructure. As the economy more broadly transitions away from natural gas and towards hydrogen, this will become more straightforward.

3.4 Stationary Fuels

Stationary fuels are TSC's third largest source of emissions, accounting for 8% of the current inventory. This can predominantly be attributed to diesel for stationary plant such as generators, pumps and maintenance equipment. It is recommended that Council implements a staged transition of this equipment to electric over the next ten years, similar to the fleet transition process. Plant can be replaced at the end of its typical asset life, provided a viable electric alternative is available.

A small proportion of Council's emissions come from the use of bottle LPG, largely for BBQs. Council should consider electrifying the equipment using this gas to reduce these emissions to zero.

3.5 Electricity

3.5.1 Electricity Procurement

The significant work already undertaken by TSC means that electricity accounts for only 6% of TSC’s current emissions inventory (including public lighting). Procurement of 100% renewable energy will allow Council to reduce these emissions to zero.



There are two ways Council can procure renewable energy. The first is to include GreenPower in its standard electricity contracts, an option offered by most electricity retailers. GreenPower is a government-managed program that allows customers to purchase renewable energy by supporting additional renewable generation for the electricity grid. Adding GreenPower to your energy contract will attract a small price premium, Council’s current electricity provider AGL is offering 100% GreenPower for businesses for 4.40 c/kWh.⁸ This would cost TSC an additional \$11,500 over twelve months based on current electricity usage.

The second option is for Council to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). A PPA is a contract between an electricity buyer and seller. In the context of this plan, PPAs refer to an agreement that the seller will ensure that a certain amount of energy is generated from renewable sources, such as large-scale solar or wind farming. This is now a common method for procuring electricity for local governments. It enables the purchase of zero emissions electricity through current electricity contract operating expenses. This also has the added benefit of locking in contract certainty for a nominated period, typically 7-10 years. The cost of renewables in a PPA is typically cost neutral, making them more cost effective than GreenPower.

The Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) PPA is one such agreement between 46 councils and retailer Red Energy to purchase renewable electricity from Victorian wind farms. The purchasing of renewable energy presents a direct investment in Australia’s green energy transition and is of value for Council from a reputational and communications perspective as well as purely an emissions perspective. TSC could investigate joining VECO, or explore a similar arrangement with neighbouring councils.

Table 7 summarises the emissions abatement impact of procuring 100% renewable energy across all Council’s electricity accounts. The emissions abatement has been calculated assuming all other electricity reducing actions proposed in this plan have been implemented, and includes additional electricity demand following the fleet transition described in Section 3.3.

Table 7: Impact of 100% renewable procurement

Action	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2032/33 (tCO ₂ -e)
100% Renewable electricity for all Council sites (including public lighting)	2024/25	300

⁸ https://www.agl.com.au/content/dam/digital/epfs/pdfs/victorian_energy_fact_sheet_agd432722ms_electricity.pdf

3.5.2 Behind the Meter Solar

TSC already has 370 kW of behind the meter solar PV installed. These systems are already taking advantage of available roof space at Council’s largest energy consuming sites and are estimated to be generating enough electricity to reduce grid emissions by over 400 tCO₂-e each year.



Ironbark has conducted a high-level assessment of additional behind the meter solar potential for Council assets. Based on current electricity consumption and existing solar, no sites were identified as viable for additional systems. It is recommended that Council instead focuses on procuring 100% renewable energy for its remaining grid electricity consumption.

3.5.3 Public lighting

Over the past six years, Council has upgraded a significant proportion of its public lighting to more efficient LED luminaires. Public lighting constitutes 20% of Council’s 2021/22 electricity emissions, and further reductions can be achieved by completing the transition to LED.

Table 8 illustrates the simple business case for a bulk change of Council’s remaining non-LED public lighting. Yearly savings from the bulk change are estimated to be approximately \$6,500, with a cost neutral outcome over the lifespan of the equipment.

Table 8: Cost benefit analysis Public Lighting Bulk Change to LEDs

Action	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2032/33 (tCO ₂ -e)	Total Cost	Lifetime Savings	Simple payback (years)
Replace all public lights with LED	2025/26	15	\$130,000	\$130,000	20

3.6 Concrete and Asphalt

Local governments are responsible for a wide range of hard surface infrastructure construction and maintenance, including:

- Roads and car parks
- Footpaths
- Drainage and water infrastructure
- Outdoor sporting courts such as tennis, netball, basketball and skating



Given concrete and asphalt are high-intensity emissions materials, this infrastructure has significant environmental impacts. Introducing sustainability requirements into policy and specifications for Council's capital works program can reduce associated infrastructure emissions by over 20%. Actions to reduce emissions may involve a change in design, altering processes or using different materials. Updates to infrastructure guidelines and processes should consider the following requirements, in-line with relevant Australian Standards:

- Use of low emission recycled priority materials (e.g. glass, plastic, rubber) and recycled civil materials (e.g. soil, rock, crushed concrete, recycled asphalt pavement) in council infrastructure projects. Of particular importance from an emissions perspective is the substitution of Portland cement for slag or fly ash in concrete.
- Use of low emission processes (such as warm mix asphalt)
- Training of engineers and designers as well as road construction and maintenance crews to identify the potential site issues and best practices to adopt.
- Review of road, path, sewer and water systems design to identify design changes that can reduce the use of materials. This may also be an opportunity to review the volume of hard surfacing and opportunities to introduce more non-permeable and green space within relevant streetscapes (especially residential roads and key precincts).

4. Emissions Reduction Pathway Analysis

Through implementation of all the actions recommended in Section 3 of this options paper, including the purchase of 100% zero emissions power through GreenPower or a renewable energy PPA, Towong Shire Council could see a reduction in annual emissions of 31% by the year 2032/33 compared to baseline emissions of 3,842 tCO₂-e.

The following actions are recommended for TSC to implement over the next decade:

- Introduce weekly municipal Food Organics and Garden Organics collection
- Procure 100% renewable energy electricity for council facilities and public lighting
- Develop a Transition Plan to prepare for fleet electrification
- Procure Electric Vehicles (EVs) to replace petrol and diesel passenger vehicles at their end of life
- Procure EVs to replace diesel utility vehicles at their end of life
- Install charging infrastructure to support EV procurement
- Monitor emergence of viable electric or hydrogen alternatives for heavy fleet and plant
- Procure electric alternatives for stationary plant at end of life (where viable)
- Complete upgrade of all public lighting to LED
- Upgrade gas BBQs to electric (where viable)
- Update infrastructure specifications to require use of recycled and low emissions materials in capital works projects

Table 9 summarises the results of the cost-benefit analysis undertaken for several actions, including annual emissions abatement estimated in 2032/33. Total costs include the estimated additional capital and maintenance cost above BaU across the action/asset lifecycle. Lifetime savings are calculated across the asset lifecycle. Impact, cost and savings are high level estimates based on the data provided to Ironbark by Council. Prior to commencing any action, detailed feasibility and business case assessments are recommended to be completed to ensure the proposed actions are viable based on the specifications of each site.

If all the actions listed in Table 9 are implemented, TSC is estimated to be able to abate 1,130 tCO₂-e per year by 2032/33 compared to BAU emissions projections. A further 300 tCO₂-e can be abated through the procurement of 100% renewable energy. Taking all of these factors into account, Council's residual emissions in 2032/33 are estimated to be approximately 2,600 tCO₂-e, representing a 31% reduction in GHG emission compared to 2021/22 levels. These residual emissions will predominantly come from landfill and fuel for heavy vehicles and plant equipment.

Implementation of this plan will require investment from Council of approximately \$600,000 over the next 10 years, with the majority of these costs being upfront capital costs over the next four years. This figure also includes additional ongoing costs (for example maintenance of solar PV systems) that will recur across the lifecycle of some assets and programs. Actions within this plan are also estimated to achieve a saving of \$1.2 million across the lifespan of all

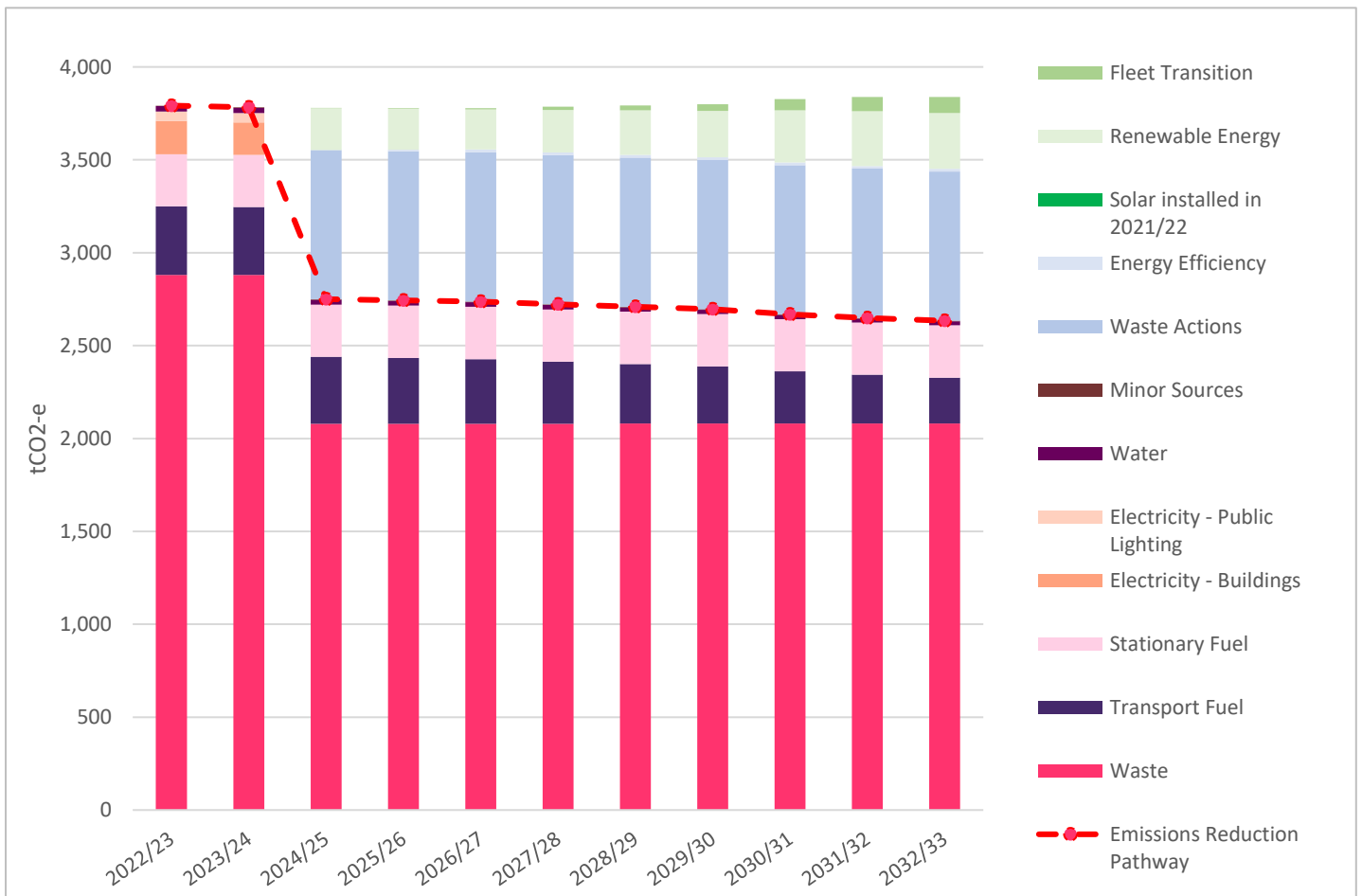
actions and assets modelled. These costs do not include ongoing costs of procuring renewable energy through GreenPower.

