towongshire

Towong Shire Council Annual Report

2024–2025



towong.vic.gov.au

Front Cover: Tallangatta Lookout with Lake Road in distance

From the Tallangatta Lookout, visitors can enjoy sweeping views of Lake Hume and the township nestled along its foreshore. The town was relocated to its present site, formerly known as Bulga, in 1956 to make way for the expansion of the Hume Dam.

Acknowledgement of Country

Towong Shire Council acknowledges all the Traditional Custodians throughout the Shire, we recognise their continued care of lands and waters, their living knowledges and wisdom. We pay our respect to Elders past and present, we honour their stories, leadership and strength. We understand that their voice holds the knowledges that has carried them for thousands of years, we are committed to listening and working together to help build a stronger and more inclusive society.

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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 2024-2025, 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.





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 6,223* 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 strong agricultural sector, tourism, and timber production. Approximately two-thirds of businesses in the Shire are in the agricultural and forestry industries.

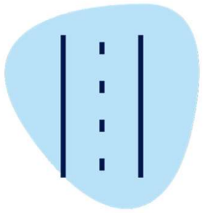
*ABS statistics

Facts, statistics, characteristics



Population

Population[1] – 6,223
Area[1] – 6,675 km²
Private dwellings – 3,106



Roads & Transport

Council roads – 1,183 km
Arterial roads – 483 km
Number of registered vehicles – 4,696
People living near public transport – 5.3%



Individuals & Households

Median age[1] – **52**
Average household size[1] – **2.2**
Access to internet at home[1] – **74.2%**



Economy

Businesses[1] – **925**
Employment participation rate[1] – **88.8%**
Median weekly household income[1] – **$1,282**



Social & Health

People who rated their community as a pleasant environment[2] – 85%
Children fully immunised between 24 and 27 months[4] – 91.3%
Kindergarten participation[3] – 88.9%
People who are members of a sports group[1] – 58.5%

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (https://dbr.abs.gov.au)
2 Vic Health (https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Vic161_Towong_indicator_v5.pdf)
3 State Government of Victoria (https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/the-child-children-andyoung-people-participate-in-learning-and-education/resource/3809bb4d-0c67-440c-927cf5486e54fd25)
4 Australian Government Department of Health (https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/immunisation-data/childhood-immunisation-coverage/current-coverage-data-tables-for-all-children)
Unless otherwise indicated, statistics are taken from the latest year available.

About our organisation

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

Community Vision

The Community Vision 2031 was first developed in 2021 based on the feedback received during our previous Council Plan engagement. To determine if we should refine or change our community vision we asked the community if the statement was still relevant to them. We conducted a survey in the first half of 2025 where 70.5% of respondents indicated our Community Vision was still relevant.

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

Council Mission

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.

"To provide strong leadership and to work with our communities to enhance their social, economic and environmental wellbeing."

Council Values



Teamwork
We will help others to achieve by being positive, enthusiastic and confident.



Integrity
We will be honest with strong moral principles.



Pride
We will always take care in what we do.



Respect
We will listen and consider other perspectives and treat each other with courtesy.

Message from the Mayor and CEO

We are very pleased to present the 2024/25 Towong Shire Council Annual Report. This report provides a review of the Council Plan initiatives completed during the year and the ways that we increased and enhanced the services and infrastructure we provide to our communities.

A significant amount of progress was made in delivering important infrastructure that supports our communities and in particular, our young people, being active. Notably these included the Bellbridge Walking Trail, Corryong Skate Park and Circuit Trail Projects, and the Dartmouth Splash Park and Pump Track.

The Corryong CBD Streetscape Upgrade project was a key initiative under the Council Plan 2021–2025 and while there were some hurdles, this, along with a range of other important capital works projects were completed during the year. These included the upgrade of Georges Creek Road, the Corryong Heavy Vehicle Bypass along the Stock Route, and Stage Two works on the Great River Road.

The Resilient Buildings project has commenced implementation and is set to deliver invaluable improvements to our rural community facilities across the municipality, providing for water tanks, solar panels and batteries to provide backup power solutions as well as communication backup solutions. This project will increase the resilience of our community facilities in the event of future natural disasters.

During the year a new Towong Shire Council Youth Strategy was adopted, and we hosted youth-focused events, programs, and activities across Towong Shire.

The three-year-old kindergarten program was successfully integrated with the four-year-old program and is now operational in Corryong, Tallangatta, Bellbridge, and Walwa. The Walwa Early Years service has also been relocated to the Primary school site, with these activities providing a consistent and enriching early education experience for children in these communities.

Council's Maternal Child Health team continues to offer essential services across five locations in the Shire where we provide weekly programs for first-time mothers, conduct playgroups, and make home visits to support and assess families within the community.

The progress we have made in delivering inclusion activities was very pleasing and included finalising our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), erecting signage across the Shire exploring our region's First Nations Heritage, and once again supporting IDAHOBIT Day.

Diversification of the Shire's economy continued across the year, and we continued to look at innovative ways of supporting businesses in the Shire as well as continuing to attract more visitors.

New gateway signage branded under "The Undiscovered" was installed welcoming visitors to each of our townships on the Murray Valley Highway between Tallangatta and Corryong. The signage was supported by the launch of The Undiscovered website, the new signage and the website combine to create a new showcase for visitors featuring the many built and natural attractions within Towong Shire.

In 2024-2025 over one thousand tonnes, or 57.47% of the total amount of garbage and recyclables collected, was diverted from landfill through kerbside collection bins – which was a significant increase on the prior years result.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Councillors. During the year they worked relentlessly to pursue our Community Vision to be the ideal place to be. Our Councillors also represented the interests of our community in a range of advocacy activities undertaken during the year highlighted by their continuing support for a new hospital on a greenfield site in Albury Wodonga.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the small but hard-working team of staff who continue to deliver high-quality results for our communities. It is through their commitment and hard work that we will be able to deliver on our vision of Towong being the ideal place to be.



Cr Andrew Whitehead
Mayor

Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer

Our Councillors



Cr Andrew Whitehead | Mayor

Cr Andrew Whitehead was first elected to Council in October 2016 and was re-elected for his third term on Council and fourth term as Mayor in November 2024. Cr Whitehead has been an active volunteer in the Upper Murray for over 40 years. He grew up in the Upper Murray and after completing school at Corryong High School, was a mechanic for 30 years as well as working on the family beef and sheep farm at Towong Upper. Cr Whitehead is married to Brenda and they have four children, and he now works full-time on the family farm.



Cr Peter Tolsher | Deputy Mayor

Cr Peter Tolsher has been a resident of Tallangatta since 1976. He is married to Joanne, who was the Librarian at Tallangatta for 35 years, and has two children and two grandchildren. His professional career spanned 40 years including a senior management role at North East Water before retiring in 2022. His dedication extended beyond his professional role, actively contributing to the Water Industry Operators Association as a voluntary board member for over 10 years. Cr Tolsher previously served as a Councillor on Towong Shire Council from 2016 to 2020. He is passionate about improving local infrastructure and services for ratepayers and residents across the Shire.



Cr David Wortmann

Cr David Wortmann has a long history of service to Towong Shire Council. He was first elected to Council in November 2008 and re-elected for a fifth term in November 2024. He has served six terms as Mayor and is Council's representative to the peak body for Local Government, the Municipal Association of Victoria. A lifelong resident of Granya, Cr Wortmann is married with two adult children and runs a beef and sheep farm as well as operating a school bus service. He has been a CFA volunteer for 46 years and is also Secretary of the Granya Cemetery Trust.



Cr Denise Anderson

Cr Denise Anderson was elected to Council on 24 October 2020 for her first term. 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 and has experience working in the banking and medical industries in the areas of customer service and management. She has been involved with a variety of school and community organisations such as Community Recovery Committees and has been a strong voice advocating for her community on Local, State and Federal Government issues.



Cr Jon Pitman

Cr Jon Pitman is married to Caz and is the proud father of four boys. Since moving to Corryong in 2001, he has been involved in the community in many ways from the Man from Snowy River Bush Festival to Sacred Heart School, as well as being a long term member of the local CFA brigade. He has been on the committee of the Corryong Recreation Reserve and a member of a number of other local community groups. Cr Pitman's career experience covers domestic and civil construction and maintenance, tourism, education, small project and site management. Cr Pitman's focus is on bringing community together and a sustainable legacy for our future.

Outgoing Councillors October 2024

Thanks go to our outgoing Councillors who finished their tenures with Council in October 2024.



Cr Aaron Scales

Cr Aaron Scales was first elected to Council in October 2012. He was re-elected to Council on 24 October 2020 and served three terms. He has served one term as Mayor. Cr Scales studied Law, Accounting and Hospitality/Tourism and has completed a Masters Degree in Business Administration. He was raised on his family's farm at Dartmouth and has now settled in the town with his two children.



Cr Peter Dikschei

Cr Peter Dikschei was elected to Council on 24 October 2020 for his first term 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.

Our staff

Senior Management Team

Juliana Phelps | Chief Executive Officer

Juliana is passionate about the sustainability of rural communities and small rural councils, and is committed to ensuring that the residents and ratepayers of Towong Shire have access to quality services and infrastructure. Juliana has served as Chief Executive Officer since 2009, having previously held the position of Director of Community and Corporate Services. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Chartered Accountant, with experience auditing private and public organisations. Juliana holds a Master of Business Administration from Charles Sturt University and a Bachelor of Business (Accounting and Economics). Before joining Council, Juliana held a senior management position in the manufacturing sector in Albury-Wodonga and Melbourne. In 2020, Juliana was recognised as one of the Top 50 Public Sector Women in Victoria.

Jamie Heritage | Director of Infrastructure and Environment

Jamie has a passion for civil works and has been the Director of Infrastructure and Environment since 2024. With a background in Mechanical Engineering, he brings extensive experience from both the private and public sectors, having held operational and engineering roles in local government. Throughout his career, Jamie has been committed to delivering practical, innovative solutions that benefit communities. He is guided by his motto: *"Find reasons why we can, not reasons why we can't."*

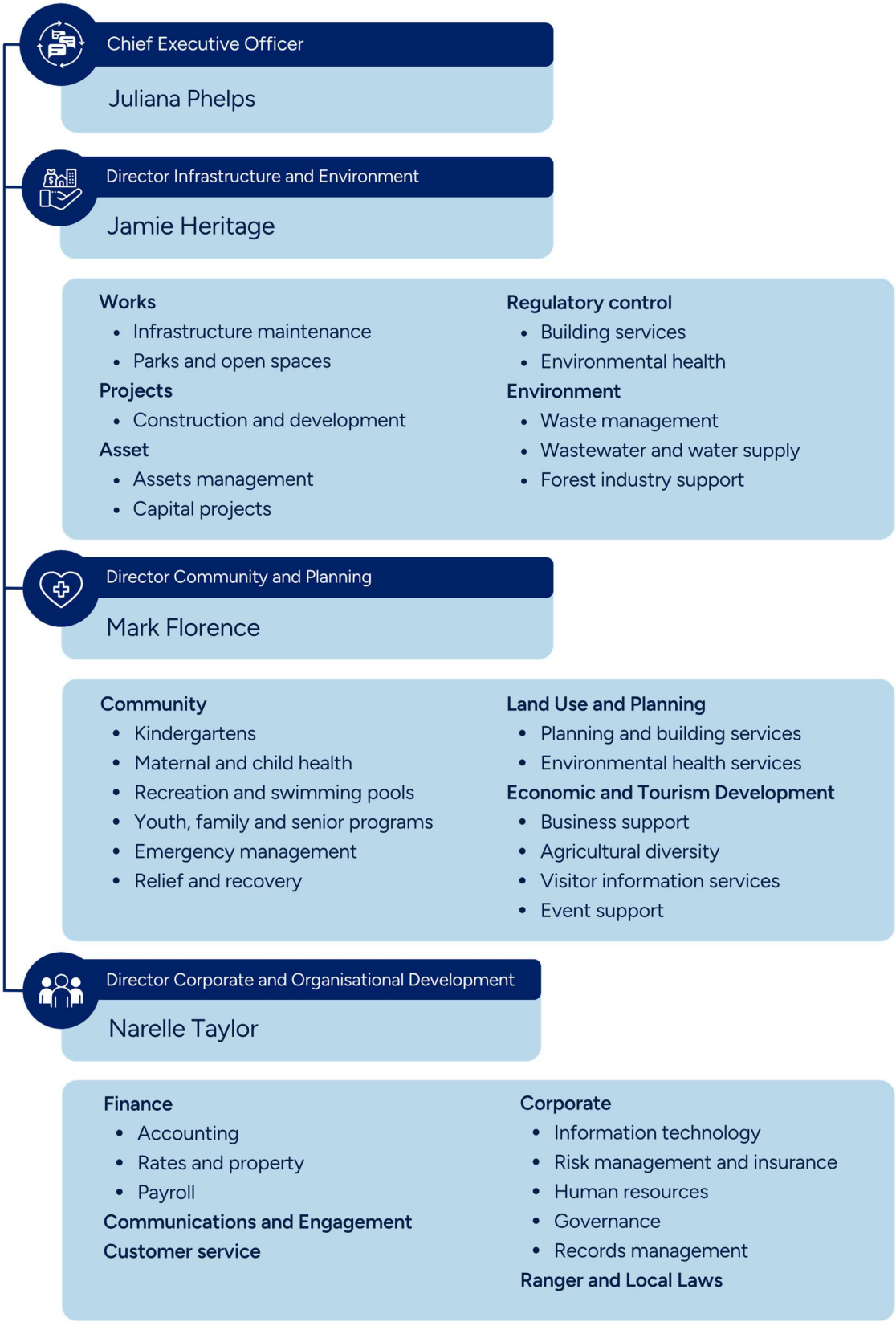
Narelle Taylor | Director of Corporate and Organisational Development

Narelle has served as Director of Corporate and Organisational Development since 2023 and is passionate about the future direction and sustainability of towns in local and rural areas. With a background in the accounting industry, she specialises in audit and compliance while also bringing extensive operational and strategic leadership skills. She holds a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and a Graduate Diploma of Chartered Accounting from the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia.

Mark Florence | Director of Community and Planning

Mark is dedicated to fostering community wellbeing and development. He works to enhance community services, ensuring that families and residents in Towong Shire have better access to support and facilities. Mark has held the position of Director of Community and Planning since August 2024, having previously worked within local government and the education sector. He has experience in youth services, recreation, community development, and planning. Mark is a graduate of the LG Pro Executive Leadership Program and holds a range of diplomas in education and management.

Organisational structure



Workforce statistics

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) council staff, as at 30 June 2025, 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	34.6	3.6	0.8	1.3	0.8	0.1	**41.3**
Community wellbeing	2.4	9.0	1.2	23.1	0.1	0.6	**36.4**
Economic and tourism development	-	2.0	-	0.3	-	-	**2.3**
Land use	-	-	1.8	-	-	-	**1.8**
Environmental sustainability	3.0	-	-	-	0.5	-	**3.5**
Organisational improvement	5.3	6.6	2.7	6.3	-	0.1	**20.8**
Relief and recovery	-	1.0	-	-	-	-	**1.0**
Executive	-	2.0	-	-	-	-	**2.0**
TOTAL	**45.3**	**24.1**	**6.5**	**31.0**	**1.4**	**0.8**	**109.0**

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) council staff, as at 30 June 2025, by employment classification and gender is set out below.

Employment Classification	Male	Female	Total
Band 1	-	-	**-**
Band 2	-	0.52	**0.52**
Band 3	18.8	8.19	**27.00**
Band 4	11.98	9.70	**21.68**
Band 5	3.17	9.54	**12.71**
Band 6	4.69	9.37	**14.06**
Band 7	9.18	3.55	**12.73**
Band 8	0.04	0.38	**0.42**
Band not applicable	5.3	14.63	**19.93**
TOTAL	**53.15**	**55.89**	**109.04**

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.

The year in review

A snapshot

July 2024
Upper Murray Recovery Hub Closure

Council celebrated the resilience and strength of the Upper Murray community with a special event to mark the closure of the Recovery Hub. Established in the immediate aftermath of the fires, the Hub brought together key government and community agencies, coordinated essential services, and provided a vital gathering place where community members could find support.

August 2024
Tri Council Meeting

Alpine, Indigo, and Towong Shire Councils voted unanimously to take a united stance to advocate for better health outcomes for their communities. On Tuesday 13 August, in Beechworth, Councils agreed on a range of advocacy actions, including calling on the Victorian and New South Wales governments to pause the current redevelopment plans for the Albury Hospital and redirect efforts towards a new single-site facility built on a greenfield site.

September 2024
Mitta Mitta Streetscape Stage 2

Stage 2 of the Mitta Mitta Streetscape with the construction of a new pedestrian footpath along Lafontaine Street, from Little Snowy Creek Bridge to Magorra Park was completed.

October 2024
Completion of the Corryong Skatepark.

Following the 2019/20 bushfires, the redevelopment of the Corryong Skate Park was identified as a priority by local youth and the Corryong Community Recovery Committee. Council secured $882,000 through the National Recovery and Resilience Agency's Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants Program. Council delivered a new skate park to support recovery and provide lasting benefits for the community.

November 2024
Great River Road Artwork

The final large-scale artwork on the Great River Road was installed. 'Your Song' is a stunning fabricated steel sculpture depicting two Brolgas that majestically rise above the Cumbungi along the Towong Walking Track.

December 2024
December on Hanson

Council and the community came together on Hanson Street, Corryong, to celebrate the festive season. The street was lined with decorations, including cutouts of local residents and community members, as well as a competition that added to the festive spirit.

January 2025
Australia Day

Annually, Council assists community groups in ceremonies that honour the individuals, community groups, and businesses that have made significant contributions to our communities throughout the year. Celebrations were held in Bellbridge, Corryong, Eskdale and Tallangatta, welcoming new Australian citizens and recognising those who made outstanding contributions that have enriched our communities.

February 2025
Cat Desexing Program

Council launched a cat desexing program to support residents caring for semi-owned and unowned cats, helping them take full ownership. The program was a great success, with 47 cats desexed, microchipped and registered.

March 2025
Dartmouth Splash Pad opened

The Dartmouth Splash Pad opened with the support of Council and the Dartmouth Community Progress Association. The project supported Council's 2021–2025 Council Plan commitment to increasing recreation opportunities for young families in Dartmouth.

April 2025
Council Plan 2025-2029 Consultations

Council held 17 consultation sessions for the new Council Plan 2025–2029. These sessions reviewed the relevance of the Community Vision and identified the services, projects, and priorities that will guide Council's work over the next four years.

May 2025
Draft Youth Strategy

Council adopted the Draft Youth Strategy, setting the direction for Towong Shire Council's youth focus for 2025–2029.

June 2025
Council adopted Budget 2025/26 and Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029

Council adopted the Budget 2025/26. The Budget prioritised the renewal and maintenance of existing assets, ensuring our roads, bridges, parks and community facilities remain safe, functional and fit for purpose. The budget includes a 3% increase to the rate income raised by Council, in accordance with the rate cap set by the State Government.

Council adopted the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029, which has a key focus to complete the outstanding priorities from the Council Plan 2021-2025 in particular, the continued maintenance of our roads and road assets in line with our Road Management Plan.

Major capital works

Bellbridge Walking Trail
Total Project Cost: $500,000

The Bellbridge Our Town Place Plan identifies the importance of enhancing recreational and economic opportunities in the area. This project directly supports those goals by:

- **Boosting tourism** – improving the visitor experience along the Great River Road and making Bellbridge a more attractive stop for travellers.
- **Encouraging community activation** – providing a welcoming space for residents to gather, relax, and enjoy the natural beauty of Lake Hume.

Stage 1 of the project was completed in 2023. In 2024, stage 2 and 3 works commenced on the new footpath, starting at the park approximately 170 metres south-west of Mitta Avenue, Bellbridge, and continuing through to the Kurrajong Gap Boat Ramp (Victoria side of Lake Hume).

The project was completed in mid-2025, delivering an important recreational and tourism asset for the Bellbridge community and its visitors.

Corryong Circuit Trail
Total Project Cost: $750,000

The Corryong Circuit Trail Project has delivered a 4.7km shared walking and cycling trail, connecting points of cultural, natural, and historical significance while providing valuable recreation opportunities for the community.

Previously, Corryong's footpath network did not provide the necessary connections to support off-road community recreation and exercise. This project addresses that gap by looping the township through a combination of existing footpaths, new concrete and sealed pathways, and key infrastructure upgrades, including a pedestrian bridge and boardwalk.

The project has delivered:

- A pedestrian boardwalk and bridge along sections of Cemetery Creek.
- Approximately 975m of new sealed paths along Cemetery Creek.
- Approximately 2.2km of new concrete paths along township roads.
- Interpretive and wayfinding signage along the full 4.7km trail.
- Landscaping enhancements to improve amenity and trail user experience.

Funding for the project has been provided by the Victorian Government's Regional Infrastructure Fund, the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, and the Australian Government's Local Economic Recovery Fund.

The trail forms part of initiatives set out in the Council Plan 2021–2025, specifically the strategic parks and playgrounds upgrade program, reinforcing Council's commitment to community health, recreation, and regional tourism.

Corryong Skate Park
Total Project Cost: $882,000

Following the devastating 2019-20 bushfires in the Upper Murray region, the redevelopment of the Corryong Skate Park was identified as a key priority by the Corryong Youth Working Groups and aligned strongly with the recovery priorities set by the Corryong Community Recovery Committee.

Council prioritised the project within its Council Plan 2021–2025 and, in 2022, successfully secured $882,000 from the National Recovery and Resilience Agency's Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grants Program for the construction of a new skate park in Corryong.

Extensive community consultation was undertaken in 2022 and 2023, with feedback confirming that the new skate park should be relocated from its existing site on Strezlecki Way to the former Corryong Primary School site, located at the corner of Anzac Avenue and Towong Road.

In March 2023, internationally renowned skate park designers Convic were awarded the contract to deliver the design phase of the project.

The upgraded facility was completed in late 2024, providing enhanced skate and recreational elements that encourage active lifestyles, support social connections, and create a welcoming, modern space for young people, families, and the broader Upper Murray community.

Dartmouth Splash Pad & Pump Track
Total Project Cost: $350,000

The Dartmouth Splash Park and Pump Track project was delivered as part of the Council Plan 2021–2025, reflecting Council's commitment to increasing recreational opportunities for young families in Dartmouth.

The project aimed to provide high-quality, safe, and engaging outdoor facilities that encourage physical activity, social connection, and community participation. To ensure the project met the needs of the community, an information session was held in October 2023. Community feedback was sought on key elements of the project, including:

- The optimal location for the Splash Park.
- Preferred layout options.
- Ideas for the sustainable reuse of water.

Council worked closely with a landscape architect to develop several layout options, which were presented to the community for input. This consultation helped shape the final design to ensure it was both functional and enjoyable for residents and visitors.

Construction of the Pump Track commenced prior to the Splash Park and was officially opened in January 2024, providing a safe and exciting space for young people to develop skills in cycling and other wheeled sports. Works on the walking track were mapped and commenced shortly after.

The Dartmouth Splash Pad was completed and officially opened in March 2025, delivering a vibrant and inclusive recreational space for families. Together, these facilities provide safe and accessible opportunities for outdoor play, promote healthy lifestyles, and strengthen community connections in Dartmouth.

Corryong CBD Streetscape Upgrade
Total Project Cost: $2,947,744

The Corryong CBD Streetscape Upgrade project was a key initiative under the Council Plan 2021–2025 and the Municipal Recovery Plan, aimed at revitalising the township's central business district and supporting the long-term economic and community resilience of the Upper Murray region following the Black Summer bushfires. The investment is strategically important for Corryong, enhancing its role as a service centre that supports regional productivity, connectivity, and development.

The project focuses on Hanson Street, between Jardine Street and Donaldson Street, with the intent of creating a welcoming, vibrant town centre for both residents and visitors.

Key project deliverables were:

- Improved carparking
- Widened footpaths with active and casual spaces
- New footpaths
- Landscaping
- New street lighting
- Signage
- Outdoor seating areas
- A pedestrian crossing leading to the Man from Snowy River Arcade

The Man from Snowy River Arcade has also benefited from upgrades, including a new amenities block, shade sails over existing seating areas, a solar-powered shade structure over the carpark, and an electric vehicle charging station.

While the project has taken longer than anticipated due to a range of internal and external challenges, these measures were necessary to ensure all works met the required standards.

The Great River Road (Stage 2)
Total Project Cost: $5,000,000

The Great River Road project forms part of the Council Plan 2021–2025 initiatives and aligns with the Upper Murray 2030 Vision Plan, which identified transformative projects to enhance tourism, recreation, and cultural experiences in the region.

The 153km Great River Road stretches from Bellbridge to Khancoban, following the bends of the Murray River. The route offers visitors a premier touring experience with unique views of the Upper Murray mountains and valleys, and the spectacular Snowy Mountains as a backdrop. Along the journey, travellers can enjoy rest stops, storyboards celebrating the region's rich culture and history, and a collection of nine large-scale artworks that bring the landscape to life.

Stage 1 of the Great River Road was completed in 2019 and delivered five interactive sculptures, including the Bogong Moth and Murray Cod at Tintaldra, the Murray Cray at Bringenbrong, the Wedge-tailed Eagle at Mount Alfred Gap, and the Rainbow Trout at Khancoban. During this stage, opportunities for future expansions were identified to create the current Stage 2 of the project. This current Stage 2 work focused on delivering eight key initiatives, guided by the Shire's Community Recovery Committees to support ongoing regional recovery following the 2019–20 bushfires.

Key elements include additional wayside stops, walking trails, a marketing campaign, and enhanced interpretive signage along the route covering Indigenous history, early European settlement, natural history, and the stories behind the sculptures.

Stage 2 also included the installation of the final large-scale artwork, *Your Song*, a striking fabricated steel sculpture depicting two Brolgas rising above the Cumbungi along the Towong

Walking Track. Inspired by the story of the last two Brolgas in Towong, this artwork highlights the cultural and environmental significance of the wetlands where the birds nested.

Stage 2 works and the total Great River Road project were completed in August 2025 and have been funded through a $5 million grant from the Victorian Government's Bushfire Recovery Regional Economic Stimulus and Resilience Fund. The Great River Road now stands as a premier destination for drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, bushwalkers, and campers, enhancing the visitor experience and supporting tourism and economic growth in the Upper Murray region.

Walwa Playground
Total Project Cost: $80,000

The Walwa Playground project delivered an upgraded recreational space for the local community, enhancing the existing playground on Main Street with modern play equipment and new landscaping to create a vibrant and welcoming environment.

This project was funded through a generous donation from the City of Kingston, provided in response to the 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires, supporting the community's recovery and resilience.

In February 2024, Council engaged directly with young community members at the Walwa Primary School and Early Years Centre to gather input on the types of play equipment they would like to see. A wider community survey was also conducted to collect feedback and ideas from residents, ensuring the design reflects the needs and preferences of the local community.

Following the engagement phase, the project was put out to tender and construction works commenced. The upgraded playground was officially reopened in March 2025 to the public, providing a safe, enjoyable, and inclusive space for children and families in Walwa.

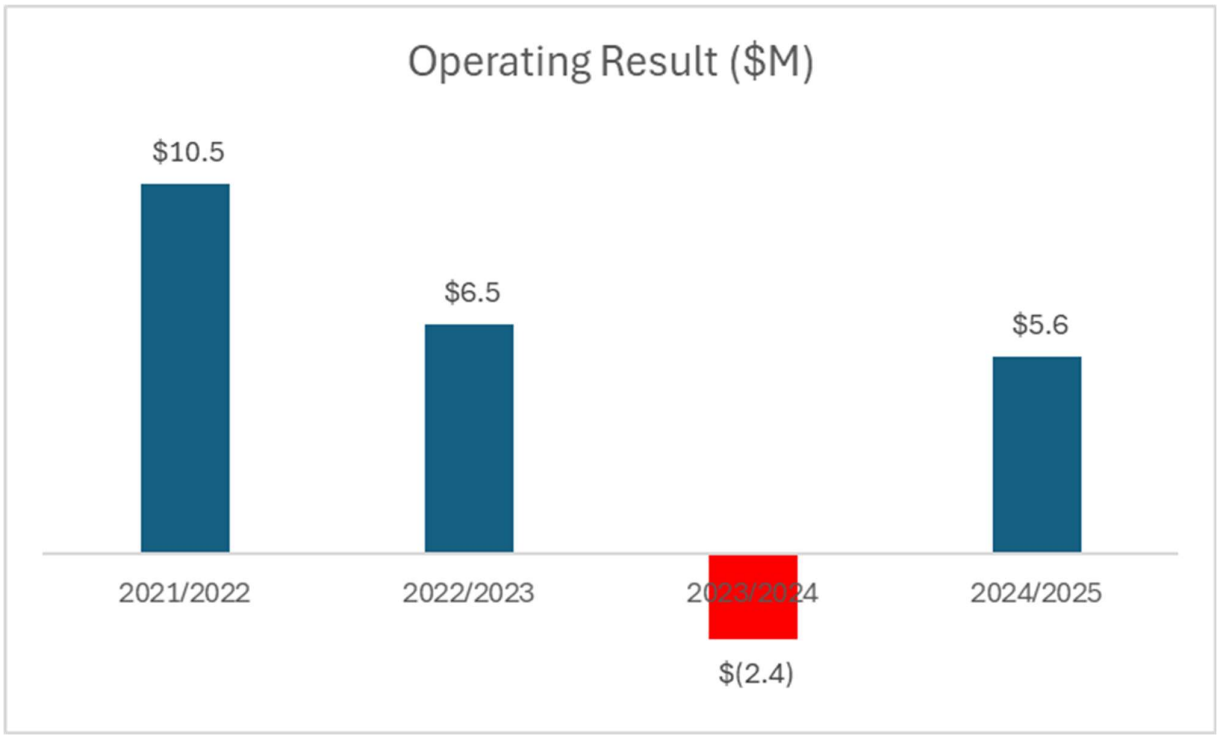
Financial Summary

Operating result

Our Financial Statements for 2024/25 resulted in a surplus of $5.6 million against a budget of $1.9 million deficit. This was primarily due to:

- Accruals of $1.5 million DRFA insurance settlement relating to the 2022 Floods;
- $3.3 Million (or 50%) of 2025/26 Financial Assistance Grants paid early.
- Non-recurrent grant income exceeding budget by $3 million.

A comparison of operating results from the prior four years is provided in the graph below.



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. During the 2024/25 financial year, the rate cap adopted by Towong Shire Council was 2.75%.

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 that impact our financial sustainability. In addition, Council does not have the option to raise revenue through other avenues like larger councils do, such as parking fees, development contributions and levies.

Sustainability outlook

Maintaining services and infrastructure at the standard our communities expect presents considerable challenges, particularly as recent inflation has far outpaced the State Government's rate cap. Over several years, we have worked hard to secure substantial grant funding to support a wide range of capital works benefiting our communities. Councillors and Council officers have actively advocated for the needs of ratepayers and residents, submitting many well-considered applications to both State and Federal Governments. This work has delivered results over the past few years. While we now have substantial funds to support our communities, much of this funding is tied to specific, one-off projects. Reliance on such grants is not sustainable, and without ongoing support from Federal and State governments, our ability to meet future community needs could be compromised. We also acknowledge the rising ongoing costs associated with new infrastructure and the impact these have on our long-term financial sustainability.

Council continues to advocate to State and Federal Governments for more reliable funding to support long-term infrastructure renewal. This advocacy includes direct engagement with government representatives, the submission of formal proposals, and collaborative campaigns alongside other small rural councils. In the absence of more dependable funding, it may become necessary to reduce services or limit the maintenance and renewal of existing infrastructure.

Long-term response

Council's long-term approach to sustainability focuses on increasing the number of residents across Towong Shire. This strategy enables better use of existing rural infrastructure and allows costs to be distributed across a broader ratepayer base. Council has demonstrated its commitment to this approach through the ongoing delivery of several key strategic projects, including:

- Master planning exercises in key communities (Our Town Towards 2030 for Tallangatta, Mitta Mitta, Bellbridge, Corryong, Bethanga)
- Construction of new recreational facilities and multi-purpose centres throughout the Shire (Corryong, Cudgewa, Mitta Mitta, Tallangatta, Tallangatta Valley and Walwa)
- Assisting the applications for residential subdivisions in growth areas around Tallangatta and Bellbridge.

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

Without adequate funding to provide essential services and infrastructure, residents may relocate to larger shires and regional cities where their needs can be met. A declining local population creates a downward spiral for rural towns, with fewer residents contributing to the community and sharing the costs of local services and infrastructure. This, in turn, places increased financial pressure on rural councils.

Rates and charges

Rates and charges increased by $212,000, supported by a 2.75% rise in general rates and the municipal charge, in line with the State Government mandated rate cap approved as part of the 2024/25 Budget. Adhering to the rate cap continues to place considerable strain on Council's financial sustainability. We also recognise that higher inflation and slower wage growth are impacting our residents and have determined that the rate increase aligns appropriately with their capacity to pay.

Fees and fines

Statutory fees were down by $51,000 on the prior year and $109,000 on budget due to a lower than expected level of building permits, fees and charges. With the planned residential developments in Tallangatta and Bethanga, we expect revenue from building and planning permits to increase over the years.

Grant income

Net grant income was $20.8 million, well up on budget ($13.5M) and prior year ($8.5M). The key factors that contributed to this result included the timing related to the receipt of the Financial Assistance Grants and Local Roads Fundings, both of which 100% of the current year allocation, plus 50% ($3M) of the next year allocation was paid. The completion of a number of specific purpose grants, such as community projects, meant that we recognised higher income as a result of these being carried forward from the prior year.

Other Income

Other income was lower at $4.4 million, down from $4.9 million in the prior year but still well above budget of $2 million. Other income primarily reflects one-off events, including higher interest on investments ($1.4M) resulting from slower-than-planned capital expenditure, which allowed more funds to remain invested. Additional income was also received through insurance claims and disaster recovery funding, which together exceeded $2 million for the year.

Expenses

Expenditure increased by 7% over budget, contributed by higher expenditure related to community projects that were largely grant funded and not awarded at time of budget. Material costs exceeding the budget were driven by the increase in capital-related works. Cost savings were made in staffing costs ($1M) due to vacancies not being filled.

Capital expenditure

Capital works expenditure was in line with the prior year's spend, reaching $13 million, a very significant investment for our organisation. Despite the record capital spending, it was short of budget due to wet weather and the availability of contractors. $1.3 million was incurred on buildings and related improvements, $5.9 million on local roads, $1.9 million on bridges and $2 million of capital works relating to footpaths, cycleways, parks, open space and streetscapes.

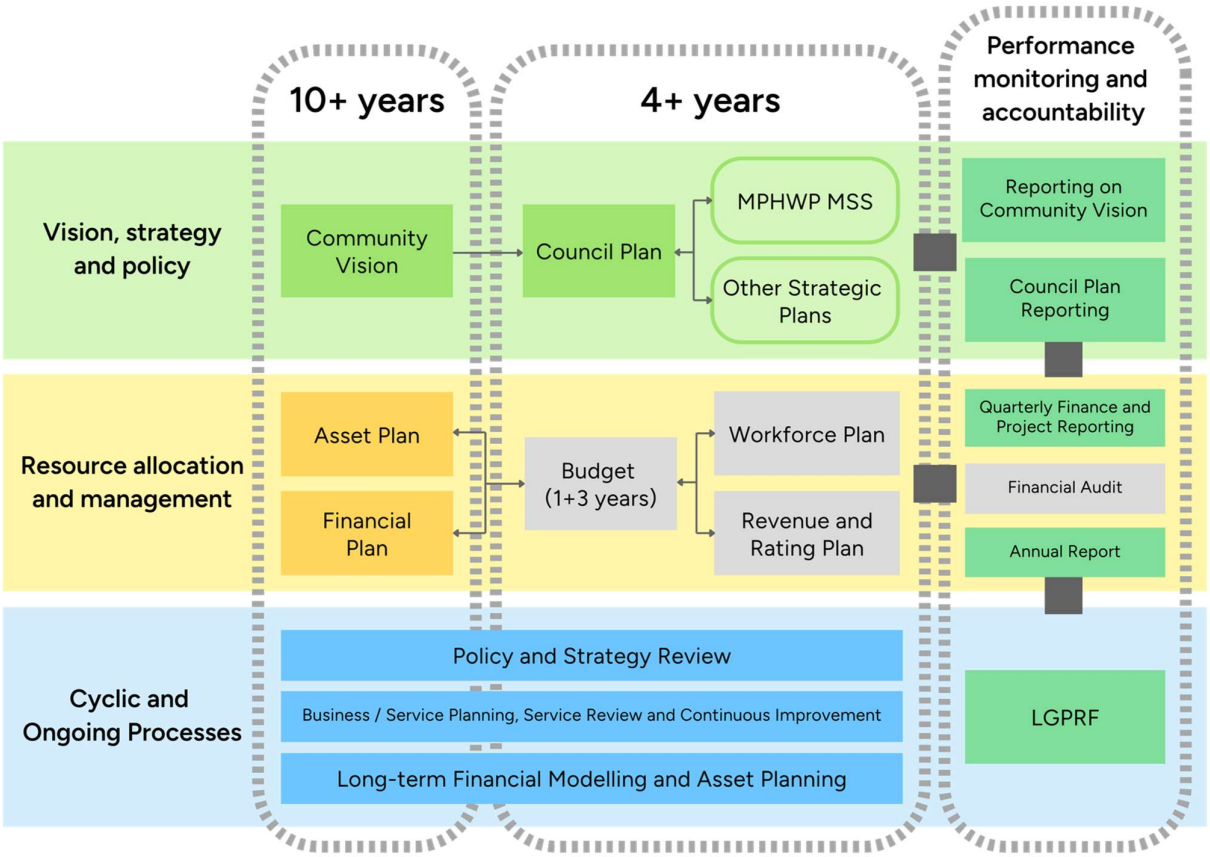
The carried forward amounts on capital projects now see this council budgeting for a capital spending program in the 2025/26 financial year of $12.2 million which include works relating to:

- Corryong Carparking
- Drainage Works, Eskdale
- Hanson Street, Corryong
- Evans Street, Corryong
- Georges Creek Road
- Thomas Lane Intersection
- Mitta Mitta Streetscape – Stage 2
- Various Renewal Programs

Our performance

Planning and reporting framework

The following diagram shows the relationships between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the planning and reporting 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.



*Adapted from the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions. (2021). Local Government Better Practice Guide 2021–2022 (p. 10).

Reporting on the delivery of the Council Plan

The following pages detail Council's performance for the 2024/25 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	• Completion of Wises Creek Road Stage 3 upgrade • Completion of the Stock Route Upgrade • Completion of Mitta Mitta Stage 1 • Completion of Eskdale Bridges – Little Snowy Creek Road and Smythe's Road • Completion of Corryong Circuit Trail Stage 2 • Completion of the Corryong Weighbridge and Truck wash
Challenges	• Significant increases in material and building costs. • Unavailability of civil contractors for capital projects due to commitments towards storm damage remedial works • Unavailability of design consultants to undertake project designs leading to delays.

The Major Capital Works summary provides a comprehensive review of the significant projects undertaken. In addition to this, renewal works are a priority and solid progress has been made in this regard with recent independent inspection and condition assessment works identifying an improvement in the condition of local roads over a number of years. The forecast requirement for pavement renewal and reseal renewal was contracted and spent, which underpins the successful management of our local road network over the long term. Sealing of gravel roads in townships has also been a focus with Legge Street and Sparrow Street in Granya being sealed.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Sealed local road requests	Reduction in number of requests	68	160	192	No*
Unsealed local road requests	Reduction in number of requests	115	166	174	No*
Requests per 100km of sealed local roads	Reduction in number of requests	6	14.50	16.23	No*
Unsealed road condition	Improvement in condition	226	D/U	D/U	No*
Fatal and non-fatal crash statistics across the shire attributable to road safety	Improvement in crash statistics	1	D/U	D/U	D/U
Completion of annual capital works projects	100% complete	32.2%	54%	56.69%	No

*The impact of rain and storm events over the last two years has resulted in significant damage to Council's road infrastructure. This has driven an increase from 2021/22, and consequently we have not met these targets.

D/U = Data unavailable at the time

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
ROADS ***Satisfaction of use*** *Sealed local road requests* [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	17.42	24.53	29.64	The number of road requests has increased again over the last year primarily as a result of damage caused by flooding and heavy rain over the past 12-36 months. This is also consistent with the decrease in community satisfaction of sealed local roads.
Condition *Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards* [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	97.00%	97.52%	99.37%	Sealed roads with an observable SCI score of 3.3 and below; as measured by the Infrastructure Management Group; are assessed to be above the renewal intervention level.
Service cost *Cost of sealed local road reconstruction* [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	$62.24	$65.50	$64.00	Increases in cost due to inflationary pressures.
Service Cost *Cost of sealed local road resealing* [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	$6.51	$6.64	7.00	This cost has remained stable. This recognises the good value Council is able to obtain by partnering with quality local contractors.

Satisfaction				
Satisfaction with sealed local roads [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	38.00	38.00	42.00	A significant drop in the community satisfaction level for local roads is reflective of a state-wide trend. Council's performance is slightly below the average for comparative small rural Councils.

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	In the 2024/25 year, there are 70 projects, including new initiatives and carry-over works. Of these, 31 have been completed, 28 are in progress, 4 are in the design phase, 1 is in the tender phase, and 6 have not commenced.
1.2	Deliver infrastructure projects that arise from place-based master planning	In Progress	Tintaldra, Cudgewa and Towong plans development complete, implementation of works expected in the 25-29 Council Plan.
1.3	Complete Stage Two Great River Road	Complete	
1.4	Continue the upgrade of Georges Creek Road	Complete	
1.5	Complete upgrades of Hanson Street from Sugarloaf Road to Kiel Street	In Progress	Hanson Street Stage 1, between Keil and McKay St, design has been completed, concept Artist impressions are being prepared with Community Consultation completed in July 2025.
1.6	Complete the upgrade of the Stock Route in Corryong	Complete	Completed in the 2023/24 financial year.
1.7	Progressively deliver the upgrade of the unsealed sections of Lake Road	In Progress	Construction drawings and land surveys are complete. Stage 1 due to commence in early 25-26.
1.8	Investigate upgrade options for Wises Creek Road	Complete	
1.9	Advocate for the upgrade of the Benambra Corryong Road from Staceys Bridge 40km South	Ongoing	Ongoing
1.10	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of key transport routes and hazardous road alignments to improve efficiency and safety	Ongoing	Parish Lane and Hanson Street, Corryong: A functional design has been prepared, and Road Safety Audits have been commissioned for both the design and the existing Thomas Lane intersection to improve truck access along the stock route. Works have been issued to the contractor for completion of

			minor works at both intersections, with major works at Parish Lane and Hanson Street planned within the staged Hanson Street construction approach.
1.11	Seek funding to deliver upgrades of load limited bridges on strategic transport routes.	In Progress	Springdale Road bridge construction is 95% complete, while Lake Road culverts have been completed.
1.12	Continue to deliver the upgrade of unsealed streets in urban areas program.	In Progress	Works on Sparrow Legge Street, Granya have been completed, and the design process is currently underway for Evans Street, Corryong.
1.13	Complete the upgrade of the Corryong CBD.	In Progress	Corryong CBD works 95% complete minor works remaining.
1.14.1	Complete streetscape upgrades in Dartmouth.	Complete	
1.14.2	Complete streetscape upgrades in Mitta Mitta.	In Progress	Funded Stage 1 projects complete; stage 2 underway
1.15.1	Conduct planning for streetscape upgrades in Tintaldra.	Complete	Streetscape masterplan completed and adopted.
1.15.2	Conduct planning for streetscape upgrades in Towong.	Complete	
1.15.3	Conduct planning for streetscape upgrades in Cudgewa.	Complete	
1.16	Continue to deliver the strategic footpath network improvement program in urban areas.	Complete	
1.17	Address long vehicle and overflow parking issues in CBD areas.	In Progress	Donaldson Street parking has been completed, with signage for long vehicle parking ordered for Donaldson Street and Wheeler Street. Options for additional rear-of-CBD parking are currently being investigated.
1.18	Seek funding to deliver improved public toilets across the Shire.	Complete	
1.19	Seek funding to deliver upgrades to town entrances and wayfinding signage across the shire	In Progress	Further progress is dependent on funding.
1.20	Seek funding to deliver an upgraded Corryong Integrated Community Centre	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
1.21	Increase the recreation opportunities for young families in Dartmouth	In Progress	Splashpad and Pumptrack completed

1.22	Review and deliver the strategic parks and playgrounds upgrade program to completion	In Progress	The Walwa Playground installation has been completed, with additional improvements to parks and gardens in Walwa currently in progress.
1.23	Undertake upgrades at the Colac Colac Caravan Park to ensure long term viability of the park	Complete	
1.24	Investigate options for additional boat ramps	Not Started	Future start date scheduled.
1.25	Deliver the Corryong aerodrome 24 hour fuel project	Complete	
1.26	Seek funding to deliver a rolling program for the maintenance of strategic limited access roads for improved emergency services access	Not Started	
1.27	Deliver annual asset inspection and renewal programs per asset management and road management plan requirements	Ongoing	External 4–5 year inspections have been completed, showing overall improvement of the road network over the past 20 years. Road inspections occur throughout the year and continue to be delivered as per the requirements of the road management plan.
1.28	Implement the maintenance program for Council's buildings	Ongoing	

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	• Implementation of the draft Reconciliation Action Plan, including cultural awareness training for staff, cultural awareness included in the staff induction program, art workshops, and Reconciliation week events. • Successful in receiving significant state government funding for the Bethanga Sports Pavilion ($1M), Corryong Library Refurbishment ($320K) • Increased library visitation and programming, and both libraries hosted inclusion events for Reconciliation Week and IDAHOIT Day. • Towong Shire Council Youth Strategy 2025-2029 adopted by Council and implementation has commenced. • Youth events held such as the North East Skate Park Series, with further events to take place as part of the engage funding we have accessed through partnerships with Gateway Health and neighbouring LGA's. • The new Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was drafted. • Completion of the Transforming Tintaldra Equine Arena and Rowan Park lighting projects. • Further support for the arts community (Bridge River Arts, Snowy Mountain Tango Festival and local school art installations). • Relocation of the Walwa Early Years Centre to the Walwa Primary School. • Continued provision of Early Years Services including childcare. Kindergarten, and maternal Child Health. • Emergency Management planning, collaborations, and funded program delivery continued.
Challenges	• Volunteer sustainability across the board but further impacted by the Shire's ageing demographic. • Being able to provide consistent levels of service and engagement due to the geographical population dispersion. • The continued escalation of construction costs is impacting the delivery of projects such as the Bullioh Female Friendly Facility. • Limited success in recruitment of staff in the Early Years sector.

In 2024/2025, Council supported a wide range of community and wellbeing initiatives, securing funding for several projects across the range of community wellbeing services. Key projects include the upgrade of lighting at Rowen Park Tallangatta, youth based events, art program supports to name a few.

Despite ongoing challenges in staff recruitment within the early years sector, exacerbated by Towong's remote location, Council continues to deliver valuable early years services across the Shire. The three-year-old kindergarten program has been successfully integrated with the four-year-old program and is now operational in Corryong, Tallangatta, Bellbridge, and Walwa. This integration has provided a consistent and enriching early education experience for children in these communities.

The Maternal Child Health team continues to offer essential services across five locations in the Shire. They provide weekly programs for first-time mothers, conduct playgroups, and make home visits to support and assess families within the community.

The Tallangatta Neighbourhood House delivered programs focused on mental health support, building resilience, and fostering community connectedness. Additionally, Council's libraries offered weekly sessions aimed at further contributing to community engagement.

Whilst waiting for formal endorsement of its Reconciliation Action Plan by Reconciliation Australia, Council began implementing actions through the services of a grant funded First Nations Cultural Awareness Officer. Actions included cultural awareness training for staff, activities in the Early Years services, Reconciliation Week programs, and connections with traditional owners.

Council maintained strong performance in its Emergency Management efforts including training of staff, conducting scenario responses, linking with other response agencies, and collaborating with neighbouring shires.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Wellbeing	Improved wellbeing	14.3%*	14.3%*	D/U	N/A
Community Resilience Plans	Plans developed	10	14	17	Yes
Sedentary behaviour	Reduction in sedentary behaviour	11.4%*	11.4%*	11.4%*	N/A
Family violence and suicide occurrences	Decrease in occurrences*	FV á 38.1% 0%	D/U	D/U	N/A
Participation in MCH, early education and early childcare services	Increased participation	91.1%	84.8%	85.51%	No
Participation in Council run social inclusion activities	Increased number of participants	1,628	1480	1720	Yes

* Data source issued every 3 years.
D/U = Data unavailable at the time

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
AQUATIC FACILITIES				
Service standard *Health inspections of aquatic facilities* [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	1.00	1.00	1.00	Life Saving Victoria conducting the Aquatic Facility and Safety Audits across both the Tallangatta and Corryong pools in the 2023/24 season. This will be completed again in 2025/26 as part of our two-yearly process. The swimming pools at both Corryong and Tallangatta passed legislative water quality requirements for safe pool operation when water testing was undertaken by Kernow Environmental Services early in the pool season. Eskdale pool was also included in this testing phase to support pool operations.
Utilisation *Utilisation of aquatic facilities*	1.12	1.37	1.85	Council operates two outdoor seasonal swimming pools. There were 11,506 visits recorded in 2024/25 compared to 10,804 in the prior year. Taking into account, 8480 in

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]				2022/23 and 6,783 visits in 2021/22. This highlights an increasing trend of usage.
Service cost *Cost of aquatic facilities* [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	$16.22	$26.10	$26.50	Despite rising industry costs, the service cost for Towong Shire Council is a good result and assisted by the increase in participation across the Tallangatta and Corryong Pools. When the nett position is considered under the management contract, the cost per visit drops to $16.
LIBRARIES ***Utilisation*** *Loans per head of population* [Number of physical library collection item loans / Population	New	2.12	2.79	This indicator has not previously been measured, so there is little commentary to this result over a period of time.
LIBRARIES ***Resource standard*** *Recently purchased library collection* *[Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x100.*	33.15%	28.47%	23.10%	The number of items purchased for the collection was slightly lower compared to previous years.
Participation *Library membership* [Number of registered library members / Population] x100	New	17.99%	19.54%	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 has been steadily declining.

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
Service cost *Cost of library service per population* [Direct cost of the library service / Population]	$22.57	$28.45	$39.97	Additional resources were required to cover additional leave incurred over the period.
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)				
Service standard *Infant enrolments in the MCH service* [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100	100%	100%	98%	Every child born in the LGA during 2023/24 was enrolled in the MCH service.
Service cost *Cost of the MCH service* [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	$64.90	$80.00	$101.69	Family Support resources were committed into the MCH service compared to prior year which contributed to a greater per unit cost. The resources committed and activities conducted were not completed by nurse staff, therefore as a measure of cost / hours worked by MCH nurses, this has driven an increase in the service rate cost.
Participation *Participation in the MCH service* [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	89.13%	84.89%	85.51%	The participation rate has dropped back to levels more consistently seen across our municipality.

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	Complete	
2.2	Undertake place-based master planning for the Mitta Valley, Corryong and Tallangatta	Complete	
2.3	Maintain a contemporary Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan (MHWP) which reflects our community priorities	Complete	
2.4	Support the development of recreational activities and infrastructure to encourage active lifestyles for all ages and stages	Ongoing	The Cudgewa lighting project tender has been delayed due to final assessment and action by Ausnet. The Bullioh female friendly facilities contract has been awarded. The swimming pool season has been completed successfully with increased participation across both pools. High Country Rail Trail 'investment ready activities' (CHMP, NVA and Bridge designs) are currently underway. Ongoing support provided to Mitta Valley Inc in relation to the development of the Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park.
2.5	Review opportunities for communities to access library resources and connect through libraries	Complete	
2.6	Develop a strategy for arts and cultural offerings across the Shire	Ongoing	Ongoing collaboration with Murray Arts through membership and networking, connecting with local artists and supporting creative initiative
2.7	Expand and improve early years services across the Shire to support young families	Complete	The Walwa Early Years Service has successfully relocated to the Walwa Primary School, and facility upgrades are being planned. Ongoing discussions with the Department of Education are assessing facility needs in response to demand and childcare waiting lists.

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comment
2.8	Renew the Youth Plan to embed the 'youth voice' in all aspects of service delivery	Complete	
2.9	Advocate for the development of a variety of housing options to match community needs, particularly for older people	Ongoing	Work is ongoing through the planning scheme amendments.
2.10	Encourage the establishment of innovative, sustainable transport solutions for remote communities	Ongoing	Work in this area is ongoing, including actions outlined in the Youth Strategy and discussions as part of the Council Plan 2025–29 consultation.
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	Complete	IDAHOBIT Day events were successfully staged in Tallangatta and Corryong.
2.12	Build relationships and develop understanding of aboriginal people and consider the commitment to an ongoing reconciliation action plan process	Complete	A number of signs have been produced across the Shire that explore the region's First Nations heritage. The majority of staff completed cultural awareness training from March to May 2025. The 2nd draft of the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been finalised and sent to Reconciliation Australia.
2.13	Participate in key networks to support communities and key stakeholders on solutions to address family violence, suicide and mental health	Ongoing	This work is ongoing and has been included in considerations for the new Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.
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	Ongoing support has been provided to community groups.

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	• Completing revitalisation of the Tallangatta Visitor Information Centre. • Initiating the Bellbridge Container Café project. • Successful delivery of numerous events throughout the Shire.
Challenges	• Lack of State funding opportunities.

During the 2024/25 financial year, Council made substantial progress in advancing its Economic Development priorities, delivering a range of initiatives that strengthened regional connectivity, enhanced tourism infrastructure, and supported local business development.

Through strong advocacy from Council and local representatives, mobile coverage was significantly improved with the launch of new towers at Burrowye and Koetong under the Australian Government's Mobile Black Spot Program. Additionally, a small-cell base station was installed in southwest of Cudgewa, further extending coverage in remote areas.

Early in the financial year, Council collaborated with stakeholders to complete and launch the new Destination website, *The Undiscovered*, providing a central platform for promoting the region's tourism offerings. This was followed by an intensive program to onboard local tourism operators to the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, improving their digital visibility and access to national marketing channels.

Economic development infrastructure associated with the *Great River Road* was completed, including the Pine Mountain Information Stop, which has attracted positive feedback. A refined marketing program for the *Great River Road* was also implemented to support ongoing promotion.

Council delivered a suite of signage projects across the Shire, including installations at the Corryong Saleyards, Paddy's Reserve, Lockharts Gap, Eskdale, and the Tallangatta Triangles. New gateway signage reflecting the region's destination branding was installed at six localities and received strong community support.

The *Mount Elliot Adventure Park* Masterplan was formally adopted by Council.

Events and community engagement remained a strong focus throughout the year. The inaugural *Run Upper Murray* trail running event was successfully launched, demonstrating strong potential for growth. The second *Pub to Pelican* Marathon was particularly successful, attracting participation

numbers double that of the previous year. The *Upper Murray Expo*, a community-driven initiative, once again inspired and motivated local businesses. Council also facilitated the *150-years of Corryong* celebration, which was well received by the community and further enriched through event marketing and the curation of the Arnold Playle exhibition. The *December on Hanson* program added festive cheer to Hanson Street with its *Shop & Win* campaign supporting small businesses in the lead-up to Christmas.

Public art and placemaking initiatives were advanced through the installation of two murals as part of the *Hanson Street Revitalisation* Project; one celebrating Corryong's heritage and the legacy of Arnold Playle, and another capturing the natural beauty and spirit of the Upper Murray.

Advancement of the *High Country Rail Trail* project continued, with Council submitting an application to the Victorian Government's Regional Tourism Investment Fund to develop the leg between Colac Colac and Cudgewa. Although the application was unsuccessful, Council proactively commissioned a Cultural Heritage Management Plan and Vegetation Assessment to strengthen future funding proposals.

Council continued to support Mitta Valley Inc. in progressing the *Mitta Valley Mountain Bike Park*, with a planning permit application submitted. Further supporting cycle tourism in the Shire, gravel and road cycling maps were produced and distributed in both print and digital formats.

Council continues to explore potential opportunities for the *Bellbridge Boathouse* with stakeholders. As an interim measure to provide services to the Bellbridge community and visitors, the *Bellbridge Container Café* project was initiated. During the reporting period, the container was fitted-out and a suitable operator was appointed following an Expression of Interest process.

Visitor Information Centre upgrades were a key priority. The completion of the Tallangatta Visitor Information Centre included the curation of historic artifacts, creation of videography content, accessibility improvements, and interpretive signage. Funding for the Eskdale Visitor Information Centre was successfully secured through the State Government's Tiny Towns Fund, and the Corryong Visitor Information Centre underwent a branding refresh and accessibility upgrades. The Corryong Centre recorded 11,053 walk-in inquiries and 637 phone inquiries, representing an 11% increase and a 29% decrease respectively, compared to the previous year.

Beyond tourism, Council partnered with Riverine Plains to support the agricultural sector through a series of skill-building workshops, dissemination of research and development findings, and networking opportunities. These efforts reflect Council's ongoing commitment to fostering economic resilience and growth across the Shire.

Tourism North East delivered a suite of targeted campaigns aimed at increasing overnight stays and dispersing visitors across North East Victoria, including Towong Shire. Of particular significance was their *It's a High Country Thing*, and *Ride High Country* campaigns in which Towong focused on gravel riding promotion. The organisation also supported local operators through one-on-one engagement and a series of workshops held throughout the region. TNE's data insights informed decision-making and grant applications, while its advocacy helped secure funding for tourism-related projects.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Number of businesses	Increased number of businesses	975	957	Unavailable until Dec	TBC
Shire GRP and per industry	Increased GRP	$349.1m	$433.5m	$467.4m	Yes
Number of visitors	Increased number of visitors	5,490,000	5,051,877	4,750,000*	Unknown*
Spend per visitor	Increased spend per visitor	$432.78	$416.47	$402*	Unknown*
Diversification of agriculture sector	Increased diversification			Unavailable	Unknown

*Data for North East Victoria and sourced for 2024 calendar year. TRA has changed method for data collection.

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comment
3.1	Connect businesses to learning, development and networking opportunities to increase capacity	Ongoing	Officers continue to engage with numerous existing and new businesses to provide support where needed and give direction on opportunities.
3.2	Run a series of business expos to support local businesses	Ongoing	The Upper Murray Tourism and Business Expo hosted in February was well attended and received by the Upper Murray business community. The Small Business Bus visited Tallangatta during May. Tourism North East continue to host workshops that upskill small businesses.
3.3	Develop a business assistance service for new businesses including accommodation providers in the shared economy	Complete	The new destination website was launched early 2025. Council is supporting businesses to create ATDW listings on the site; one-on-one assistance is being offered. Officers successfully sourced funding for the revitalisation of the Eskdale Visitor Information Centre. The Planning and Economic Development staff continue to

			collaborate in supporting new business, and Tourism North East have assisted startups and run workshops.
3.4	Support businesses to adapt to and recover from the impact of bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic	Ongoing	Officers continue to support the two running events initiated in 2024; Run Upper Murray (RUM) and Pub to Pelican (P2P). The events drive new visitation to the area. The Upper Murray Tourism and Business Expo was well attended and provided upskilling opportunities for small businesses. Council Officers continue to support the Upper Murray Tourism Innovation Working Group initiatives. The Great River Road website and other marketing activities are currently under development.
3.5	Support businesses to expand adventure tourism offerings across the shire	Ongoing	Council has adopted the Mount Elliot Masterplan. Significant in-kind support has gone into preparing for the 2025 Pub to Pelican event, which was sold out three weeks in advance. With demand for entries still strong, there is a clear opportunity to further support the controlled growth of the event. Officers have procured contractors to deliver a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Native Vegetation Assessment, bridge designs, and an Arborist's assessment for the High Country Rail Trail. These documents will make the project investment-ready and eligible for infrastructure funding. Officers have also advocated to the State Government, including the Great Outdoors Taskforce and the local Regional Development Victoria office, for the activation of the Mount Elliot Adventure Park, Pine Mountain Masterplanning, Shelley Wilderness Trail, the High Country Rail Trail, and Mitta Mountain Bike Park Stage 2.

3.6	Advocate for the development and broadening of the Pine Mountain experience	Ongoing	The Pine Mountain Information Stop in now complete and features intepretive signage, large-scale artworks, a telescope, seating, a shelter and landscaping. Advocacy for the project has been undertaken with Regional Development Victoria.
3.7	Advocate for the development of adventure tourism opportunities at Mount Elliot	Complete	Advocacy for the project has been undertaken with Regional Development Victoria and the Great Outdoors Taskforce.
3.8	Develop and implement a masterplan for cycling across the Shire	Complete	
3.9	Support Mitta Valley Inc (MVI) to develop the Mitta Valley mountain bike park	Ongoing	Ongoing project.
3.10	Seek funding to complete the High Country Rail Trail	Ongoing	Planning is underway to position the High Country Rail Trail as 'investment ready,' with a Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Native Vegetation Assessment, bridge designs, and an Arborist assessment currently in progress. This work will ensure Council meets all necessary requirements.
3.11.1	Establish new annual cycling events in the Mitta Valley and Upper Murray	Complete	
3.11.2	Establish new annual cycling events in the Mitta Valley and Upper Murray	Complete	
3.12.1	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Great River Road.	Complete	
3.12.2	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Omeo Highway.	Not Started	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3.12.3	Seek funding to develop key touring routes as premier touring destinations, including the Benambra Corryong Road.	Not Started	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3.13	Seek funding to develop a master plan for Lake Hume as a tourism destination including houseboats and the Narrows project	Complete	
3.14	Seek funding to develop and expand the tourism opportunities at Dartmouth Dam	Ongoing	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.

3.15	Capitalise on Tallangatta's status as a Notable Town	Ongoing	Visitor Information Centre is complete.
3.16	Secure control of the Tallangatta Caravan Park and seek funding to implement the adopted recommendations from Tallangatta Holiday Park Planning Study	Ongoing	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3.17	Deliver improved visitor information and experience across the Shire	Complete	
3.18	Expand the reach of tourism marketing and promotional materials	Complete	
3.19	Seek to support the growth of value-add product and/or diversification opportunities for the agriculture industry	Ongoing	Riverine Plains collaboration has delivered a range of targeted activities and workshops and they have provided support and resources in response to drought conditions experienced during the year.
3.20	Facilitate the creation of a centre of excellence for innovation in agriculture	Not Started	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3.21	Seek funding to support efforts to attract and sustain new industries	Complete	
3.22	Explore opportunities to activate the Corryong Aerodrome	Not Started	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3.23	Work with Upper Murray Inc to deliver outcomes from the UM2030 Plan	Complete	
3.24	Attract investment to address key weaknesses (connectivity and reliability) in critical infrastructure (mobile telecommunications, internet and power)	Complete	

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	• Commenced Planning Scheme Amendment process to include a Settlement Strategy to reflect the endorsed Structure Plans, Rural zones changes, and other administrative elements. • Concluded the planning permit for the 155 lot Tallangatta Estate residential subdivision. • Adopted a Development Plan for a proposed 90 lot residential subdivision in Bellbridge • Successfully enhanced the management and compliance under Environmental Health legislations through year one of a contract with Kernow Environmental Health Services. • Introduced additional resource to co-ordinate and enhance the Building and Planning services. • Progressed the Greenlight Project to support and improve customer experience.
Challenges	• Consistent and timely advice and responses from referral authorities can be difficult to achieve which places pressure on progress of important planning matters. • The completion of the Rebuild program has been problematic due to changes in grant funding structures, and gap in staff resources.

The development of township structure plans for Bellbridge, Corryong, and Tallangatta represents a significant strategic achievement for the Council Plan 2021–2025. The next goal is to incorporate these structure plans into the Towong Planning Scheme, which will guide land use and development through 2044.

The Planning Scheme Amendment process has been delayed with a new completion date expected in early 2026. The process will include not only the Structure Plans, but also Settlement Strategy for the Shire, and a revised examination for Rural Activity Zone opportunities.

The achievement of a planning permit for the Tallangatta Estate, and a Development Plan for Bellbridge new subdivision, marks a long process which will provide the foundations to support residential housing growth as part of the Victorian Government Housing Plan.

The Greenlight project has delivered improved systems and processes behind the scenes which will underpin the experience of customers at the front end of the planning or building process.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Customer satisfaction (post interaction)	Increased level of satisfaction*	60%	52%	66%	Yes
Time taken to decide planning applications	Within Statutory Time Limits	47 Days	26 Days	84 days	No
Residential building activity	Increased number of certificates of occupancy issued	89	16	23	Yes

*2022/23 first year of data collection

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
STATUTORY PLANNING				
Timeliness				
Time taken to decide planning applications [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	47	26	84	The time taken to decide planning applications is significantly higher than the previous year. Three planning permits were particularly challenging, and time consuming which impacted the median data..
Service standard				
Planning applications decided within required time frames [(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	58.65%	89.23%	66.67%	The percentage of applications decided within the required time frame has dropped compared to the previous year. This is a direct consequence of the three most challenging planning permit applications.
Service cost				
Cost of statutory planning service	$1,986.07	$5,142.10	$8,191.15	The cost of the planning service is consistent with the contracted resource and part time employee.

[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]				
Decision making				There were no VCAT planning decisions for 2024/25.
Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT [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%	0.00%	0.00%	
FOOD SAFETY				Any complaints received in 2025/25 were responded to within 1 day.
Timeliness				
Time taken to action food complaints [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Service standard				Food safety assessments have been undertaken for all registered premises across the reporting periods.
Food safety assessments [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	100%	100%	100%	
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]	$2,290.53	$2,688.75	$2,556.54	
Health and safety				

Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications	100.00%	100.00%	84.62%

Council Plan progress report

Initiatives and Priorities		Status	Comment
4.1	Support the rebuild process for fire impacted properties	Ongoing	This project is ongoing.
4.2	Establish a Developer Contributions Policy and a Minimum Social Infrastructure Requirements Policy	Not Started	This matter is under consideration for the 2025-2029 Council Plan.
4.3	Develop structure plans for Corryong, Tallangatta and Bellbridge and incorporate into the planning scheme	In Progress	
4.4	Review the Residential Settlement Strategy	In Progress	The Settlement Strategy is a key element of the overall Planning Scheme Amendment process to be finalised in early 2026.
4.5	Support population growth outside of key townships through appropriate amendments to the planning scheme	Ongoing	Timeframes have been extended to allow for additional work on the Bushfire Assessment.
4.6	Review the Rural Land Use Study	In Progress	Timeframes have been extended to allow for additional work on the Bushfire Assessment.
4.7	Review the Schedule to the Rural Activity Zone	In Progress	
4.8	Advocate for changes to the farming zone to allow for a second residence to enable succession planning	Ongoing	Timeframes have been extended to allow for additional work on the Bushfire Assessment.
4.9	Seek funding to extend the Heritage Study	Not Started	
4.10.1	Update planning scheme overlays including: Bushfire Management	Complete	
4.10.2	Update planning scheme overlays including: Heritage	In Progress	
4.11	Review statutory service processes to ensure an excellent customer experience	Complete	Council continues to improve and enhance its behind the scenes systems and processes to support a continued positive experience for customers.

5. Environmental Sustainability

Strategic objective

- Integrate sustainable environmental management practices into all of our activities.
- 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 aimed at increasing diversion percentages from landfill, as well as decreasing total waste to landfill.

Highlights	• Rollout of a three stream waste model including a food and garden organics kerbside collection service. • Land cell capping of Corryong Resource Recovery Centre (RRC) to be finalised in the first quarter of 25/26 fiscal year as part of final remediation works for landfill closure. • Upgrades to retaining walls at Corryong and Tallangatta Resource Recovery Centres. • Secured $20,000 in funding to review Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan and create a map of the Shire's existing septic tanks.
Challenges	• Increasing waste generation per capita • Model waste contract clauses – increased risk and costs for councils; • Distance from recycling collectors and processors – high cost of transport; • Limited regional landfill space; • Legacy of former landfills; • Limitations of transfer station infrastructure and staffing; • Increasing e-waste generation, and expectation for council to recycle all e-waste with no cost recovery and; • Increasing community expectations about waste services, i.e. soft plastics collections.

In 2023/24, a four-stream waste service was introduced to align with the State Government's Recycling Victoria 2020 policy, which mandates that all Victorians have access to four waste and recycling streams by 2030. To implement this service a third party provider, Cleanaway Pty Ltd was appointed to manage kerbside waste collection with a three bin system adopted.

Garbage is collected and taken directly to the landfill at the Albury Waste Management Centre (AWMC), where volumes are calculated by a weighbridge.

Recyclables are delivered to Cleanaway's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in Albury, where they are sorted, processed, and baled before being on-sold to dynamic, predominantly overseas markets. Contaminants in recycling bins are manually removed by operators at the MRF and throughout the conveyor process.

Organic waste is first taken to the AWMC for screening before being transported to an industrial composting facility.

Glass drop-off services were installed at all Resource Recovery Centres and recycling sheds across the Shire and are now available for community use. These services complement the State Government's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS), which is operated independently by community and business groups.

To ensure a smooth transition for residents, extensive education and information programs were implemented. These included clear guidance on which waste belongs in each bin, communicated through social media and print materials. Residents were also provided with a magnetic collection calendar and bin stickers. Additionally, Halve Waste conducted pop-up education sessions across the Shire to enhance understanding of the new system and support residents in using it effectively.

In November 2023, the State Government's Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) was promoted to residents, which offers a 10-cent refund for every eligible can, carton, and bottle returned to designated collection points. This scheme aims to reduce litter in Victoria by up to 50% by providing a financial incentive for recycling drink containers. Since commencement of the program in late 2024 over 2.17 million containers were returned by Shire residents providing a windfall for end users.

With funding from Round Two of the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action's Transfer Station Upgrade Fund, retaining wall upgrades were completed at both Recovery Resource Centres. The operational plan for both centres has been reviewed with existing retaining wall at Tallangatta RRC to be upgraded with new concrete block structure to reinforce wall integrity. Slide chute railing at bay entry also to be installed with similar railing works at Corryong proposed to ensure both are "fit for purpose" and meet safety requirements for public and worker use.

Council has a responsibility to ensure environmental compliance for forestry operations on private land across the Shire. This involves inspecting and auditing forestry practices and liaising with landowners. As part of this effort, the Towong Shire Plantations Committee meets twice a year to discuss community issues related to forestry with plantation owners and representatives.

In 2024/25, there was an increase in harvesting activity, with forestry operators making significant progress on their harvest plans. Favourable weather conditions allowed them to accelerate planned works with minimal disruption.

Additionally, State Government funding was secured for a roadside weed and pest management program, resulting in the inspection and management of 1,500 km of roadsides.

Work continued on implementation of our Tree Management Strategy, successfully planting numerous tree species as part of Council of increase canopy coverage.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Kerbside bin collection requests per 1,000 households	Reduced number of requests*	114	151	279	No
Kerbside collection bins missed per 10,000 households	Reduced number of bins missed**	6.32%	9.57%	7.48%	No
Organisational carbon emission	Reduced carbon emission	2,121 tCO2	2,568 tCO2	2,945 tCo2	No
Kerbside recycling separation quality (contamination)	Improved separation quality (reduced levels of contamination)	7.8%	7.8%	0.39%#	No
Kerbside recycling separation participation rates (amount of recycling)	Increased participation rates (amount of waste recycled)	24.9%**	30.8%**	83.9%#	Yes
Increased use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects	Increased use of recycled materials	119.7kg	D/U	D/U	N/A

* Internal data collection - Kerbside audit report 2021
** Internal data collection - Average bin weights 22_23 Bin Count spreadsheet
# As measured by Cleanaway MRF data

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2022/23	Result 2023/24	Result 2024/25	Comments
WASTE COLLECTION				
Satisfaction				
Kerbside bin requests [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x1000	U/D	49.367	91.14	Bin collection requests for per household for 2024/25 (279/3061) for garbage and recycling include new or upgrades and replacement service. Requests higher due to full year of service data record capture on prior year. (151/3040)
Service standard				
Kerbside collection bins missed [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	632	957	748	There were 229 bins missed in 2024/25 which was comparable to prior year notwithstanding increased bin lifts due to new 3 bin system. Council's kerbside collection service lifts 318,000 approximately individual bins each year. (Assumes 100% presentation)

Service cost *Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service* [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	$170.24	$209.36	$143.01	The cost of collecting garbage from kerbside bins has reduced following transition to new contractor. Landfill costs have excluded which if added would see result at $ 302.01.
Service cost *Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service* [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	$107.85	$120.57	$120.74	The cost of collecting recyclables from kerbside bins has remained stable.
Waste diversion *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	30.81%	40.45%	57.47%	The total amount of garbage and recyclables collected by Council in 2024/25 was 2,166, tonnes across 3061 households with kerbside collection bins. 1,244 tonnes of this waste was made up of recyclables and green organic waste. Total waste diverted from landfill totalled 57.47% which was a significant increase on prior years result due to improved bin usage by households following the implementation of the 3 bin system. This included introduction of the FOGO bin which has been in place for a period of 12 months. Increased education around "what items goes in what bin" have been contributing factors during roll out.
ANIMAL MANAGEMENT ***Timeliness*** *Time taken to action animal management requests* [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	2.60	1.14	1.60	Council implemented a new Customer Request Management (CRM) system in the prior year which has altered the approach to reporting customer enquiries. The establishment of a full-time ranger coupled with the CRM, improvement in timeliness has been achieved.
Service standard *Animals reclaimed* [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100	6.67%	10.00%	15.38%	In 2023/24, 21 dogs and 9 cats were collected. 3 dogs were reclaimed.
Animals rehomed				

[Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x100	20.00%	22.22%	31.82%	A new permanent owner was found for 4 cats and 2 dogs. A further 13 dogs were sent to organisations which specialise in rehoming.
Service cost *Cost of animal management service per population* [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	$19.49	$20.98	$21.81	The cost of managing the animal management service is marginally higher (on a per capita basis) than the previous year.
Health and safety *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	There have been no animal management prosecutions in 2023/24.

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	Complete	
5.2	Advocate for reticulated potable water in Bethanga and Mitta Mitta	Complete	
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	In Progress	This project is ongoing.
5.4	Seek funding to explore options for the establishment of a recycling industry	Ongoing	The introduction of new kerbside collection services has aided in closing the loop. Forums and workshops by state government body advocates continue to be rolled out for council consideration. Two community run collection points for 10c refund program are in operation.
5.5	Improve the use of recycled materials in infrastructure projects e.g., crushed concrete, glass and rubber	Ongoing	

5.6	Investigate and implement options for the management of roadside vegetation for fire mitigation	In Progress	All spatial data and information requests provided to consultant and report now under review.
5.7	Advocate for the establishment of roadside clearances on arterial roads for emergencies	In Progress	Assessment of roadside pull off areas was undertaken by Council officer with photos and GPS locations submitted to Department of Transport and Planning for consideration.
5.8	Continue to implement noxious weed control and monitoring along roadsides within available funding	Complete	Roadside weed spraying completed.
5.9	Continue to implement the tree planting strategy to achieve 40% canopy coverage in urban streets by 2025	In Progress	Moving toward target aerial canopy survey will be required to achieve results.
5.10	Explore the diversification of options for the establishment of native vegetation offset sites	In Progress	
5.11	Seek funding to establish a network of electric car charging stations	Complete	
5.12	Develop a climate change action plan (including actions to reduce carbon emissions, electric vehicle charging, etc)	Complete	
5.13	Transition waste and recycling services operations as per Victorian Government Circular Economy Strategy to deliver a four stream system for waste and recycling collection including separation of glass, green waste and organics	Complete	
5.14	Invest in community education programs and a waste services survey to improve waste and recycling separation	Ongoing	
5.15	Investigate options for hard waste, greenwaste and agricultural waste management e.g silage wrap	Complete	
5.16	Replace the retaining wall at the Tallangatta Transfer Station	Complete	The design has been prepared, with installation and implementation scheduled for October 2025.
5.17	Investigate options for the future of the Corryong Landfill	In Progress	Construction is underway and 75% complete, with recent wet weather causing temporary delays.
5.18	Implement required measures to ensure management of closed landfills is compliant with EPA requirements	Ongoing	Care and maintenance are ongoing, with regular bore monitoring being conducted.

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.

Highlights	• Council Plan 2025-2029 community engagement sessions held across the shire. • Two all staff days held to promote teamwork, build relationships and promote collaboration. • Implementation of new Long term financial planning software to support regular review and updating of the Long Term Financial Plan. • Developed a draft People Plan to support the ongoing development of a high performing, adaptable, resilient, engaged and cohesive organisation
Challenges	• Filling vacancies across the organisation

A procurement process was completed for Safety Incident Management software (SIMS) and Human Resource Information System (HRIS) with the successful software providers selected and implementation processes underway. These system improvements will enhance our efficiency in supporting the organisation to be effective and compliant in these highly regulated fields.

Local Government elections were held in October 2024, with the election process managed by Victorian Election Commission, supported by Council's Governance Coordinator. Induction training for all Councillors was completed from December 2024 to March 2025.

With the commencement of a new Council term, development of the Council Plan 2025-2029 started in January 2025 and spanned five major town hall community sessions and more than 12 small community engagement sessions across the shire. Online surveys were also completed and all up, more than 600 individual pieces of feedback were provided to Council.

Actions to resolve non-compliant outcomes from the ISO45001 safety audit have continued with significant progress in the development of Standard Operating Procedures, rectification of hazards on Council properties and facilities, and development of policies and procedures.

An IT infrastructure strategy was developed to provide a clear direction between on-premise or cloud-based infrastructure and an associated action plan to move to the recommended cloud-based solution.

Strategic indicators

Indicator	Target	Result 22/23	Result 23/24	Result 24/25	Target Reached
Community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	Increased level of satisfaction	53	45	47	Yes
Community satisfaction with Council decisions	Increased level of satisfaction	52	44	47	Yes
Community satisfaction with customer service	Increased level of satisfaction	56	59	61	Yes
Percentage of customer requests resolved within target service levels	Increased percentage	53.77%	35.55%	42.8%	Yes
Number of business improvements	Five (5) improvements per annum	8	12	9	Yes
Percentage of staff who agree that Council is a great place to work	Increased percentage	N/A*	N/A*	N/A	N/A

Service performance indicators

Indicator	Result 2021/22	Result 2022/23	Result 2024/25	Comments
Governance				
Transparency				
Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public [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 delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x100	1.46%	2.65%	1.82%	

Consultation and engagement				Council's performance is in line with the average for Small Rural Councils as well as the overall Statewide Council average for Victoria.
Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	53.00	46.00	47.00	
Attendance				The result recognises Councillor attendance at Council meetings. Formal granting of leave of absence is obtained when a Councillor is unable to attend.
Councillor attendance at council meetings [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	95.56%	95.00%	96.47%	
Service cost				Local Government elected officials received an allowance increase effective 18 December 2024 as per the Victorian Tribunal Determination. The Determination provides for further scheduled annual increases to allowance values until 1 July 2025.
Cost of elected representation	$43,267.68	$45,779.40	$46,848.00	
Satisfaction				Council's performance has improved on the prior year. This result is consistent Small Rural Councils as well as the overall Statewide Council average for Victoria.
Satisfaction with council decisions [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	52.00	44.00	47.00	

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	Preparation for the Council Plan consultation sessions began in the first quarter of 2025, with community engagement sessions held throughout April, May, and June. The community provided valuable input through these sessions and the accompanying survey. This engagement process will culminate in the draft Council Plan being presented to Council for approval for public exhibition.
6.2	Continually improve customer service experience across the organisation	Ongoing	The Tallangatta Customer Service Desk has reopened with increased staffing to support its operations. Work has also begun to enhance customer service across all planning and building services, including the introduction of a 'concierge' function, with recruitment for this role now underway.
6.3	Continually improve processes to support improved service delivery	In Progress	Procurement processes for the introduction of safety and incident management software, as well as a human resources information system. Work has also begun on developing safe operating procedures to improve the efficiency of training for plant operators within our depot teams.
6.4	Deliver improved business technology - finance, rates, human resources	In Progress	As above
6.5	Update the technology strategy to support the ongoing delivery excellent customer service	In Progress	Significant progress has been made with the delivery of an IT hardware strategy, providing guidance for the transition from on-premise servers to cloud-based IT infrastructure.
6.6	Develop and implement a People Plan to support the ongoing development of a high performing, adaptable, resilient, engaged and cohesive organisation	Complete	The People Plan has been re-drafted following feedback and is scheduled to be presented to the CEO for review in June 2025, before being distributed to staff for consultation.
6.7	Provide a safe and healthy workplace for all Councillors and	Ongoing	Progress continues in the implementation of safety software

	staff in a continually evolving environment		and the development of safe operating procedures. Hazards identified during site audits are being addressed, with significant improvements made at the saleyards.
6.8	Continue to seek opportunities to improve service delivery and achieve best value including further investigation of shared services	Ongoing	A review of the rates shared service agreement has been completed, resulting in productive outcomes for both Councils.
6.9	Continue to advocate for increased government funding support to ensure long term sustainability	Ongoing	
6.10	Investigate alternative revenue streams	Ongoing	
6.11	Review the Revenue and Rating strategy	Complete	
6.12	Consider options for the realisation of surplus Council assets	Ongoing	
6.13	Continually improve the risk management and governance frameworks and practices	Ongoing	
6.14	Provide ongoing support and development of Councillors in fulfilling their roles	Ongoing	The induction program for Councillors has been completed, with a financial sustainability presentation in June 2025.

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 2024/25 year Council held the following meetings:

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

Committees

In 2024/25 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.

Since the introduction of the *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 2024 – 17 December 2024	18 December 2024 – 30 June 2025
Mayor	$84,498	$86,722
Deputy Mayor	$42,248	$43,360
Councillor	$27,291	$27,291

As at 1 July 2025, Councillors could also claim a remote travel allowance of $48.90 per day to attend meetings held more than 50km from their place of residence. 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 2024/25 on behalf of each Councillor.

Councillor	Conferences and Training	ICT*	Travel^	Childcare	Functions and Events	Other	TOTAL
Cr Aaron Scales	$0	$379	$569	$0	$0	$0	$948
Cr Andrew Whitehead	$0	$0	$1,836	$0	$0	$0	$1,836
Cr David Wortmann	$713	$421	$4,577	$0	$0	$0	$5,711
Cr Denise Anderson	$48	$193	$247	$0	$0	$0	$487
Cr Pete Dikschei	$0	$209	$1048	$0	$0	$0	$1,257
Cr Peter Tolsher	$0	$0	$1,483	$0	$0	$0	$1,483
Cr Jon Pitman	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
TOTAL	**$761**	**$1,202**	**$9,760**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$11,722**

*Information and Communication Technology.
^Inclusive of mileage and accommodation. It is noted that Cr Wortmann does not utilise a Council vehicle.

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 2024/25 the Audit and Risk Committee met on four (4) occasions 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 2024/25, 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
- Insurances
- Human resources

Internal Audit

- Internal audit plan
- Records management audit
- Safety audit
- IT Security audit
- IT/Records Management Strategy
- Local government investigations

Compliance

- Legislative and regulatory reforms
- Councillor expense reimbursements
- CEO credit card expenditure
- Gifts register
- Procurement exemptions
- Policy reviews.

Audit and Risk Committee Members

In 2024/25 the Audit Committee comprised the Mayor and four independent external members. The external members were as follows:

Ms Lisa Forsyth (Chair from 15 September 2023 to current)
Ms Forsyth was appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee in July 2022. She brings invaluable experience accumulated throughout various senior corporate and non-for-profit roles. The focus across these roles have included risk and compliance management, audit and assurance, quality management functions and best practice innovation. She is currently the Quality and Risk Manager at Mercy Connected Limited.

Mr Parag Shah
Mr Shah was appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee in July 2023. With over 19 years of experience in cyber security and information technology, Mr Shah brings a unique skillset to the Committee in identifying cyber and information risks and subsequent opportunities for mitigation. Mr Shah currently works as an executive-level officer for the National Bank of Australia.

Ms Carolyn Rosetta-Walsh *(1 August 2024 to 31 July 2028)*
Ms Rosetta-Walsh was appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee in August 2024. She brings relevant experience, currently serving on audit and risk committees in regional NSW. Ms Rosetta-Walsh is a Chartered Accountant and is a Director at C&N Audit Services, specialising in assurance and risk.

Mr Marcus Goonan *(1 August 2024 to 31 July 2028)*
Mr Goonan brings significant local government experience, currently working at Wangaratta City Council as the Director Community and Infrastructure. With engineering and leadership experience and qualifications, his experience in the application of risk in a local government setting is very valuable.

External audit

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). For the 2024/25 financial year the annual external audit of Council's financial statements and performance statement was conducted by VAGO's representative, Johnsons MME. 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	Adopted 25 January 2023	Yes
5 Revenue and Rating Plan Plan required by section 93 of the Act describing Council's funding sources	Adopted June 2025	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 June 2025	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
8 Fraud policy Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud	Current policy in operation 9 December 2020	Yes
9 Municipal emergency management plan Plan under section 60ADB of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* for emergency mitigation, response and recovery	Prepared and maintained in accordance with section 60ADB of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* 3 December 2019	Yes
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	Current policy in operation August 2024	Yes
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	Current plan in operation 30 July 2018	Yes
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	Current plan in operation 30 July 2018	Yes
13 Risk management framework Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations	Updated 23 February 2025	Yes
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	Established 1 September 2020	Yes
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	Internal payroll audit conducted in financial year 2024/25	Yes

16 Performance reporting framework A set of prescribed indicators required by section 98 of the Act measuring financial and non-financial performance	Current framework in operation 1 July 2020	Yes
17 Council Plan reporting Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators	Conducted quarterly	Yes
18 Financial reporting Quarterly report required by section 97 of the Act comparing actual and budgeted results to date with an explanation of variances	Conducted quarterly	Yes
19 Risk reporting Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies	Reported bi-monthly	Yes
20 Performance reporting Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance	Reported six monthly	Yes
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	Presented at a meeting of Council October 2024	Yes
22 Councillor Code of Conduct Code required by section 139 of the Act including the standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors	Reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* 24 February 2021	Yes
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	Reviewed 24 January 2024	Yes
24 Meeting procedures Governance Rules required by section 60 of the Act outlining the conduct of Council meetings	Current rules in operation 28 September 2022	Yes

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



Juliana Phelps
Chief Executive Officer
Date: 13 October 2025



Cr Andrew Whitehead
Mayor
Date: 13 October 2025

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 following information for access by the public, except where the information is confidential in accordance with legislation:

- Plans, strategies, reports, policies and documents required by LGA 2020;
- Plans, strategies and policies otherwise adopted by Council;
- Local Laws; Council meeting agendas, minutes, and meeting recordings;
- Terms of reference or charters for Council committees;
- Application processes for approvals, permits, grants, and access to services.

Council will at minimum make the following information available to the public upon request, except where confidential in accordance with legislation:

- Plans, strategies, reports and documents required by any Act or which have been adopted by Council;
- Project and service plans which have been adopted by Council;
- Guidelines, manuals, policies and procedures;
- Technical reports and/or research used to inform decision making;
- Registers required by LGA 2020 or any other legislation;
- Newsletters, handbooks and promotional materials;
- Building approval registers as required by the Building Act 1993;
- Planning permit registers and documentation as required by the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Council website

All Council information published for access by the community will be available on Council's website, which will be maintained for use on desktop computers, mobile phones and other devices, and which will be tested to work with most commonly used browsers and operating systems.

Inspection at Council Office

All Council information published for access by the community will also be available for inspection upon request at Council's Office, 32 Towong Street, Tallangatta or at 76 Hanson Street, Corryong.

Application to access information

Council will consider all requests for access to Council information made outside the Freedom of Information process in accordance with privacy principles. Information will be provided for free or at low cost, commensurate to the effort to provide it or in accordance with any relevant legislation. Information may be provided by email and requests for information to be provided in hard copy or mailed to the requestor will be considered.

Freedom of information (FOI)

The FOI Act provides the public with a general right to access documents in the possession of Council relating to their personal affairs or the activities of Council, except where those documents are deemed confidential under legislation.

Council may request that a formal Freedom of Information request is submitted in order to access certain documents. In assessing a Freedom of Information request, Council may consult with third parties where documents contain related information that may be exempt from release under the FOI Act.

Social media

Council will, where beneficial to community engagement, make information publicly available through its social media platforms.

Content accessibility

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth) requires Council to ensure people with a disability have the same access to information and services as others in the community. Council recognises the diverse range of needs in its community and commits to making its written information accessible to everyone..

Information Privacy

Council values the treatment of personal and health information and acknowledges it's obligations primarily under the Privacy and Data Act 2014 and Health Records Act 2001. The legislation prescribes numerous information privacy and data protection principles that Council is required to comply with to ensure information is safety collection, stored and disclosed through Council's administrative and operational processes. Council's Privacy Policy was revised and adopted in August 2023, which includes further detail of Council's privacy commitments and procedures.

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 provides a strong foundation for further collaborative initiatives between the Councils. Additional best value initiatives include the Greenlight Project, which intends to improve the customer service experience for planning permit applications through better access to planning information whilst a permit is still being processed.

Contracts

A list of Contracts awarded at Council Meetings valued at $150,000 or over are supplied below for the 2024/25 financial year:

Project	Contract	Supplier	Value ($)
Resealing council roads	No: 2023/24-073	Boral Resources	651,180
Plant renewal	No: 2023/24-070	Kobelco	223,000
Springdale Rd Bridge	No: 2023/24-049	Waratah Constructions	835,804
Halls Pit, Talgarno rock extraction	No: 2024/25-003	Tallangatta Construction and Maintenance	194,928
Bullioh Female Friendly facilities	No: 2024/25-061	Barton St Developments	614,796
Tallandoon Tennis Courts Redevelopment	No: 2024/25-001A	Global Turf Projects	510,180
Plant Renewal	No: 2024/25-049	William Adams	212,500

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.

Equality Action Plan

Council adopted its Gender Equality Action Plan in March 2022 in line with the gender equality principles outlined in the Gender Equality Act 2020. Since its adoption, In the spirit of the principles defined in section 6 of the Act, Council have to consider and promote gender equality and to take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality. This includes celebrating IDAHOBIT day on 17 May 2025, completion of Gender Impact Assessments for the Enterprise Agreement and the Bethanga Sports Pavilion.

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 (FoI)

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 FOI can be found at ovic.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 2023/24 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

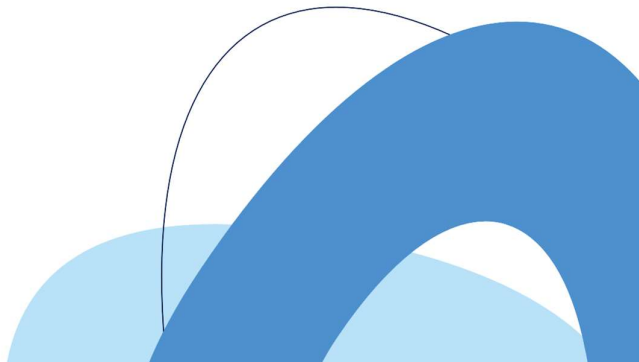
In accordance with Section 22 of the Road Management Act 2004 Council must publish a copy or summary of any ministerial direction in its Annual Report. No such ministerial directions were received by Council during the financial year.

Contact us:
Phone: 1300 365 222
Email: info@towong.vic.gov.au

Tallangatta Service Centre
33 Towong Street, Tallangatta VIC 3700

Corryong Service Centre
66-76 Hanson Street, Corryong VIC 3707

towong.vic.gov.au



Appendix 1: Financial Statements

Appendix 2: Performance Statements

Towong Shire Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Towong Shire Council
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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.



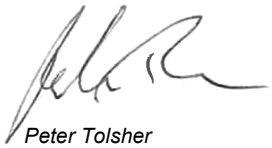
Narelle Taylor
Principal Accounting Officer

Dated : 13/10/2025
Tallangatta

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Towong Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 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.



Peter Tolsher
Deputy Mayor
Dated : 13/10/2025
Tallangatta



Andrew Whitehead
Mayor
Dated : 13/10/2025
Tallangatta



Jamie Heritage
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated : 13/10/2025
Tallangatta

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Councillors of Towong Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Towong Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2025 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • certification of the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2025 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
15 October 2025

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Income / Revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	10,702	10,568
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	259	310
User fees	3.3	1,269	1,250
Grants - operating	3.4	14,155	3,245
Grants - capital	3.4	6,679	5,269
Contributions - monetary	3.5	136	72
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	(199)	16
Fair value adjustments for investment property	6.4	-	25
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	6.3	-	-
Other income	3.7	4,454	4,991
Total income / revenue		**37,455**	**25,746**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	10,901	10,485
Materials and services	4.2	13,746	10,615
Depreciation	4.3	6,840	6,832
Finance costs	4.4	18	23
Other expenses	4.5	300	263
Total expenses		**31,804**	**28,218**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**5,651**	**(2,472)**
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	6.2	11,312	913
Share of other comprehensive income of associates and joint ventures	6.3	-	-
Total other comprehensive income		**11,312**	**913**
Total comprehensive result		**16,963**	**(1,559)**

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

Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1 (a)	6,159	5,052
Trade and other receivables	5.1 (c)	3,806	3,327
Other financial assets	5.1 (b)	22,596	26,536
Inventories	5.2 (a)	381	464
Prepayments	5.2 (b)	339	66
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	6.1	-	62
Other assets	5.2 (b)	2,379	1,223
Total current assets		**35,660**	**36,730**
Non-current assets			
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	6.3	43	43
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.2	291,143	274,135
Investment property	6.4	1,275	1,275
Total non-current assets		**292,461**	**275,453**
Total assets		**328,121**	**312,183**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3 (a)	4,871	2,092
Trust funds and deposits	5.3 (b)	739	886
Contract and other liabilities	5.3 (c)	1,476	5,426
Provisions	5.4	2,114	1,781
Total current liabilities		**9,201**	**10,185**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.4	783	824
Total non-current liabilities		**783**	**824**
Total liabilities		**9,984**	**11,009**
Net assets		**318,137**	**301,174**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		135,054	129,403
Reserves	9.1	183,083	171,771
Total Equity		**318,137**	**301,174**

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2025	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		301,173	129,403	171,770
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		5,651	5,651	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	6.2	11,312	-	11,312
		318,136	135,054	183,082
Balance at end of the financial year		**318,136**	**135,054**	**183,082**

2024		Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		302,732	131,875	170,857
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		(2,472)	(2,472)	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	6.2	913	-	913
		301,173	129,403	171,770
Balance at end of the financial year		**301,173**	**129,403**	**171,770**

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 2025

	Note	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		10,248	10,373
Statutory fees and fines		259	310
User fees		1,215	1,782
Grants - operating		13,370	2,239
Grants - capital		8,175	3,223
Contributions - monetary		136	51
Interest received		1,624	1,968
Other receipts		2,425	2,584
Net GST refund		88	22
Employee costs		(10,925)	(10,469)
Materials and services		(16,461)	(10,326)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(147)	(737)
Other payments		(317)	(263)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9.2	**9,689**	**757**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(12,655)	(13,649)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		151	35
Proceeds from sale of investments		3,940	4,422
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		**(8,564)**	**(9,192)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(18)	(23)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		**(18)**	**(23)**
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		1,107	(8,458)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		5,052	13,510
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5.1	**6,159**	**5,052**
Financing arrangements	5.5		

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Property			
Land		85	71
Land improvements		199	912
Total land		284	983
Buildings		479	1,178
Building improvements		550	-
Total buildings		1,029	1,178
Total property		1,313	2,161
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		1,569	457
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		63	-
Computers and telecommunications		19	24
Library books		-	11
Total plant and equipment		1,651	492
Infrastructure			
Roads		5,919	6,568
Bridges		1,947	569
Footpaths and cycleways		772	1,082
Drainage		130	72
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		-	176
Waste management		92	258
Parks, open space and streetscapes		1,137	2,031
Other infrastructure		62	241
Total infrastructure		10,059	10,996
Total capital works expenditure		13,023	13,649
Represented by:			
New asset expenditure		2,466	2,570
Asset renewal expenditure		5,963	4,035
Asset expansion expenditure		-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure		4,594	7,044
Total capital works expenditure		13,023	13,649

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

The 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, 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.

Accounting policy information

1.1 Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Specific accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

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

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.

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.

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.

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 6.2)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.2)
- 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 Note 3)

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.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

1.2 Impact of emergencies and natural disasters

On 15 October 2022 Towong Shire were impacted by significant flooding. Additional revenue and expenses were covered by National Disaster Recovery Arrangement (NDFA) and has been outlined below:

Additional revenue of $1.8 million was recorded in 2025 in relation to reimbursement of approved works.

Additional expenditure $1.8 million was incurred in 2025 in relation to these events.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS

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 10 percent 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.

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 / Revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2025 $'000	Actual 2025 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Income / Revenue					
Rates and charges	10,596	10,702	106	1.00%	
Statutory fees and fines	368	259	(109)	-29.51%	**1**
User fees	1,121	1,269	148	13.19%	**2**
Grants - operating	10,170	14,155	3,985	39.18%	**3**
Grants - capital	3,390	6,679	3,289	97.02%	**4**
Contributions - monetary	-	136	136	100.00%	**5**
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	(199)	(199)	100.00%	**6**
Other income	2,023	4,454	2,431	120.15%	**7**
Total income / revenue	27,667	37,455	9,787	35.37%	
Expenses					
Employee costs	11,945	10,901	1,044	8.74%	
Materials and services	10,709	13,746	(3,037)	-28.36%	**8**
Depreciation	6,562	6,840	(278)	-4.23%	
Finance costs	16	18	(2)	-9.73%	
Other expenses	434	300	134	30.97%	**9**
Total expenses	29,665	31,804	(2,138)	-7.21%	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(1,998)	5,651	7,649	-382.86%	

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(i) Explanation of material variations

1	Statutory fees and fines	Income from Building permits were down $140K on budget due to lower than expected activities. All other statutory fees were close to budget with Town Planning fees ($107K) amounting for the largest proportion of income received.
2	User fees	User fees exceeded budget due to increased childcare fees and higher one off general income, both combining for almost $1.1M of income received. Resource recovery income was down $47K on budget.
3	Grants - operating	Operating grant income exceeded budget by 40% in large part due to higher expenditure on related grant projects resulting in an increased grant income recognised. Early payments of 2025-2026 Financial Assistance Grants also contributed significantly to budget being exceeded.
4	Grants - capital	Finalisation of projects such as Great River Road, Corryong Skate Park, Corryong Stock Route and Omeo Highway saw Council receive final milestone grant inflows. Grants not previously budget for such as Corryong Library Refurbishment, factored in the budget being exceeded.
5	Contributions - monetary	Community contributions towards some non council assets such as sports and recreation projects exceeded budget.
6	Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Loss on disposal of assets were recognised to make way for asset upgrades or replacements such as Corryong Skatepark.
7	Other income	Accruing for disaster recovery income far exceeded budget after announcements was made post year end, that payment would be made in advance and approved amounts revealed. Due to slower than expected expenditure on capital projects, interest received on funds invested exceeded budget.
8	Materials and services	$1.8M of expenditure was incurred on costs relating to disaster funding related works as urgent repairs were needed to be prioritised. Community projects that were not previously budget for at time of Budget Adoption, contributed in large part to exceeding expediture however these were generally backed by grant funding. Staff vacancy resulted in higher than expected expenditure on external staffing such as consultants and contract workers.
9	Other expenses	Expenses for community contributions were down on budget due to delays in projects, pushing out the contributions into the following year. Excluding this, the Audit fees and Councillor allowances expenditure were close to budget.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2025 $'000	Actual 2025 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	-	85	85	100.00%	
Land improvements	-	199	199	100.00%	**1**
Total land	-	284	284	100.00%	
Buildings	1,716	479	(1,237)	-72.09%	**2**
Building improvements	-	550	550	100.00%	**3**
Total buildings	1,716	1,029	(687)	-40.03%	
Total property	1,716	1,313	(403)	-23.49%	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,836	1,569	(1,267)	-44.69%	**4**
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	63	63	100.00%	
Computers and telecommunications	212	19	(193)	-90.86%	**5**
Total plant and equipment	3,048	1,651	(1,397)	-45.85%	
Infrastructure					
Roads	10,269	5,919	(4,350)	-42.36%	**6**
Bridges	2,309	1,947	(362)	-15.66%	**7**
Footpaths and cycleways	1,638	772	(866)	-52.88%	**8**
Drainage	70	130	60	85.19%	
Waste management	1,221	92	(1,129)	-92.43%	**9**
Parks, open space and streetscapes	2,061	1,137	(924)	-44.83%	**10**
Other infrastructure	262	62	(200)	-76.42%	**11**
Total infrastructure	17,830	10,059	(7,771)	-43.58%	
Total capital works expenditure	22,594	13,023	(9,571)	-42.36%	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	3,685	2,466	(1,219)	-33.08%	
Asset renewal expenditure	9,855	5,963	(3,892)	-39.49%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	9,054	4,594	(4,460)	-49.26%	
Total capital works expenditure	22,594	13,023	(9,571)	-42.36%	

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Land Improvements	This year, Council invested $199,000 in important land improvement capital works projects, including upgrades to the EYLC Building Blocks ($23,000), renewal of local playgrounds ($145,000), and works at the Corryong Airport ($8,000) helping to keep our community facilities safe, welcoming and well-maintained. Some of these were grant funded and carried forward from the prior year where they were expected to have been completed by year end at time of budget adoption and therefore were not included in the budget.
2	Building	Council invested in buildings in 2024/25, including upgrades to the Talgarno Toilet Block ($43,686) and the Bellbridge Container Café ($158,235), enhancing community amenities and public facilities. Constraints on resourcing meant that some projects initially planned for year end completion were carried forward into the next year.
3	Building Improvements	With ongoing demand for Council-owned and managed buildings, Council invested in a range of building improvements and renewals, including the Corryong Weighbridge ($30,000), general building upgrades ($296,127), the Tallangatta Swimming Pool ($2,491), Tallangatta Office ($47,045), RRC's Water Tanks ($59,140), Roy Williams Park Toilet Block ($1,591), and RRC's Toilets, supporting the continued maintenance and functionality of key community facilities. The results show an overbudget in this area and this is explained partly by carry forward works completed as well as unbudgetted works being shifted forward due to them becoming a high priority.
4	Plant, Machinery and Equipment	This year, Council continued to invested in plant, machinery and equipment, including Fleet Replacement ($131,356), Plant Replacement ($1,315,169), Minor Tools ($6,161) and ERC Trailers ($116,000), ensuring the ongoing efficiency, safety and reliability of Council operations. Some planned purchases were pushed out into the next year, hence finishing under budget.
5	Computers and Telecommunications	In response to technological advancements, Council invested $19,371 in IT equipment, upgrading computers and telecommunications systems to support efficient and reliable operations across its services. The majority of these were grant funded and due to grant deadlines, needed to be brought forward from future year budgets, hence the over budget result during the year.
6	Roads	To maintain Council-managed roads to acceptable standards, Council invested in a range of road infrastructure projects, including the Cudgewa Avenue of Honour ($120,706), digouts and major patching ($939,305), paving construction on Wises Creek Road, Talgarno ($362,510), Georges Creek Road Stage 6 ($462,152), Mitta Streetscape Stage 2 ($248,543), the Annual Reseal Program ($600,219), Donaldson Street Carpark ($33,734), Dartmouth Recreation Reserve driveway renewal ($29,362), gravel road sealing at Granya Sparrow and Legge Streets ($102,190), Ferry Lane sealing ($99,256), and Great River Road capital costs ($128,719), supporting safe and reliable transport networks across the municipality. Resource constraints played a large factor in the overall underbudget as there were some carried forwards, however we anticipate a similar spend in the next year.
7	Bridges	Council continues to invest in the management of bridge infrastructure following recent flood event years. Projects include the Little Snowy Creek Road Bridge Replacement ($16,420), Tallangatta Creek Crossing ($586,525), replacement of major culverts and bridges ($169,504), Springdale Road Bridge ($646,035), and Lake Road Bridge ($528,962), enhancing the safety, reliability, and resilience of the municipality's transport network. We finished 15% under budget as a result of job prioritisation however anticipate hitting budget next year.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

8	Footpaths & Cycleways	Council invested in the replacement and ongoing management of the Shire's footpaths and cycleways, including Great River Road Stage 2 ($22,576), the Bellbridge Walking Path upgrade and exercise equipment ($314,033), footpath replacements ($67,890), Stage 2 of the Towong Walking Track ($103,688), and the reseal of the Rail Trail from Tallangatta to Sandy Creek Bridge ($250,000), enhancing safety, accessibility, and recreational opportunities for the community. Council finished almost 50% under budget as we held off some works due to external revaluation and conditioning assessments being done in order to give us better data for resource allocation in future.
9	Waste Management	In line with our ongoing obligations for the current and future management of waste facilities, Council invested $92,413 in waste management infrastructure, including the capping of Cell 2 at the Corryong Resource Recovery Centre, ensuring safe, sustainable, and compliant operations for the community. Job delays caused the underbudget result however we anticipate completion of major capping project in early 2025/26.
10	Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes	In 2024/25, Council invested in parks, open space, and streetscape improvements, including Outdoor Dining at Bethanga Playground ($5,080) and the Dartmouth Splash Park ($383,333), enhancing recreational opportunities and community amenity across the municipality. Due to resource constraints, some large projects have been carried forward into the next year.
11	Other Infrastructure	As part of the ongoing upgrade and replacement of critical infrastructure across the Shire, Council invested $61,769 in other infrastructure works, including guardrail replacements, enhancing safety and resilience throughout the municipality's transport network. Job prioritisation into other areas of higher risk meant that some works were delayed into the next year, resulting in an underbudgetted result.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2.2.2 Summary of income / revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

2025	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Asset Management	9,348	12,810	(3,462)	9,459	246,313
Community Wellbeing	4,195	5,546	(1,351)	3,083	14,836
Economic & Tourism Development	13	879	(867)	1	9,575
Land-use Planning	376	985	(608)	172	-
Environmental Sustainability	3,975	5,911	(1,936)	67	2,028
Organisational Improvement	17,394	4,404	12,990	5,915	55,295
Relief & Recovery	2,155	1,270	885	2,137	74
	37,455	31,804	5,651	20,834	328,121

2024	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Asset Management	5,558	14,226	(8,668)	5,353	238,298
Community Wellbeing	3,075	3,933	(858)	2,093	13,399
Economic & Tourism Development	152	1,019	(867)	130	8,648
Land-use Planning	258	1,025	(767)	6	-
Environmental Sustainability	3,041	2,504	537	38	1,831
Organisational Improvement	12,989	4,154	8,835	228	49,940
Relief & Recovery	673	1,357	(684)	666	67
	25,746	28,218	(2,472)	8,514	312,183

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES

	2025	2024
3.1 Rates and charges	**$'000**	**$'000**

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 2024/25 was $3,540 million (2023/24 $3,545 million).

General rates	7,185	7,008
Municipal charge	1,350	1,315
Kerbside collection charge	1,446	1,506
Waste facilities management charge	405	404
Revenue in lieu of rates	316	334
Total rates and charges	**10,702**	10,568

The date of the general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2024 and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2024.

Annual rates and charges are recognised as income 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

Infringements and costs	11	20
Health registration fees	46	27
Town planning fees	118	94
Land information certificates	11	10
Permits	74	158
Total statutory fees and fines	**259**	310

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as income 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	929	908
External private works	1	-
Refuse disposal fees	53	111
Saleyard dues	11	16
Septic tank fees	13	24
Swimming pool fees	43	39
Other fees and charges	219	152
Total user fees	**1,269**	**1,250**
User fees by timing of revenue recognition		
User fees recognised over time	-	-
User fees recognised at a point in time	1,269	1,250
Total user fees	**1,269**	**1,250**

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
	$'000	$'000
3.4 Funding from other levels of government		
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	12,662	3,002
State funded grants	8,173	5,512
Total grants received	20,834	8,514
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants - General Purpose	5,912	163
Financial Assistance Grants - Local Roads	3,543	100
Recurrent - State Government		
Family and Children	1,403	1,304
Community	122	120
Emergency Services	60	-
School Crossing Supervisors	16	15
Total recurrent operating grants	11,056	1,702
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Economic development	-	81
Family and children	422	-
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Community	170	273
Family and children	139	363
Environment	51	38
Waste	16	20
Bushfire relief & recovery	2,042	524
Economic Devolopment	1	54
Information Technology	164	-
Other Infrastructure	27	-
Emergency Support	66	190
Total non-recurrent operating grants	3,098	1,543
Total operating grants	14,155	3,245
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	-	2,322
Total recurrent capital grants	-	2,322
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Emergency Support	30	
Infrastructure	2,754	336
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Other Infrastructure	3,895	2,611
Total non-recurrent capital grants	6,679	2,947
Total capital grants	6,679	5,269

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(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 point in 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 of 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	11,848	4,827
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	4,210	-
Other specific purpose grants	68	402
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*		
Specific purpose grants	4,708	3,286
	20,834	8,514

		2025		**2024**
		$'000		**$'000**
(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner				
Operating				
Balance at start of year		3,236		**4,395**
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date		260		23
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	-	2,132	-	1,182
Balance at year end		**1,364**		**3,236**
Capital				
Balance at start of year		2,206		**5,939**
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date		-		463
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	-	2,206	-	4,196
Balance at year end		**-**		**2,206**

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

3.5 Contributions	**2025 $'000**	**2024 $'000**
Monetary	136	72
Total contributions	**136**	**72**

Monetary and non monetary contributions are recognised as income 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	151	35
Written down value of assets disposed	(350)	(19)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	**(199)**	**16**

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	1,537	1,875
Interest on rates	122	153
Shared Services	189	114
Other rent	101	157
Insurance reimbursement	4	1,589
Disaster recovery funding arrangement	1,865	996
Other	636	107
Total other income	**4,454**	**4,991**

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 4 THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
4.1 (a) Employee costs		
Wages and salaries	8,601	8,221
WorkCover	203	219
Annual leave and long service leave	1,016	1,076
Superannuation	1,063	956
Fringe benefit tax	18	14
Total employee costs	**10,901**	**10,485**

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	13	27
Employer contributions - other funds	-	-
	13	27
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	-	-
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	330	312
Employer contributions - other funds	720	722
	1,050	1,034
Employer contributions payable at reporting date.	130	117

Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Materials and services	6,928	4,016
Contract payments	4,093	3,541
Maintenance-building, towns, parks and gardens	1,380	2,016
Plant and equipment maintenance	1,117	826
Utilities	228	216
Total materials and services	**13,746**	10,615

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

4.3 Depreciation

Property	1,352	1,249
Plant and equipment	821	827
Infrastructure	4,667	4,756
Total depreciation	**6,840**	**6,832**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

4.4 Finance costs

Bank fees	18	23
Total finance costs	**18**	**23**

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.

4.5 Other expenses

Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	96	72
Councillors' allowances	203	191
Total other expenses	**300**	**263**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 5 INVESTING IN AND FINANCING OUR OPERATIONS

5.1 Financial assets	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	1	1
Cash at bank	5,615	499
Money market call accounts	544	4,553
Total cash and cash equivalents	6,159	5,052
(b) Other financial assets		
Current		
Term deposits	22,596	26,536
Total current other financial assets	22,596	26,536
Non-current		
Term deposits	-	-
Total non-current other financial assets	-	-
Total other financial assets	22,596	26,536
Total cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets	28,755	31,588

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Trade and other receivables	**2025 $'000**	**2024 $'000**
Current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	1,897	1,599
Walwa Waste Water Supply debtors scheme	65	69
Fire Service Property Levy debtors	250	189
Net GST receivable	854	766
Other debtors		
Sundry Debtors	740	704
Total current trade and other receivables	3,806	3,327
Non-current		
Total non-current trade and other receivables	-	-
Total trade and other receivables	**3,806**	3,327

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. An allowance for expected credit losses is recognised based on past experience and other objective evidence of expected losses. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(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)	703	679
Past due by up to 30 days	4	2
Past due between 31 and 180 days	24	23
Past due between 181 and 365 days	-	-
Past due by more than 1 year	9	-
Total trade and other receivables	740	704

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.2 Non-financial assets	**2025**	**2024**
(a) Inventories	**$'000**	**$'000**
Inventories held for distribution	381	464
Total inventories	**381**	**464**

Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential. All other inventories, including land held for sale, are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Where inventories are acquired for no cost or nominal consideration, they are measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

(b) Other assets

Prepayments	339	66
Other	2,379	1,223
Total other assets	**2,718**	**1,289**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
(a) Trade and other payables		
Current		
Non-statutory payables		
Trade payables	3,941	1,409
Credit cards	2	-
Accrued wages	171	147
Accrued expenses	500	276
Other payable	211	218
PAYG payable	46	42
Total current trade and other payables	**4,871**	**2,092**
(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Current		
Refundable deposits	2	38
Fire services levy	436	310
Retention amounts	300	538
Total current trust funds and deposits	**739**	**886**
(c) Contract and other liabilities		
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance - operating	1,364	3,237
Grants received in advance - capital	-	2,189
Total contract liabilities	**1,364**	**5,426**
Other liabilities		
Current		
Other liabilities	112	-
Total other liabilities	**112**	**-**
Total contract and other liabilities	1,476	5,426

Trust funds and deposits

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.

Contract liabilities

Contract liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of grant funding to deliver specified works on behalf of the funding body. Grants received in advance for capital and operating projects are to be recognised when the specific obligations for the grant agreement have been fulfilled. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Purpose and nature of items

Fire Service 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 process.

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.4 Provisions

	Employee	Landfill restoration	Total
2025	**$ '000**	**$ '000**	**$ '000**
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,895	710	2,605
Additional provisions	986	417	1,403
Amounts used	(921)	(190)	(1,111)
Balance at the end of the financial year	**1,960**	**937**	**2,897**
Provisions - current	1,702	412	2,114
Provisions - non-current	258	525	783
2024			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,835	741	2,576
Additional provisions	979	-	979
Amounts used	(919)	(31)	(950)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	-	-	-
Balance at the end of the financial year	**1,895**	**710**	**2,605**
Provisions - current	1,668	113	1,781
Provisions - non-current	227	597	824

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
(a) Employee provisions	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	141	548
Long service leave	230	181
Flexi time	77	77
	448	806
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	564	137
Long service leave	690	725
	1,254	862
Total current employee provisions	**1,702**	1,668
Non-current		
Long service leave	258	227
Annual leave	-	-
Total non-current employee provisions	**258**	227
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	1,702	1,668
Non-current	258	227
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**1,960**	1,895

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	4.20%	4.35%
- index rate	4.25%	4.45%

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
(b) Landfill restoration	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current	412	113
Non-current	525	597
	937	**710**

Council is obligated to restore Corryong Landfill site to a particular 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.
Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

Key assumptions:		
- discount rate	4.20%	4.35%
- index rate	4.25%	4.45%

5.5 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2025.

Credit card facilities (Westpac Banking Corporation)	40	25
Total facilities	40	25
Used facilities	5	6
Unused facilities	**35**	**19**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

5.6 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

2025	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					
Garbage collection	940	968	3,083	908	5,899
Town Maintenance Contracts	307	614	-	-	921
Environmental Services Contracts	225	-	-	-	225
Landfill Site Lease	31	-	-	-	31
Total	1,503	1,582	3,083	908	7,076
Capital					
Landfill Capping Works	426	-	-	-	426
Plant Replacements	557	-	-	-	557
Construction of Town Toilet Blocks	473	-	-	-	473
Total	1,456	-	-	-	1,456

2024	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	44	-	-	-	44
Garbage Management	913	940	2,993	1,966	6,812
Total	957	940	2,993	1,966	6,856
Capital					
Bridges	547	-	-	-	547
Roads	196	-	-	-	196
Parks and Open Space	267	-	-	-	267
Total	1,010	-	-	-	1,010

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(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.

Future undiscounted minimum rentals receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025	2024
	$'000	$'000
Not later than one year	20	20
	20	20

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE

6.1 Non current assets classified as held for sale

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Cost of acquisition	-	62
Total non current assets classified as held for sale	**-**	**62**

Non-current assets classified as held for sale (including disposal groups) are measured at the lower of its carrying amount and fair value less costs of disposal, and are not subject to depreciation. Non-current assets, disposal groups and related liabilities and assets are treated as current and classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. This condition is regarded as met only when the sale is highly probable and the asset's sale (or disposal group sale) is expected to be completed within 12 months from the date of classification.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

6.2 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2024 $'000	Additions $'000	Reclassifications $'000	Revaluation $'000	Depreciation $'000	Disposal $'000	Write-off $'000	Transfers $'000	Carrying amount 30 June 2025 $'000
Property	46,805	85	-	-	(1,352)	(30)	-	3,339	48,847
Plant and equipment	3,992	-	-	-	(821)	(245)	(75)	1,642	4,494
Infrastructure	216,828	-	-	11,313	(4,667)	-	-	5,501	228,975
Work in progress	6,510	12,820	-	-	-	-	-	(10,482)	8,848
	274,136	12,905	-	11,313	(6,840)	(275)	(75)	-	291,143

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP $'000	Additions $'000	Write-off $'000	Reclassification $'000	Transfers $'000	Closing WIP $'000
Property	432	1,988	-	1,407	(3,339)	488
Plant and equipment	2	1,668	-	-	(1,642)	28
Infrastructure	6,076	9,164	-	(1,407)	(5,501)	8,333
Total	6,510	12,820	-	-	(10,482)	8,849

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(a) Property

	Land - specialised	Land - non specialised	Land improvements	Total Land & Land Improvements	Heritage buildings	Buildings - specialised	Buildings - non specialised	Total Buildings	Work In Progress	Total Property
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	10,904	8,128	-	**19,032**	-	43,322	-	**43,322**	432	**62,786**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	-	-	-	**-**	-	(15,548)	-	**(15,548)**	-	**(15,548)**
Rounding	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
	10,904	8,128	-	19,032	-	27,773	-	27,773	432	**47,237**
Movements in fair value										
Additions	-	85	-	**85**	-	-	-	**-**	1,988	**2,073**
Reclassifications	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	1,407	**1,407**
Revaluation	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
Disposal	-	-	-	**-**	-	(90)	-	**(90)**	-	**(90)**
Write-off	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
Transfers	-	-	-	**-**	-	3,339	-	**3,339**	(3,339)	**0**
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
	-	85	-	**85**	-	3,249	-	**3,249**	56	**3,389**
Movements in accumulated depreciation										
Depreciation and amortisation	-	-	-	**-**	-	(1,352)	-	**(1,352)**	-	**(1,352)**
Reclassifications	-	-	-		-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	**-**	-	60	-	**60**	-	**60**
Revaluation	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
Transfers	-	-	-	**-**	-	-	-	**-**	-	**-**
	-	-	-	-	-	(1,292)	-	(1,292)	-	(1,292)
At fair value 30 June 2025	10,904	8,213	-	**19,117**	-	46,571	-	**46,571**	488	**66,175**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	-	-	-	**-**	-	(16,840)	-	**(16,840)**	-	**(16,840)**
Carrying amount	**10,904**	**8,213**	**-**	**19,117**	**-**	**29,731**	**-**	**29,731**	**488**	**49,335**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Heritage plant and equipment	Plant machinery and equipment	Fixtures fittings and furniture	Computers and telecomms	Library books	Work In Progress	Total plant and equipment
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	-	9,503	30	798	228	2	**10,567**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	-	(5,725)	(26)	(677)	(141)	-	**(6,570)**
	-	3,778	4	121	87	2	**3,997**
Movements in fair value							
Additions	-	-	2	-	-	1,668	**1,670**
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Disposal	-	(710)	-	-	-	-	**(710)**
Write-off	-	-	-	(75)	-	-	**(75)**
Transfers	-	1,619	2	22	-	(1,642)	**0**
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	-	909	3	(54)	-	26	**884**
Movements in accumulated depreciation							
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(714)	(1)	(83)	(23)	-	**(821)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	390	-	75	-	-	**466**
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	-	(324)	(1)	(7)	(23)	-	**(355)**
At fair value 30 June 2025	-	10,412	32	744	228	28	**11,444**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	-	(6,049)	(27)	(684)	(164)	-	**(6,925)**
Carrying amount	**-**	**4,362**	**5**	**60**	64	28	**4,522**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads	Bridges	Footpaths and cycleways	Drainage	Kerb & Channel	Waste Management	Parks open space and streetscapes	Guardrail	Work In Progress	Total Infrastructure
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	237,889	64,069	9,135	9,449	9,859	605	4,052	941	6,076	**342,075**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(78,546)	(25,847)	(2,416)	(5,090)	(5,009)	(558)	(1,432)	(314)	-	**(119,211)**
	159,378	38,220	6,720	4,360	4,849	46	2,624	633	6,076	**222,906**
Movements in fair value										
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,164	**9,164**
Contributions	-	877	(877)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,407)	**(1,407)**
Revaluation	(8,892)	-	(139)	-	5,645	-	-	-	-	**(3,386)**
Disposal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Write-off	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Transfers	2,901	811	529	146	-	-	1,053	62	(5,501)	**(0)**
Impairment losses recognised in operating result	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	(5,991)	1,688	(487)	146	5,645	-	1,053	62	2,256	**4,372**
Movements in accumulated depreciation										
Depreciation and amortisation	(3,139)	(523)	(379)	(94)	(108)	(8)	(397)	(18)	-	**(4,667)**
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Revalution	17,083	-	(556)	-	(1,829)	-	-	-	-	**14,699**
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
	13,944	(523)	(935)	(94)	(1,937)	(8)	(397)	(18)	-	**10,031**
At fair value 30 June 2025	231,898	65,756	8,648	9,595	15,505	605	5,105	1,003	8,333	**346,447**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(64,602)	(26,370)	(3,351)	(5,184)	(6,945)	(566)	(1,829)	(332)	-	**(109,180)**
Carrying amount	167,295	39,386	5,297	4,411	8,559	39	3,276	671	8,333	**237,269**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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. Refer also to Note 8.4 for further disclosure regarding fair value measurement.

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.

	Depreciation Period	**Threshold Limit**
Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods		**$'000**
Buildings		
buildings	50 years	5,000
Plant and Equipment		
Vehicles & 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
Other 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	1,000
Infrastructure		
Bridges - decks and substructure	119 years	10,000
Bridges - added features	80 years	10,000
Bridges - major culverts	100 years	10,000
Drainage underground	100 years	10,000
Footpaths	70 years	10,000
Guardrails	40 years	10,000
Roads - kerb, channel and minor culverts and other	90 years	10,000
Roads - sealed pavements	70 years	10,000
Roads - unsealed pavements	30 years	10,000
Roads - sealed formations	200 years	10,000
Roads - unsealed formations	200 years	10,000
Sealed Surfaces (seal only)	15 years	10,000
Street lighting and streetscape	10 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken in the 2023 financial year by Marcus Hann of LG Valuations, a qualified independent valuer. 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.

Specialised land is 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.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Land	-	5,227	2,986	Jun-23	Full revaluation
Specialised land	-	-	10,904	Jun-23	Full revaluation
Buildings - Specialised	-	-	29,731	Jun-23	Full revaluation
	-	-	-		
Total	-	5,227	43,621		

Valuation of infrastructure

Valuation of infrastructure assets has been determined in accordance with an independent valuation undertaken by Peter Moloney of Moloney Asset Management.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

The valuation is at fair value based on current replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Roads	-	-	167,295	Jun-25	Full revaluation
Bridges	-	-	39,386	Jun-23	Full revaluation
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	5,297	Jun-25	Full revaluation
Drainage	-	-	4,411	Jun-22	Full revaluation
Kerb & Channel	-	-	8,559	Jun-25	Full revaluation
Parks, open space and streetscapes	-	-	3,276	Jun-23	Full revaluation
Guardrail	-	-	671	Jun-23	Full revaluation
	-	-	-		
Total	-	-	228,895		

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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 5% 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 $.95 and $3,486.10 per square metre.

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 were determined by LG Valuations in 2023. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 10 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 current 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 0 years to 200 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.

	2025	2024
Reconciliation of specialised land	**$'000**	**$'000**
Land under roads	10,904	10,904
Total specialised land	**10,904**	**10,904**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

6.3 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
(a) Investments in associates		
MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd	43	43

MomentumOne Shared Services P/L

Background

Council has a 50% interest held in MomentumOne Shared Services Pty Ltd

Fair value of Council's investment in MomentumOne Shared Services P/L	**43**	43
Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit)		
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at start of year	43	43
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at end of year	**43**	43
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	43	43
Share of surplus(deficit) for year	-	-
Share of asset revaluation	-	-
Distributions received	-	-
Carrying value of investment at end of year	**43**	43

Associates are all entities over which Council has significant influence but not control or joint control. Investments in associates are accounted for using the equity method of accounting, after initially being recognised at cost.

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.

For joint operations, Council recognises its direct right to, and its share of jointly held assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses of joint operations.

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 estabilished on 29 October 2015 as a joint venture between Alpine 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

6.4 Investment property

	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Balance at beginning of financial year	1,275	1,250
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Fair value adjustments	-	25
Balance at end of financial year	1,275	1,275

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 Pyt Ltd, ABN 77 095 763 623 who has recent experience in the location and category of the property being valued. The valuation is at fair value, based on the current market value for the properties as at 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2025.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties

Parent entity

Towong Shire Council is the parent entity.

Subsidiaries and Associates

Interests in subsidiaries and associates are detailed in Note 6.3.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Towong Shire Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Directors are deemed KMP.

Details of KMP at any time during the year are:

Councillors	Cr Andrew Whitehead - Mayor (1/7/24 - 26/10/24 & 13/11/24 - 30/6/25)
	Cr Peter Tolsher - Deputy Mayor (13/11/24 - 30/6/25)
	Cr Denise Anderson (1/7/24 - 26/10/24 & 13/11/24 - 30/6/25)
	Cr David Wortmann (1/7/24 - 26/10/24 & 13/11/24 - 30/6/25)
	Cr Jon Pitman (13/11/24 - 30/6/25)
	Cr Aaron Scales (1/7/24 - 26/10/24)
	Cr Peter Dikschei (1/7/24 - 26/10/24)
Key Management Personnel	Juliana Phelps - Chief Executive Officer
	Narelle Taylor - Director - Corporate and Organisational Development
	Mark Florence - Director - Community and Planning
	Jamie Heritage - Director - Infrastructure and Environment (11/11/24 - 30/6/24)
	Rachael Gadd - Director - Infrastructure and Environment (1/7/24 - 6/8/25)

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Total Number of Councillors	7	5
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	5	5
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	12	10

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.
Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.
Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2025 $	2024 $
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	975	1,124
Other long-term employee benefits	7	6
Post-employment benefits	83	98
Termination benefits	16	-
Total	1,081	1,228

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
$10,000 - $19,999	3	-
$20,000 - $29,999	1	2
$30,000 - $39,999	3	2
$80,000 - $89,999	1	1
$100,000 - $109,999	1	-
$120,000 - $129,999	-	1
$180,000 - $189,999	-	1
$190,000 - $199,000	1	-
$200,000 - $209,999	1	2
$290,000 - $299,000	-	1
$320,000 - $329,999	1	-
	12	10

(d) Remuneration of other senior staff

There were no senior staff, othr than Key Management Personnel, who's remuneration exceeded $170,000.

7.2 Related party disclosure	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
(a) Transactions with related parties		
During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.		
Income		
Fees and charges to entitles controlled by KMP (1)	9	13
Grants received from entity controlled by KMP (2)	3	24
Total Income	12	37
Expenses		
Grants paid to entities controlled by KMP	-	-
Purchases of materials or services from entities controlled by KMP (3)	178	171
Total Expenses	**178**	**171**
Total Transactions	**190**	**208**

(1) Councils pays insurance premiums on behalf of assets controlled by community groups and invoices for reimbursement. In this case, insurance reimbursements were charged to Corryong Recreation Reserve, in which Cr Whitehead is on the board of.

(2) A former Councillor (Cr Scales) was a director of Municipal Association of Victoria. Income of $3,000 was received in the form of a scholarship grant.

(3) Membership Fees were paid to Rural Councils Victoria & Tourism North East, Ms Phelps is a board member of both. Membership fees were also paid to Municipal Association of Victoria in which Cr Scales is a director of. Small costs for catering/hall hire were incurred towards Corryong Recreation Reserve and Towong Soldiers Memorial Hall.

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There are no balance outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties

(c) Loans to/from related parties

There are no loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

There are no outstanding commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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. There were no contingent assets at balance date.

(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.

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

Council are not aware of any insurance claims being made against itself.

Legal matters

Council has no major legal matters that could have a material impact on 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

The amount disclosed for financial guarantee in this note is the nominal amount of the underlying loan that is guaranteed by the Council, not the fair value of the financial guarantee.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or Council has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2025 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2025 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2025 that are expected to impact Council.
In September 2024 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued two Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS). This followed Commonwealth legislation establishing Australia's sustainability reporting framework. Relevant entities will be required to undertake mandatory reporting of climate-related disclosures in future financial years. Public sector application issues remain under consideration and Council wil continue to monitor developments and potential implications for future financial years.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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 and borrowings. Details of the material accounting policy information 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.

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'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 / 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. 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 have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities council deal with;
- council may require collateral where appropriate; anc
- 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 our 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 allowance 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:

- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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.

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 0.5% and -1.5% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.35%.

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.

Council has considered the amendments to AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement that apply for the 2024-25 financial year as a result of AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities. For assets, where the Council adopts a current replacement cost approach to determine fair value, the Council now considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation.
The AASB 13 amendments apply prospectively, comparative figures have not been restated.

The AASB 13 amendments have not resulted in any material impacts to Council's financial statements.

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; and

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. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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 < > to < > years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Asset class	**Revaluation frequency**
Land	5 years
Buildings	5 years
Roads	5 years
Bridges	5 years
Footpaths and cycleways	5 years
Drainage	5 years
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	5 years
Waste management	5 years
Parks, open space and streetscapes	5 years
Aerodromes	5 years
Other infrastructure	5 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increases are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increase reverses a prior year decrease for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increase is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increases and decreases within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets
At each reporting date, the 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
No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS

9.1 Reserves (a) Asset revaluation reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Increase (decrease) $'000	Share of increase (decrease) on revaluations by an associate $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
2025				
Property				
Land and land improvements	17,907	-	-	17,907
Buildings	7,685	-	-	7,685
	25,592	-	-	25,592
Infrastructure				
Roads	101,908	8,191	-	110,099
Bridges	33,981	-	-	33,981
Footpaths and cycleways	1,450	(695)	-	755
Drainage	4,068	-	-	4,068
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	4,681	-	-	4,681
Waste management	91	-	-	91
Parks, open space and streetscapes	-	-	-	-
Kerb and channels	-	3,816	-	3,816
	146,179	11,312	-	157,491
Total asset revaluation reserves	**171,771**	**11,312**	**-**	**183,083**
2024				
Property				
Land and land improvements	16,994	913	-	17,907
Buildings	7,685	-	-	7,685
	24,679	913	-	25,592
Infrastructure				
Roads	101,908	-	-	101,908
Bridges	33,981	-	-	33,981
Footpaths and cycleways	1,450	-	-	1,450
Drainage	4,068	-	-	4,068
Kerb and channel	4,681	-	-	4,681
Guardrail	91	-	-	91
	146,179	-	-	146,179
Total asset revaluation reserves	**170,858**	**913**	**-**	**171,771**

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	5,651	(2,472)
Non-cash adjustments:		
Profit/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	199	(16)
Depreciation	6,840	6,832
Financing activities included in operating result	18	23
Fair value adjustments for investment property	-	(25)
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(479)	(378)
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	(273)	384
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(1,156)	(14)
Increase/(decrease) in inventories	(83)	(112)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	2,779	296
(Decrease)/increase in unearned income /revenue	(4,062)	(3,053)
(Decrease)/increase in trust fund & deposits	(147)	(737)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	402	29
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**9,689**	**757**

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 2025, this was 11.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2024: 11.0%)).

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 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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 2024, 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 as at 30 June 2024 (of which Council is a contributing employer) was 105.4%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.6% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.7% pa

As at 30 June 2025, 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 2025.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during Auugust 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VB were:

Net investment returns 5.7% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.6% pa

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2024 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2024 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 2025, this rate was 11.5% of members' salaries (11.0% in 2023/24). 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 2023 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 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 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 2024 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 2024 while a full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2024 (Interim) $m	2023 (Triennial) $m
- A VBI Surplus	108.4	84.7
- A total service liability surplus	141.4	123.6
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	156.7	141.9

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 2024.

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 2024.

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 2024.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

The 2025 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2025 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.7% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.6% pa

It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 October 2025.

The 2023 triennial investigation

The last triennial actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2023 was at 30 June 2020. This actuarial investigation was completed by 31 December 2020. The financial assumptions for the purposes of that investigation was:

	2023 Triennial investigation	2020 Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.7% pa	5.6% pa
Salary inflation	3.50% pa	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter
Price inflation	2.8% pa	2.0% pa

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2025 $'000	2024 $'000
Vision super	Defined benefits	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	13	27
Vision super	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	330	312
Other Funds	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	720	722

Council has NIL unfunded liability payments to Vision Super at 30 June 2025 (NIL at 30 June 2024).

There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2025.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2026 is $27,000.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Note 10 CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING POLICY

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2024-25 year.

Towong Shire Council

Performance Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

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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.



_____
Narelle Taylor CA
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated: 13/10/2025

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the *Towong Shire Council* for the year ended 30 June 2025 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
Dated: 13/10/2025



_____
Peter Tolsher
Deputy Mayor
Dated: 13/10/2025



_____
Mr Jamie Heritage
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 13/10/2025

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Councillors of Towong Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Towong Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2025 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • notes to the accounts • certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of Towong Shire Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
15 October 2025

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Section 1. 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.

Section 2. Service performance indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Results					
	2022	2023	2024	2025		Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	
Aquatic Facilities ***Utilisation*** *Utilisation of aquatic facilities* [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	1.12	1.37	1.73	NA	1.85	Council operates two outdoor seasonal swimming pools. There were 11,551 visits recorded in 2024/25 compared to 10,804 in 2023/24; compared to 8,480 in 2022/23 and 6,783 in 2021/22.
Animal Management ***Health and safety*** *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	0%	0%	0%	NA	0%	There have been no animal prosecutions in 2024/25.

Food Safety ***Health and safety*** *Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications* *[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*	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	NA	84.62%	There were thirteen critical or major non-compliance outcome notifications issued in 2023/24. Eleven of these were followed up. The expected result for 2025/26 reporting is 100%. This compares four notifications in 2023/24; two in 2022/23 and eleven in 2021/22.
Governance ***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement (community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council)*	54	53	46	50	47	Satisfaction with Council's decisions improved one point in compared to the prior year. State-wide average was 50. It is likely that a complex capital project which continued to receive a lot of community attention impacted on a lower than desired score. Council have put a lot of effort in recent times to engage the community for the Council Plan. We are working hard to improve on these scores into the future.
Libraries ***Participation*** *Library membership* *[percentage of the population that are registered library members] x100*	New for 2023/24	New for 2023/24	17.99%	NA	19.54%	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. We are happy with an improved result from prior year and anticipate a continued increase with the recent successful grant application to redevelop the Corryong Library.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Participation *Participation in the MCH service* *[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100*	75.83%	89.13%	84.89%	NA	84.51%	226 children attended the service at least once during 2024/25. The participation rate is on par with previous years.
Participation *Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children* *[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*	84.62%	91.67%	100%	NA	87.50%	There were eight children who identify as having an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background who are registered with the MCH service. Seven of these children attended the service at least once in 2024/25.
Roads ***Condition*** *Sealed local roads below the intervention level* *(percentage of sealed local roads that are below the renewal intervention level set by Council and not requiring renewal)*	100%	97%	97.52%	100%	99.37%	The increase in the number of roads that have reached intervention may be the result of the extremely wet weather that has been experienced over the last few years.
Statutory Planning ***Service standard*** *Planning applications decided within the relevant required time* *(percentage of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time)*	53.54%	58.65%	89.23%	70.00%	66.67%	Planning applications have continued to be made within appropriate time frames. Applications decided in timeframes has seen a change due to the assessment of a number of larger applications which have required additional stakeholder engagement to achieve good planning outcomes.

Waste Management ***Waste diversion*** *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* *[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100*	48.62%	30.81%	40.45%	50.00%	57.47%	The total amount of garbage and recyclables collected by Council in 2024/25 was 2,166.13 tonnes. 1,244.93 tonne of this waste was made up of recyclable and green organics waste. The introduction of the FOGO bin services has contributed to the improved diversion from landfill.

Section 3. Financial performance indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Dimension/indicator/ measure	2022	2023	2024	2025		2026	2027	2028	2029	Material Variations and Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target As per budget	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
Efficiency										
Expenditure level										
Expenses per property assessment *[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]*	$4,754.09	$5,685.15	$6,207.22	$6,246.00	$6,988.35	$6,443.57	$6,626.86	$6,815.70	$7,017.23	Higher materials & service costs due to increased costs of building and spending of unbudgeted grants during the year. The number of property assessments has remained relatively stable. A 12% increase on prior year when we know that some of these unbudgeted expenditure is largely backed by grant income has Council unconcerned. Despite this swing, Council places a large emphasis on its financial sustainability.

Revenue level *Average rate per property assessment* *[Sum of all general rates and municipal charges / Number of property assessments]*	$1,745.91	$1,780.92	$1,830.84	$1,891.00	$1,875.41	$1,921.83	$1,970.35	$2,020.11	$2,076.17	No material changes on four-year averages. The 2.7% increase on prior year is close to the rate cap of 2.75%.
Liquidity ***Working capital*** *Current assets compared to current liabilities* *[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100*	488.06%	364.20%	360.63%	179.00%	387.61%	252.64%	248.91%	255.86%	261.91%	On par with previous years. Slower than budgeted capital works expenditure meant that cash in bank was not utilised as much as intended, resulting in a higher than target working capital ratio.
Unrestricted cash *Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities* *[Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100*	178.75%	183.02%	112.19%	93.99%	216.37%	130.00%	86.00%	34.00%	30.00%	Higher amounts of cash on hand required to fund carried forward capital works which has decreased the unrestricted cash amounts.

Obligations ***Loans and borrowings*** *Loans and borrowings compared to rates* *[Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100*	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Council had no borrowings owing at year end.
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates *[Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100*	0.18%	0.17%	0.22%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Council had no borrowings owing at year end. The incremental percentages reflect bank and finance charges related to having these services.
Indebtedness *Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue* *[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100*	7.79%	6.52%	4.80%	9.00%	4.72%	2.54%	2.45%	2.38%	2.32%	Own source revenue is more than previous year due to increased income from General Rates & Municipal charges as well as interest and insurance reimbursements & disaster recovery arrangements.

Asset renewal and upgrade *Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation* *[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100*	120.04%	158.79%	162.16%	100%	154.34%	175.35%	83.10%	68.30%	67.56%	Spike in asset renewals because of highest capital spendings in recent years, especially expenditure on asset renewals due to bushfire and flooding events.
Operating position ***Adjusted underlying result*** *Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)* *[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100*	15.08%	2.68%	(24.16%)	(11.00%)	(3.41%)	(2.85%)	(1.36%)	(1.42%)	(1.88%)	Council has achieved net accumulated surpluses in the prior four years which are budgeted to be utilised in the forecast periods. We continue to advocate for capital grants to sustain our ageing assets.

Stability ***Rates concentration*** *Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue* *[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100*	37.56%	37.76%	46.50%	38.00%	34.81%	38.47%	37.79%	37.67%	37.76%	This indicator is impacted largely by the timing of receipt of the Federal Financial Assistance Grants. In the prior year, no advance payment was received however in 2024/25 we received 50% of the 2025/26 allocation.
Rates effort *Rates compared to property values* *[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100*	0.56%	0.38%	0.30%	0.24%	0.30%	0.31%	0.30%	0.29%	0.28%	No material movements. There was a small overall change in property values in the shire, contributed in large part to stability following two years of high growth.

Section 4. Sustainable capacity indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Results				
Indicator / measure [formula]	2022	2023	2024	2025	Comments
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
Population *Expenses per head of municipal population*	$3,543.06	$4,168.07	$4,519.94	$5,099.25	Higher materials & service costs due to increased costs of building and spending of unbudgeted grants during the year. The number of property assessments has remained relatively stable. An increase on prior year when we know that some of these unbudgeted expenditure is largely backed by grant income has Council unconcerned. Despite this swing, Council places a large emphasis on its financial sustainability.
Infrastructure per head of municipal population *[Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]*	$36,556.23	$39,997.41	$40,862.31	$43,614.88	Slightly higher capital expenditure for the year has increased the value of infrastructure. The Municipal population has remained relatively stable.

Population density per length of road *[Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]*	5.13	5.23	6.59	6.58	No material movements
Own-source revenue *Own-source revenue per head of municipal population* *[Own-source revenue / Municipal population]*	$2,071.96	$2,238.74	$2,748.68	$2,661.38	No material movements
Recurrent grants *Recurrent grants per head of municipal population* *[Recurrent grants / Municipal population]*	$1,375.10	$1,411.99	$644.56	$1,772.65	This indicator is impacted largely by the timing of receipt of the Federal Financial Assistance Grants. In the prior year, no advance payment was received however in 2024/25 we received 50% of the 2025/26 allocation.

Disadvantage *Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage* *[Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]*	5	5	5	5	
Workforce turnover *Percentage of staff turnover* [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	25.9%	30.0%	21.1%	26.7%	Staff turnover is in line with four year averages. Council expects the turnover percentage to decrease in the coming years despite some upcoming fixed term contracts expiring.

Section 5. Notes to the accounts

5.1. 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, service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. 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 or the Council's satisfaction survey provider).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by *the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year and the results forecast for the period 2025-26 to 2028-29 by the council's financial 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.

5.2. Definitions

Key term	Definition
Aboriginal children	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
adjusted underlying revenue	means total income other than: • non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and • non-monetary asset contributions; and • contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
annual report	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
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
asset upgrade expenditure	means expenditure that— (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
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 authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
food premises	has the same meaning as in the *Food Act 1984*
intervention level	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
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 council by an authorized officer under that 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
non-current liabilities	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
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
relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
restricted cash	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash