

Engagement Report



2022/23 Draft Budget

Background

Strathbogie Shire Council's 2022/23 Draft Budget is a significant document for Council and our community.

It sets Council's fees and charges for the next year, along with our capital works program, the money we spend on services and the resources we need to deliver these services.

Our communications and engagement plan aimed to inform the community about the 2022/23 Draft Budget and create a series of engagement opportunities to seek feedback.

Approach

This year we took the opportunity for meaningful input from our community into our Draft Budget to the next level.

In stage one we launched the innovative Pitch my Project initiative in November to ensure input into every stage of the Draft Budget's development.

In stage two we created a series of clear communication materials that provided our community with information about the Draft Budget and ensured they understood how they could have their say.

To ensure those who did not have access to the internet could have their say we also continued to seek submissions in writing.

Depth of Engagement

Depth of engagement: Involve

Public participation goal: To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Promise to the public: We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Engagement Report

Participation and reach

Stage	Share Strathbogie Contributions	Share Strathbogie Views
One	49	671
Two	21	495
TOTAL	70	1166

Stage	Social Media Posts	Social Media Reach
One	7	4037
Two	8	2730
TOTAL	15	6767

What our community told us

We received 23 submissions to the 2022/23 Draft Budget.

The most common theme was around a community desire to implement an art trail throughout the Shire. Ten submissions were received in support of this project.

Officers recommend initiating a broad community engagement program, to determine the type of artwork the community supports, where it should be installed and input into a possible theme.

This engagement could be completed quickly and would allow the expenditure of \$20,000 allocated in the Draft Budget to progress as supported by the Euroa Community Action Group and Euroa Chamber of Business and Commerce's submission.

Engagement Report

Findings

	From	Request to speak	Submission
1	Nagambie resident	No	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to Council on the exhibited Draft FY2022-2023 Budget.</p> <p>I made a submission to Council under the “Pitch my Project” Program. The purpose of the Program being to appraise Council of a project(s) that members of the municipal community believe to be worthwhile projects that will enhance the municipality. My project was listed in Council’s system as: Environmental Improvements – Trinity Reserve McGregor Avenue Nagambie.</p> <p>The estimated cost of my project which is for Stage 1 of a multi-stage project is \$14,000 ex GST. I was advised by letter on 2022-04-22 (your reference #779315) that my submission was unsuccessful. This is disappointing. It is disappointing because Council has been moving to improve our response to a wide range of environmental issues, in particular the sparsity of our Urban Forests, and my project seeks to enhance that journey.</p> <p>Council has identified, through multiple reports that we need to increase our Urban Green Infrastructure, all so known as trees, throughout our shire. In particular in the Nagambie Township. The relevant reports are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Green Infrastructure Review March2019, and associated listed on pages 4&5 of this report • Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 • Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 (draft). <p>My project proposal fits within the recommendations provided in these reports. The reports highlight that Nagambie has a decidedly poor tree canopy – Urban Green Infrastructure Review 2019 and Sustainable Strathbogie 2030.</p> <p>They lament the need for space for the planting of trees - Urban Green Infrastructure Review2019 and Sustainable Strathbogie 2030. They focus on street trees, ie trees in streets. Our streets are not wide enough for decent sized trees.</p>

Engagement Report

		<p>The Climate Change Action Plan (draft) – Action Items 4,5,6,8,11,17,23,31 all relate to trees and/or water reuse. My project provides the genesis of the solution to these issues.</p> <p>Trinity Reserve is located north of McGregor Avenue, and east of Tarquin Place in Nagambie Township. It is part of the natural depression that flows through the Whroovale Estate, and drains this area to Lake Nagambie. The natural depression was excavated to create a drainage retardation basin at this point. Material was excavated and placed on the adjoining new allotments. The excavation exposed the heavy clay subsoil that is now the floor of the basin. This floor material is a very plastic clay that shrinks significantly as it dries out.</p> <p>My proposal is to undertake the investigation and design of a rehabilitated reserve basin floor. The purpose being to know what we need to do to improve the floor soil properties and the drainage system within the basin so that we will have improved growing conditions for Urban Green Infrastructure, ie trees. To get the ground conditions right so that we can maximise the chances of a successful planting.</p> <p>I maintain the north end this reserve, and I have planted numerous trees over the last six years at the north end of the reserve. I have trouble keeping them going through the various seasons. In summer, the grounds cracks and is baked dry as a result of the heavy clay material. In winter because the basin does not have good drainage there can be “wet feet” situations. I have had some success, and I want more. I have also had a lot of losses and/or very slow growth in the poor ground conditions, and I do not want this.</p> <p>My proposal is considered to be Stage 1 of a two/three stage process. The stages being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1: Investigation and design of the enhancements, eg: soil sampling, testing and necessary soil improvements; design of new surface contours; design of infiltration drains along the east and west edges of the basin floor , and preparation of P90 cost estimate for the project. • Stage 2: Undertake the improvement works as developed in Stage 1 • Stage 3: Plant new Urban Green Infrastructure in the new improved reserve basin. <p>I was advised in July 2021 that \$400,000 had been set aside over the next 4 years, starting in FY2021-2022, for the planting and maintaining of 1000 trees. A significant project for good. I do not know how far we have progressed with the implementation this project. This does however demonstrates that Council is serious in its intent on improving our tree canopy cover.</p> <p>The increased tree canopy will provide shade and habitat for our community and our fauna.</p>
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Engagement Report

			<p>All projects require planning. My project is focussed on exactly this, and the outcomes will be scalable, and could be used in other nearby developments and sites.</p> <p>I request that Council give favourable consideration to including my project: Environmental Improvements – Trinity Reserve McGregor Avenue Nagambie – Stage 1, with an estimated cost of \$14,000 ex GST into the FY2022-2023 Strathbogje Council Budget.</p>
2	Euroa Memorial Reserve Committee	Yes	<p>As a committee of management, we are seeking financial assistance to upgrade the playing surface of the oval. I was informed from community members of Euroa that the last time major works were undertaken on the oval was in 1996. The committee of management have had professional advice and have been advised that the playing surface is in desperate need of repair.</p> <p>It needs scarification which will break up, loosen and rough up the playing surface. Verti draining will penetrate small holes into the turf to allow oxygen to reach the sub soil. This breaks up the thatch and allows the surface to drain properly. Finally laser levelling the whole ground which sand is applied across the entire playing surface. Even though as a spectator you would look at the playing surface and say it's green and it looks fine, it clearly is not.</p> <p>As a committee of management we have had some concern's from several user groups regarding the playing surface being uneven and patchy which in turn may cause injuries to its users.</p> <p>We recently held the Euroa Gift and would like this event to grow. It provides financial support to our local economy. The memorial oval is a place that brings people together during the winter months and the precinct can accommodate on most weekends over 1000 people. From Auskick participation on Friday nights to the Euroa Football and Netball Club hosting teams all over the Goulburn Valley in the GVFL and GVNL. We have a lot of families from Euroa and surrounding towns playing for Euroa in the junior football netball club.</p> <p>In summer the ground is used by the Euroa senior and junior cricket clubs every weekend. The Euroa Secondary College also utilises the ground for their annual school athletic carnival and also cross-country running day.</p> <p>Last of all it is surprising busy being used by community members taking their dogs for a play. Runners using the surface and people driving through Euroa that need a break find the reserve very appealing.</p> <p>The costs of these works still needs to be finalised, however we have received an estimate of \$17,000. As a committee of management we are committed to financially providing \$5,000 towards these works. The committee of management would appreciate the support of \$12,000 from the Shire of Strathbogje.</p>

Engagement Report

3	Nagambie Lakes Community House	Yes	<p>The Nagambie Lakes Community House, (NLCH) is a not for profit, incorporated organisation offering a wide range of social activities and educational services. The House commenced operations in 2010 with the aim of providing programmes in response to residents’ needs and feedback. Today, the NLCH is a member of the peak body Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, which includes close to 400 community-based organisations across the state.</p> <p>The Community House primarily operates from 363 High Street in Nagambie, The Kearns Centre, but also runs the community garden at 11 Prentice Street and offers weekly participation in an Art Group, currently meeting at the Nagambie Primary School. The House is open from Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm, but will offer access to our food pantry 24/7. We regularly work alongside other Nagambie organisations which creates positive synergy effects for the extended community. Our constitution does not require participants in our events or groups to be members of our organisation, however, 170 individuals have still chosen to become paying members.</p> <p>The Community House tagline is “sharing friendship, knowledge and skills”. It is a simple, yet poignant summary of how we run our day-to-day-operations, however, our main objective is to listen and try to meet the needs we identify in our local community. We believe in and work with a strength-based approach and hence many of our activities and services are offered with the help of, or run entirely by, volunteers. On a weekly/monthly basis, we have 16 different groups which meet under the Community House umbrella. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Group • Breast Cancer Support Group • Community Café • Computer Support • Craft Group • Garden Group • Lakeside Larks • Matildas • Patchwork and Quilting • Scrabble/Chess Group • Shared Table • Tow 'n' Yarn • Ukulele Group • Walking Group • Welcome Group
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Engagement Report

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing Group <p>In addition, some of the events and activities we've undertaken in more recent years are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drama and Music Workshop for Primary School Aged Children• Self Defence Workshop for Seniors• YouTube Advent Calendar (Seen by over 11,000 people)• Healthy Ageing Day• Family Walk• Community Quilt• International Women's Day Breakfast with proceeds supporting charities• Food pantry• National Volunteer Week Celebrations• (Co-organised) Nagambie Community Carols• Accredited Level 2 First Aid Course• Accredited Responsible Service of Alcohol Course• Safe Seats, Safe Kids event• Online Trivia Nights• Recycling station (Lids4Kids, Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs, blister packs etc.)• Clean Up Australia Day• Song writing workshop with Belle Miners• Boat licence course• Music/soaré events• Glass Square Block Party• Christmas Wreath Making. <p>Community Value provided by the Nagambie Lakes Community House</p> <p>Every year, the NLCH is required to complete an extensive survey from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. This is to ensure we deliver on our programming, justifying the funds we receive from the State Government.</p> <p>In 2021, due to repeated lockdowns, the DFFH decided to modify the survey. Instead of reporting on the whole year, we were asked to focus on activities and events occurring over the course of four days in July. Although this</p>
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Engagement Report

		<p>is normally a more quiet period of our calendar year and we were adhering to COVID-19 restrictions, the results of the survey were telling. In four days, The NLCH provided \$5352 of community value divided as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved quality of life through social connection: \$2,113• Volunteer contributions: \$3,205• Emergency relief provided: \$20• Services provided: \$14 <p>This community value equates to: \$174.00 for every hour the neighbourhood house was in use. For more information how these calculations were made, please see attached PDF on NLCH Community Value.</p> <p>The financing of Neighbourhood/Community Houses The State Government acknowledges the important work Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria do. As a result, we receive yearly funding covering the cost of rent and part time employment of a coordinator. (25h per week). However, most Shires in the North East Goulburn Valley region also recognise the positive impact Neighbourhood Houses bring and therefore contribute with additional funds to ensure a maximum positive impact. They see the value in supporting already existing and functioning structures serving their communities. Two of Strathbogie’s neighbouring shires provide a yearly budget of \$15,000 and \$21,000 respectively to their Neighbourhood/Community Houses.</p> <p>Mental Health and the Community House As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the many statewide lockdowns, the NLCH had to reinvent much of its normal activities during the past two years. We quickly identified an increased need for people to feel connected and supported in facing ‘the great unknown’. We therefore took the initiative to create a Community Quilt, we made a YouTube Advent Calendar and held Online Trivia Evenings. We also decided to print and personally deliver our monthly newsletter to all members without an email address. (Approximately 25 people.) This not only gave those with a greater risk of being isolated a written production to read, but also provided them with an opportunity to see and talk to someone, within the safety of their own front porch. During this time we conducted many social phone calls and received a couple of social prescriptions from local GPs.</p> <p>The overarching challenge related to mental health continues and we have recently started a conversation/community café, run by a former nurse, which primarily targets people in isolation, carers and those with mental health challenges. As the House is open from Monday to Friday, we also have the opportunity of refer people on to counselling, whether it be grief and trauma or alcohol addiction.</p>
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Engagement Report

		<p>On a weekly basis, through our food pantry, we also meet people from various socioeconomic backgrounds. We are able to refer them to organisations where they can receive further help, such as Haag, (Housing for the Aged Action Group).</p> <p>In conclusion The Community House has proven to be a key stakeholder in the immediate Nagambie community and beyond. By not only regarding our members as consumers, but also knowledgeable contributors, we have created a vibrant meeting place at the centre of town where everyone is welcome. In the future, and as the Nagambie township grows, it is our ambition to continue offering a wide variety of activities, and to be open to and respond to the changing needs of our community, promoting interaction, cooperation, and cohesion across all ages.</p> <p>Budget submission The Nagambie Lakes Community House hereby request funding of \$15,000 per year, over a period of two years. Should the Shire see it necessary, we are willing to work together to formulate and sign a service agreement which outlines our respective commitments. The breakdown of allocated funds would look as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 Community Carols (Includes costs for PA and sound equipment, musicians, stage prop and printing costs.) \$5,000 • Community Garden at the Kearns Centre (Includes levelling of ground, purchase of garden beds, plants, installation of watering systems and wheelchair accessible garden paths.) \$4,000 • Gazebo cover (To enable outdoor classes and enhance the Nagambie Playgroup) \$3,500 • Primary School Disco (To arrange a Primary School Disco at the Mechanics Hall for both local schools) \$500 • Facilitating for and organising a National Volunteer Week Celebration (Alongside the Strathbogie Shire) \$1,000 • Monthly Newsletter Printing (For members of the community with no internet or email) \$1,000 • Year 2 Community Carols (Includes costs for PA and sound equipment, musicians, stage prop and printing costs.) \$5,000 • Family Walk Arranging a Taungurung themed Family Walk at Tabilk Wetlands with Taungurung elder as invited speaker. \$1,500 • Purchase of a coffee machine to arrange barista courses at the Community House \$3,500 • Facilitating for and organising a National Volunteer Week Celebration \$1,000 (Alongside the Strathbogie Shire)
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Engagement Report

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging a Shire wide Talent Show with local artists and bands (Includes cost for PA, prize money, hall hire and printing costs) \$3,000 • Monthly Newsletter Printing (For members of the community with no internet or email) \$1,000
4	Nagambie Bowls Club	Yes	<p>We would like to extend the height of the existing fence between the Nagambie Bowls Club and the Skate Park to the equivalent height (to match) the Tennis Club fence.</p> <p>We consider this a high priority after recent issues with items being thrown from the Skate Park onto the Bowling Green (synthetic carpet).</p> <p>Prior to the Skate Park being designed, ██████████ had indicated to our club that a high fence would be placed in between us and the Skate Park, as well as Security Cameras and a person that would be supervising this Hub for several hours Monday to Friday. None of these things were done. We spoke with ██████████ prior to the Skate Park construction and were told that there was not enough money in the budget for fencing.</p> <p>As the wire fence was less than a metre high, we applied for a Department Of Justice Grant to have the whole boundary of our club fenced, (to maximum colorbond height) the club's contribution to this grant was \$5,000 and another \$5,000 with in kind.</p> <p>When the Skate Park was completed, (even before the Skate Park was officially opened) we were having issues with numerous items being thrown from the Skate Park onto our \$250,000 playing surface (this ranged from balls, chewing gum, coke cans, banana peel, stones, sticks, etc) We met with ██████████ on Nov 16 to discuss our concerns. This was followed up by an email from ██████████ later that day highlighting the points discussed and for them to be followed up on.</p> <p>On 17th Nov we received an email from ██████████ indicating that he had "forwarded various aspects of the email onto other officers". In relation to extending the fence his response was: "I had a chat with our Op's team this morning and they have looked into it, however they want to do a proper job to do it justice, so they are looking at extending the fence height. I'll be interested in what creative solution they can come up with."</p> <p>Disappointingly no one from the Shire contacted the club or followed up on this. On 31st December (New Year's Eve) sparklers tied together were thrown from the Skate Park onto our playing surface damaging our carpet to the extent of \$29,000. Nagambie Police completed a report, confirming that this item was definitely thrown from the Skate Park.</p>

Engagement Report

			<p>On 5th January we sent [REDACTED] a text message to indicate the damage done to our green. We had no response from [REDACTED]. We then raised our concerns with [REDACTED], who inspected our damage and was proactive in [REDACTED] contacting us. We met with [REDACTED] on 13th May at the club where [REDACTED] suggested we place a submission to the council via the Draft Budget.</p> <p>We are still getting a large volume of items coming over this fence onto our green and now have dents in the new colour bond fence where people are climbing over from the Skate Park. This along with adults and children entering our premises and running across the green to retrieve things is not ideal at all. We propose that an extended fence will cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000 and will forward quotes once we have received them.</p>
5	Avenel Active	Yes	<p>Avenel Active Inc is grateful that our Pitch My Project application to build a landscaped parking area in Bank St Avenel has been included in the draft budget for 2022/23. This is an important project for the town which is experiencing an unprecedented increase in building approvals. At last count, 108 new building blocks had been approved by council, with a further 47 awaiting approval. This translates into approximately 300 to 400 new residents in a community of 1,200 people. Parking in Avenel is already at a premium, especially on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday when the medical clinic is open and the only parking close to the clinic and pharmacy is on the street. The influx of new residents and their vehicles will severely impact the amenity and safety of the Queen St town centre without an increase in available car parking. Our proposal is to use land, partially owned by Vic Track, between the railway line and Saleyards Rd to build a carpark with suitable landscaping. This would ease congestion in the town centre and improve the main northern entry to the town, which at present is an eyesore.</p> <p>The present budget application request is for \$55,000 to carry out a scoping and costing of the proposed carpark. A preliminary plan for the area has been drawn up (attached) by Shire engineers prior to our proposal, and this could act as a starting point.</p> <p>We commend this project to our councillors as an important step in allowing Avenel to develop in a timely manner and maintain infrastructure necessary to ensure the safety of its community. Our application is included in the line item "Unallocated Infrastructure Fund" on page 37 of the draft budget. If possible, we would prefer that this proposal be considered as its own line item, given its importance to the town of Avenel. Our thanks for your consideration of this proposal.</p> <p>Please note plans are included in appendix XXXX</p>
6	Resident	No	<p>Please consider art in our towns within the Shire. Make a statement. Metal Art, Tank Art. Shepparton Shire have cows, it's fantastic. You will find all community members would support it and actually be proud of our Shire doing this</p>

Engagement Report

7	Resident	No	Why wouldn't you support your local artist's, especially two local people Tank & Tobin this a fantastic idea to have these amazing birds around town. Will also bring so many people in to look, which will create more business for our local businesses too. EUROA needs something like this something new and exciting.
8	Resident	No	I would love to see some budget allocated to the fantastic art work done by the locals. It is a great attraction for tourists and the local community.
9	Resident	No	To whom it may concern, Can some funding please be included in the budget to purchase some outdoor art work from Tank and Tobin. The most popular idea that has been discussed among residents is a magpie - built on a base that allows it to spend most of it's time on the banks of The Sevens but also allows it to be moved to Memorial Oval for home football games during the football / netball season. When it is erected on the banks of The Sevens Creek it should be a piece of art work that will bring much joy to both our residents and tourists.
10	Resident	No	Funding for Tank & Tobin (local artists) to create metal bird sculptures for Euroa. These sculptures are magnificent and have created a lot of interest elsewhere - a great promotional item for our town and will bring visitors to the area if we'll marketed. Similar to Benalla's Artscape, and regional Silo art but unique to Euroa. Plus, supporting local artists at the same time
11	Resident	No	I believe that the Strathbogie Shire needs to be more forward thinking. Embracing our local talents in the arts and displaying their works. We have some amazingly talented people in our shire. Using some of the budget to utilize these people and creating an art trail would benefit everyone and bring tourist dollars to the shire.
12	Resident	No	Let there be more funding to street art, sculptures & Murals. They bring people to the towns and communities together.
13	Resident	No	I would like to request a deeper look at the adding of more art installations throughout the shire. It's widely known that you have been given a request and it has been dismissed for more "scoping". This is such a sad response. You have talented artists champing at the bit to give our shire an attraction greater than being known as "Kelly country" We have an opportunity right now to be bold and make something wonderful happen. I hope you don't give in to your fears and open your minds to what could be a major attraction and beautification in the future.
14	Resident	No	I ask council to reconsider investing in metal art to be displayed in Euroa. The recent display of the blue wren attracted much discussion and such art work would help draw more people into our town and perhaps as they stay a little longer, they will take the opportunity to try many of our lovely cafes etc.
15	Euroa Community Action Group and Euroa Chamber of Business	Yes	<p>The Longwood Action Group and Euroa Community Action Group put forward a pitch my project for funding, requesting investment in a trail for an arts trail. There has been money allocated to scoping, however we know there is an evident and present need for more public art in both towns, as well as across the Shire.</p> <p>It is great to see funding allocated for scoping, however this will no doubt take a long period of time. We saw the absolutely incredible public support of Steve Tobin's blue wren when it was put in public space. There were tourists and locals taking photos with it, there were people commenting on the joy it brought to their days.</p>

Engagement Report

	and Commerce		<p>The need does not further scoping. The community need is clear.</p> <p>Therefore we are asking for \$30 000 for two sculptures (one in Euroa and one in Longwood) that utilise the amazing skills of local artist Steve Tobin and also showcase the beauty of our local fauna through public arts.</p> <p>This will enable a trial to kick off with two art pieces and enable the scoping to look at the longer term strategic components of a trail. If we wait for the scoping, we will likely be waiting for a very long time and this is an opportunity to meet the community need now as well as plan for the future. It is a no regret action and has strong support from the community.</p>
16	Euroa Friendlies Reserve CoM	Yes	<p>The Friendlies Reserve does not have the opportunity to earn money required for upkeep, maintenance, and upgrading current facilities and oval. As the Memorial Oval receives shire money, so we would like something similar (about \$16,000pa). This would pay for minor upgrades to facilities (in poor condition), grounds, eg scarifying etc, and any mechanical breakdowns (lawnmowers etc). In particular we wish to insulate particularly the kitchen area which becomes a sauna in hot weather. We are also up for hydraulic repairs to mower and believe the shires grounds budget has already been taken up. If enough money is received, we would like the driveway gravelled to alleviate the mud when it rains</p>
17	Euroa Bowls Club	Yes	<p>We welcome and appreciate the allocation of funds to update our clubrooms. The principal objective is to remove the asbestos, and then restore the male toilet area. Because asbestos removal will require removal of all fittings, including pans, urinal and shower, the cost is difficult to determine. We request a degree of flexibility to allow proper repairs, such as bringing the toilet area to modern standards. We request assistance in the planning stage as well as the construction stage. We also request that the work be expedited, to be done in the bowling off season of winter</p>
18	Resident	No	<p>Learn to Eat. Love to Eat. Group education sessions for parents and carers of babies, toddlers and children on how to start the journey of eating well and set up positive relationships with food from the beginning to avoid fussy eating. Cost: \$2000 Audience: parents of babies (mothers groups attending the Maternal and Child Health clinic), toddlers (attending kinder and the childcare), and children with additional needs such as children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.</p> <p>Primary objectives of Learn to Eat Love to Eat sessions are to: - reduce worry, stress and anxiety in parents about starting solids and introducing finger foods. - teach the difference between choking and gaging, - Help parents read and respond appropriately to their babies cues at mealtimes. - Help parents understand and practice a good feeding relationship from the start to help to reduce fussy eating behaviour now and into the future." By way of example, a session for parents of babies starting solids may focus on the promotion of baby led feeding which is all about responding to your babies cues, and discussion of the benefits of both using purees and solid finger foods. With detail about how babies actually learn to eat and chew and how you as a parent can</p>

Engagement Report

			support them. As well as discussion about the feeding relationship and who is responsible for what at mealtimes. This then leads to a discussion about the best way to respond to common behaviours such as refusing food.
19	Resident	No	After living at [REDACTED] Mitchell St Violet Town for nearly 36 years we are very pleased to see that this Strathbogie Shire budget (2022/2023) has included upgrading and sealing our street.
20	Resident	Yes	<p>Items to note (in order of the document)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The budget is based on the maximum rate increase the government will permit -1.75% This will ensure that the ratepayers of Strathbogie Shire will continue to pay one of the highest rates in the State a legacy of the period 2010-2013 when the Shire increased the rates by 43% in a period of 3 years. (This was one of the reasons that the State Government imposed a limit on rate increases.) It would seem to me that Strathbogie should either cap its rate rise below that permitted by the government or freeze its rates to bring the rate burden down to a similar level to surrounding Councils over time. 2. The total operating expenditure for the forthcoming year is \$31.78 Million 3. The budget includes 12 projects presented under the pitch my project program. These projects comprise (in dollars): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope Arts Sculpture and Mural Trail for Shire 20,000 • Seven Creeks Euroa Master Plan 15,000 • Longwood Master Plan 30,000 • Scope and design Nature Playground Euroa 85,000 • Euroa Bowling Club building - asbestos 17,000 • Euroa RSL memorial to Sir Charles Ryan 4,180 • Euroa Action Group Irrigation for community garden 8,000 • Avenel Active - review and scope car parking 55,000 • Strathbogie Hall bike racks 4,000 • Strathbogie Hall roof 95,000 • Strathbogie hall kitchen 35,000 • Euroa Fire Brigade - 50% cost of re asphalt training track 8,500 <p>It is noted that there is no project directed for Violet Town. This may be as a result of a low number of applications from Violet Town or some confusion or misunderstanding of the program or indeed the lack of organisation by the community. I can easily name many projects which are included in the towns Community Action Plan prepared by VTAG.</p>

Engagement Report

		<p>It seems to me that many of the projects are building maintenance items and not innovative or community projects at all. I have asked the Council for guidelines for project applications. I have yet to obtain a comment.</p> <p>4. One of the major elements of the capital works budget is the rehabilitation of the Violet Town Landfill for \$3.787mill. as required by the EPA.</p> <p>This does not include the \$400,000 already committed, past costs, past and future monitoring, legal costs, past fines and investigations.</p> <p>Apparently, this work is required to protect the health of the Violet Town community however it has never been explained to this community what the risks are. (If indeed if there is any) It is noted that the EPA places a requirement on operators of land fill sites to keep the local community informed regarding activities on landfill sites. This has not been done. I would suggest that the council should embarked on a consultation process as required by the EPA.</p> <p>5. It is noted that the Values of the Council include “To be a respectful, innovative, open and transparent, fair and ethical Council” -which is good to know. A change for the better.</p> <p>6. The Council under the direction of the Government undertakes a yearly service and performance indicator survey and these figures are shown in the budget together with aspiration figures for the future. For example the satisfaction rating for consultation and engagement with the community was 52 out of 100 in 20/21 (a somewhat disappointing figure) the forecast figure for the 21/22 year is 54 out of 100 and expected to be 55 out of 100 as a result of this budget. This seems to be a very low aspirational target. I would have thought that the Council would try a bit harder to improve their performance in this important area.</p> <p>7. Two of the major initiatives under Strategic Focus area 4 are -“Continue to explore free camping possibilities and RV Friendly Town accreditation”. This will comprise a major change to Councils current performance in this area. “Review the Violet Town District Strategic Development Plan to guide future development and growth while maintaining local character.” This has been included in previous budgets but no action has yet been taken.</p> <p>8. The Council employs 128 personal.</p> <p>9. The rates for occupied residential properties are likely to be decreased by an average of 1.1% while vacant residential property rates will rise by approx 63% (due to variation in valuations in recent times) Farm properties</p>
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Engagement Report

		<p>will rise by an average of 2.0% and occupied commercial properties will reduce by 13.5% - also due to variation to valuations.</p> <p>10. Total rate revenue will be \$18,043,701.</p> <p>11. Swimming pool fees (entry) will be static at \$10,000 whereas tip fees will increase from \$134,000 to \$190,000.</p> <p>12 The Council will receive grants from the Commonwealth government \$9.6 mill and State Government \$8.4 mill.</p> <p>13. Capital works program 22/23. The forecast 21/22 expenditure is forecast as \$11.3 mill. The expected 22/23 expenditure is \$15.1mill. It includes the following Violet Town and District projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building improvements -Bowling club unisex disabled toilets • Roads - Mitchell St(gravel and seal), Nicholson (gravel and seal), Agar St (Gravel and seal) • Footpaths - \$25,000 Cowslip St Railway to High St (Both sides gravel 1.5m wide) I don't remember any consultation about this, it would be better with a concrete path one side only given the long term maintenance costs of gravel paths. (And the poor surface as shown by the paths north of the police station) • Drainage -Caulfield St open drain \$70,000, design only Shiffner and Mitchel Sts \$25,000, High St and Irwin Sts box culvert \$35,000. • Waste Management Landfill Restoration \$3.787 Mill. See previous notes. • Parks, open space and streetscapes - red bridge over Honeysuckle Ck \$30,000, Streetscape \$O (see 15 below) <p>14. Capital Works previously approved this year (and previous years) not completed totalling \$9.826 Mill are also listed in the Budget which includes works previously approved and funded but not carried out in the time frame allocated. The only item for Violet Town is an amount of \$400,000 previously allocated to the Violet Town Landfill Restoration which was not used. This large figure indicates that the Council has not been able to undertake the works that have been approved and funded in the past and consideration should be given to matching the budget to the capability of the Shire to deliver projects.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the following projects have not surfaced nor had any allocation of funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of the Violet Town Flood Study. This item has been on the work plan of the Shire for many years to commence with a community meeting which has never been realised. With the Shires
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Engagement Report

			<p>stated goals in addressing the issues of Climate Change it was expected that this matter would have a high priority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape Plan. Council has allocated all of the Shires 2021-2022 funds for streetscape activities to Avenel, Longwood and Euroa. The plans prepared for Violet Town and Strathbogie are now subject to a community consultation program due to these plans not being acceptable to the community primarily due to an inadequate community consultation during its preparation. It is of concern that no funds are allocated in this budget to Violet Town (and Strathbogie) as the whole of the Grant monies have now been committed elsewhere. <p>Areas of concern</p> <p>My dad always said to me that you get what you pay for and to get quality you need to pay for it. Unfortunately, we continue to pay the highest rates (that is the highest rates for a property of equivalent value) in the State yet do not receive a quality product as measured on the Community satisfaction survey. We were led to believe that there would be significant improvements in the performance of the Shire with a new CEO and Council but not yet delivered. It is disappointing that the aspirational targets are so low presumably based upon low expectations by the Council of their own future actions.</p> <p>That the Council is in a position to have to spend almost \$5million dollars of ratepayer’s funds on the rehabilitation of the Violet Town landfill site (tip) due to past what would best described as incompetent actions of officers and Council. There does not seem that any benefit will accrue to the local community the municipality or the State by the spending of such funds. (Other than non-local contractors) Imagine what could be done with that amount of funds for our community especially in critical areas such as Climate action.</p> <p>The Council has for many years demonstrated an incapability to expend the funds allocated to it by the Council each year. The funds held over it this budget is some \$9.6 M which means there is \$. M to expend this year as against an forecast expenditure of \$. M. (Note-I am waiting to get some further information from the Council to complete this item.)</p> <p>This is a serious lack of performance and planning by the current Shire.</p> <p>I would suggest that Council review its proposed capital works program to ensure that it matches the capability of the staff to deliver.</p> <p>This reduction in the program of physical infrastructure projects in this budget would make no effect on the works undertaken in this or future years and the funds saved could be put to halving the rate rise (from 1.5% to 0.75%)</p>
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Engagement Report

			(which would reduce the rate burden on this Shires ratepayers caused by past excessive rate hikes) and put additional funds into human services and the like (such as a concerted effort to improve the communities opinion of the Council performance.)
21	Elloura Owners Corporation	Yes	<p>The Elloura Owners Corporation Agreement with the Strathbogie Shire Council expires on 30 June 2022. That being so the Elloura Owners Corporation (EOC) would like to submit a proposal to the Shire Council to enter into a new agreement for a further four years. In support of our request, we advise the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Owners Corporation is the only development of its kind within the Shire and as such does not set a precedent for other existing developments. 2. The number of lots affected in the agreement is restricted to the early blocks sold (Lots 201 – 235, 501 – 547, 901 – 919 and 1001 -1009) and does not extend to additional newly created blocks within the development. 3. The owners of the above blocks when signing purchase agreements made such decisions knowing an agreement was in place, whereas new purchasers are not entitled to this rebate. 4. The rebate was originally established to offset the Shire Councils costs had it been the manager of the land and associated assets, that rebate was set at 40%. The next agreement reduced the rebate to 20% as the Shire assumed control of the public roads, street lighting / signs, shared pathway along the lake frontage and the constructed access road to Buckley Park. It is not known to the EOC why the next agreement proposed a further reduction in the rebate. 5. The access to Buckley Park is via the Developer / Owner Corporation land. 6. Lot Owners currently pay \$1,400 / block p.a. fees to manage the EOC land and the rate rebate does not anywhere near cover this amount. 7. The higher level of service provided to the development has meant higher prices for land and quality homes which attract a significantly higher rate income for the Shire than other lower service level developments. 8. The EOC provides public recreational access to the town's only safe sandy beachfront, with free public bbqs located on the beach which are maintained by the EOC and are free for public use. 9. The beachfront and landscaped areas provide public recreational walking and fishing for all the Nagambie township and showcases the town to visiting tourists a destination for future investment and growth. 10. Unlike other landowners the EOC has not obstructed the public's access to EOC owned land and recreational facilities. <p>The Owners Corporation has never been advised the justification for a further reduction in the rebate from 20% to 10%. As such the EOC request the shire to maintain the rebate at 20% for the next 4 year agreement for the restricted number of lots as mentioned above.</p>

Engagement Report

			If necessary, members of the Owners Corporation would be more than willing to meet with Shire representatives to discuss the future Rate Rebate Agreement.
22	Violet Town Action Group	No	<p>Violet Town's Community Reference Group (ie. VTAG) is charged by Shire with helping the community come up with a community action plan every five years.</p> <p>In the Violet Town community plan 2019-2023, several gravel streets were identified as being priorities for sealing, namely Mary's Lane and Lilac Street. However, the draft budget identifies three different streets in its plan.</p> <p>This leads to a small but important question about whether there is a disconnect between the community's planning and the Shire's planning processes. My questions are (and please pardon my bluntness):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who in the Shire reads the community action plan, and how widely is it distributed? • was the plan used it to devise its operational plans, or was the community supposed to inform the Shire by other means? • if Shire did not want to seal Mary's Lane and Lilac Street, who in Violet Town was this information conveyed to, and when? • Was there any consideration of asking the Violet Town community if they had other priorities for sealing? • What were the reasons the three new streets were chosen? <p>I am sure there are logical reasons for the decisions taken - I understand from my Councillor there were reasons for not doing Mary's Lane, for example, and I am assuming that your plans will not change. However, if the Violet Town Action Group and the community are to spend hours and hours writing a community plan, then we need to feel confident that the Shire acts on the relevant items in it or tells us why not.</p> <p>If there is a process for how Shire handles the community action plans, then I would be pleased to know the details.</p>
23	Resident	No	<p>This email is to inform council that the state of Armstrong Street is no longer safe, with the increased traffic using Armstrong Street, to access granite court and also people use it to bypass going down Gobar Street, the intersection off Strathbogie Rd Armstrong Street is too narrow, when cars meet, it's dangerous, also the deep drains on left side of Armstrong Street are dangerous as well. I've personally seen a couple of cars almost end up in them. When we as ratepayers are paying large amounts of rates, you'd think the rates would be spent on fixing such issues.</p>