Figure 11 shows the emissions reduction pathway based on the actions outlined in Table 9.

Table 9: Summary of Recommended Actions

Action	Start Year	Annual Emissions Abated in 2030/31 (tCO ₂ -e)	Total Cost	Lifetime Savings
Diversion of Food Organics Garden Organics	2024/25	900	Not modelled	
Develop Fleet Transition Plan	2023/24	N/A	\$15,000	Nil
Transition all passenger vehicles to EVs by 2032/33.	2024/25	100	\$70,500	\$460,000
Transition all utility vehicles to EVs by 2032/33	2026/27	115	\$18,000	\$570,000
Install sufficient charging stations for passenger and utility EVs	2024/25	N/A	\$365,000	\$0
Replace all public lights with LED	2025/26	15	\$130,000	\$130,000
Total		1,130	\$598,500	\$1.16 m

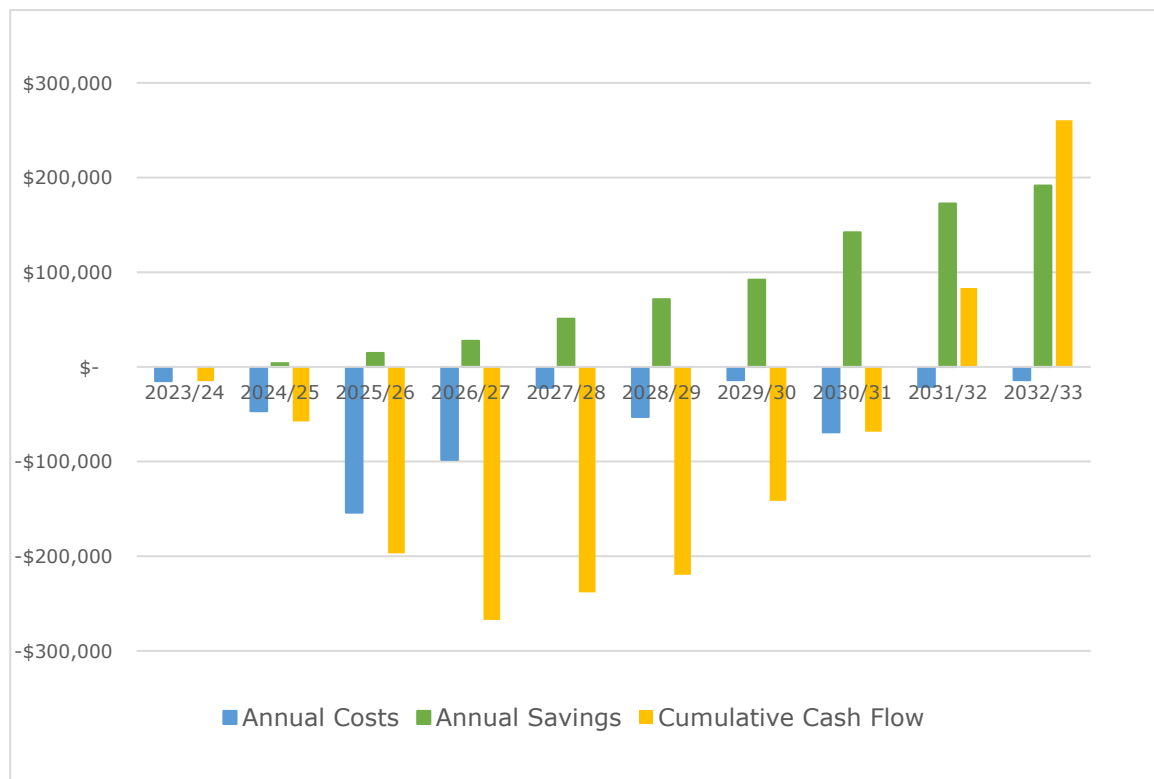
Figure 11: Emissions Reduction Pathway to 2032/33



A cash flow analysis has been undertaken, which shows the anticipated cash flow of actions implemented in accordance with the proposed phasing presented in Table 9. Figure 12 shows the results of this analysis, which includes the following key takeaways:

- The cumulative cash flow (yellow bar) in each year is the cumulative savings minus total costs incurred between 2023/24 and that year. A negative cumulative cash flow indicates total costs to date are greater than savings. A positive cumulative cash flow shows a net saving has been achieved across all implemented actions
- First four to five years of implementation are a period of larger capital expenditure and investment (blue bars, showing negative cash flow)
- Annual savings ramp up as actions are completed, resulting in over \$170,000 saved each year from 2031/32 (green bars, showing positive cash flow)
- High expenditure in the early years results in a cumulative cash flow deficit until 2030/31 (yellow bars, showing negative cash flow)
- As annual savings from emissions reduction actions accumulate, there is an overall plan break-even point in 2031/32 (yellow bars show positive cash flow from this year)
- By 2032/33 the cumulative cash flow shows savings of \$260,000, which will continue to increase into the future

Figure 12: Cash Flow Pathway



Economic Development Report – October 2022 to March 2023

Major Projects

Bellbridge Boathouse

In November 2021, the draft Towong Shire Destination Management Plan was completed. The Lake Hume Boathouse at Bellbridge was listed as one of five transformative projects within the Plan. Previously, the project also formed a key component of the 'Our Bellbridge Masterplan'.

In July 2022, the Victorian State Government opened the Investment Fast-Track Fund (IFF). The IFF supports the planning and preparation of regional and rural development project proposals. Council resolved to prioritise the Bellbridge Boathouse for an application to progress the project to an 'investment ready' stage.

Successful IFF bids were announced in October 2022; Council secured \$324,495 for the Bellbridge Boathouse planning preparation works, inclusive of developing:

- Governance framework
- Commercial tenancy agreement (and onboarding of tenant)
- Financial modelling
- Architectural construction designs
- Parking and traffic flow management plans.

To support the project a Project Steering Group (PSG) was formed and includes representation from:

- Lake Hume Boat Club
- Tourism North East
- Regional Development Victoria
- Peninsula business community
- Bellbridge community

To formalise the PSG, Terms of Reference were produced. The project is well underway with regular PSG meetings being held and a clear pathway forward defined.

For efficiency, it was decided to bundle the delivery of the governance framework, commercial tenancy agreement and financial modelling. A RFQ process was completed, and the contract awarded to Urban Enterprise.

A comprehensive tender document was prepared to contract an architectural firm to develop construction plans for the proposed building. A positive response was received from the public release of the tender and three architectural firms were commissioned to engage with stakeholders and develop quality concept designs.

The architects will meet with the PSG in early April. Following completion of the concept designs, the PSG with the assistance of an experienced construction project manager, will evaluate the designs to make a recommendation to Council on which firm should progress to delivering the final construction plans.

Great River Road

At the close of 2020, Council successfully secured \$5 million from the State Government's Local Economic Recovery Program to deliver Stage Two of the Great River Road Project.

During this reporting period, the Destination Marketing Store consultants have collaborated with community to draft copy for the interpretive signage. Destination Marketing Store have produced a draft marketing plan for review.

Tender documentation was released for the contracting of artists to deliver four large-scale artwork pieces. A strong response was received with 17 artists submitting proposals for 37 different artworks.

Following an evaluation completed by the Great River Road Artwork Panel and Council officers, a short-list of artists was made. The short-listed artists were commissioned to provide the Panel with two detailed designs (and a maquette if desired) for each of the four sites.

A round two evaluation was completed which resulted in three artists being contracted:

- John Wood – 'Your Journey' Travel Journal sculpture at the Bellbridge Gateway site;
- Xavier Pinard – Bridge to Moon sculpture at the Talgarno site;
- Glennys Briggs in collaboration with Xavier Pinard - Lace Monitor sculpture at the Pine Mountain Interpretive site; and
- John Wood - Brolgas at the Towong Boardwalk site.

The artwork is expected to be fabricated by September 2023, however installation in some instances will be dependent on other works occurring on site.

Key strategic documents

High Country Rail Trail

The draft High Country Rail Trail (HCRT) has been completed and was presented to the Project Steering Group and Council in early 2022.

The Masterplan was released for public exhibition in January and adopted by Council in February 2023. Officers are reviewing seven submissions received.

Signage for key locations along the HCRT are currently being fabricated.

Activating Lake Hume

In August 2021, a funding application was submitted through the State Government's Investment Fast Track Fund for the development of a Lake Hume Masterplan. The application was successful.

Following extensive research and engagement, consultants Urban Enterprise completed the Activating Lake Hume Masterplan. The plan provides direction for the future development on and around the Lake, with the objective of improving its economic performance as a key recreation and tourism asset.

In addition to the overarching Masterplan, four business cases were developed:

- Tallangatta Foreshore Activation
- Arts and Cultural Activation
- Cruising Lake Hume
- Round Lake Hume Trail

The four business cases assess the economic viability of the four priority projects identified in the Activating Lake Hume Masterplan.

Mount Elliot Adventure Park

In the first quarter of this year, the State Government opened the Enabling Tourism Fund. The fund supports regional and rural Victorian tourism projects to reach investment ready status.

Three applications were prepared for the funding opportunity, including one for developing a Masterplan for the activation of Mount Elliot, which was successful.

During the period, an expression of interest process was undertaken to develop a Project Steering Group to oversee the project delivery. The inception meeting of the group was held in December 2022.

A comprehensive RFQ document for public release and following an evaluation of submissions, the successful consultants, Urban Enterprise in collaboration with Terrain Trail Construction, were brought on board.

Subsequent PSG meetings have been held and the consultants are commencing stakeholder engagement and site evaluations.

Agriculture Strategic Plan

Agriculture significantly contributes to Towong Shire's gross regional product and employment, generating \$217.6 million, or 35.5%, of regional gross product and value, adding a further \$79.3 million to the local economy. Agriculture is a significant employer; it directly supports 626 jobs, comprising 30.9% of jobs in the municipality. Supporting the agricultural industry to grow provides several benefits, including:

- Enhancing existing industries
- Growing the local economy
- Creating jobs
- Supporting community resilience

In recognition of this, Drs' Karenza Menzies and Sara Healey were engaged in 2020 to develop a strategic plan to support the sustainable development and diversification of the local agriculture sector. The document was placed on public exhibition in 2022 and extensive feedback was received for incorporation into the plan's final draft. Broadly speaking the respondents were supportive of the plan with feedback reflecting a desire for the following inclusions:

- Further consideration of how to maximise the potential of natural resources other than water;
- A stronger link between agriculture and emergency management, biosecurity considerations and adaptation to climate change risks; and
- Further consideration of improving transport corridors.

The plan's final draft was developed in partnership with an Agriculture Steering Group to address the feedback received. The final draft document was presented at the December 2022 Council meeting and was formally adopted in February 2023.

Mobile and Internet Communications Strategy

Towong Shire experiences some of the lowest levels of digital inclusion in the state, as demonstrated by the recent Ovens Murray Regional Economic Development Strategy. The highly dispersed population and the topography have resulted in a significant inequity in the delivery of telecommunications services within and outside of townships across the shire. There are also numerous mobile black spots along

major transport routes, unreliable or low-capacity mobile 3/4G services and poorly performing ADSL and satellite services. Without access to high-performing telecommunications services, the population and economy within the shire cannot prosper.

To drive reform in telecommunications (mobile and internet) within the shire, Council engaged Gravelroad Group, in partnership with Alpine Shire Council, to develop a Mobile and Internet Communications Strategy specific to each local government area.

The Gravelroad Group developed the draft Mobile and Internet Communications Strategy through desktop review, field testing and limited community consultation. The strategy provides Council with a clear direction for the improvements to mobile and internet connectivity. The strategy highlights the priorities, new technologies, future funding opportunities and infrastructure that is required to improve telecommunications across the municipality.

In November 2022, the strategy was placed on public exhibition for community feedback. The feedback was sought through Facebook, flyers/posters in key locations and advertising through the Corryong Courier and Tallangatta Herald. Many of the responses to the public exhibition proposed technological solutions that would not be viable from an infrastructure perspective. The responses suggested that digital literacy levels are generally low and there are some opportunities to address this within specific communities. Officers have commenced work to develop a digital literacy program to support this.

The strategy was presented to Council in February 2023 and adopted.

Business Support

Engagement with various small businesses across the Shire to identify what support services are required and refer businesses to appropriate agencies accordingly.

This quarter, we have welcomed and supported new businesses within the Shire, provided guidance with product development in the private sector, and collaborated with external agencies to deliver several business capacity building events.

Support for producers

The majority of the work during the period was directed at supporting producers to recover from flooding. In addition to flood support, staff also supported the delivery of a range of programs, including:

- The University of Melbourne facilitated Resilience Pastures Project;
- Supporting the planning for the Dare to Dairy dinner;

- Promulgation of information regarding biosecurity from Ag Vic;
- Supporting Start Up Shake Up to develop the 'Breaking into AgTech' program; and
- Supporting AgBiz Assist to run Xero, MYOB and Excel training in Tallangatta and Corryong.

Partnership with Riverine Plains

During the period negotiations commenced to forge a formal partnership with Riverine Plains to provide support to producers across municipality. The partnership will ensure:

- Ongoing engagement and support with key producers and stakeholders to support the industry;
- Support to strengthen existing producer networks; and
- Support to access the latest research and full suite of Riverine Plains programs.

The partnership will include the joint appointment of a role. It is expected the agreement will be signed in April 2023.

Upper Murray Business and Tourism Expo

In conjunction with Upper Murray Inc and the Man from Snowy River Tourism Association, the Upper Murray Business and Tourism Expo will again take place at the Upper Murray Event Centre on Tuesday 2 May 2023.

Council has taken the lead in delivering the 2023 event which will feature four key speakers:

- Ben Kraus, Bridge Road Brewery – Build it and They Will Come;
- Ilena Young, StartUp ShakeUp –StartUp ShakeUp;
- James Davidson, Tourism North East – A Picture Can Paint a Thousand Words; and
- Ella Metcalf, Bridge Road Brewery – Tapping into Mindsets (and Wallets).

As a means of encouraging attendance this year, businesses who attend will be offered the opportunity to have three to five photos of their business taken with a professional photographer at no charge. This will allow the businesses to better absorb and deliver the skills they learn with James Davidson on the evening. In addition, it will fill a void Council have in their photography library; whilst there is a quality range of public product and infrastructure, there is extremely limited photography of residents or visitors engaging with the private sector (e.g. cafes, accommodation and retail).

Global Entrepreneurs Congress Melbourne

The next Global Entrepreneurship Congress will take place in Melbourne during May 2023. We are participating in a Project Stakeholder Steering Group, led by StartUp ShakeUp, consisting of regional council staff and small business representatives. The event will drive 'big thinking' conversation about how we can leverage innovation and entrepreneurship to fuel growth in rural areas, showcase the innovation potential of the region to delegates, provide regional entrepreneurs the opportunity to network with their highly successful counterparts, and kickstart a strategy that will bank innovative ideas for the region.

Events

An allocation of recovery funding is seeing a series of events delivered across the Shire. The guiding principles are to ensure the events are accessible, sustainable (where possible) and provide social and economic benefits across the municipality.

Evolve Fest

Early in 2022, the Recovery Team successfully received funding through Visit Victoria's Regional Community Events Fund to deliver a youth focused music festival in the Upper Murray.

Following engagement with various segments of the community, it was determined the event would take the form of a Battle of the Bands.

An event manager that specialises in music events was contracted and community engagement undertaken to refine the event offering.

The all-ages live music event took place 4.00pm to 10.00pm Friday 11 November 2022. Opening with a drumming workshop led by percussion legend Nicky Bomba, the event featured five local youth bands/artists battling it out to take the top prize. Their performances were followed by professional bands. Including Nicky Bomba and the All Stars. Throughout the evening, a food truck was available and supported food service available at nearby cafes. Attending youth were engaged with youth creative workshops, largescale games, a chill-out space and various stalls.

In addition to performing on stage, young people were provided with other capacity building opportunities; from coordinating the battle, to sound and lighting, many young people were involved in the back end of the event delivery.

Excellent feedback was received by those who attended; the event is proposed to take place again, this time in Tallangatta, in 2023.

Gravel Unravel

In 2020, Towong Shire Council successfully received \$20,000 through the Federal Government's Regional Tourism Bushfire Recovery Grants program to deliver a gravel cycling race in the Mitta Valley.

Big Hill Events, who specialise in managing quality sporting competitions, were procured to deliver the event. There were four attempts made to host the event with COVID-19 and poor weather proving to be a barrier. The Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel was finally delivered on the weekend of the 13 & 14 December 2022.

Leveraging on the majestic landscape of mountains, lakes and rivers, and quiet gravel back roads, the event exposed the Mitta Valley region and the villages to a new market – gravel riders. All 120 rider participants were from outside the Shire. While most riders lived in Victoria or New South Wales, the event also attracted riders from Tasmania and Queensland. A few participants were recorded as being from the USA, Western Europe and Africa.

The Mitta Valley Gravel Unravel is set to be an annual December event.

Towong Movie Night – various dates

A series of Movie's have been delivered across the Shire in town halls. To date, movie nights have been hosted at Corryong, Eskdale and Bethanga. Additional events will be hosted at Walwa and Tallangatta in the coming months.

The free movie nights offer popcorn and drinks to attendees and have been extremely well received by the hall committees and communities. Local groups or residents have been involved in the delivery of each and it is hoped the events will become a regular social activities with community ownership.

Festival of Small Halls – 4 to 6 April 2023

The Festival of Small Halls is an annual touring music event featuring folk and contemporary acoustic artists. Occurring over three weeks, performances are held at a different small hall across Victoria each evening. The artists line-up includes one international musician, one Australian musician, as well as one local artists of the host's choice.

Three Towong town halls will participate:

- Thowgla – 4 April 2023
- Mitta Mitta – 5 April 2023
- Talgarno – 6 April 2023

Local artists from each locality have been approached to perform alongside the visiting artist. Entry has been kept at a minimum to encourage attendance.

Autumn Glory Car Rally – 5 to 7 May 2023

Intended to be an annual event that celebrates the glory of autumn leaves on the first weekend of May, the three-day touring assembly will involve various makes and models of (registered) cars of interest touring North East Victoria.

The Saturday Loop will commence with breakfast in Tallangatta, followed by lunch in Walwa, then a drive to Tumbaramba before heading back to Walwa to travel the western end of the Great River Road. Dinner back in Tallangatta will conclude the day.

Sunday will see participants drive the Great River Road from Bellbridge to Tintaldra and on to Biggara, before parking in Corryong for lunch. The procession will then proceed to Cudgewa and on to Old Tallangatta via the Murray Valley Highway, north to Talgarno, and through to Bethanga.

Cars and Brekky Tallangatta

Leveraging on the Autumn Glory Car Rally, the appetite locally for a regular car and coffee meetup was explored. Cars and Coffee meetups around the world are popular with car enthusiasts and Towong Shire's Great River Road, Omeo Highway, Snowy Valleys Way, Lake Hume, and Alpine Way touring routes make it a more than suitable destination for such a regular event.

To be hosted by Tallangatta Classics Inc., the first Cars and Brekky Tallangatta gathering will take place on the Saturday morning of the Autumn Glory Car Rally. Both the Rally and Cars and Brekky Tallangatta vehicles will be parked on display in Tallangatta along the northern side of Towong Street. The Rally will ensure quality numbers for the first event, which is proposed to be hosted 2-4 times a year with direct marketing to regional car clubs.

Pub Tucker Month

In 2021, a project plan was prepared for an event that would support the economic recovery of the Shire's hotels. The plan proposed a 'buy two get one meal free' concept and encouraged participants to visit 3 hotels within the Shire. The event would provide direct economic recovery to the Shire's hotels, as well as support to residents. Unfortunately, due to the unpredictability of travel restrictions at the time, the event was unable to be confidently delivered.

With COVID-19 restrictions lifted, February was chosen as the ideal period to host the event due to the slower nature of month. A few teething problems were

overcome to deliver a successful event. Whilst not all redeemed a free meal, 305 people participated in the program with 40% being from out of region.

Parkrun

Parkrun is a global event that is positive, welcoming, social and completely inclusive. It occurs every Saturday morning at 8am where participants run, jog or walk a set 5km route. There is no time limit, and no one finishes last. The event is free to all and continues to grow in popularity around Australia.

Parkrun has a strong culture and is becoming a global household name with the event hosted at over 466 locations weekly. Many parkrunners take on various challenges (e.g., the parkrun passport) that encourages participation at new parkrun localities. Many will go as far as choosing their holiday or localities to visit based on parkrun locations. The event provides both social and economic benefits to communities.

Engagement was undertaken to determine the interest of activating parkrun in Tallangatta. Following a positive response, officers collaborated with a community group to work through the process of having Tallangatta formally recognised as a parkrun destination. Tallangatta Station parkrun will be added to the global parkrun map and launch on Saturday 29 April 2023. Due to changes in parkrun's policy, simply having the town name solely in the title is no longer an option. Therefore, the name Tallangatta Station parkrun was chosen to reflect the start and finish location of the event.

Long Lunch @ Towong Turf Club

For some years the concept of having a long lunch at the Towong Turf Club has been considered. The Turf Club and a group of interested residents met to develop a plan for delivering the Long Lunch as an inaugural event in late March. With limited people participating in the steering group, and those onboard having competing commitments, it was decided to postpone the event to late spring and look to expand the Project Steering Group. The Turf Club indicated that whilst they supported the event at the Turf Club grounds, they didn't have the capacity to assist direct or drive the event.

An expression of interest process was released to seek additional residents to become involved. Without adequate community involvement, the event is unlikely to continue in future years. A steering group is formed and officers, with the support of an events contractor, will work towards delivering the event in November 2023.

Upper Murray Adventure Race

Opportunities have been explored to leverage on the natural assets of the Shire to deliver an adventure race, including the reinstatement of the Upper Murray Challenge.

The Upper Murray Challenge has not operated for a number of years. Adventure Junkie who has previously ran the event, suggested that the event was tired and no longer economically viable for them. Discussions have occurred to determine whether Council could assist reinstate the event.

Opportunities to introduce a new adventure race are also being considered; potentially a duathlon that incorporates the High Country Rail Trail, or a trail run marathon.

In addition to the above, we continue to explore opportunities to host a geocaching event, billycart championships, photography workshop, Mitta Valley music and cultural event and a skateboarding epic race.

Marketing and promotional activities

Destination Branding and Website

The destination branding project has concluded resulting in three distinct brand guidelines for the Shire: Upper Murray, Mitta Valley and Lake Hume. All three brands work independently, however are clearly identifiable as being from the same family.

The completion of the branding has positioned Council well to commence work on the new destination website. Following discussion with Tourism North East on the website's requirements, two RFQ documents were developed; one for the structural build of the new website, and the other for delivery of content (which was felt may be best delivered by a marketing firm). Following a public RFQ procurement process, Us&Us were contracted to deliver the works. An inception meeting is scheduled for March.

In recent months, there has been a need for guidelines that demonstrate how the Shire as an entirety is branded. Such a style guide would be particularly valuable for Visitor Information material.

Us&Us, the organisation that developed the three brands, was commissioned to produce Shire-wide branding guidelines.

Upper Murray Business and Tourism Guide

The Upper Murray Visitors Guide was becoming low in supply at the Corryong Visitor Information Centre. With the new website still in its initial phase of development, it was determined now was not the right time to cease production.

We are leading the delivery of the new guide. Artwork is now complete and the guide is expected to be sent to the printers immediately following Easter. Enough guides will be printed to last for at least another 12-18 months.

Cycling promotional material

The Towong Shire Road and Gravel cycling maps have been proofed with numerous changes required. Tourism North East is taking longer to finalise these maps than anticipated.

Tourism services

Corryong Visitor Information Centre

During the six month reporting period, the Visitor Information Centre staff and volunteers assisted 5,462 visitors with the majority, 60%, arriving by the Murray Valley Highway and leaving by the Murray Valley Highway (36%), Alpine Way (29%), or Great River Road (15%). Additionally, 477 calls were received with the most common queries relating to the The Man from Snowy River Bush Festival (14%) and driving directions (10%).

Other projects

Tallangatta Heritage Walk

The Rock Around the Town self-guided tour leverages on Tallangatta's unique heritage as 'the town that moved'; Tallangatta moved to its present location in 1956 to allow for the expansion of Lake Hume. The 'old town' was flooded soon after. The mass move saw the town transformed into one with distinctive 1950s' flair. The CBD commercial streetscape, and majority of homes and civic buildings were redesigned in the prevailing 1950 architectural style. Many homes were literally placed on the back of trucks and relocated. Each of the buildings has a unique story or secret related to the move to tell.

A small amount of funding was secured to seed a self-guided walk product to tell Tallangatta's story. The funding was partially used to bring a consultant on board to engage with community members and develop a costed project plan. The detailed plan will be used to support bids to fund the product's development.

Community engagement has occurred in the last quarter to determine which buildings should be included in the walk. Research is also underway to determine the platform from which the self-guided walk will be activated.

Consultants are taking longer than anticipated to complete these works.

Supporting the Mitta Mountain Bike Park

In 2018, the Mitta Valley community successfully received funding to produce a Mitta Mountain Bike Park Masterplan, including the delivery of a multi-purpose recreation carpark that would double as a Mountain Bike Park Trailhead. The project was successfully delivered.

Mitta Valley Inc. was also successful in securing \$1.5 million to develop the first stage of the Trail Network of the Mitta Mountain Bike Park through the Local Economic Recovery Fund – Round 2.

Although the project is not a Council project, we continue to assist the Mountain Bike Park Project Steering Group (PSG) to deliver the project, primarily with administrative activities.

Funding sought for the development of the social enterprise was unfortunately not successful. However, the request lodged for a time variation to the funding agreement was successful; the completion date has been extended to June 2024.

Upon completion of the environmental reporting, the project has overcome challenges associated with the CHMP and vegetation offsetting expenses. Environmental reports are now completed in preparation for a planning permit application.

Throughout the last reporting period, much discussion has occurred around the development of the social enterprise. Assistance to the PSG has been provided to procure a consultant to deliver the social enterprise business plan, as well as position Mitta Valley Inc. ready to activate the resulting plan.

LOCAL LAW 1

Common seal and miscellaneous penalties

Adopted by Council on 1 September 2020

Contents

Common seal and miscellaneous penalties.....	1
Part 1 – Preliminary provisions.....	2
1. Title.....	2
2. Purpose of Local Law.....	2
3. Power for making this Local Law.....	2
4. Revocation.....	2
5. Sunset provision.....	2
6. Commencement.....	2
7. Definitions.....	2
Part 2 – Common Seal.....	4
8. Common Seal.....	4
Part 3 – Offences and penalties.....	5
9. Offences.....	5
10. Infringement Penalties.....	5

Part 1 – Preliminary provisions

1. Title

- 1.1 This Local Law is titled Local Law No.1 of 2020 – Common Seal and Miscellaneous Penalties.

2. Purpose of Local Law

- 2.1 The purpose of this Local Law is to:
- 2.1.1 Regulate and control the use of Council’s Common Seal;
 - 2.1.2 Regulate the types of offences and penalties applicable at Council meetings as described in Towong Shire Council’s Governance Rules; and
 - 2.1.3 Repealing Local Law No. 1, adopted by Council on 5 September 2011 – Meeting Procedures & Use of the Common Seal.

3. Power for making this Local Law

- 3.1 This Local Law:
- 3.1.1 Is made under Section 14 of the 2020 Act, and Part 5, in particular Section 111(1) of the 1989 Act; and
 - 3.1.2 Was prepared following due consideration of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

4. Revocation

- 4.1 Local Law No. 1 Meeting Procedures and Use of the Common Seal is revoked on the day this Local Law comes into operation, save that any notice or consent given or any business, matter or thing commenced, made or done under the repealed local law is not affected.

5. Sunset provision

- 5.1 This Local Law ceases to operate on the tenth anniversary of its commencement, unless earlier revoked.

6. Commencement

- 6.1 This Local Law is effective immediately following adoption at the Council Meeting on 1 September 2020.

7. Definitions

- 7.1 Unless the contrary intention appears in this Local Law, the following words and phrases are defined to mean:

‘1989 Act’ means the *Local Government Act 1989*;

‘2020 Act’ means the *Local Government Act 2020*;

‘Chief Executive Officer’ means the Chief Executive Officer of Council, and includes a person acting as Chief Executive Officer;

‘clause’ means a clause of this Local Law;

‘Common Seal’ means the Common Seal of Council;

'Council' means the Towong Shire Council;

'Deputy Mayor' means the Councillor appointed to the role of Deputy Mayor to represent the Mayor and act in the Mayor's role in the event of the Mayor's absence, and elected in accordance with the Governance Rules;

'Mayor' means the Mayor of Council and/or any person acting as Mayor;

'offence' means an act or default contrary to this Local Law;

'penalty unit' means penalty units as prescribed in the *Sentencing Act 1992*;

'resolution' means a formal determination by a meeting of Council or delegated committee;

'written' includes duplicated, photocopied, photographed, emailed, faxed, printed and typed.

Part 2 – Common Seal

The purpose of this Part is to:

- regulate the use of the Common Seal, which is a device which formally and solemnly records the collective will of the Council; and
- prohibit the use of the Common Seal, or any device resembling the Common Seal, as required by section 14 of the 2020 Act.

8. Common Seal

- 8.1 The Council must authorise the use of the Common Seal by resolution.
- 8.2 The Common Seal and words to be used accompanying it on any document to which it is affixed are as follows:

The COMMON SEAL of TOWONG)
 SHIRE COUNCIL was affixed in the) [Affix common seal here]
 presence of:)

.....
 Chief Executive Officer

.....
 Mayor/Deputy Mayor

- 8.3 The Chief Executive Officer and, either the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, must sign every document to which the Common Seal is affixed.
- 8.4 The Common Seal may only be used to sign, seal, issue, revoke or cancel any notice, document, order or agreement pursuant to a decision of Council.
- 8.5 It is an offence for a person to use the Common Seal or any device or representation resembling the Common Seal without authority given by resolution of the Council.
- 8.6 In accordance with section 14(2)(b) of the 2020 Act, the Common Seal must be kept at the Council office.

Part 3 – Offences and penalties

9. Offences

This section of the Local Law relate to offences at a Council Meeting as described in Towong Shire Council's Governance Rules. It is an offence at a meeting of the Council for any person to breach a requirement of the Governance Rules. This includes:

- 9.1 For a Councillor to not withdraw an expression which is considered by the Chair to be defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, disorderly or objectionable, and to not satisfactorily apologise when called upon twice by the Chair to do so.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 2 units
Penalty: 5 penalty units
- 9.2 For any person, not being a Councillor, who is guilty of any improper or disorderly conduct to not leave the meeting when requested by the Chair to do so.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 2 units
Penalty: 5 penalty units
- 9.3 For any person, not being a Councillor, who is guilty of any improper or disorderly conduct at the meeting.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 2 units
Penalty: 5 penalty units
- 9.4 For any person to fail to obey a direction of the Chair relating to the conduct of the meeting and the maintenance of order.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 2 units
Penalty: 5 Penalty Units
- 9.5 For a Councillor to refuse to leave the chamber on suspension.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 2 units
Penalty: 5 Penalty Units
- 9.6 For any person to use the Common Seal of Council or any device resembling the Common Seal without the authority of Council.
Infringement Notice Penalty: 10 units
Penalty: 20 penalty units

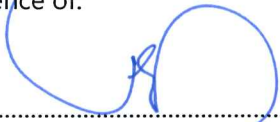
10. Infringement Penalties

- 10.1 If an offence is committed against this Local Law, the Chair shall request the Chief Executive Officer to issue to the offender an infringement notice in a form approved by Council for the relevant number of penalty units as an alternative to a prosecution for the offence.
- 10.2 To avoid prosecution, a person to whom an infringement notice has been issued must pay to Council the amount specified in the notice within 28 days.
- 10.3 A person in receipt of an infringement notice is entitled to disregard the notice and defend a prosecution in court.

This Local Law was made by resolution of the Towong Shire Council on 1 September 2020.

The COMMON SEAL of TOWONG SHIRE COUNCIL was affixed in the presence of:)
)
)

[Affix common seal here]



.....
Chief Executive Officer



.....
Mayor/Deputy Mayor



Councillor Code of Conduct

Adopted on 24 February 2021

Contents

1. Introduction and Purpose	3
2. Governance Principles	4
3. Behaviours.....	4
4. Decision Making	5
5. Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
Role of Councillors.....	6
Role of the Mayor	7
Role of Deputy Mayor	8
Role of the Chief Executive Officer	8
Role of Council Staff	9
6. Standards of Conduct.....	10
1. Treatment of others	10
2. Performing the role of Councillor	10
3. Compliance with good governance measures.....	11
4. Councillor must not discredit or mislead Council or public.....	11
5. Standards do not limit robust political debate	11
7. Specific Councillor Conduct Obligations	11
Use of Council Resources.....	11
Elections	12
Conflict of Interest.....	12
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity.....	12
Sexual Harassment	12
Fraud and Corruption.....	12
Misuse of Position	13
8. Dispute Resolution Procedures	13
Self Resolution	14
Mayoral Negotiation.....	14
External Mediation.....	15
9. Breaches of the Prescribed Standards of Conduct.....	16
Internal Arbitration	16
Serious Misconduct.....	16
Gross Misconduct	17
Other Penalties.....	17
Suspension during Election Period.....	18
10. Legislative Context.....	18
11. Human Rights Charter compatibility.....	18
12. Endorsement.....	18

1. Introduction and Purpose

As the elected representatives of the Shire of Towong, we have an important role in providing leadership to the municipality. While we may sometimes have different viewpoints, it is critical that we work together in the best interests of the municipality as a whole.

In doing this we are committed to living the vision and values of Towong Shire Council (Council) while adhering to the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 (LGA 2020).

Vision

We will be a World Class small Council and Towong Shire will be the ideal place to live.

Mission

To provide leadership and service to the Towong Shire community that adds value and enhances social, economic and environmental wellbeing now and in the future.

Values

Respect

We will listen and consider other perspectives and treat each other with courtesy.

Integrity

We will seek the common good.

Pride

We will always take care in what we do.

Teamwork

We will help others to achieve by being positive, enthusiastic and confident.

The purpose of this Councillor Code of Conduct is to outline the standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors in the course of performing their duties and functions as Councillors.

2. Governance Principles

The primary role of the Council is to provide good governance to the municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community. As required by LGA 2020 we will in the performance of our roles give effect to the overarching governance principles of LGA 2020:

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;*
- (b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;*
- (c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;*
- (d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;*
- (e) innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;*
- (f) collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;*
- (g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;*
- (h) regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;*
- (i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.*

In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, we will also take into account the following supporting principles of the LGA 2020:

- (a) the community engagement principles;*
- (b) the public transparency principles;*
- (c) the strategic planning principles;*
- (d) the financial management principles;*
- (e) the service performance principles.*

3. Behaviours

As community leaders we are committed to leading by example and promoting the highest standard of behavior in adherence to the following behaviours:

Respectful

We respect each other, each other's time, and each other's right to put forward a viewpoint. We are courteous, polite and value one another's ideas even if we don't agree.

United

We put forward a united front even if a decision hasn't gone the way that some of us might have wanted. We don't have to agree with one another, but we don't undermine our collective decisions.

Strategic

We represent the best interest of the whole shire, and strive together towards our bigger-picture goals, rather than representing specific geographical areas or community groups.

Supportive

We support one another in learning, share information and skills, contribute to the debate, and respect different experience levels.

Discreet

We maintain confidentiality of Councillor discussions and do not quote private conversations unless it is understood that the content may be discussed publicly.

4. Decision Making

We are committed to making good decisions impartially and in the best interest of the community. We understand that in line with the requirements of LGA 2020 decisions are to be made by a resolution of the Council. A resolution of the Council may include:

- A resolution at a Council meeting
- A resolution made at a meeting of a delegated committee
- The exercise of a duty, function or power made by a member of Council staff or a Community Asset Committee under delegation.

In making decisions we are committed to:

- Transparent processes in line with our *Public Transparency Policy*
- Good community engagement in line with our *Community Engagement Policy*
- Sound participative meeting practices in line with our *Governance Rules*
- Adhering to all relevant legislation and regulation
- Seeking appropriate technical advice and expertise from the Administration.

As issues arise that may require Council consideration we will work together and with the administration to develop an approach to forming a decision. Decisions are to be made with due consideration to the time required to seek the necessary inputs and

hold the necessary discussions; urgent business should only be raised if the matter cannot be addressed through this process due to time constraints.

While significant work and discussion may occur prior to a Council meeting where a decision is made, we are committed to ensuring that the community understands all of the factors that contribute to the decision when it is presented at the Council meeting.

Once Council has made a decision, it becomes the collective decision of Council. While it is recognised that some Councillors may not support a decision, it is highly desirable that we present a united front to the public once the decision has been made. Dissent may be expressed but with due care to the reputation of Council and Councillors as an effective leadership team. In line with the requirements of LGA 2020 Councillors are not to publicly discredit or actively undermine the Council.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Towong Shire Council consists of democratically elected Councillors, including the Mayor; and the administration, consisting of the Chief Executive Officer and their staff.

Good governance relies on good relationships between all people who form part of the Council, and an understanding and respect for one another's roles.

Role of Councillors

Councillors are the democratically elected representatives of the community and play a key advocacy and leadership role. They are critical in facilitating community engagement with the activities and decisions of Council. There is an expectation that Councillors will make decisions that benefit the long term interest of the whole community.

In line with the requirements of LGA 2020 we will uphold the role of Councillors:

- (a) to participate in the decision making of the Council; and*
- (b) to represent the interests of the municipal community in that decision making;*
and
- (c) to contribute to the strategic direction of the Council through the development and review of key strategic documents of the Council, including the Council Plan.*

In performing the role of a Councillor, we will:

- (a) consider the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community; and*
- (b) support the role of the Council; and*
- (c) acknowledge and support the role of the Mayor; and*
- (d) act lawfully and in accordance with the oath or affirmation of office; and*
- (e) act in accordance with the standards of conduct; and*
- (f) comply with Council procedures required for good governance.*

Further we will respect that:

The role of a Councillor does not include the performance of any responsibilities or functions of the Chief Executive Officer.

Councillors, sitting as Council, are responsible for appointing the Chief Executive Officer and developing and maintaining a *Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy*. We are effectively responsible for performance management of the Chief Executive Officer and set and monitor their progress against goals.

We will maintain an excellent working relationship with the Chief Executive Officer and keep them informed about relevant issues.

Role of the Mayor

The Mayor is the elected leader of the Council and this role is to be respected by all Councillors. The Mayor facilitates an inclusive approach to decision-making and involvement in Council activities, and supports good relationships amongst the Councillor team and between Councillors and the Administration. The Mayor sets the tone and style of behaviour, practice and projection of the Council working with, supporting and coordinating the team of Councillors.

In line with the requirements of LGA 2020 we will respect the role of the Mayor to:

- (a) chair Council meetings; and*
- (b) be the principal spokesperson for the Council; and*
- (c) lead engagement with the municipal community on the development of the Council Plan; and*
- (d) report to the municipal community, at least once each year, on the implementation of the Council Plan; and*
- (e) promote behaviour among Councillors that meets the standards of conduct set out in the Councillor Code of Conduct; and*
- (f) assist Councillors to understand their role; and*

- (g) take a leadership role in ensuring the regular review of the performance of the Chief Executive Officer; and*
- (h) provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer when the Chief Executive Officer is setting the agenda for Council meetings; and*
- (i) perform civic and ceremonial duties on behalf of the Council.*

The Mayor facilitates resolution of any Councillor disputes and is responsible for Councillors' training and development.

The Mayor maintains regular open communication regarding relevant issues with the Chief Executive Officer and with due regard to their respective roles.

Role of Deputy Mayor

The primary role of the Deputy Mayor is to play the role of the Mayor in the absence of the Mayor. In line with LGA 2020:

The Deputy Mayor must perform the role of the Mayor and may exercise any of the powers of the Mayor if—

- (a) the Mayor is unable for any reason to attend a Council meeting or part of a Council meeting; or*
- (b) the Mayor is incapable of performing the duties of the office of Mayor for any reason, including illness; or*
- (c) the office of Mayor is vacant.*

The Deputy Mayor will take responsibility for the internal resolution process when the matter relates to the Mayor.

Role of the Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is accountable to the Mayor and the Councillors for delivering Council's strategies and services. The CEO maintains the organisational structure and fosters a positive culture, while helping to manage the relationship between the Councillors and the Administration.

In line with LGA 2020 the role of the CEO is:

- (a) supporting the Mayor and the Councillors in the performance of their roles; and*
- (b) ensuring the effective and efficient management of the day to day operations of the Council.*

Without limiting the generality of this role, this responsibility includes the following—

- (c) ensuring that the decisions of the Council are implemented without undue delay;*
- (d) ensuring that the Council receives timely and reliable advice about its obligations under this Act or any other Act;*
- (e) supporting the Mayor in the performance of the Mayor's role as Mayor;*
- (f) setting the agenda for Council meetings after consulting the Mayor;*
- (g) when requested by the Mayor, reporting to the Council in respect of the implementation of a Council decision;*
- (h) carrying out the Council's responsibilities as a deemed employer with respect to Councillors, as deemed workers, which arise under or with respect to the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013.*

Role of Council Staff

Council staff provide support, advice and information to Council and Councillors through the CEO to support the democratic process and ensure good governance. They are responsible for delivering programs and services (within budgets), exercising their Council delegations, implementing Council decisions and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

If we require information or need to provide feedback to Council staff we will direct the enquiry through the CEO or a Director to best support consistent communication, accountability and appropriate task management. This also helps to avoid a Councillor unintentionally directing a member of staff in contravention of the misuse of position requirements of LGA 2020, or being perceived to do so.

Council staff are to inform their Director about any contacts with Councillors where Council business including operational matters were discussed.

If we receive a complaint from an officer about organisational issues we will direct them to Council's *Issue Resolution Policy* in the first instance.

If we wish to complain about a member of Council staff we will direct the complaint to the Chief Executive Officer or the relevant Director.

6. Standards of Conduct

LGA 2020 places obligations on Councillors in relation to way they should act. It also prohibits certain conduct by Councillors and prescribes penalties for Councillors who contravene these provisions.

In line with the requirements of LGA 2020 and supporting regulations we will respect the following standards:

1. *Treatment of others*

- (a) A Councillor must, in performing the role of a Councillor, treat other Councillors, members of Council staff, the municipal community and members of the public with dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect, including by ensuring that the Councillor—*
- (b) takes positive action to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010; and*
- (c) supports the Council in fulfilling its obligation to achieve and promote gender equality; and*
- (d) does not engage in abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour in their dealings with members of the public, Council staff and Councillors; and*
- (e) in considering the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community, treats all persons with respect and has due regard for their opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities.*

2. *Performing the role of Councillor*

- (a) A Councillor must, in performing the role of a Councillor, do everything reasonably necessary to ensure that the Councillor performs the role of a Councillor effectively and responsibly, including by ensuring that the Councillor—*
- (b) undertakes any training or professional development activities the Council decides it is necessary for all Councillors to undertake in order to effectively perform the role of a Councillor; and*
- (c) diligently uses Council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to Council decisions; and*
- (d) is fit to conscientiously perform the role of a Councillor when acting in that capacity or purporting to act in that capacity; and*
- (e) represents the interests of the municipal community in performing the role of a Councillor by considering and being responsive to the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community.*

3. Compliance with good governance measures

- (a) A Councillor, in performing the role of a Councillor, to ensure the good governance of the Council, must diligently and properly comply with the following—*
- (b) any policy, practice or protocol developed and implemented by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 46 of the Act for managing interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors;*
- (c) the Council expenses policy adopted and maintained by the Council under section 41 of the Act;*
- (d) the Governance Rules developed, adopted and kept in force by the Council under section 60 of the Act;*
- (e) any directions of the Minister issued under section 175 of the Act.*

4. Councillor must not discredit or mislead Council or public

- (1) In performing the role of a Councillor, a Councillor must ensure that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council.*
- (2) In performing the role of a Councillor, a Councillor must not deliberately mislead the Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of their public duties.*

5. Standards do not limit robust political debate

Nothing in these standards is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate in a democracy.

7. Specific Councillor Conduct Obligations

Gifts, Benefits or Hospitality

We will avoid situations giving rise to the appearance that a person or body, through the provision of gifts, benefits or hospitality of any kind, is attempting to secure favourable treatment. We will respond to offers of gifts or hospitality in line with Council's *Gift Policy* and the requirements of LGA 2020.

Use of Council Resources

We will use Council resources effectively and economically and in line with the requirements of Council's *Councillor Support and Expenses Policy*. Council resources are only to be used for the purposes of duties as a Councillor and not for private

purposes unless authorised to do so. We will maintain adequate security over Council property and information.

Elections

We are committed to fair and democratic Council elections and therefore adopt and endorse the practices and legislative requirements set out in Council's *Election Period Policy* that forms part of Council's *Governance Rules* and the provisions of LGA 2020.

Conflict of Interest

We will identify, manage and disclose any conflicts of interest that we may have in line with the requirements of Council's *Governance Rules* and the provisions of LGA 2020. We will give early notice to the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer as to the conflict and seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer if we need assistance on interpretation.

We recognise that the legal onus to determine whether the conflict exists rests entirely with each individual Councillor. If we cannot confidently say whether a conflict exists, we will declare the potential conflict.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity

We will take positive action to eliminate discrimination and bullying in accordance with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and support Council in fulfilling its obligation to achieve and promote gender equality. We will treat all people with dignity and respect and have due regards for the opinions, beliefs, rights and attributes of others. We will not discriminate against, bully, vilify or victimise any individual.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is against the law and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. We will take positive action to eliminate sexual harassment in accordance with the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. We will not engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another individual where a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated the possibility that the individual would be offended, humiliated or offended.

Fraud and Corruption

We will take positive action to eliminate fraud or corrupt behaviour and support Council's obligations under the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*. We will

immediately report to the Chief Executive Officer and / or an appropriate integrity body any suspected, potential or actual fraudulent, criminal, unethical or corrupt behaviour in line with Council's *Public Interest Disclosures Policy*.

Misuse of Position

In line with section 123 of LGA 2020, we will not intentionally misuse our position to gain an advantage for ourselves or any other person, or to cause detriment to the Council or another person. Offences under this section of LGA 2020 are indictable. Circumstances including misuse of position include:

- a) making improper use of information acquired as a result of the position the person held or holds; or*
- b) disclosing information that is confidential information; or*
- c) directing or improperly influencing, or seeking to direct or improperly influence, a member of Council staff; or*
- d) exercising or performing, or purporting to exercise or perform, a power, duty or function that the person is not authorised to exercise or perform; or*
- e) using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised; or*
- f) participating in a decision on a matter in which the person has a conflict of interest.*

8. Dispute Resolution Procedures

We have an individual and collective responsibility to try every avenue possible to resolve such disputes in house and from allowing them to escalate further. This dispute resolution procedure is intended to be used:

1. When Councillors have been unable to resolve an interpersonal conflict and where the situation is unduly affecting the operation of the Council;
2. To manage complaints or concerns regarding the behaviour of Councillors from the public or Council staff, where a Councillor or group of Councillors takes up the complaint on behalf of the complainant.

It is not intended to resolve differences in policy or decision-making, which are appropriately resolved through discussion and voting in Council and Committee Meetings.

Council's dispute resolution procedure comprises four components, namely:

- 1) Self Resolution
- 2) Mayoral Negotiation
- 3) External Mediation
- 4) Internal Arbitration

A Councillor or a group of Councillors may make an application for a dispute to be referred for external mediation or internal arbitration regardless of whether self-resolution or Mayoral negotiation have been attempted, however it is preferred that these options are exhausted first.

Self Resolution

Councillors must take personal responsibility and endeavour to resolve their differences in an informal, but at all times, courteous and respectful manner, recognising that they have been elected to represent the best interests of the community.

Mayoral Negotiation

If the informal resolution process between the Councillors is unsuccessful, the Mayor should be involved as soon as practically possible to convene a meeting of the parties.

The party requesting the Mayoral negotiation meeting is to provide the Mayor with the name of the other Councillor and the details of the dispute in writing. The written request is to indicate that it is for a "Mayoral negotiation" dispute resolution process.

Within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint, the Mayor will:

- provide written acknowledgment of receipt of the complaint to the Complainant;
- provide a copy of the complaint to the Councillor concerned; and
- attempt to facilitate a resolution and convene a meeting.

The Mayor may call upon the Councillor Conduct Officer for advice and guidance at this point in the process.

The Mayor is to document any agreement reached at the meeting. Copies of the agreement are to be provided to both parties. Where one party does not comply with the agreement, the other party has recourse to external mediation.

If the parties cannot resolve the dispute at the meeting, a further meeting may be convened with the consent of both parties. Where the dispute remains unresolved, the parties should progress to external mediation.

In the event that the dispute involves the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor or other Councillor nominated by Council resolution will perform the role of the Mayor in facilitating discussions between the parties in dispute and liaising with the Councillor Conduct Officer.

External Mediation

If reconciliation of the dispute is not possible after Mayoral negotiation, it is the responsibility of the Mayor to seek assistance from an external mediator to resolve the dispute, preferably with the active support of the parties to the dispute, who must be informed of such a decision in any circumstance.

The applicant is to submit a written application to the Councillor Conduct Officer setting out the name of the Councillor and the details of the dispute. The application is to indicate that the application is for an "external mediation". The applicant is to notify the other party of the request and provide him or her with a copy of the application either at the same time or as soon as practical thereafter.

The Councillor Conduct Officer is to ascertain (in writing) whether or not the other party is prepared to attend an "external mediation". If the other party declines to participate in an external mediation, he or she is to provide their reasons for doing so in writing to the Councillor Conduct Officer. When the other party declines to participate in an external mediation, this does not constitute a contravention of this Councillor Code of Conduct.

If the other party agrees to participate in an external mediation, the Councillor Conduct Officer is to advise the applicant, the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer immediately, and engage the services of an external mediator to conduct the mediation at the earliest practicable opportunity.

The mediator is to document any agreement reached at the meeting. Copies of the agreement are to be provided to both parties. Where one party does not comply with the agreement, the other party has recourse to the internal resolution procedure

where the matter relates to an alleged contravention of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

If the parties cannot resolve the dispute at the meeting, a further meeting may be convened with the consent of both parties. Where the dispute remains unresolved, the Mayor may recommend a resolution unless the dispute involves an allegation of a breach of the prescribed standards of conduct, in which case the matter must be referred for internal arbitration.

9. Breaches of the Prescribed Standards of Conduct

Internal Arbitration

If a Councillor is suspected of breaching the prescribed standards of conduct, an internal arbitration process may be pursued in line with section 141 of LGA 2020.

An application for internal arbitration may be made by the Council, following a resolution of the Council; a Councillor; or a group of Councillors. It must be made within three months of the alleged misconduct occurring, and is to be given to the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar as specified by section 149 of LGA 2020.

Councillors may refer to the Councillor Conduct Officer appointed by the CEO to assist in the implementation of the arbitration process.

If the Principle Councillor Conduct Registrar is satisfied that the matter warrants arbitration given the evidence at hand, they will appoint an arbiter from the state's panel list. If the arbiter believes at any stage that the subject of the application involves serious misconduct as defined by LGA 2020, it will be referred to the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar for hearing by a Councillor Conduct Panel.

The arbiter will ensure that parties involved are given an opportunity to be heard. If after completing the arbitration process, the arbiter determines that there has been a breach of the prescribed standards of conduct, they may make a finding of misconduct and direct the Councillor to make an apology, suspend the Councillor from office for up to one month, and / or direct a Councillor to attend training or counselling.

Serious Misconduct

A Councillor Conduct Panel may be appointed in the case that the application alleges serious misconduct by a Councillor. An application to make a finding of serious

misconduct may be made by the Council following a resolution of Council; a Councillor or a group of Councillors; or the Chief Municipal Inspector.

An application regarding serious misconduct must be made within 12 months of the alleged misconduct occurring. The application must satisfy the form prescribed by section 154 of LGA 2020 and is to be made to the Principle Councillor Conduct Registrar.

If the Registrar is satisfied that the application warrants the appointment of a Panel given the evidence at hand, they will form a Councillor Conduct Panel from the state panel list. The Panel may request persons to attend a hearing, request information from the applicant, the respondent of the Council, and may direct a Councillor to attend a hearing. They must provide the respondent with an opportunity to be heard.

If the Councillor Conduct Panel finds that a Councillor has committed an offence, they will notify the Chief Municipal Inspector and may reprimand the Councillor, direct them to make an apology, suspend them from office for a period of up to 12 months, and / or make them ineligible to chair a delegated committee of Council for the remainder of the Council term. The Councillor becomes ineligible from holding the office of Mayor or Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the Council term unless the Panel decides otherwise.

The Panel may also determine that remedial action is required such as mediation, training or counselling.

A person who is affected by the decision made by a Councillor Conduct Panel may apply to VCAT for review of the decision.

Gross Misconduct

If the Chief Municipal Inspector determines that a Councillor has engaged in gross misconduct as specified by LGA 2020 they may refer an application to VCAT. If VCAT supports the finding they may order that the Councillor is disqualified from continuing as a Councillor for up to 8 years.

Other Penalties

Other penalties such as fines and indictment may occur depending on the nature of the breach in accordance with any relevant legislation and regulation.

Suspension during Election Period

All applications and proceedings are suspended during the election period for a general election. If the Councillor is not returned to office the application lapses, unless it is for an application for gross misconduct in which case it must resume after the election is held regardless of whether the person is returned to office.

10. Legislative Context

Section 139 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires a council to develop a Councillor Code of Conduct which contains the standards of conduct as prescribed by the regulations and any other prescribed matters.

11. Human Rights Charter compatibility

This policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 [Vic]*.

12. Endorsement

This Code of Conduct was adopted by Council on 24 February 2021 and is signed by the following Councillors:



Cr David Wortmann (Mayor)



Cr Peter Dikschei (Deputy Mayor)



Cr Denise Anderson



Cr Aaron Scales



Cr Andrew Whitehead

Community Engagement

Responsible officer:	Director Corporate and Organisational Development
Key Result Area:	Organisational Improvement
Document type:	Policy
Reference:	10/01/004
Approved by:	Council
Date approved:	24 February 2021
Date of next review:	February 2023

1. Purpose

Towong Shire Council (Council) is committed to participatory democracy and providing community members with the opportunity to engage in decision making in relation to matters that affect them. The purpose of this policy is to describe how Council engages the community in order to inform decisions.

Key objectives include:

- Ensuring that Council decision-making reflects the interest of the community;
- Providing a consistent, transparent and proactive approach to community engagement;
- Building community confidence and empowerment in regard to matters that affect them;
- Fostering community ownership of solutions to problems or plans for the future;
- Build the community's sense of belonging, connection, involvement and resilience; and
- Meeting Council's legislative obligations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all community engagement activities undertaken by Council. It is binding upon Councillors, Council employees, volunteers, contractors, consultants and members of Council committees.

3. Policy Details

3.1. Principles

In line with the community engagement requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA 2020), the following principles will underpin all engagement activities undertaken by Council:

- Council's community engagement activities will have a clearly defined objective and scope, being clear on what is and is not able to be influenced;
- Community members will have timely access to objective, relevant and easy to understand information to inform effective participation

- Participants in community engagement will be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement;
- Council will allow time and diverse engagement methods to reach people and for them to respond;
- Council values all participants' knowledge, expertise and experiences, acknowledging that everyone has different views and needs;
- Council will ensure that participants in community engagement activities are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Council decision-making;
- Council will build the community's trust through transparency, following through, closing the loop, saying what we are doing and doing what we say we will do.

It is important to understand that community engagement is not always the sole determinant in a decision-making process. Other factors also require consideration, including:

- Legislation
- Budget
- Other levels of government
- Existing policies and strategies
- Councillors
- Council expertise and experience.

3.2. When we engage

Council will undertake a community engagement process when:

- A decision will significantly affect the way services are provided;
- A decision has the potential to significantly affect the community or a segment of the community;
- A decision is likely to generate significant community concern or interest;
- Additional information is required by Council to make an informed decision;
- Engagement is mandated by legislation, policy or other agreement.

In this context a decision may include, for example, the adoption of a policy, strategy, program, plan or project, the approval of a design, proceeding with an action, or the ruling on an issue.

Where possible community engagement will take place in the early stages of decision making so that community members have the full opportunity to assist in identifying options, rather than simply 'tweaking' a decision which appears to already have been made.

Council will plan community engagement activities with due regard to community availability and will group consultations to avoid 'consultation fatigue' where appropriate.

Other considerations that help shape how and when Council undertakes engagement are outlined below.

3.2.1 Legislative

Council will undertake engagement where prescribed under the relevant legislation or regulations. The engagement will be undertaken to ensure statutory obligations as well as the commitments outlined in this policy as met.

3.2.2 Council Elections

Council is required to avoid public consultations during the Council election period and will not undertake community consultation on topics which may influence the outcome of the election. Should community consultation be considered necessary during this time, the results will not be reported to Council until after the election.

3.2.3 Reasons for limited engagement

There are times when Council's level of engagement with the community and key stakeholders will be limited. Examples include when:

- An immediate resolution is required;
- A time limited funding opportunity becomes available;
- Technical or other expertise is required;
- An initiative involves confidential or commercial information;
- There are clear and defined legislative responsibilities that must be met;
- Developing or reviewing internal policies and procedures;
- Council is responding to an emergency; or
- There is a risk to public safety.

In certain circumstances, Council may only be able to inform the community and stakeholders of Council's decisions and actions.

Where engagement is limited due to the timing of a funding opportunity, further detailed engagement will be undertaken if the funding application is successful, noting that the scope of engagement may be limited by the conditions of the grant.

It is noted that decisions involving confidential or commercial information are rare and Council endeavours to maintain public transparency wherever possible.

3.3. Who we engage with

Council will engage with people and groups that are impacted by or interested in a project or Council decision. This can include anyone who lives, works, plays, visits, studies or has an interest in the Towong area.

For each engagement process, the communities or stakeholders impacted will be identified and Council will seek to engage with them to ensure representative feedback to guide decision making.

When there are barriers to participation Council will seek to understand these barriers and apply mechanisms to enable participation.

3.4. Type and level of engagement

The type and level of engagement undertaken by Council will be determined by:

- The scope and complexity of the matter;
- The number of people impacted and the degree of impact;
- The strategic importance of the subject matter;
- Legislative requirements;
- The level of community interest;
- The resources available to Council;
- Prior consultation undertaken that is relevant to the matter; and
- The community's ability to impact decision making.

Management tools will be put in place to govern the engagement approach used, aligned to the International Association for Public Participation¹ (IAP2)'s Spectrum of Public Participation. The table below has been adapted from the IAP2 Spectrum, and shows the increasing level of possible community and Council involvement from the 'inform' end of the spectrum through to the 'empower' end of the spectrum.

1. INFORM	2. CONSULT	3. INVOLVE	4. COLLABORATE	5. EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL				
To provide the public with balanced information to assist them understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback and analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and identification of preferred solution	To place final decision making in the hands of the public
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC				
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals. We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

¹ <https://www.iap2.org.au/Home>

		developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.		
EXAMPLES				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAQs • Information sheets • Updates on Council websites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Focus groups • Community Panel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Information sheets • Deliberative opinion polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Reference Groups • Consensus building • Participation in decision making • Co-designing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegated decision making (e.g. community makes the decision) • Community ballot

The engagement approach used will be reflective of the needs of the people and groups being consulted. Council will use plain language that is easy to understand and encourages interaction.

Some consultations may involve a mix of channels such as electronic surveys and face-to-face discussions. The process of community engagement may be dynamic and involve movement back and forth through the different levels as a matter is considered and developed.

It is recognised that Councillors as the elected representatives of the community play a key role in engagement processes, particularly in relation to high impact and strategic decisions.

It is recognised that community members may sometimes have different views and that regardless of the type of engagement undertaken, consensus may not be possible. Councillors play a key role in making a final decision which they believe represents the best interests of the community.

3.5. Feedback to the community

Council understands and values the importance of closing the loop with community engagement participants and the broader community. Council will advise participants and the broader community (as relevant) as to how feedback was considered in the decision making process and the end outcome.

3.6. Engagement resources for staff

To ensure Council can deliver on its commitment of consistent and proactive community engagement as outlined in this policy, staff will be supported with resources, budget and advice to support the development and implementation of suitable and appropriate engagement practices.

3.7. Monitoring, evaluation and review

Council will put in place feedback mechanisms to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of its community engagement practises on an ongoing basis.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Responsibility	Role / Position
Champion the commitment and principles for community engagement through leadership and decision-making	Councillors Chief Executive Officer
Champion behaviours that foster engagement and lead the implementation of this policy	Chief Executive Officer Directors Managers and Coordinators Communications and Engagement Officers
Adhere to community engagement principles, this policy and associated requirements as appropriate to role and function	Councillors Committee members All employees
Monitor implementation and adherence to this policy	Director Corporate and Organisational Development

5. Breaches

Failure to comply with Council policy, supporting procedures or guidelines, will be subject to investigation which may lead to disciplinary action.

6. Human Rights Charter compatibility

This policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 [Vic]*.

7. Supporting documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other relevant Council policies and procedures, as well as relevant legislative requirements.

Other related legislation includes:

- *Local Government Act 1989;*
- *Local Government Act 2020;*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006;*
- *Disability Act 2016;*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010;*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987;*
- *Road Management Act 2004.*

Other related guidelines or policies include:

- *Towong Shire Council Governance Rules;*
- *Towong Shire Council Privacy Policy;*
- *Towong Shire Council Public Transparency Policy.*

8. Definitions

Community	People of the municipality, including individuals or groups who live, work, play, study, visit or invest in the municipality.
Community engagement	The range of opportunities for public involvement in Council decision-making. Community engagement is achieved when the community is and feels part of the decision-making process.
Deliberative engagement	Deliberative engagement empowers the community to partner with Council to come to a decision after considering relevant information and identifying options. It typically involves discussion and may involve consensus, although it is recognised that consensus may not always be achieved.
IAP2	The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is an international organisation that advances the practice of public participation. IAP2 supports people who implement or participate in public decision-making processes.
Stakeholder	An individual or group with a special or particular interest in an issue; may incorporate the broader community as well as Council staff and Council stakeholders.

Authorised by: _____



Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer

Debt Collection

Responsible officer:	Manager Finance
Key Result Area:	Governance
Document type:	Policy
Reference:	10/01/0004
Approved by:	Council
Date approved:	2 May 2017
Date of next review:	March 2018
Print date:	8 May 2017

Scope

A key source of income for Council are the annual Rates and Charges raised in relation to properties within the Shire. These funds assist with the provision of works and services which are included in the annual Budget.

Council acknowledges that from time to time ratepayers and community members are faced with financial difficulties, (Local Government Act 1989 s170). In recognition of this, the following Policy has been developed in order to clearly outline Council's approach to recover outstanding Rate and Sundry Debtors.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure that outstanding debts (ie. Rates and Sundry Debts) are recovered by Council in a reasonable timeframe; and
- To encourage ratepayers experiencing financial difficulty to contact Council to arrange payment plans in order to avoid Council having to pursue legal action to recover the amount(s) outstanding.

Approach

We aim to achieve the objectives of this Policy by implementing the following approach:

OUTSTANDING RATES AND CHARGES

Where Rates for the Financial Year are unpaid the following procedures are to be followed:-

- When the first instalment is unpaid a reminder is issued advising the ratepayer that the instalment is outstanding and requesting that the amount be remitted to Council within 14 days.
- When the second instalment is unpaid a reminder is issued advising the ratepayer that the instalment is outstanding and requesting that the amount be remitted to Council within 14 days. This reminder also encourages the ratepayer to contact Council if they are having difficulty paying their rates to arrange a payment plan.

Where Rates for the Financial Year are still outstanding after the third instalment date, and previous instalments remain unpaid, the following procedures are to be implemented without delay:-

- The Assistant Accountant sends a "Courtesy" letter advising the Ratepayer that the debt is outstanding and asking the Ratepayer to remit the outstanding funds to Council within 14 days. This letter encourages the ratepayer to contact Council if they are having difficulty paying their rates to arrange a payment plan.
- If no response is received in relation to the Courtesy letter, the Assistant Accountant sends another letter (referred to as the "Final" letter) advising that if the debt is not settled within 14 days from the date of the Final letter the matter will be put in the hands of Council's Debt Collector. This letter again encourages the ratepayer to contact Council if they are having difficulty paying their rates to arrange a payment plan, (as per s167 of the Local Government Act 1989).
- If no response is received within 14 days from the date of the Assistant Accountant's "Final" letter the Assistant Accountant is to provide the Chief Executive with the details of the outstanding debt together with details of all action taken to recover the debt and the Chief Executive may then authorise the Assistant Accountant to put the debt in the hands of Council's Debt Collector.

At this stage the matter is then pursued by the Debt Collector.

- The Debt Collector sends a Final Notice advising the Debtor that Legal Proceedings will be instigated if the debt is not settled within 7 days from the date of the letter. If no response is received the Debt Collector may issue a Solicitors letter, then if no response received, instigate Legal Proceedings.
- Should it become necessary that the matter proceed to the sale of the property to recover the outstanding amount, a report outlining all recovery action is to be presented to the Council prior to commencement of proceedings for the sale of the property.

OUTSTANDING SUNDRY DEBTORS

Where Sundry Debtors are 60 days overdue (from the due date) the following procedures are to be implemented without delay:-

- The Assistant Accountant sends a "Courtesy" letter advising the Debtor that the debt is outstanding and asking the Debtor to remit the outstanding funds to, or arrange a payment plan with, Council within 14 days.
- If no response is received in relation to the Courtesy letter, the Assistant Accountant sends another letter (referred to as the "Final" letter) advising that if the debt is not settled, or a payment plan arranged, within 14 days from the date of the Final letter the matter will be put in the hands of Council's Debt Collector.
- If no response is received within 14 days from the date of the Assistant Accountant's "Final" letter the Assistant Accountant is to provide the Chief Executive with the details of the outstanding debt together with details of all action taken to recover the debt and the Chief Executive may then authorise the Assistant Accountant to put the debt in the hands of Council's Debt Collector.

At this stage the matter is then pursued by the Debt Collector.

- The Debt Collector sends a Final Notice advising the Debtor that Legal Proceedings will be instigated if the debt is not settled within 7 days from the date of the letter. If no response is received the Debt Collector may issue a Solicitors letter, then if no response received, instigate Legal Proceedings.

Deployment

The Finance Department are to be familiar with, and accountable for, the delivery of this Policy. This will be measured via quarterly Workplan Reviews. In specific terms the responsibility for the management of outstanding rates, charges and debts generally can be described as follows:

- The Manager Finance is responsible for managing debt collection for Council
- The Assistant Accountant is responsible for forwarding 'Courtesy' and 'Final' letters, assessment of any proposed 'Payment Plans', furnishing information to the Chief Executive Officer and liaison with Council's Debt Collector
- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for authorising which debts are to be put in the hands of the Debt Collector
- The Audit Committee together with Council are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Policy and any subsequent reviews/amendments.

Application of the Policy

This Policy is applicable to the recovery of all outstanding amounts which are due and payable to Council.

Resources

The following resources are committed by Council to assist with the implementation of this policy:

- Manager Finance to manage implementation of this Policy.
- Assistant Accountant to implement this Policy.
- Audit Committee and Council to monitor implementation of this Policy.
- Other resources as deemed necessary by the Chief Executive Officer.

Results

The deployment of this policy together with the results achieved will be reviewed at least annually.

COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy

Responsible officer:	Manager Finance
Key Result Area:	Organisational Improvement
Document type:	Policy
Reference:	10/01/0004
Approved by:	Council
Date approved:	4 August 2021
Date of next review:	August 2022

Scope

COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic on 30 January 2020 and a State of Emergency was declared in Victoria on 16 March 2020. In addition to the global economic impacts of this pandemic on trade and financial systems, strong measures implemented by the Australian and Victorian Governments to slow the spread of the virus have impacted the employment and businesses of local people in a way that has not been experienced before.

This policy applies to residents and ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship due to the impact of COVID-19 and face difficulties in paying their rates and charges or other debts owed to Council. This policy does not apply to statutory fees and fines and user fees.

It is also noted that separate provisions that equal or exceed the provisions of this policy may apply to rates, statutory fees and fines and user fees due to:

- Specific support provided as a result of the 2019/20 Upper Murray Bushfires; and
- Specific support that may be provided by the Australian and Victorian Governments in relation to COVID-19.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to assist residents and ratepayers facing financial hardship due to the impact of COVID-19 through:

- Interest waiver
- Flexible payment plans
- Deferral of debt collection action

Approach

We aim to achieve the objectives of this Policy by implementing the following approach:

Payment plans and interest hold:

The total deferral of all financial responsibilities due to an event can cause a secondary bout of financial stress when the event has concluded, and bills are owed. Council's aim is to provide assistance to sundry debtors, residents, business and commercial ratepayers through the COVID-19 event without creating additional financial stress when the pandemic has been resolved.

Council will encourage sundry debtors, residents, business and commercial ratepayers to set up a payment plan with Council tailored specifically to their needs, to reduce the amount of debt owing after the pandemic.

Council will not charge interest on debt accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic. The interest hold will begin from 1 March 2020 until 31 December 2021 to allow ample time for the debt to be paid without interest. If any debt is still outstanding at 1 January 2022, Council's *Rates Financial Hardship Policy* will apply.

Rates and sundry debtors deferral and interest hold:

If the sundry debtor, resident, business or commercial ratepayer is unable to enter into a payment plan, Council will defer the debt accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic and will not charge interest on this debt from 1 March 2020 until 31 December 2021 to allow ample time for the debt to be paid without interest. If any debt is still outstanding at 1 January 2022, Council's *Rates Financial Hardship Policy* will apply.

Debt recovery:

Council will make a reasonable attempt to contact a resident or business about their overdue account. This may include a reminder letter, account statement, email or phone call. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Council will hold off on all legal action for the collection of sundry fees and rates and charges.

The above does not include legal action to recover the payment of fines. The debtor will be liable for all legal costs incurred by Council in the debt collection process.

Deployment

The Finance Department are to be familiar with, and accountable for, the delivery of this Policy. This will be measured via quarterly Workplan Reviews. In specific terms the responsibility for the implementation of this policy can be described as follows:

- The Manager Finance is responsible for overall implementation of this Policy.
- The Assistant Accountant is responsible for forwarding 'Courtesy' letters to encourage the arrangement of payment plans, assessing proposed payment plans and providing the Chief Executive Officer with information about outstanding debts where no payment arrangements have been entered into.

- The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for authorising further action on debts which remain unpaid or with no payment arrangements.
- The Audit Committee together with Council are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Policy and any subsequent reviews/amendments.

Application of the Policy

This policy applies to residents and ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship due to the impact of COVID-19 and face difficulties in paying their rates and charges or other debts owed to Council.

Resources

The following resources are committed by Council to assist with the implementation of this Policy:

- Manager Finance to manage implementation of this Policy.
- Assistant Accountant to implement this Policy.
- Audit Committee and Council to monitor implementation of this Policy.
- Other resources as deemed necessary by the Chief Executive Officer.

Results

The deployment of this policy together with the results achieved will be reviewed monthly throughout the COVID-19 crisis through the monthly finance reports presented to Council.



Authorised by:

Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer