

Strathbogie Shire Council

# Council Meeting Agenda

**Tuesday 16 April 2024**

# Agenda

## Council Meeting

**Tuesday 16 April 2024, at 6pm**

**Meeting to be held at the Euroa Community Conference and livestreamed on Council's website:**

<https://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au/council/our-council/council-meetings-and-minutes/>

**Administrator:**

Peter Stephenson

**Officers:**

Julie Salomon – Chief Executive Officer

Amanda Tingay – Director People and Governance

John Harvey – Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Rachael Frampton – Acting Executive Manager Community, Communications and Engagement

Braydon Aitken – Acting Director Planning and Community Safety

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## Meeting Procedure

### 1. Welcome

### 2. Acknowledgement of Country

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the places we live, work and play. We recognise and respect the enduring relationship they have with their lands and waters, and we pay respects to the Elders past, present and emerging. Today we are meeting on the lands of the Taungurung peoples of the Eastern Kulin nation, whose sovereignty here has never been ceded.*

### 3. Privacy Notice

*This public meeting is being streamed live via our website ([Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire](#)) and made available for public access on our website along with the official Minutes/Decisions of this meeting. All care is taken to maintain your privacy; however, as a visitor in the public gallery, it is assumed that your consent is given in the event that your image is broadcast to the public. It is also assumed that your consent is given to the use and disclosure of any information that you share at the meeting (including personal or sensitive information) to any person who accesses those recordings or Minutes/Decisions.*

### 4. Governance Principles

*Council considers that the recommendations contained in this Agenda gives effect to the overarching governance principles stated in Section 9(2) of the Local Government Act 2020. These principles are as follows:*

- 1. Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;*
- 2. priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;*
- 3. the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;*
- 4. the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;*
- 5. innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;*
- 6. collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;*
- 7. the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;*
- 8. regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;*
- 9. the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.*

### 5. Apologies / Leave of Absence

### 6. Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

## 7. Confirmation of Minutes/Decisions of Previous Meetings

### RECOMMENDATION

***That the Minutes/Decisions of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 19 March 2024, be confirmed (Council Meetings and Minutes | Strathbogie Shire)***

## 8. Petitions

A petition was received by Council on 19 March 2024 from Nola Caines of Euroa in relation to the end of season closure of Council's public pools on 11 March 2024.

The petition provided contains 82 signatories.

The petition reads:-

*We wish to table a petition to Council. The 84 signatures were all provided in a 2 hour period on Monday 11 March (the last day pools were open in our Shire). We have not sought to gather more signatures. The exercise was purely to demonstrate the need for a re-think of pool opening dates and times. We understand, for some, the public pools are their only chance to cool off during heatwave conditions. It is also a critical facility for swimming education and practice. You only need to read this morning's Age newspaper to see how valuable these lessons are. As an experienced and long-term swim coach, I am heartened by the number of kids who are benefiting from tuition, and this must remain a priority.*

*Can I suggest that we open our public pools at the beginning of the summer school holidays, instead of on the 1 December, and close them on the 31 March - the official end of summer. This would better coincide with the hottest summer temperatures. An extension of pool hours during heatwaves must also be considered. It would also ensure greater use of these valuable public assets.*

*We, the undersigned, ask Strathbogie Shire Council to immediately renegotiate the end of season date for our public pools. Our request comes as heatwave conditions persist (11 March 2024).*

- *For many families the public pool is an essential service.*
- *The pool pass states that access to the pool is available until 31 March, 2024*
- *Without Councillor representation, we appeal to the Council Administrator to demonstrate greater flexibility with pool closures, to ensure pool access is available when most needed.*

### RECOMMENDATION

1. ***That Council accept the petition in relation to the request to change the season opening period for Council's public pools to commence from the beginning of the summer school holidays and close on 31 March; and***

8. Petitions (cont.)

*RECOMMENDATION (cont.)*

- 2. *That the petition be referred to the Acting Executive Manager Community, Communications and Engagement for consideration and response.***

**9. Reports of Interim Administrator**

**10. Public Question Time**

**11. Officer Reports**

- 11.1 Strategic and Statutory
- 11.2 Community
- 11.3 Infrastructure
- 11.4 Corporate
- 11.5 Governance and Customer Service
- 11.6 Executive

**12. Notices of Motion**

**13. Notices of Rescission**

**14. Urgent Business**

**15. Confidential Business**

**Julie Salomon**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**12 April 2024**

**Next meeting**

The next monthly meeting of the Strathbogie Shire Council is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 21 May 2024, at the Euroa Community Conference Centre, at 6pm.

**Public question time**

Questions for the Ordinary Council Meeting can be submitted to be read, and responded to, by the Chair, or a member of Council staff nominated by the Chair, during the Public Question Time. Questions must be submitted before 12 noon on Monday 15 April 2024, by emailing [info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@strathbogie.vic.gov.au). No more than two (2) questions may be asked, with each question up to a maximum of 300 characters.

Public Question Time will be conducted as per Rule 35 of Strathbogie Shire Council's Governance Rules. The required [form](#) for completion and lodgement, and associated [Procedural Guidelines](#), can be found on Council's website at [www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au](http://www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au).

As the questions are a permanent public record and to meet the requirements of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014, only the initials of the person asking the question will be used in the Minutes of the meeting, together with a Council reference number.

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## 11. OFFICER REPORTS

### 11.1 STRATEGIC AND STATUTORY PLANNING

#### 11.1.1 Planning Applications Received and Planning Applications Determined - 1 to 31 March 2024

Author: Manager Planning and Investment

Responsible Director: Director Community and Planning

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides listings of all Planning Applications Received (Attachment 1) and Planning Applications Determined (Attachment 2) for the period of 1 to 31 March 2024. The latest available Planning Permit Activity Performance (PPARS) Figures are also attached (Attachment 3). It should be noted that the latest PPARS Figures are for the month of February 2024. The March 2024 PPARS Figures were not available at the time of writing this report as the monthly figures are not updated until 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. The contents of this report are provided for information purposes only.

It is noted that there were eight (8) new planning applications received and twelve (12) planning applications decided upon during the reporting period.

Attachment 4 to this report provides an update on current Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) appeals where no decision has been made.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

##### ***That Council:***

1. ***Note that there were eight (8) new planning applications received, and twelve (12) planning applications decided on during the period of 1 to 31 March 2024; and***
2. ***Note the report.***

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

To report to Council on the current planning application activity and matters considered under delegation.

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Council is a Responsible Authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act). In this role, Council administers the Strathbogie Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme) and, among other things, determines planning permit applications made for the use and development of the land in the municipality. Under delegated authority of Council, Council officers determine some matters.

**11.1.1 Planning Applications Received and Planning Applications Determined  
- 1 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)**

Many types of use and development do not require a planning permit and may take place without being recorded as part of the planning approvals data. The statistics presented do not represent all development activity in the municipality. In addition, some planning permits are not acted on, or there may be a delay between when the approval is granted and when works take place.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Individual applications consider these requirements through assessment phase of each application as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the provisions of the Strathbogie Planning Scheme.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Failure to notify Council of a planning permit application of significant public interest or that is controversial in nature.	Possible	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting on planning permit applications received and decided.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report continues to demonstrate that Council is being transparent in its position in relation to all applications received and determined by the Council.

**CONCLUSION**

This report is provided for Council to note the current planning permit application activity.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1:** Planning Applications Received
- Attachment 2:** Planning Applications Determined
- Attachment 3:** Planning Permit Activity Performance Figures
- Attachment 4:** Current VCAT Appeals

## **11.2 COMMUNITY**

### **11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply**

Author: Economic Development and Projects Coordinator

Responsible Director: Acting Executive Manager Community, Communication, Engagement and Advocacy

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Power supply in Strathbogie Shire towns and their surrounding districts has been unreliable for many years. The North eastern side of Strathbogie Shire's power is supplied from Benalla and the South western side of the municipality is supplied from Seymour. Both supply lines are operated by AusNet and are single lines of supply. Graytown sits outside this and is the responsibility of Powercor.

With the introduction of new fire prevention requirements, legislated following the devastating Black Saturday fires in 2009, Strathbogie Shire's power supply has become even more unreliable. Since the introduction of Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiters (REFCL) in Benalla and Violet Town, Euroa and Violet Town have experienced approximately 17 outages including nine sustained widespread outages, which has seen towns without supply for a sustained period.

The local community has been impacted significantly by these outages and have mobilised together calling on local politicians and AusNet to find solutions and a mechanism for a more reliable power supply. The outages have resulted in significant medical, social, economic and financial loss for individuals and businesses, along with being inconvenient. Public meetings have recently been held in localities across the Shire and a public awareness campaign by local the Local State member of Parliament has been initiated calling for the State Government and AusNet to identify a power solution for the municipality.

In recent years, Strathbogie Shire has also made applications under federal and state funding schemes for renewable energy projects and studies that may provide a greater level of resilience to local power supplies.

Due to population growth, a reliance on technology and the current climate, household and industrial demand has grown, and there is a pressing need to provide adequate and progressive infrastructure to meet the demands now and into the future.

Council's 'Advocacy Ask' of State Government outlines reliable power supply as our number 1 Ask of Government. This ask included the need to upgrade aging and inadequate infrastructure in the Shire of Strathbogie, with reference to the supply line between Benalla and Seymour (BN 11).

Joint advocacy is required from many stakeholders to demonstrate to the State Government and the Australian Energy Regulator that this is not an acceptable level of service, and that a solution must be identified, that is supported by funding to deliver what is required. The identified solution also should not compromise the safety of residents in the municipality from bushfire.

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

Reliable power supply underpins housing, industrial and business growth and investment and is critical to modern day life; from schooling, to work life to responding in times of an emergency. Every household and business relies on power and technology.

This report provides an overview of the issue and recommends a course of advocacy to important stakeholders building on the current political interest and significant community concern regarding the matter.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

##### ***That Council:***

1. ***Write to relevant members of State and Federal Government urging them to find and fund a solution to Strathbogie Shire's unreliable power supply;***
2. ***Continue to work with AusNet and other key stakeholders to find potential solutions including renewable energy solutions;***
3. ***Continue to work with AusNet to support them to engage with the local community to better understand local impacts and keep them informed of the investment in medium and long term infrastructure solutions;***
4. ***Write to the Australian Energy Regulator to reiterate the need for investment in Strathbogie Shire for a more reliable electrical supply via line upgrades and/or renewable energy solutions;***
5. ***Continue to work with Telstra to initiate a review and/or upgrade of battery storage at the Telecommunications Towers within Strathbogie Municipality;***
6. ***In partnership with relevant stakeholders, continue to identify funding opportunities for feasibility studies and projects that may strengthen the municipality's energy security and resilience; and***
7. ***Continue to advocate on behalf of the municipality for a more reliable and adequate power supply (mains and renewable), where possible.***

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and history of the power supply across Strathbogie Shire and consider options to advocate for a more reliable supply, building on previous advocacy work consistent with Council's Advocacy Ask of Government.

Power supply in Strathbogie Shire towns and their surrounding districts has been unreliable for many years. The North eastern side of Strathbogie Shire's power is supplied from Benalla and the South western side of the municipality is supplied from Seymour. Both supply lines are operated by AusNet and are single lines of supply. Graytown sits outside this and is the responsibility of Powercor.

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

#### **Current Network**

##### Violet Town / Euroa Supply line (BN 11)

BN is AusNet's designation for the City of Benalla and there are several lines and nodes radiating out from that location. In total, Benalla supplies approximately 12,100 customers, made up of 58.9% residential, 9.2% commercial, 1% industrial and 30.8% farming.

Currently there is a single 22 kV line of supply running from Benalla through Violet Town to Euroa and spreading out across the surrounding localities including the Strathbogie Tablelands and Longwood known as the BN11 Line. The 1,201 km long BN 11 Line is the main source of supply for the rural towns of Benalla, Violet Town, Euroa, Lima South, Tatong, and Goorambat townships.

The line terminates approximately 2 km south of Longwood on the Longwood Avenel Road. This is the longest single line of supply in the Victoria.

Since the introduction of Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiters (REFCL) in Benalla and Violet Town in September 2023, Euroa and Violet Town has experienced approximately 17 outages including nine (9) sustained widespread outages, which has seen towns without supply for a sustained period. There is a community perception that there has been a marked increase in the number of outages and sustained outages, although AusNet's data does not support this.

##### Nagambie supply line (SMR 24)

A similar situation exists on the western side of Strathbogie Shire with a single line of supply from Seymour to Nagambie / Avenel and surrounding localities with regular failure experienced during peak demand.

Nagambie's uplift as a tourist destination, residential development and commercial investment continue to place severe strain on the power supply. As the population of the town is expected to double in the next decade, this will further exacerbate this issue.

Whilst the number of outages experienced along this line is unknown at this stage, there have been several outages reported by the community.

#### **New Bushfire Technology**

With the introduction of REFCL to the area in 2023, the Strathbogie municipality has seen a significant increase in the number of unplanned outages. This new bushfire mitigation technology has been installed to meet the requirements of regulations put in place following the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission.

AusNet has stated that "... while REFCLs are important technology to reduce the risk of the electricity network starting bushfires, they also make the network more sensitive to faults and it can take longer to restore them." Essentially, when bushfire protection becomes operationalised, the whole feeder line is deactivated, rather than just a single or few sections.

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

*AusNet must then locate and clear the fault before reenergising the line, which is a more time-consuming process which involves a physical inspection of the entire line until they can locate the cause of the fault. The impact is more prominent on long radial (single pathway) powerlines such as Benalla to Euroa, which has no alternative path for power supply”.*

Regular failures of supply, particularly prevalent in times of high heat and inclement weather, can cause sustained outages. These sustained outages have a significant impact on local households, businesses, and organisations and lead to severe inconvenience and hardship for residents.

There is a significant risk for telecommunications and internet supply due to the power required to operate these towers. The mobile network has failed on several occasions as the battery at these locations has not been sufficient. This poses a significant emergency management risk to the municipality, with all service agencies and emergency messaging being delivered online or via a device that requires power.

Several residents and business have invested in their own local solutions including generators, batteries and solar, to live off grid and be completely independent when required. In addition, some larger power users, who have generators, have also been asked to assist in maintaining the power supply at peak demand times by “load shedding” using their own generators to power their operations rather than relying on the grid. They receive some financial compensation to do so.

#### **Renewable Energy**

Strathbogie Shire Council declared a climate change emergency in 2021 following strong community support including the need for renewable energy generation. During the last five years, Council, with the support of community groups, has made several applications for state and federal funding for renewable energy projects within the municipality. These applications have been largely unsuccessful.

In February 2021, the Victorian Government announced the Victorian Renewable Energy Zones Development Plan and released a directions paper calling for submissions. Strathbogie Shire has not been included in any of these zones and, therefore, will not be the recipient of investment under this plan. The Shire made a submission outlining the municipality’s power supply problems as well as the potential of the Shire to host renewable energy projects and requesting consideration under the development plan in March 2021.

In short, whilst renewable energy projects are an important way of reducing the load on our power infrastructure, they are not a complete solution. Regardless of the source of energy, there is a need to have a reliable means of distributing it. It seems that the best way to provide resilience to the Strathbogie power supply is the strengthening of the grid, which would allow the distribution of power regardless of the source of that power.

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **Impacts of supply outages**

Sustained outages have a significant impact on local households, businesses, and organisations, and lead to severe inconvenience and hardship for residents. These are summarised below:

- Telecommunications and internet supply due to the power required to operate the towers. The mobile network has failed on several occasions as the battery at these locations has not been sufficient. This poses a significant emergency management risk to the municipality, for both locals and visitors, with all service agencies and emergency messaging being delivered online or via a device that requires power in most instances.
- Heating/cooling homes and business.
- Maintaining refrigeration and general day-to-day lifestyle issues.
- Medical impacts: many people with health conditions that require either power operated medical devices such as dialysis, CCPAP machines for sleep apnoea or power operated mobility systems.
- Pharmacists, veterinary practices, medical practices, farmers and some residents need refrigeration to maintain the viability of medications. The loss of these medications can be extremely costly.
- EFTPOS machines will not function and, whilst most mobile phone towers have some battery backup, these last only a short period of time before mobile communications and Internet fail.
- Fuel becomes unavailable as retailers are unable to pump fuel from their tanks; this includes a major service station complex on the Hume Freeway, impacting both locals and visitors.
- Charging of electronic vehicles and other essential devices is not possible.
- Many farms and homes rely on electricity to pump water and sewerage; this can include water for the home, showers, washing, toilets and cooking and water for livestock.

Due to the significant impact of sustained outages, the community have banded together and are demanding a solution.

##### **Public Meetings**

On 24 January 2024, public meetings were held at Longwood, Euroa, Violet Town and Nagambie hosted by the State Member for Euroa, Annabelle Cleeland MP, calling on the Government and AusNet to identify a power solution for the municipality. The State Shadow Minister for Energy, David Davis MP, also attended all meetings and the Federal Member for Nicholls, Sam Birrell MP, attending the meetings held in Longwood and Nagambie.

The meetings were well attended by wide range of community members,

The primary issues raised at these meetings has been summarised under the impacts of supply outages section of this Council report. Broadly they also included medical risk, loss of communications, vulnerability, emergency management, financial impacts and losses (income, food, business closures), caretaking, employment, education, damage and failure of equipment.

There was general agreement on the need to upgrade the supply lines, preferably with secondary lines installed, and loops to replace single lines of supply

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

In response to the public meeting, Annabele Cleeland MP stated that *“AusNet have acknowledged that they have obligations to provide compensation to residents when extended outages occur and that in recent times they have paid out \$1.3 million to businesses and residents in Strathbogie. Given that this payout occurs as a result of outages over a relatively short period of time she believed it would be in AusNet’s best interests to fund the secondary lines of supply required to resolve this issue”*.

David Davis, State Shadow Minister for Energy, stated that *he “would be pursuing the Government on the need to upgrade the grid and to install second lines of supply to the region, removing the reliance on the single line....(that) is currently in place”*.

Council Officers and the Administrator met with senior representatives from AusNet in early March who updated Council on the immediate and short-term operational responses which have improved reliability since the January outages.

These immediate responses included:

- Amended operating procedures and REFCL settings for low fire danger days to reduce frequency and duration of outages.
- Repaired defective equipment to improve control and response times.
- Relocated scouting helicopter to area to improve response times.
- Cancelled all non-critical planned outages to minimise community impact.
- Additional support crews deployed, including for high-risk fire days.
- Creation of Feeder patrol plan to reduce fault identification time.

AusNet advised it is working on medium term options that could be implemented ahead of next Summer including the installation of the neutral bus kiosk at Violet Town.

AusNet indicated that they are also looking at longer term options to improve reliability above pre-REFCL levels including the installation of Advance Auto Circuit Reclosers.

Ausnet are continuing to work on a community engagement process to keep the community informed about these investments and to better understand local experience and impact.

There is also significant interest in renewable energy solutions and whether it is feasible to investigate renewable independent power options including microgrids, “islandable” microgrids and other options to alleviate some of the issues experienced. Whilst renewable energy projects are an important way of reducing the load on the grid, they are not a complete solution as, regardless of the source of power, there is a need to have a reliable network for distributing it.

Council and AusNet will continue to investigate funding opportunities regarding renewable energy options.

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.



### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

Council's 'Advocacy Ask' of State Government outlines reliable power supply as our number 1 Ask of Government. This ask included the need to upgrade aging and inadequate infrastructure in the Shire of Strathbogie, with reference to the supply line between Benalla and Seymour (BN 11). Concerted advocacy is required to highlight this issue and the urgent need for a solution to be identified and funded by the relevant responsible agency.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Officers have not completed any specific community engagement on the matter, however the need for a reliable power supply has been identified as an advocacy ask for several years.

In addition to this, there is clear support for and lobbying from the community regarding a reliable power supply and the urgency relating to this request.

The recent series of public meetings, media coverage (newspaper and TV) and significant political interest demonstrate the strong support for a more reliable power supply.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Council Plans and Policies

*Strategic Focus Area 3: Protect. Enhance. Adapt*

*3.1.8 Advocate to Federal and State governments for investment in reliable power supply infrastructure with a focus on renewable energy.*

##### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

- Strathbogie Shire Council Victorian Government Advocacy Ask *Priority 1 Reliable Power Supply*
- Strathbogie Shire Council Australian Government Ask *Priority 3 Reliable Power Supply*
- *Goulburn Region Partnerships Priority Project*

#### **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

As this is a report pertaining to advocacy, there is limited risk associated with this report. Risk has been considered and documented in table 1.

**Table 1. Risk considerations**

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
No action will be taken as a result of Council's advocacy	Likely	Insignificant	Low	None required.

11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

Community may perceive Council as the responsible authority for power	Unlikely	Minor	Low	Ensure all correspondence and published documents clearly state that SSC are acting in an advocacy capacity.
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**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Whilst there are no perceived legal issues to be considered in this matter, there is considerable risk to the community and economic well-being of the municipality in the event that the current power supply situation is not adequately addressed, or planning for the future is addressed. Unreliable power supply makes Strathbogie Shire an undesirable place to live, establish a business or visit.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report will be presented to Council in a Council meeting, open to the public and live streamed to the public. This is consistent with Council’s Transparency Policy, enabling the community to have oversight regarding the matters being discussed by Council and the decisions being made.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The report calls for advocacy on an important community issue.

**SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

#### **Economic**

Unplanned outages and sustained power outages have a detrimental impact on the economic viability of the municipality. It also significantly impacts the municipality's ability to attract investment, housing, education and the daily operations of many, if not all, businesses across the municipality.

Individuals, households and farmers also suffer significant economic losses associated with loss of income, food, stock, medications and the inability to work from home, or farm the land.

#### **Social**

Regular failures of supply, particularly prevalent in times of high heat and inclement weather, can cause sustained outages. These sustained outages have a significant impact on local households, businesses, and organisations, and lead to severe inconvenience and hardship for residents. There is a significant impact for individuals who may already be vulnerable, suffer from medical conditions or those who cannot afford to lose food, refrigeration.

There is a significant risk for telecommunications and internet supply due to the power required to operate these towers. The mobile network has failed on several occasions as the battery at these locations has not been sufficient. This poses a significant emergency management risk to the municipality, with all service agencies and emergency messaging being delivered online or via a device that requires power.

#### **Environmental**

There are limited environmental impacts associated with this report as this report pertains to advocacy. Options to explore renewable energy solutions may reduce long term environmental impact and may be considered.

#### **Climate change**

There are limited climate change impacts associated with this report as this report pertains to advocacy. Options to explore renewable energy solutions may contribute to positive climate change impacts in the long term.

#### **COLLABORATION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

Collaboration will be required between Council, AusNet, the Australian Energy Regulator and the community on this matter.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

There are no direct human rights implications associated with this report, as this report pertains to advocacy.

Access to power and electricity is not considered a Human Right. However, access to electricity reduces poverty, increases opportunity, and improves health, productivity and living standards. It powers devices that make daily living more efficient, freeing-up the population's time to grow the economy in other more creative ways.

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### 11.2.1 Strathbogie Shire Power Supply (cont.)

#### **CONCLUSION**

Power supply infrastructure in Strathbogie Shire has been known to be inadequate for several decades. As the population has grown, along with the increased reliance on technology and electrical appliances, increased demand is being placed on this infrastructure. A significant increase in the number of sustained outages has been experienced particularly during periods of high demand.

The social and economic impacts of sustained outages can be significant and the potential for severe consequences at times of emergency is also very high.

Council's 'Advocacy Ask' of State Government outlines reliable power supply as our number 1 Ask of Government. This ask included the need to upgrade aging and inadequate infrastructure in the Shire of Strathbogie, with reference to the supply line between Benalla and Seymour (BN 11). Concerted advocacy is required to highlight this issue and the urgent need for a solution to be identified and funded by the relevant responsible agency.

This report provides an overview of the issue and recommends a course of advocacy to important stakeholders building on the current political interest and significant community concern regarding the matter.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

### **11.2.2 Request to Waive Council Venue Hire Fees for the Rowing Victoria Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta**

Author: Acting Executive Manager Communications and Engagement

Responsible Director: Chief Executive Officer

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Council has received a written request from Rowing Victoria to waive the venue hire fees associated with the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre and Peninsula to support the delivery of the Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2024.

This Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta will attract club members and participants from across the State to visit Nagambie, not only for the weekend of competition but also prior to train on the course. Many participants will visit local food, hospitality and tourism outlets and stay in local accommodation, which will have a significant contribution to the local economy.

Staging of the Victorian Rowing Regatta in Nagambie will provide the opportunity to showcase the township and the rowing course facilities and will be delivered in line with Council's Events and Regulatory policies and procedures.

Officers have reviewed this request, and it is considered in this report.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Approve the request from Rowing Victoria Inc. to waive the venue hire fees associated with the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre and Peninsula to support the delivery of the Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2024; and***
- 2. Subject to the adoption of the Community Funding Policy, work with Rowing Victoria to enter into a strategic funding agreement with Council to waive the fees associated with the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre and Peninsula for two-day events for the next four (4) years, recognising the significant economic and social benefit the two-day event brings to the Region.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

Council recognises the importance of events and tourism to the social and economic growth of our region.

This Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta will attract club members and participants from across the State to visit Nagambie, not only for the weekend of competition but also prior to train on the course. Many participants will visit local food, hospitality and tourism outlets and stay in local accommodation; which will have a significant contribution to the local economy.

### 11.2.2 Request to Waive Council Venue Hire Fees for the Rowing Victoria Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta (cont.)

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

With regatta operating costs continuing to increase, the ability to run the Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta in Nagambie has become more challenging due to several location specific costs. Rowing Victoria acknowledge the importance of the event remaining in Nagambie, however, will require assistance through Council's event grants and other grant opportunities outside of Council for the event to continue to be viable.

This event will result in several significant social and economic benefits to the Strathbogie Shire community and will be delivered in line with Council's Events and Regulatory policies and procedures.

The event organisers must obtain Event Approval from Strathbogie Shire Council and deliver zero waste events. All required documentation including: risk plan, emergency management, public liability insurance certificate of currency, TSV exclusion zone application have been provided.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Event organisers have been working with key stakeholders, Council and the community to plan a safe and successful event. The event will be publicised broadly across the community through advertisements and press releases in the local newspapers, social media and Council's website, where appropriate.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Council Plans and Policies

This initiative addresses the key objectives of the Council Plan 2021 – 2025 as follows:

- Strategic focus area 1: Engage. Create. Unite.

Our community's goals – We create welcoming social spaces where people can connect.

- Strategic focus area 2: Live. Access. Connect

Our community's goals - We are focused on activities that build economic, financial and social security.

- Strategic focus area 4: Inclusive. Productive. Balanced.

Our community's goals – We target economic development to enhance our region; we are capitalising on our region's strengths. We partner with our community to achieve great things.

11.2.2 Request to Waive Council Venue Hire Fees for the Rowing Victoria Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta (cont.)

- Strategic Focus Area 5: Strong. Healthy. Safe  
Our community’s goals – We have protected the ‘vibe’ we love.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state and national plans/policies that are relevant to the report.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Event may be unviable for hosts to hold the regatta in Nagambie forcing organisers to move future regattas to another venue in the State.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Support the Regatta to ensure future viability of the event in Nagambie.  Work with Rowing Victoria to understand the location specific costs associated with the delivery in Nagambie.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

There are no significant legal considerations associated with this report.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

In the interest of transparency and open and honest communication with community, it is recommended that this report be acknowledged in a public forum providing full disclosure of how Council funding is being distributed within the community, and to support the community to understand the value brought to the Region by events of this nature.

### 11.2.2 Request to Waive Council Venue Hire Fees for the Rowing Victoria Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta (cont.)

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Officers propose that funds required to approve this request to waive fees can be identified within Council's existing Community Funding allocation for 2023/24.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

##### **Economic**

The event will result in substantial economic benefits to the Strathbogie Shire community. All the items relating to the events will be sourced locally, where possible. The event will utilise 500 local hotel beds, an estimated 3,000 meals in local eateries, increased local retail shopping, winery visits and fuel purchases.

##### **Social**

The events will offer significant social benefits to the local community and those attending the Regatta. The event will provide an opportunity for participants, community, and visitors alike to connect, re-engage, make lasting relationships, and celebrate their townships and their sport. Being a 'masters' event, it is more about social 'catch ups' than winning at all costs. There are several physical health and wellbeing benefits associated with this activity.

##### **Environmental**

Officers will work with Rowing Victoria to support the delivery of the Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta event to reduce the overall waste produced at the event through the implementation of the objectives of both the Waste Wise Events Policy and Guidelines and Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 in being "A Zero Waste Shire". This includes the implementation of measures to enforce the State Government's ban on single use plastics.

##### **Climate change**

Officers will work with event organisers to implement initiatives in the Waste Wise Events Guidelines at this event, making it a showcase for how a waste wise event should be run and encouraging all attendees to reduce their consumption of raw materials in a further effort to reduce the effects of climate change.

#### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The organisers will ensure that all regulatory requirements are in place, consistent with the approved event application and conditions.



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11.2.2 Request to Waive Council Venue Hire Fees for the Rowing Victoria Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta (cont.)

**HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

**CONCLUSION**

Council Officers received a written request from Rowing Victoria to waive the venue hire fees associated with the Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre and Peninsula to support the delivery of the Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta on Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2024.

This Victorian Masters Rowing Regatta will attract club members and participants from across the State to visit Nagambie, not only for the weekend of competition but also prior to train on the course. Many participants will visit local food, hospitality and tourism outlets and stay in local accommodation, which will have a significant contribution to the local economy. The event will be delivered in line with Council's Events and Regulatory policies and procedures.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

## 11.3 **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### 11.3.1 **Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan**

Author: Strategic Planner

Responsible Director: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Council is seeking to appoint a consultant to assist Council in the preparation of the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan; a complementary Plan to the Australian Inland Rail Project.

The Commonwealth Government's Inland Rail Project, led by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), has a clear aim of getting more freight on rail. Euroa is within the Tottenham to Albury scope of works. All work will be undertaken along the existing rail corridor throughout Northeast Victoria. More specifically in Euroa, there is not adequate clearance under the Anderson Street Bridge and new infrastructure will be required to safely allow for double-stacked carriage trains.

Strathbogie Shire Council has received funding from the Victorian State Government through the Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program for the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan.

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan will conceptualise and itemise the potential redevelopment of the Euroa Railway precinct to improve the connectivity, accessibility, useability, and environmental outcomes for the Railway Precinct and its interface with the broader Euroa township.

Council has undertaken a competitive tender process to ensure the procurement process for the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan represents best value for the municipality and meets compliance requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Strathbogie Shire Council's Procurement Policy.

Through public advertisement in local and national newspapers, Council invited tenders for the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan with the tender opening at 9am Friday 19 January 2024. At the close of the tender at 4pm Wednesday 28 February 2024, eight (8) tender submissions were received.

After initial independent assessment and evaluation, the result of the officer evaluations is summarised in the tables within this report. This report recommends the awarding of this tender, in line with this assessment, to the preferred tenderer, UrbanFold Pty Ltd.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

1. ***Note the outcome of the Request for Tender assessment process for Contract No.22/23-68 Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan;***

### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

#### *RECOMMENDATION (cont.)*

- 2. Award Contract No. 22/23-68 Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan to UrbanFold Pty Ltd based in Melbourne for a total amount of \$82,170.00 including GST;**
- 3. Authorise Officers to advise the unsuccessful tenders; and**
- 4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to award the Contract by signing a letter of award and approving a purchase order for the amount above.**

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

##### *Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan*

Euroa has an active rail line (both passenger and freight) that runs north-south in the middle of the township. Currently 133 trains per week pass through and/or stop at Euroa (freight and passenger). Currently there are 18 freight trains per day (9 each direction).

Once Inland Rail becomes operational, it is anticipated there will be an increase of 3 additional double-stacked freight trains in each direction. Change in freight numbers is dependent on the shift of inter-capital and long-distance freight from road to rail.

At Euroa, there is not enough clearance under the current Anderson Street bridge for double-stacked freight trains to pass through.

The project aims of the Euroa Railway Precinct is to develop an Masterplan, for relevant agencies to undertake and implement works identified in a staged approach (and subject to budget availability) for the Precinct and surrounds. The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan will conceptualise and itemise the potential redevelopment and improvement opportunities and outcomes of the Euroa rail precinct to improve the vistas, connectivity, accessibility, useability, and environmental outcomes of the precinct and the broader Euroa township. There is a strong need for this plan to be developed with reference to the redevelopment of the Anderson Street bridge and associated works that will be carried out by the ARTC.

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan will aim to address items, outcomes and plans that will ensure a positive legacy is left for the residents of Euroa in a way that aspirations can be achieved over time, in a staged approach.

This report seeks Council endorsement for the recommendations from the Tender Evaluation Panel for Contract Number CN 22/23-68 - Request for Tender – Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan and to award the contract to the tenderer as detailed in this report.

11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

**REQUEST FOR QUOTATION PROCESS**

Tenders were invited by advertising on “Tendersearch” via the Council website on 19 January 2024. Council also advertised in Saturday’s The Age newspaper (providing state-wide reach), Shepparton News, Euroa Gazette, and Benalla Ensign, in the week following release.

Two (2) online briefings were held, the first being the 1 February 2024. The potential tenderers that attended the briefing provided feedback that the scope of works was too broad and left too much to interpretation due to the project budget. Council subsequently reduced the scope of works and issued an addendum on 12 February 2024 and held a second tender briefing on 15 February 2024.

By the close of tenders at 4.00 pm on 28 February 2024, eight (8) tender submissions were received.

The eight (8) tender submissions were assessed for compliance including the contractual terms and conditions and the requirements of the response schedules. Two (2) tender submissions were set aside as they were 15% over the allocated budget.

Table 1 below lists those quoters who submitted quotations received at the close of the Quotation period.

**Table 1: Quotation Submissions Received**

Quotation Submissions Received at the close of Quotation Period (In Alphabetical Order)
Enlocus Pty Ltd
GMR Engineering Services Pty Ltd
Hatch Design Pty Ltd
Jeavons Landscape Architects Pty Ltd
JF Studio Pty Ltd
LatStudios Pty Ltd
Taylor Cullity Lethlean Pty Ltd
UrbanFold Pty Ltd

Table 2 below lists the quotation offer at the close of the quotation period.

**Table 2: Quotation Offers Received**

Tender Submissions Received at Close Of Quotation Period in lowest to highest order
\$50,727.60 including GST
\$82,170.00 including GST
\$94,182.00 including GST
\$98,741.50 including GST
\$107,074.00 including GST
\$108,669.00 including GST
\$157,520.00 including GST
\$185,680.00 including GST

### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

#### **Assessment Process**

The following Strathbogie Shire Council Officers reviewed the submission:

1. Director People & Governance
2. Director Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Strategic Planner
4. Procurement and Tenders Officer (process facilitator, non-voting member).

The principle that underlies the awarding of all Council contracts is that a contract is awarded based on providing overall Best Value, offering the most benefit to the community and the greatest advantage to Council.

The tenders were assessed and evaluated against the following criteria and weightings:

- Tendered Price (40%)  
This criterion measures the price only – either lump sum or unit rates – submitted by the tenderer. In accordance with Council's Procurement Guidelines, a price weighting of 40% was applied.
- Project Methodology & Experience (30%)  
As the work requires timely completion and the requirement for extensive public engagement, this criterion is considered important and is, therefore, allocated a weighting of 30%
- Resources, Subcontractors, Capability, and Current Commitments (20%)  
Tenderer to demonstrate they have the capacity and capability to deliver the project and a 20% weighting was allocated to this criterium.
- Local Content (10%)  
In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and consistent with value for money principles where different products are of comparable price, quality and equivalent value can be sourced either locally or regionally; preference will be given to local suppliers. A weighting of 10% was allocated to this tender.
- Business and Management Requirements - OHS, Insurance, Quality, Risk, Management, HR, QMS/ISO (0%)  
Due to the importance for the tender to meet the specification, a weighting of pass/fail (0)% was allocated to this criterium.
- Tender Conformance, Offer of Alternative Tender, Request for Contract Changes/Exclusions (Pass/Fail) 0%  
Due to the importance for the tender to meet the specification, a weighting of pass/fail (0)% was allocated to this criterium.

### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

**Table 3: Evaluation Criteria**

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Price	40%
Project Methodology & Experience	30%
Resources, Subcontractors, Capability, and Current	20%
Regional Benefit	10%
Business and Management Requirements	Pass/Fail (0%)
Conformance to Contract and Specification	Pass/Fail (0%)

The framework of the Evaluation Criteria saw UrbanFold Pty Ltd to be the successful tenderer. The Evaluation Panel are satisfied that UrbanFold Pty Ltd demonstrated to be an experienced capable supplier and, therefore, provide an overall best value outcome for Council.

The qualitative criteria (experience, workplan, capability, Regional Benefit) evaluation rates the overall suitability of the tenderers and is considered highly important in the overall assessment of the tender.

At the time of Tender opening, Strathbogie Shire Council mandated 40% weighting on submitted tender pricing, ensuring that the evaluation criteria allowed for a focus on methodology and experience, with a weighting of 30% when selecting the preferred tenderer.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Significant community engagement is a core requirement that has been embedded into the scope of works for the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan. The scope of the project includes several project milestones requiring community engagement.

This project will also use engagement already undertaken by Council and ARTC to better understand the communities existing aspirations to direct the project/precinct and avoid consultation fatigue.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Council Plans and Policies

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan is relevant to Strategic focus area 4: Inclusive. Productive. Balanced of the Strathbogie Council Plan with the following actions:

- 4.1.6 Continue to seek funding options for the upgrade of the Euroa Railway Precinct as part of the Euroa Structure Plan's implementation.
- 4.1.7 Continue to advocate to the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) for a community led outcome for the redesign of railway infrastructure in Euroa.

### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan will provide strategic support for future grant applications. It will also be a strategic land use document that will advocate for community aspirations for the precinct.

The Euroa township Strategy (adopted by Council 2020, prior to ARTC exploring the underpass option) identifies the following actions that refer to the Inland Rail Project:-

**Action 33:** Continue to lobby the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) to ensure the Inland Rail project considers and implements community values by taking into account the Urban Design principals illustrated on the Town Centre Concept Plan: Functionality of the area around Railway, Binney and Anderson Streets including: connectivity, visual amenity, accessibility, safety & location.

**Action 41:** Implement alternate intersection treatment at Binney and Railway Streets, subject to traffic impact assessments, with consideration of future Inland Rail works.

**Action 43:** Revise traffic flow from Railway Street into Anderson Street into a one-way system, subject to a traffic impact assessment in response to potential Inland Rail works, including bridge replacement.

**Action 44:** Create connection of Railway Street to Hinton Street as part of Council's preferred outcomes to the Inland Rail project.

**Action 46:** Investigate opportunities for additional landscaping and canopy tree planting around Euroa Station precinct following ARTC bridge replacement.

The Euroa Township Strategy involved significant community consultation. These actions will be further explored and provide further strategic justification as part of the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan.

#### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

The Inland Rail Project is a Commonwealth Government initiative being implemented by ARTC, which has a clear aim of getting more freight on rail. The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan will align with applicable Regional, State and National Plans where appropriate to provide strategic support when applying for grant funding to implement actions identified within the plan.

11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Project timelines not being met.	Possible	Minor	Low	Fortnightly meetings between Council officers and consultant to ensure project is progressing with methodology provided.
Community concern regarding lack of consultation	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Community consultation has been imbedded into project scope. The project scope identifies a minimum of two extended periods of consultation.
Community aspirations not being included into masterplan	Likely	Moderate	High	The adoption of this strategy will be at a formal Council meeting. This will ensure the communities views are heard and considered before adoption.
Exceeding allocated budget	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	The preferred tender submission has come in under the identified budget. Any large project variances will need to come before a formal Council meeting.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.



### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Council officers can award this contract under delegation. However, due to the public interest surrounding the ARTC and the Inland Rail Project as it relates to Euroa; and for transparency; this matter is being heard at a formal Council meeting.

#### ***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

This project has been funded through a grant via the Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program.

The Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan and associated implementation plan will require future budget considerations including budget bids for projects to be 'shovel ready' to increase the likelihood of grant funding for the implementation of identified actions.

#### ***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

#### **Economic**

The delivery of this project may support future development opportunities within the areas and give developers the confidence to continue to invest in the surrounding area.

#### **Social**

The delivery of this project may support Council to:

- Protect and enhance appropriate infrastructure for public transport services for the community.
- Establish better and safer connection between the station and its surrounds.
- Design public spaces to be more accessible, comfortable, safe, and inviting for all people.
- Ensure Aboriginal Self Determination is embedded throughout the planning process.

### 11.3.1 Tender for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (cont.)

#### **Environmental**

The delivery of this project may support Council to

- The Euroa community has strongly communicated the need for environmental benefits to form a significant component of the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan
- Identify opportunities for the development of vacant and underutilised Government land within the precinct.

#### **Climate change**

The delivery of this project will also support Council to maximise opportunities to drive climate change responsiveness and low carbon impact land use.

#### **COLLABORATION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

The project control group comprises of Strathbogie Shire Council, Department of Transport and Planning, ARTC, VicTrack and V/Line. Each government body/statutory body is a key stakeholder for this project.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

There are no human rights considerations associated with this report.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Council invited tenders for Contract No 22/23-68 Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan. The submitted tenders were sought and evaluated strictly in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and against the provided brief and specifications. This report looks to award this tender in line with this assessment to the preferred tenderer for the development of the Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (Contract No 22/23-68)

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

#### **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1:** Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 22/23-68: Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan (CONFIDENTIAL)

### **11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation**

Author: Senior Project Officer

Responsible Director: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Strathbogie Shire Council is dedicated to the management of local transport infrastructure, with a focus on guaranteeing safe and efficient access to the road network for the broader community within the municipality by maintaining a consistent standard across all aspects of transportation infrastructure.

The Nagambie Locksley Road intersection at Avenel Longwood Road and Nagambie Locksley Road has significantly deteriorated, exhibiting numerous potholes on both sides of the railway tracks. Immediate intervention is imperative to mitigate maintenance costs and ensure a comfortable commuting experience for road users, as temporary pothole treatments have proven inadequate.

The proposed rehabilitation aims to establish a durable asphalt surface, thereby reducing the need for extensive and recurrent maintenance activities. In line with this, tender documentation for the rehabilitation work was prepared and publicly advertised in local and state newspapers by the Council. The competitive tender process, conducted from 01/03/2024 to 28/03/2024, resulted in the collection of tenders for Contract No. 23/24-48, pertaining to the Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation. By the close of tenders at 4.00pm on 28 March 2024, five (5) tender submissions had been received.

Following a thorough tender evaluation, this report recommends the award of the lump sum contract for CN 23/24-48 to Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd. Their proposal, totalling \$147,307.60 (including GST), has been deemed aligned with project objectives and selected based on comprehensive evaluation criteria.

The endorsement of this recommendation marks a significant step toward fostering a safer and more efficient road network within the Strathbogie Shire. It emphasises the municipality's commitment to upholding a consistent standard for local transport infrastructure.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Note the outcome of the tender assessment process for Contract No 23/24-48 Nagambie Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation;***
- 2. Award the tender for Contract No 23/24-48 Nagambie Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation - Lump Sum for a total amount of \$147,307.60 (including GST) to Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd based in Kialla;***
- 3. Authorise officers to advise the unsuccessful tenderers; and***
- 4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Contract by signing and affixing with the Common Seal of Strathbogie Shire Council.***

11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

**PURPOSE and BACKGROUND**

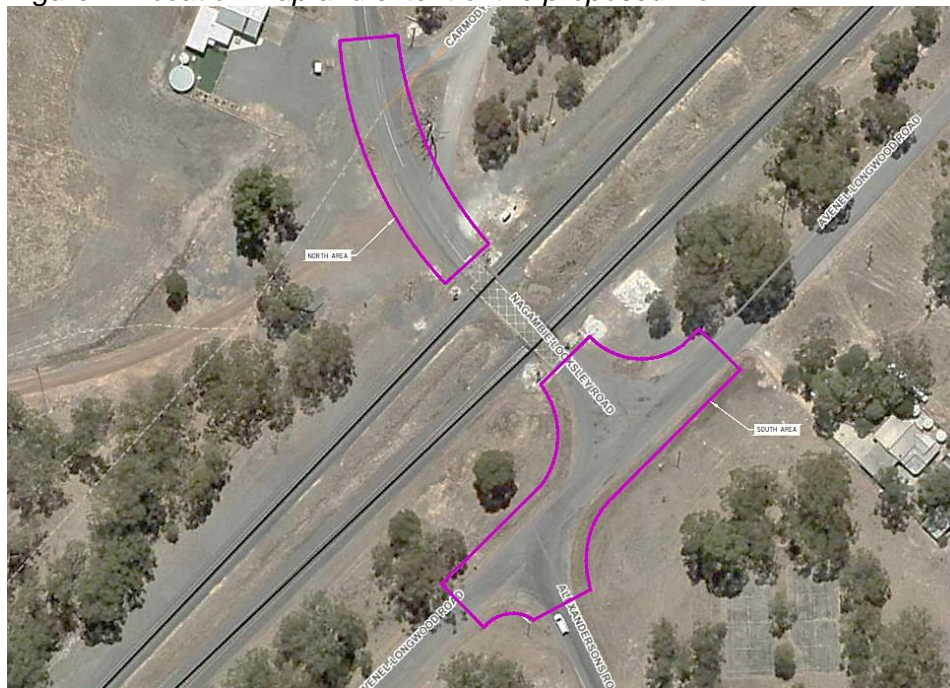
Nagambie/Locksley Road plays a vital role within Strathbogie Shire, serving as a Class 2 Link Road and designated bus route, establishing essential connections between major roads and regions. Identified as a Freight Route by Council, this road acts as a critical connector for various entities, including Broiler Farms, Mixed farming and grazing areas, Wastewater Management Facility, Transfer Station, Mine, and Arterial Road and Freeway networks.

The Nagambie Locksley Road intersection at Avenel Longwood Road and Nagambie Locksley Road has significantly deteriorated, exhibiting numerous potholes on both sides of the railway tracks. Immediate intervention is imperative to mitigate maintenance costs and ensure a comfortable commuting experience for road users, as temporary pothole treatments have proven inadequate.

The proposed rehabilitation aims to establish a durable asphalt surface, thereby reducing the need for extensive and recurrent maintenance activities. In line with this, tender documentation for the rehabilitation work was prepared and publicly advertised in local and state newspapers by Council. The competitive tender process, conducted from 01/03/2024 to 28/03/2024, resulted in the collection of tenders for Contract No. 23/24-48 pertaining to the Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation.

This report seeks Council approval of the recommendations from the Tender Evaluation exercise on Contract No 23/24-48 Nagambie Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation and to award the contract to the highest scoring tenderer as provided in this report.

*Figure 1: Location Map and extent of the proposed work*



### 11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

#### **Tender Process**

The public tender was released on <https://www.eprocure.com.au/strathbogie/> website on the 01 March 2024. The tender was advertised in Saturday's The Age newspaper (state-wide reach), and Shepparton News in the week following release.

By the close of tenders at 4.00pm on 28 March 2024, five (5) tender submissions had been received.

All tender submissions were assessed for their compliance including the contractual terms, conditions, and the requirements of the response schedules. Two (2) tender submissions were deemed conforming and three (3) considered non-conforming as they exceeded more than 30% of available budget of \$154,000.00 (including GST) for the works.

Table 1 below lists the tenders that were received at the close of the advertised tender period.

**Table 1: Tender Submissions Received**

<b>Tender Submissions Received at the close of Tender Period (in Alphabetical Order)</b>	
Apex Earthworks Pty Ltd	Non-conforming
Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd	Non-conforming
Grampians Excavations Pty Ltd	Non-conforming
Hiway Stabilizers Australia Pty Ltd	Conforming
Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd	Conforming

The tender offers at the close of the advertised tender period ranged from \$147,307.60 through to \$255,268.00.

#### **Panel Assessment Process**

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, the evaluation panel and evaluation criteria weightings were determined prior to release of the Tender documentation. The evaluation panel members were nominated prior to release of the tender submissions for evaluation. The panel signed 'Conflict of Interest' statements prior to the evaluation panel viewing the submitted tenders.

The Tender Evaluation Panel members were made up of the following Strathbogie Shire Council officers:

1. Manager, Project Delivery – Sustainable Infrastructure
2. Senior Project Officer – Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Project Officer – Sustainable Infrastructure
4. Procurement & Tender Officer, People and Governance (moderating).

The principle that underpins the awarding of all Council contracts is that a contract provides the overall Best Value; offering the most benefit to the community and the greatest advantage to Council.

### 11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

The tenders were assessed and evaluated against the following criteria and weightings in line with the Council Procurement Policy:

**Table 2: Evaluation Criteria**

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Price	50
Business and Management Requirements	Evaluator Review
Capacity - Subcontractors, Equipment & Resources, Experience, Current Contracts	20
Experience, Personnel CVs, Methodology, Traffic Management Plan	10
Local Content/Regional Benefit	10
Sustainability	10
Compliance/exclusion from Contract	Evaluator Review
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Evaluation Moderation Process**

The purpose of the moderation meeting is to discuss and moderate scoring discrepancies larger than three (3) points and to raise any concerns and/or queries that may need to be put to the tenderers prior to recommending the preferred Tenderer.

The Tender Evaluation Panel individually reviewed all tender submissions in detail and assessed tenderers' submitted schedules and attachments against the evaluation criteria.

The Moderator (Procurement & Tender Officer) averaged the scores and highlighted scoring discrepancies larger than three (3) points. On Tuesday 2 April 2024 the Panel members and the Moderator met to finalise the evaluation.

#### **Assessment Summary**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

At the completion of the tender evaluation process, Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd attained the highest ranking with a total score of 76.93%.

The Tender Evaluation Panel was, therefore, satisfied that Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd represents the best value outcome for Council, specifically given the high pricing score and significant local content.

Mawson Constructions Pty Ltd is based in Kialla Victoria and have demonstrated experience in roadworks and general civil construction in the region, based on their submission.

### 11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

The matter under consideration does not require a community consultation process.

However, the transparent and inclusive tender process, as well as the decision-making transparency outlined in the report, demonstrates accountability and fosters trust between the local government and the community.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Council Plans and Policies

The author of this report considers that the report is consistent with Council Policies, key strategic documents, and the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

This report is consistent with the Strathbogie Shire Council *Procurement Policy*.

The 2021-2025 Council Plan is relevant with the following:

- Strategic focus area 2 - Live. Access. Connect;
- Strategic focus area 4 - Inclusive. Productive. Balanced;
- Strategic focus area 5 - Strong. Healthy. Safe;

##### Asset Management Policy

- Asset renewal – is the upgrading or replacement of an existing Asset, or a component, that restores the service capability of the Asset to its original functional condition and performance.

##### Asset Management Strategy

- Ensure the Shire's infrastructure enhances efficiency for people and freight movement, service delivery and community amenities.

##### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state, and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state, and national plans or policies relevant to the report.

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The recommendation has no legal or statutory implications which require the consideration of Council.

### 11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

It is considered that this report meets Council's Procurement Policy which ensures transparency in the process.

Decisions made by Council will be: -

- undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Governance Rules;
- will be conducted in an open and transparent forum with information available via Council reports,

Council meetings will be open to the community or can be viewed on the livestream (and available as a recording) unless closed for reasons permitted by s.66(2) of the Act.

#### ***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The current available budget for the project is \$154,000.00 (incl. GST). This award \$147,307.60 (incl. GST) sits within the available project budget.

#### ***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

#### **Economic**

A rehabilitated road intersection supports local businesses and industries by facilitating the movement of goods and services in an effective manner.

#### **Social**

A well-maintained road network improves access to essential services, amenities, and employment opportunities for residents in the surrounding areas. This promotes social inclusion and facilitates community engagement by ensuring that individuals can easily navigate their surroundings.



### 11.3.2 Tender for Contract 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (cont.)

#### **Environmental**

By providing a smoother road surface, the rehabilitation project can potentially reduce vehicle emissions by improving traffic flow and reducing idling time. This contributes to lower air pollution levels and mitigates the project's carbon footprint. Proper road maintenance can help preserve natural habitats by reducing the risk of soil erosion, sedimentation, and runoff into adjacent ecosystems. This protects local flora and fauna, particularly in sensitive areas near waterways or wildlife reserves.

#### **Climate change**

The construction works under this project may contribute to carbon emissions, impacting the project's carbon footprint. Implementing sustainable construction practices, using eco-friendly materials as far as practicable; and considering low-carbon transportation for construction activities can help minimize the project's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with broader climate change mitigation goals. As mentioned under Environmental section, the project can potentially reduce vehicle emissions by improving traffic flow and reducing idling time which contributes to lower air pollution levels and mitigates the project's carbon footprint in longer terms.

#### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

##### ***Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006***

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

#### ***CONCLUSION***

Council invited tenders for Contract No 23/24-48 Nagambie Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation. The submitted tenders were sought and evaluated in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy and against the provided brief and specifications. It is proposed that Council endorses the recommendations of this report.

#### ***ATTACHMENTS***

Nil

#### ***APPENDICES***

**Appendix 2:** Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 23/24-48: Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation (CONFIDENTIAL)

### **11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogrie Streetscape - Construction**

Author: Project Officer – Project Delivery

Responsible Director: Director of Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Strathbogrie Shire Council approved funding within the 2023/2024 budget for Streetscape works throughout the Shire.

Effective Streetscape design is an integral part of shaping a community's identity, increasing civic pride, and improving a sense of well-being and belonging.

As part of Council's Streetscape Program Stage 2, the Strathbogrie Tablelands community was consulted with to develop a design for Main Street, Strathbogrie. The community has collaborated with Council Officers on a design that will welcome visitors to the Strathbogrie Tablelands.

The public tender was released on "Tendersearch" via the Council website on the 23 February 2024. The tender was advertised in Saturday's The Age newspaper (state-wide reach), Euroa Gazette, in the week following release. By the close of tenders at 4.00 pm on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, two (2) tenders were received.

Following a Procurement process, it is proposed that Council award the Strathbogrie Streetscape - Construction to Jarvis Delahey Contractors of Shepparton, for a total amount of \$382,954.55 inclusive of GST. Any budget overruns (latent conditions) will be accommodated by reducing the scope of Stage 1 works to align with the allocated budget.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Receive and note the outcome of the tender assessment process for Contract No 23/24-47 Strathbogrie Streetscape – Construction;***
- 2. Award the tender for contract No 23/24-47 Strathbogrie Streetscape - Construction - Lump Sum to Jarvis Delahey Contractors of Shepparton, for a total amount of \$382,954.55 inclusive of GST;***
- 3. Authorise officers to advise the unsuccessful tenderer; and***
- 4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Contract by signing and affixing the Common Seal of Strathbogrie Shire Council.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

Strathbogrie Shire Council approved funding within the 2023/2024 budget for Streetscape works throughout the Shire.

Effective Streetscape design is an integral part of shaping a community's identity, increasing civic pride, and improving a sense of well-being and belonging.

### 11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

As part of Council's Streetscape Program Stage 2, the Strathbogie community was consulted with to create a design that they would like to see help develop the Main Street. The community in conjunction with the Shire have collaborated on a design that will welcome visitors to the Strathbogie Tablelands.

This report seeks Council approval of the recommendations on the Tender Evaluation exercise on Contract No 23/24-47 Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction and to award the contract to the winning tenderer as provided in this report

#### ***TENDER PROCESS***

The public tender was released on “Tendersearch” via the Council website on the 23 February 2024. The tender was advertised in Saturday's The Age newspaper (state-wide reach), Euroa Gazette, in the week following release. By the close of tenders at 4.00 pm on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, two (2) tenders were received.

All tender submissions were assessed for their compliance including the contractual terms and conditions and the requirements of the response schedules, two (2) tenders received were deemed conforming with tender prices ranging from \$382,954.55 to \$434,969.00.

#### ***Panel Assessment Process***

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, the evaluation panel and evaluation criteria weightings were determined prior to the release of the Tender documentation. The evaluation panel members were nominated prior to the release of the tender submissions for evaluation. The panel signed 'Conflict of Interest' statements prior to the evaluation panel viewing the submitted tenders.

The Tender Evaluation Panel members were made up of the following Strathbogie Shire Council staff members:

1. Project Officer, Sustainable Infrastructure
2. Senior Project Officer, Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Manager Project Delivery, Sustainable Infrastructure, and
4. Procurement & Tender Officer, Finance (moderator, non-voting member).

The principle that underpins the awarding of all Council contracts is that a contract is awarded on the basis of providing the overall best value; offering the most benefit to the community and the greatest advantage to Council.

The tenders were assessed and evaluated against the following criteria and weightings:

- Tendered Price (50%)  
This criterion measures the price only – either lump sum or unit rates – submitted by the tenderer. In accordance with Council's Procurement Guidelines, a price weighting of 60% is applied, unless a Council exemption is sought.
- Resources, Capability and Current Contracts (20%)  
As the Work requires timely completion and elimination/mitigation of work-related risks, this criterium is considered important and, therefore, allocated a weighting of 10%.

### 11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

- Project Methodology (10%)  
Due to the high level of technical skills required to provide this service, a weighting of 10% was allocated to this criterion.
- Local Content (10%)  
In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and being consistent with value-for-money principles, where different products are of comparable price, quality and equivalent value can be sourced either locally or regionally; preference will be given to local suppliers. A weighting of 10% was allocated to this tender.
- Sustainability Schedule (10%)  
In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and Councils position on Climate Change, this is considered vital and, therefore, included with an allocated weighting of 10%.

TABLE 1: Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Price	50
Resources, Capability and Current Contracts	20
Project Methodology	10
Local Content	10
Sustainability Schedule	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

#### **Evaluation Moderation Process**

The purpose of the moderation meeting is to discuss and moderate scoring discrepancies larger than three points and to raise any concerns and/or queries that may need to be put to the tenderers prior to recommending the preferred Tenderer.

The Tender Evaluation Panel individually reviewed all tender submissions in detail and assessed the tenderer's submitted schedules and attachments against the evaluation criteria. The Moderator (Procurement & Tender Officer) averaged the scores and highlighted scoring discrepancies larger than three (3) points. On Thursday 28 March 2024, the Panel members and the Moderator met to finalise the evaluation through a moderation meeting.

#### **Panel Assessment Summary**

At the completion of the tender evaluation process, Jarvis Delahey Contractors attained the top ranking with a total score of 85.80 %. Jarvis Delahey Contractors offered the lowest tendered price and thereby received the highest score available on pricing (50%); they also received a good qualitative score of 35.80% out of 50%. The Tender Evaluation Panel was, therefore, satisfied that their tender represents the best value outcome for Council. The company is based in Shepparton, Victoria.

### 11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

Jarvis Delahey Contractors has proven experience with the tendered works and has completed similar work for other organisations in the past. They have demonstrated the capability to complete the works outlined in the tender with minimal supervision based on their submitted documents. Their references are consistent with their declared project history.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Council approached the Strathbogie community before commencing the Streetscape Design for the Strathbogie Tablelands community and sought community members interested in partnering with Council in developing a concept.

Officers met with the community group regularly which involved 6-8 community members contributing to the design. Some of the major concerns of the community involved safe crossing from the community hall and school to the shop. This has been addressed with a new crossing and the safe place for the library bus to park; and a new bus bay will be constructed with footpaths that allow easy access. The functional layout for the Main Street Stage 1 works are detailed in Attachment 1. In addition, Stage 1 works will include new street furniture and plantings as detailed in Attachment 2.

The community is aware of the project work as the work is listed under the Capital Works Budget in 23/24 and the community were consulted with in regards to the design.

If Council awards the tender in line with the recommendation, the community will be notified about the works via local newspapers and Council social media channels prior to the commencement of construction works. The residents along Main Street, Strathbogie, will also receive a letter explaining the works and disruption to access to their properties whilst the work is completed

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Council Plans and Policies

The report is consistent with Council Policies, key strategic documents and the Council Plan including Council's Procurement Policy.

The *Council Plan* is relevant with the following:

- Key Initiative 2.1  
Ensure that upgrades of Council facilities, as identified in the capital works program, are compliant with the Disability and Discrimination Act 1992 to improve access for people with all abilities.

##### *Asset Management Policy*

- Asset renewal – is the upgrading or replacement of an existing Asset, or a component, that restores the service capability of the Asset to its original functional condition and performance.

11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

*Asset Management Strategy*

- Ensures Councils infrastructure enhances efficiency for people and freight movement, service delivery and community amenities.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state, or national plans or policies relevant to the report.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Budget overrun	Likely	Moderate	Moderate Risk	Ensure detailed project specifications. job prioritization at tendering.  If project cannot be delivered within the specified budget, then the scope of works will be reduced to align with the budget allocation
Delay in completion	Likely	Affects further delays on construction	Moderate Risk	Ensure detailed project specifications. job prioritisation at commencement

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The recommendation has no legal or statutory implications which require the consideration of Council.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

### 11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

All steps have been taken in line with Council's Procurement Policy which ensures transparency in the process. Decisions made by Council will be: -

- undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Governance Rules.
- will be conducted in an open and transparent forum with information available via Council reports.

Council meetings will be open to the community or can be viewed on the live stream (and available as a recording) unless closed for reasons permitted by s.66(2) of the Act.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Council received Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCIP) grant funding from Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC) for the Strathbogie Streetscape project.

The total funding received from LRCIP for the Strathbogie Tablelands Streetscape is \$478,855.30 (incl GST). The LRCIP funding is spread over Stage 3 and Stage 4, with Stage 3 being allocated \$308,000.00 (incl GST) to be acquitted by 30 June 2024, and Stage 4 being allocated \$170,855.30 to be acquitted by 31 December 2024.

The recommended tender price of \$382,954.55 (inclusive GST) is within the allocated funding.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

##### **Economic and Social**

The project will improve safety, provide environmental and economic outcomes and increase social participation.

##### **Environmental**

The awarded Contractor shall develop a site-specific Environmental Management Plan and implement it during the construction period in line with project specifications and legislation governing Environmental Protection. Council officers will monitor the proper implementation of the Environment Management Plan throughout the project cycle.

##### **Climate change**

As highlighted above, the preferred tenderer is cognisant of opportunities that promote environmental best practice.

#### **HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

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### 11.3.3 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (cont.)

**CONCLUSION**

Council invited tenders for Contract No 23/24-47 Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction. The submitted tenders were sought and evaluated in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy and against the provided brief and specifications.

It is proposed that Council awards the Strathbogie Streetscape - Construction to Jarvis Delahey Contractors of Shepparton, for a total amount of \$382,954.55 inclusive of GST. Any budget overruns will be accommodated by reducing the scope of Stage 1 works to align with the allocated budget.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1:** Strathbogie Streetscape Functional Layout Plan

**Attachment 2:** Strathbogie Streetscape Landscaping Palette

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix 3:** Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 23/24-47: Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction (CONFIDENTIAL)



### **11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy**

Author: Procurement and Tenders Officer, Manager Operations

Responsible Director: Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Strathbogie Shire Council requires the development of a Municipal Stormwater Strategy to provide strategic direction on stormwater investment which is resourceful, targeted, concise, and aligned to relevant standards and best practice guidelines. Council was successful in securing a grant from the State Government (Emergency Management Victoria) to fund this work.

Council has undertaken a competitive tender process to ensure that the proposed appointment of a consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy represents overall Best Value and meets compliance requirements of *the Local Government Act 2020* and Strathbogie Shire Council's Procurement Policy (last update November 2023).

Through public advertisement in local and national newspapers, Council invited tenders for the Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy with the initial tender opening on 9am Friday 2 February 2024. At close of the tender on Wednesday 28 February 2024, two (2) tender submissions were received.

After initial independent assessment and evaluation, Officers recommend that the tender is awarded to Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd for a lump sum value of \$140,360.40 including GST.

This report seeks Council's authorisation to constitute this Contract and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Contract accordingly.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Award Contract CN 23/24-45 - Request for Tender - Consultant to provide Municipal Stormwater Strategy to Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd from Upper Ferntree Gully Victoria for a lump sum value of \$140,360.40 including GST;***
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Contract by signing and affixing with the Common Seal of Strathbogie Shire Council;***
- 3. Authorise officers to advise the unsuccessful tenderer; and***
- 4. Note that the Contract will commence on 1 May 2024 and draft Strategy completed 30 November 2024.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

Strathbogie Shire Council requires the development of a Stormwater Strategy 2024 (the Strategy) to provide strategic direction on stormwater investment which is resourceful, targeted, concise, and aligned to relevant standards and best practice guidelines.

#### 11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

The consultancy will investigate and develop a strategy to improve the conveyance of stormwater and provide localised flood mitigation for township stormwater via efficient and sustainable measures where possible. To meet these objectives, the assessment of urban catchments and Council's infrastructure systems will be critical, together with consideration of Strathbogie's future development.

The Strategy aims to reduce the impact of floods, flash flooding and storm surges on the community; and to provide direction on investment opportunities in both the public and private sector in relation to drainage and flood mitigation; and in consideration of our growing townships.

Whilst funding had been allocated in the 2023-24 adopted Capital Works Budget, Council has been successful in securing a grant from the State Government (Emergency Management Victoria) to fund this critical Strategy.

This report seeks Council approval for the recommendations from the Tender Evaluation Panel for Contract Number CN 23/24-45 - Request for Tender - Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy and to award the contract to the tenderer as detailed in this report.

##### **TENDER PROCESS**

Tenders were invited by advertising on "Tendersearch" via the Council website on 2 February 2024. Council also advertised in Saturday's The Age newspaper (providing state-wide reach), Shepparton News, Euroa Gazette, Benalla Ensign, Violet Town Village Voice in the week following release.

An online tender briefing was conducted on Thursday 8 February 2024 and 10 prospective tenderers attended. By the close of tenders at 4.00pm on 28 February 2024, two tender submissions had been received.

The two (2) tender submissions were assessed for compliance including the contractual terms and conditions and the requirements of the response schedules. Both were deemed conforming.

##### **Panel Assessment Process**

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy, the evaluation panel and evaluation criteria weightings were determined prior to release of the Tender documentation. The evaluation panel members were nominated prior to release of the tender submissions for evaluation. The panel signed 'Conflict of Interest' statements prior to the evaluation panel viewing the submitted tenders.

The Tender Evaluation Panel members were made up of the following Strathbogie Shire Council staff members:

1. Infrastructure Development Engineer, Sustainable Infrastructure
2. Technical Officer Asset Planning Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Manager Asset Planning, Sustainable Infrastructure
4. Procurement and Tender Officer, Finance (moderating).

The principle that underpins the awarding of all Council contracts is that a contract is awarded on the basis of providing the overall best value; offering the most benefit to the community and the greatest advantage to Council.

#### 11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

The tenders were assessed and evaluated against the following criteria and weightings:

- **Tendered Price (40%)** This criterion measures the price only – either lump sum or unit rates – submitted by the tenderer. In accordance with Council’s Procurement Guidelines, a price weighting of 40% was applied given that qualitative considerations were deemed as important to deliver a successful project outcome.
- **Capability, Experience, Methodology, Resourcing (40%)** Resources to undertake project, deadlines, draft detailed project plan, demonstrated understanding of project are considered vital and, therefore, included with an allocated weighting of 10%.
- **Local Content (10%)** In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and being consistent with value for money principles, where different products are of comparable price, quality and equivalent value can be sourced either locally or regionally; preference will be given to local suppliers. A weighting of 10% was allocated to this tender.
- **Sustainability (10%)** In accordance with Procurement Guidelines (for procurement over \$150,000) and being consistent with Environmental and Sustainability principles.

**Table 1: Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting (%)</b>
Price	40
Capability, Experience, Methodology, Resourcing	40
Local Content	10
Sustainability	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### ***ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION***

#### **Evaluation Moderation Process**

The purpose of the moderation meeting is to discuss and moderate scoring discrepancies larger than three points and to raise any concerns and/or queries that may need to be put to the tenderers prior to recommending the preferred Tenderer.

The Tender Evaluation Panel individually reviewed all tender submissions in detail and assessed tenderers submitted schedules and attachments against the evaluation criteria. The Moderator (Procurement and Tender Officer) averaged the scores and all scoring was within margin of 3; therefore, no discrepancies required moderation by the Panel. As the Panel had no issues or concerns to discuss it was determined by the Procurement and Tenders Officer that a moderation meeting was not required. All Panel members endorsed the recommendation presented in this report via email.

#### **Panel Assessment Summary**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

#### 11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

##### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Community engagement is accounted for within the contract specification and strategic requirements. A schedule item will require that the consultant is available for community discussions (one per township) after assessment of the existing system.

In addition to this, the community will be invited to upload submissions via the ShareStrathbogie Hub and comments will be developed to ensure these submissions will be used to inform the Strategy development.

The draft will be placed on public exhibition for comments prior to finalisation of the Strategy.

The process is complying with Strathbogie Shire Council's Community Engagement Policy.

##### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

###### Council Plans and Policies

This Strategy will align with multiple components of the Council Plan as follows;

Strategy Focus Area 2: Live. Access. Connect.

Actions for 2021-22

2.1.1 Complete an Asset Plan to guide future investment in buildings, plant and infrastructure through the 10 Year Capital Budget.

Strategic Focus Area 3: Protect. Enhance. Adapt.

Key initiatives for 2021-25

3.3 Strengthen project scoping and design outcomes to maximise environmental benefit, including the management of stormwater to improve water quality.

Further to this key focus area are 'related strategies and policies' being:

Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy and Action Plan and the Stormwater Management Plan.

The Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy and Action Plan discusses the requirement for climate resilience in relation to infrastructure and the latter is an existing Stormwater Management Plan which requires an update as stated in the document and is aligned to this Municipal Stormwater Strategy.

11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Deterioration of Council’s financial position against Financial Plan, resulting in diminished ability to achieve and maintain financial sustainability as measured against renewal and upgrade of assets.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Linkage of budget setting and performance to adopted financial plan, including the allocation of strategy stormwater assets aligning to the budget items.
Inability to perform against climate resilience guidelines in the face of increasing rainfall intensity and flash flooding.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Linkage of budget setting and performance to adopted financial plan, including the allocation of strategy stormwater assets aligning to the budget items and completion and implementation of strategy and its recommendations throughout the long term financial plan.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

#### 11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

The process for developing the Strategy is consistent with Strathbogie Shire Council's Community Engagement Policy and will involve community engagement throughout the Strategy development.

##### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The price tendered is within the budget parameters. Whilst funding had been allocated in the 2023-24 adopted Capital Works Budget, Council has been successful in securing a \$150,000 grant from the State Government - Emergency Management Victoria to undertake the development of this critical Strategy.

##### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

##### **Economic**

Completion and implementation of the Strategy will enable Strathbogie Shire to align with best practise asset management. Projects proposed by the Strategy document will prioritise best value stormwater water asset upgrade including capacity, network growth, flood mitigation and water quality. Certainty over best value projects will provide signification economic benefit as well as climate resilience and the economic benefits that will bring to future generations.

##### **Social**

Completion and adoption of the Stormwater Strategy will provide social benefits including the transfer of valuable knowledge regarding how Council can best meet its stormwater needs. It should add to the resilience of the Strathbogie Shire community and the asset register and reinforce that Council has the most strategic stormwater projects in its immediate and long-term objectives to ensure the best value spend when it comes to stormwater related assets.

Community health and well-being, including public safety, will be improved, as well as transport and accessibility going hand in hand with asset resilience.

##### **Environmental**

Environmental benefits are expected with improvements to water quality and treatment of low flows as per industry guidelines and standards. The Strategy is designed to include provision for projects relating to water quality improvement. These environmental benefits relating to water quality will complement the long-term benefit of using strategic projects representing best value; to ensure projects are delivered to provide the greatest asset life and to minimise rework.

#### 11.3.4 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-45: Consultant to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (cont.)

##### **Climate change**

Climate change resilience has been discussed previously. The Strategy represents a focus on changing rainfall data, via its modelling of the existing catchments affecting townships, against new and updated rainfall data. This process will determine upgrade requirements to ensure that Strathbogie Shire continues to adapt to climate change. The process will also assess mitigation options for townships to ensure the community are kept as safe as possible while maintaining an efficient spend with respect to stormwater assets.

##### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The Strategy represents innovation and continuous improvement. Its completion and implementation ensure that Strathbogie Shire applies leading edge technology to the assessment and modelling of its catchments to provides an efficient list of projects to best meet the needs of its community into the future.

##### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The strategy document is designed to enable public bodies to protect the broader public interest whilst engaging with the communities to understand their stormwater issues and concerns and, as such, does not limit any human rights considerations.

##### ***CONCLUSION***

Council invited tenders for Contract No 23/24-45 – Consultancy to provide Municipal Stormwater Strategy. The submitted tenders were sought and evaluated strictly in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and against the provided brief and specifications.

It is proposed that Council endorses the recommended contract award for Consultancy to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy to Afflux Consulting Pty Ltd from Upper Ferntree Gully Victoria for a lump sum value of \$140,360.40 including GST.

##### ***ATTACHMENTS***

Nil

##### ***APPENDICES***

**Appendix 4:** Tender Evaluation Contract No 23/24-45: Consultancy to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy (CONFIDENTIAL)

### **11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage**

**Author:** Manager Project Delivery

**Responsible Director:** Director of Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Within the 2023/2024 budget, the Strathbogie Shire Council approved funding for works to be undertaken to renew and improve the existing streetscapes within the Shire.

Effective Streetscape design is an integral part of shaping a community's identity, increasing civic pride, and improving a sense of well-being and belonging.

As Avenel continues to develop, streetscape renewal should reflect and celebrate its surroundings while respecting its historic village atmosphere.

Following three stages of community engagement, officers presented the Streetscape designs to Council at the 15 March 2022 Council Meeting. Stage 1 works in Avenel occurred in 2022 and works undertaken included new landscaping garden beds, advance trees planting, new seating and footpath corrections in Queen Street.

As part of Council's Streetscape Program Stage 2, further community engagement was undertaken with the Avenel to develop design concepts for new Town Entry Signs. The town entry signage was designated as the second priority project by the community in the roll out of the overall streetscape project for Avenel Township. Subsequently, the community in partnership with the Shire have collaborated on a design that will welcome visitors to Avenel and celebrate its rich history.

The public tender was released on "Tendersearch" via the Council website on the 16 February 2024. The tender was advertised in Saturday's The Age newspaper (state-wide reach), Euroa Gazette, in the week following release. By the close of tenders at 4.00 pm on 27 March 2024, three (3) tenders were received.

The Entry signage will be delivered in accordance with Council's Town Entry Signage Protocols as part of Council Branding Strategy adopted by Council at the 17 May 2022 Council Meeting (refer Attachment 1: Strathbogie Shire Council Branding Strategy).

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Note that the Town Entry Signage was designated as the second priority project by the Avenel community to deliver Stage 2 of the Avenel Streetscape design;***
- 2. Receive and note the outcome of the tender assessment process for Contract No 23/24-46 Construction of Avenel Entry Signage;***



### 11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

#### *RECOMMENDATION (cont.)*

- 3. Award the tender for contract No 23/24-46 Construction of Avenel Entry Signage - Lump Sum to Challis Design Pty Ltd of Geelong, for a total amount of \$187,440.00 inclusive of GST;**
- 4. Authorise officers to advise unsuccessful tenderers; and**
- 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute the Contract by signing and affixing the Common Seal of Strathbogie Shire Council.**

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

Within the 2023/2024 budget, the Strathbogie Shire Council approved funding for works to be undertaken to renew and improve the existing streetscapes within the Shire.

Effective Streetscape design is an integral part of shaping a community's identity, increasing civic pride, and improving a sense of well-being and belonging.

As Avenel continues to develop, streetscape renewal should reflect and celebrate its surroundings while respecting its historic village atmosphere.

Following three stages of community engagement, officers presented the Streetscape designs to Council at the 15 March 2022 Council Meeting. Stage 1 works in Avenel occurred in 2022 and works undertaken included new landscaping, garden beds, advanced tree plantings, new seating and footpath corrections in Queen Street.

As part of Council's Streetscape Program Stage 2, further community engagement was undertaken with the Avenel community to develop design concepts for new Town Entry Signs. The town entry signage was designated as the second priority project by the community in the roll-out of the overall streetscape project for Avenel Township. Subsequently, the community, in partnership with the Shire, have collaborated on a design that will welcome visitors to Avenel and celebrate its rich history.

The Town Entry signage will be delivered in accordance with Council's Town Entry Signage Protocols as part of Council's Branding Strategy adopted by Council at the 17 May 2022 Council Meeting (refer Attachment 1: Strathbogie Shire Council Branding Strategy).

This report seeks Council approval of the recommendations on the Tender Evaluation for Contract No 23/24-46 Construction of Avenel Entry Signage and to award the contract to the winning tenderer as provided in this report.

11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

**TENDER PROCESS**

The public tender was released on “Tendersearch” via the Council website on the 16 February 2024. The tender was advertised in Saturday’s The Age newspaper (state-wide reach), Euroa Gazette, in the week following release. By the close of tenders at 4.00 pm on 27 March 2024, three (3) tenders were received.

All tender submissions were accessed for their compliance including the contractual terms and conditions and the requirements of the response schedules, three (3) tenders received were deemed conforming.

Table 1 below lists the tenders that were received at the close of the advertised tender period.

**Table 1: Tender Submissions Received**

Tender Submissions Received at the close of the Tender Period (in Alphabetical Order)
Artcraft Pty Ltd
Armsign
Challis Design Pty Ltd

**Panel Assessment Process**

In accordance with Council’s Procurement Policy, the evaluation panel and evaluation criteria weightings were determined prior to the release of the Tender documentation. The evaluation panel members were nominated prior to the release of the tender submissions for evaluation. The panel signed ‘Conflict of Interest’ statements prior to the evaluation panel viewing the submitted tenders.

The Tender Evaluation Panel members were made up of the following Strathbogie Shire Council staff members:

1. Project Officer, Sustainable Infrastructure
2. Senior Project Officer, Sustainable Infrastructure
3. Facilities, Sport & Recreation Officer, Community and Culture, and
4. Procurement & Tender Officer, Finance (moderator, non-voting member).

The principle that underlies the awarding of all Council contracts is that a contract is awarded on the basis of providing the overall Best Value, offering the most benefit to the community and the greatest advantage to Council.

The tenders were assessed and evaluated against the following criteria and weightings:

- Tendered Price (50%)  
This criterion measures the price only – either lump sum or unit rates – submitted by the tenderer.  
Officers determined that pricing was as equally as important as the qualitative criterion and as such set the weighting at 50%.
- Resources, Capability and Current Contracts (20%)  
As the Work requires timely completion and elimination/mitigation of work-related risks, this criterion is considered important and, therefore, allocated a weighting of 10%.
- Project Methodology (10%)  
Due to the high level of technical skills required to provide this service, a weighting of 10% was allocated to this criterion.

### 11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

- **Local Content (10%)**  
In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and being consistent with value-for-money principles, where different products are of comparable price, quality and equivalent value can be sourced either locally or regionally; preference will be given to local suppliers. A weighting of 10% was allocated to this tender.
- **Sustainability Schedule (10%)**  
In accordance with Procurement Guidelines and Council's position on Climate Change, this is considered vital and, therefore, included with an allocated weighting of 10%.

**TABLE 3:** Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Price	50
Resources, Capability and Current Contracts	20
Project Methodology	10
Local Content	10
Sustainability Schedule	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

#### ***ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

#### **Evaluation Moderation Process**

The purpose of a moderation meeting is to discuss and moderate scoring discrepancies larger than three points and to raise any concerns and/or queries that may need to be put to the tenderers prior to recommending the preferred Tenderer.

The Tender Evaluation Panel individually reviewed all tender submissions in detail and assessed the tenderer's submitted schedules and attachments against the evaluation criteria. The Moderator (Procurement & Tender Officer) averaged the scores and highlighted scoring discrepancies larger than three (3) points. On Friday 5 April 2024, the Panel members and the Moderator met to finalise the evaluation through a moderation meeting.

#### **Panel Assessment Summary**

At the completion of the tender evaluation process, Challis Design Pty Ltd attained the highest ranking with a total score of 78.45%. They offered the best value for money and received a strong qualitative score of 37.46% out of 50%. The Tender Evaluation Panel was, therefore, satisfied that their tender represents the best value outcome for Council. The company is based in Geelong, Victoria.

Challis Design Pty Ltd has proven experience with tendered works and has completed similar work for other organisations in the past. They have demonstrated the capability to complete the Works outlined in the tender with minimal supervision based on their submitted documents. Their references are consistent with their declared project history.

11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the Local Government Act 2020 is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision-making.

Council approached the Avenel community before commencing the Streetscape Design for the Avenel community and conducted 2 community consultation sessions and also used Share Strathbogie to vote on their preferred design from three (3) options.

The tender will deliver the preferred option and also ensuring that the rock feature will be included in the construction as specifically requested and prioritised by the community.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Council Plans and Policies

The report is consistent with Council Policies, key strategic documents and the Council Plan including Council’s Procurement Policy.

The *Council Plan* is relevant with the following:

- Key Initiative 2.1  
Ensure that upgrades of Council facilities, as identified in the capital works program, are compliant with the Disability and Discrimination Act 1992 to improve access for people with all abilities.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state, or national plans or policies relevant to the report.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Budget overrun	Likely	Minor (Some financial loss)	High Risk	Ensure detailed project specifications. job prioritization at tendering Scope can also be reduced if this was to occur
Delay in completion	Likely	Affects further delays on construction	High Risk	Ensure detailed project specifications. job prioritization at commencement
COVID-19 Infection	Possible	Sickness, death, epidemic outbreak	Moderate Risk	Contractor must have approved COVID safe plan before work.

### 11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The recommendation has no legal or statutory implications which require the consideration of Council.

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

All steps have been taken in line with Council's Procurement Policy which ensures transparency in the process. Decisions made by Council will be: -

- undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Governance Rules.
- will be conducted in an open and transparent forum with information available via Council reports.

Council meetings will be open to the community or can be viewed on the live stream (and available as a recording) unless closed for reasons permitted by s.66(2) of the Act.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

Council received Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCIP) grant funding from Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC). Council prioritised an allocation of this grant funding towards Streetscape works across the Shire.

The recommended tender price of \$187,440.00 (inclusive GST) is within the allocated funding.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

#### **Economic and Social**

The project will improve safety, provide environmental and economic outcomes and increase social participation.

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### 11.3.5 Tender for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (cont.)

#### **Environmental**

Awarded Contractor shall develop a site-specific Environmental Management Plan and implement it during the construction period in line with project specifications and legislation governing Environmental Protection. Council officers will monitor the proper implementation of the Environment Management Plan throughout the project cycle.

#### **Climate change**

As highlighted above the preferred tenderer is cognisant of opportunities that promote environmental best practice.

#### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

#### ***CONCLUSION***

Council invited tenders for Contract No 23/24-46 Construction of Avenel Entry Signage. The submitted tenders were sought and evaluated in accordance with the Council's Procurement Policy and against the provided brief and specifications.

It is proposed that Council awards the Construction of Avenel Entry Signage to Challis Design Pty Ltd of Geelong, for a total amount of \$187,440.00 inclusive of GST.

#### ***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Strathbogie Shire Council Branding Strategy

#### ***APPENDICES:***

**Appendix 5:** Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 23/24-46: Construction of Avenel Entry Signage (CONFIDENTIAL)

### **11.3.6 Capital Program Delivery Status as at 26 March 2024**

Author: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

Responsible Director: Director Sustainable Infrastructure

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

This report provides commentary on the delivery status of all approved capital projects for the 2023/24 financial year providing updates in terms of budget phasing comparison and completions timelines.

These key areas of the report are highlighted using a traffic light system with the following reporting condition:

- if the project actual expenses or the timeline for completion is within +/- 10% of the forecasted status the information is provided in yellow,
- if the current actual expenses are greater than the phased budget forecast or the timeline for completion is past the original planned date the information is reported in red, and
- if the current actual expenses are less than the phased budget forecast or the timeline for completion is before the original planned date the information is reported in red.

The preference is for all items to be reported in yellow.

The red and green results context is dependent on the item being reported; i.e. over budget, under budget, late or early delivery. Generally, both are seen to be not preferred and mitigation action is required.

This report provides the update on the financial aspects of the program's progress and the status of the forecast and original planned completion dates.

These metrics are reflecting most projects are on track to be delivered in this financial year; and the current assessment of the program's delivery status has not changed from last month in that the majority will be delivered this financial year.

All projects that are forecast to not be completed in the current financial year will be completed in the 2024/25 financial year. All these projects have funding streams that provide for these delivery timelines and do not place the receipt of funding from the external sources at risk. Further, their late delivery will not impact on the delivery of the 2024/25 financial years' Capital Program.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That Council note the Capital Program Delivery status report effective 26 March 2024.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

To report to Council on the current status of the delivery of the 2023/24 Capital Works program.

### 11.3.6 Capital Program Delivery Status as at 26 March 2024 (cont.)

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The delivery of Capital Projects identified through the asset management framework provides the best outcomes for the community, both current and future, on the maintenance of Councils current assets and where appropriate deliver new or improved assets to meet the community's needs.

Significant impacts on the delivery of the Capital Program have occurred this financial year. Due to severe weather events, staff have been redirected from its delivery into support roles for dealing with the emergency incidents experienced this and last financial year due to severe weather events. These impacts have been further compounded by changes and serious illness to senior staff within the division.

The introduction of the format of this report has also required changes to management and reporting practices within the organisation.

This report is a true reflection of the status of the Program's delivery from both a financial and progress perspective.

The key areas of the report are highlighted using a traffic light system with the following reporting condition:

- if the project actual expenses or the timeline for completion is within +/- 10% of the forecasted status the information is provided in yellow.
- if the current actual expenses are greater than the phased budget forecast or the timeline for completion is past the original planned date the information is reported in red.
- if the current actual expenses are less than the phased budget forecast or the timeline for completion is before the original planned date the information is reported in green.

The preference is for all items to be reported in yellow.

The red and green results context is dependent on the item being reported; i.e. over budget, under budget, late or early delivery. But generally, both are seen to be not preferred and mitigation action is required.

It is currently forecast that 93% of the current Capital Program, which includes the additional projects required as a consequence of the flooding experienced in 2022, 2023 and the recent disaster events that occurred in December 2023 and January 2024, will be delivered.

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.



11.3.6 Capital Program Delivery Status as at 26 March 2024 (cont.)

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report continues to demonstrate that Council is being transparent in reporting its progress on the delivery of the approved 2023/24 Capital Budget program.

***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The attached report provides an update of the progress of the delivery of the Capital Works program for the 23/24 (current) financial year.

Delivery of the Capital Works program on time and budget is one of the core services Council provides to its ratepayers. The program’s successful delivery is a key component of the maintenance and delivery of the services to the broader community which underpins the financial viability of the community.

***RISK CONSIDERATIONS***

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Capital Program not delivered resulting in delayed maintenance of assets	Possible	Major	High	Monitor progress of projects delivery, adjusting subject to emerging needs and deterioration of current assets
Capital Program not delivered resulting in delayed access to new assets	Possible	Major	High	Monitor progress of projects delivery, adjusting subject to emerging needs and community expectations
Capital Program not delivered resulting in loss of grant funding and subsequent financial loss and reputational damage to Council.	Possible	Major	High	Monitor progress of projects delivery, adjusting subject to emerging conditions of grant funding.

***CONCLUSION***

This report is provided for Council to note on the status of the delivery of the 2023/24 Capital Program.

***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Capital Works Program Delivery Status Report 26 March 2024

### **11.3.7 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation** **- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024**

Author: Procurement and Tenders Officer

Responsible Director: Director People and Governance

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of the status of request for the publicly advertised tenders, invitations for written quotations and quotations provided using collaborative and/or third-party contracts which have been awarded under delegation for the period 1 to 31 March 2024. This report specifically relates to works that form part of Council's 2023/24 adopted Budget.

This report also details any grants awarded under delegation as per Council's adopted Community Funding Model. Council adopted a Community Funding Model at the June 2023 Council Meeting authorising the Chief Executive Officer to award Quick Response Grants.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That Council note the:***

- 1. Contracts awarded under delegated authority by the Chief Executive Officer;***
- 2. Contracts awarded under delegated authority by Director/s; and***
- 3. One Grant awarded under delegated authority by the Acting Chief Executive Officer.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

In line with Council's approach to transparency and good governance, the Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation report will be presented for information purposes at each Council Meeting. The report details any contracts, works or grants that have been awarded under delegated authority by the Chief Executive Officer, a Director, or a Manager within their approved financial threshold. This report specifically relates to works and/or services that formed part of Council's approved 2023/24 budget.

#### ***ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION***

Any contract awarded under delegation is undertaken in line with Council's Procurement Policy. Through the Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer the Council has delegated authority to the following:

- Chief Executive Officer – award a contract up to the value of \$170,000 for Goods and Services and \$220,000 for Works
- A Director – award a contract up to the value of \$100,000 for Goods, Services and Works
- A Manager – varies in value depending on the functionality contained within the portfolio, awarding of contracts up to the value of between \$10,000 to \$50,000 for Goods and Services and Works

11.3.6 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation  
- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)

Council adopted a Community Funding Model at the 18 June 2023 Council Meeting authorising the Chief Executive Officer to award Quick Response Grants via this report. Officers received one Quick Response Grants in this period.

**Contracts Awarded Under Delegated Authority by Chief Executive Officer**

<b>Contract No.</b>	CN 23/24-59
<b>Contract Name</b>	<b><i>Supply Cooler for server room</i></b>
<b>Contract Details</b>	Lump Sum This is an exemption to obtaining marketplace quotes under of the 2023 Strathbogie Shire Procurement Policy, Item 20 Exemptions: <b><i>“Information technology, software renewals</i></b> Allows Council to renew software licenses and maintenance and support, or upgrade existing systems, where there is only one supplier of the software, who holds the intellectual property rights to the software.”
<b>Value Including GST</b>	\$9,671.20 including GST
<b>Supplier</b>	Fusion Energy Group Pty Ltd
<b>Scheduled Commencement</b>	25 March 2024
<b>Scheduled Completion Date</b>	25 March 2024

<b>Contract No.</b>	CN 23/24-53
<b>Contract Name</b>	<b><i>Network Switches                  Multi-Shire Collaborative Procurement, Strathbogie Shire, Benalla Rural City and Murrindindi Shire                  Using third party ‘Procurement Australia’ IT Contract</i></b> This is a collaborative procurement of modern IT network infrastructure which will enhance IT network security and compliance. This solution simplifies management and automation allowing for scalability and flexibility and delivers greater visibility and analytics into all aspects of the IT infrastructure and applications.
<b>Contract Details</b>	Lump Sum Contract This is an exemption to obtaining public marketplace quotes under of the 2023 Strathbogie Shire Procurement Policy, Item 20 Exemptions: <b><i>Collaborative engagement Contracts and arrangements established by another government entity, local authority or group purchasing scheme.</i></b> <i>E.g. Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) or National Procurement network members (e.g. Local Buy), Procurement Australia (PA) etc.</i> <i>This includes contracts covering Federal, State or Local Government Purchasing. Contract extensions granted for the purpose of aligning expiry dates for collaborative engagements.</i>

11.3.6 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation  
- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)

<b>Value Including GST</b>	\$105,221.03 including GST
<b>Supplier</b>	ASI Pty Ltd
<b>Scheduled Commencement</b>	28 March 2024
<b>Scheduled Completion Date</b>	30 April 2024

<b>Contract No.</b>	CN 23/24-63
<b>Contract Name</b>	<b><i>Event Management Software- renewal of license</i></b>
<b>Contract Details</b>	Lump Sum - 5 year contract This is an exemption to obtaining marketplace quotes under of the 2023 Strathbogie Shire Procurement Policy, Item 20 Exemptions: <b><i>“Information technology, software renewals”</i></b> Allows Council to renew software licenses and maintenance and support, or upgrade existing systems, where there is only one supplier of the software, who holds the intellectual property rights to the software.”
<b>Value Including GST</b>	\$3,300 annually, including GST
<b>Supplier</b>	Contractor HQ Pty Ltd
<b>Scheduled Commencement</b>	1 April 2024
<b>Scheduled Completion Date</b>	30 March 2029

**Contracts Awarded Under Delegated Authority by Director**

<b>Contract No.</b>	CN 23/24-52
<b>Contract Name</b>	<b><i>Pickup and Disposal of e-waste Multi-Shire Collaborative Procurement, Strathbogie Shire, Mansfield and Murrindindi</i></b>
<b>Contract Details</b>	Lump Sum Contract – 2 years and 1 single year extension option at discretion of Council
<b>Value Including GST</b>	\$12,000 per year including GST
<b>Supplier</b>	EWASTEC – Seaford Victoria
<b>Scheduled Commencement</b>	1 May 2024
<b>Scheduled Completion Date</b>	30 April 2026 + 1 single year extension option

11.3.6 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation  
- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)

<b>Contract No.</b>	CN 23/24-57
<b>Contract Name</b>	<b><i>Building Works/Fit out of Nagambie Office</i></b>
<b>Contract Details</b>	Building Works/Fit out of Nagambie Office
<b>Value Including GST</b>	\$49,720 including GST
<b>Supplier</b>	Ben Carracher
<b>Scheduled Commencement</b>	21 March 2024
<b>Scheduled Completion Date</b>	31 May 2024

**Contracts Awarded Under Delegated Authority Manager/s**

Nil.

**Quick Response Grants Awarded Under Delegated Authority by Acting Chief Executive Officer**

<b>Applicant</b>	Euroa Junior Football Club Inc.
<b>Project Overview</b>	New Netball Dresses for Euroa Junior Football Netball Club
<b>Grant Amount approved</b>	\$1,000.00

***COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Where required, external stakeholders have been engaged providing input on relevant projects.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All offices and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report demonstrates that Council is being transparent by providing information to the community regarding the awarding of any works projects and grants issued under delegation.

11.3.6 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation  
- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured. The contracts awarded under delegation are projects that have formed part of Council’s adopted 2023/24 budget.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risk has been identified:

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Lack of transparency with community	Unlikely	Moderate	Low	Regular reporting to Council and the community on contracts and grants awarded under delegation
Without projects being awarded under delegation, delays to progressing approved and budgeted projects and not meeting annual Council plan targets are possible.	Possible	Moderate	Low	Delegations in place and regular reporting to Council and the community on contracts and grants awarded under delegation

**SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

**Economic**

Works awarded under delegation provide an opportunity to generate great economic benefit using local contractors and the purchasing of materials and supplies. In addition, the enhancement of infrastructure continues to make our municipality a place of destination, one where people choose to live, work and play.

**Social**

Each project includes several social benefits to our community. Some of these benefits include infrastructure that encourages health and wellbeing activities and amenity improvements.

**Environmental**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation has no significant implications on Climate Change and on the general environment.

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11.3.6 Contracts, Works and Grants Awarded Under Delegation  
- 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024 (cont.)

**Climate Change**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation has no significant implications on Climate Change and on the general environment.

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

This report considers that the recommendations do not limit any Human Rights under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

***CONCLUSION***

It is important that decisions and actions taken under delegation be properly documented and transparent in nature. The report details the publicly advertised tenders, invitations for written quotations and quotations provided using collaborative and/or third-party contracts which have been awarded by the Chief Executive Officer, Directors and Managers under delegated authority of the Council during the period 1 March 2024 to 31 March 2024.

This report also advises Council of any grants awarded under CEO delegation as per Council's adopted Community Funding Model. There was one grant awarded during the reporting period.

***ATTACHMENTS***

Nil

## **11.4 CORPORATE**

### **11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government**

Author: Director People and Governance

Responsible Director: Chief Executive Officer

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

On 7 March 2024, the Victorian Auditor-General tabled in Parliament an audit titled *Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government*.

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) has reported clear audit opinions on both the financial and performance statements for 78 Victorian councils. As of 29 February 2024 three audits remained in progress, including one council.

The report, a general observation, finds that Strathbogie Shire Council's short term financial health is satisfactory. The report states that Councils face longer-term challenges that require sound financial planning and management to maintain this financial health.

The report includes recommendations addressed to Councils, finance teams, audit and risk committees and Local Government Victoria, and includes commentary around how Councils can improve their reporting processes.

The other recommendations directed to Local Government Victoria relate to enhancements to the model performance statement and the development of a governance training program with the Municipal Association of Victoria.

VAGO has reported that Strathbogie Shire Council met all its audited financial and performance obligations for 2022-23 (refer Appendix E included in Attachment 1). Both financial statements and performance statements were signed by the Council on 3 October 2023, with VAGO providing a clear audit opinion and signing on 11 October 2023. These signed reports were presented to the Council meeting on 17 October 2023.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That Council note the Victorian Auditor-General Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government Report.***

#### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

On 7 March 2024, the Victorian Auditor-General tabled in Parliament an audit titled *Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government*. This a public document that reports on the audited financial and performance outcomes of all Victorian Councils.

The report includes recommendations addressed to Councils, finance teams, audit and risk committees and Local Government Victoria, and includes commentary around how Councils can improve their reporting processes.



#### 11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

##### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The report finds that Strathbogie Shire Council's short term financial health is satisfactory. The report states that Councils face longer-term challenges that require sound financial planning and management to maintain this financial health.

Appendix E included in Attachment 1 of the report notes that Strathbogie Shire Council met all its audited financial and performance obligations for 2022-23. Both financial statements and performance statements were signed by Council on 3 October 2023 with VAGO providing a clear audit opinion and signing on 11 October 2023.

These signed reports were presented to the Council meeting on 17th October 2023. As highlighted in the recommendations under *effectiveness of oversight of fair value assessments and asset valuations*, the Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee will be provided with draft valuations of assets for 2023/2024 financial year at their next meeting. An external valuer has been engaged to revalue asset classes; land, building and open space assets.

The report includes six (6) recommendations to all Councils, finance teams, audit and risk committee, Local Government Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria. The recommendations address the following themes:

- Planning for and education around the financial reporting process and legislative obligations
- A documented approach to asset valuation and related accounting policies
- The asset valuation oversight role of the council's audit and risk committee and
- The prompt resolution of identified internal control and financial reporting issues.

The specific VAGO recommendations from the report fall into six categories and are listed below:

##### **All Councils**

1. Recommendations:
  - arrange for training or briefing sessions to be held with key internal stakeholders before 30 June 2024 to enhance their understanding of the financial reporting process and their legislative obligations,
  - assess the adequacy of their financial reporting plan given their legislative obligations, namely:
    - task allocation and timelines
    - the nature and timing of liaison with other business units
    - quality assurance processes, and
  - critically assess whether they have the resources and expertise to fulfil their financial reporting obligations throughout the year and, if not, that they consider engaging an external party.

#### 11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

##### **Local Government Victoria**

2. Recommendation that Local Government Victoria enhance the structure and layout of its local government model performance statement for the 2023–24 financial year.

##### **Local Government Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria**

3. Recommendation that Local Government Victoria and/or the Municipal Association of Victoria, deliver a governance training program, which may include tailored resource material, to support councillors and their audit and risk committee members throughout their term of appointment.

In relation to internal controls and financial reporting issues the following recommendations were made:

##### **Finance teams:**

###### 4. Recommendations:

- prepare and present a paper to their audit and risk committee prior to 30 June each year that outlines the:
  - requirements of the council's accounting policy with respect to property, infrastructure, assets, plant and equipment
- approach to assessing the fair value of each class of property, infrastructure assets, plant and equipment, including the engagement of an expert valuer and key milestones
- likely outcomes for the respective reporting cycle (expected movements in fair value and resultant impact on the financial report).

##### **Audit and Risk Committees:**

###### 5. Recommendations:

- prior to balance date, review the finance team's accounting paper.
- after balance date and at the time of reviewing the draft financial report:
  - determine whether there have been any changes to circumstances that would indicate that key assumptions behind the finance team's initial advice and key judgements no longer hold true.
  - assess the reasonableness of the valuation and fair value assessment outcomes.
- update their annual work plan to include the above tasks.

##### **Councils:**

###### 6. Recommendations:

- prioritise and promptly address the internal control and financial reporting issues we raise with them and that their audit and risk committee monitor this
- review the actions and timelines established to resolve internal control weaknesses, with a focus on older and higher-risk findings
- for longer-term action plans, ensure adequate compensating safeguards are in place.

#### 11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

Officers are currently reviewing the recommendations provided to all Councils and will refine our internal processes should they not align with the VAGO recommendations. In addition, the VAGO report will also be tabled at the next Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Meeting for discussion.

##### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

The preparation of the annual financial and performance statements is an internal process meaning there was no community consultation in this process.

##### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

###### Council Plans and Policies

This report addresses the Council Plan strategic focus area six - Accountable. Transparent. Responsible. and particularly the following goals:

- Achieve the highest level of good governance across the organisation and as an elected Council
- Be financially responsible, achieving the greatest possible community benefit from the programs, initiatives and services we fund
- Maximise public transparency and accountability around our performance and decision-making processes

###### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be considered in strategic planning and decision-making.

The preparation of audited financial statements and performance reports is a statutory requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Failure to report will result in a non-compliance under the Act.

#### 11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

##### **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The preparation of audited financial statements and performance reports is a statutory requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Failure to report on annual audited financial and performance obligations may result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penalties for non-compliance</li> <li>• Lack of community confidence</li> </ul>	<b>Possible</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Medium</b>	Regular liaison with the Audit and Riak Committee including external and internal auditors.  Annual action plans in place by the Finance and Governance teams to ensure deadlines and reporting requirements are met.  Endorsement of financial and performance reports by Council.

##### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Section (98) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council must prepare an Annual Report in respect of each financial year. An annual report must contain the following:

- A report of operations of the Council,
- An audited performance statement,
- Audited financial statements,
- A copy of the auditor's report on the performance statement, and
- A copy of the auditor's report on the financial statements under Part 3 of the *Audit Act 1994*.

The report notes that Strathbogie Shire Council met all its audited financial and performance obligations for 2022-23 reporting period.

##### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### 11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

##### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The VAGO report is a public document and reports on previously disclosed matters reported through Council meetings:

- The 2022-23 Audited Annual Financial and Performance Reports and Annual Report were adopted by Council at the meeting held on 17 October 2023, and
- The 2022-23 Annual Report, Financial Statements and Performance Statements are available on Council's website.

##### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The VAGO "*Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government*" Report makes recommendations (to all Councils) that provide the opportunity for continuous improvement in the preparation of financial and performance statements within agreed timeframes. Internal processes should be:

- documented and sufficiently detailed to enable staff to perform the assigned task,
- communicated to key stakeholders, and
- understood by members of the finance team and other business units involved with the:
  - preparation of the financial report or performance statement, and
  - provision of supporting information and advice.

It is critical that these processes include quality assurance procedures.

##### ***COLLABORATION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

The preparation of the annual financial and performance reports is a collaborative process involving the following government or statutory bodies:

- Local Government Victoria through the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
- Crowe (Australasia), Council external auditors on behalf of VAGO
- RSD Audit, Council internal auditors

##### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

There are no human rights implications for this report.

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11.4.1 Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Results of 2022-2023 Audits: Local Government (cont.)

**CONCLUSION**

The preparation of audited financial statements and performance reports is a statutory requirement under Section 98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The VAGO "*Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government*" Report confirms that Strathbogie Shire Council has met its obligations under the Act for the reporting period ended 30 June 2023.

The report makes several recommendations at local and state government level and provides opportunity for continuous improvement in the preparation of future Council financial and performance reporting documents.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1:** Victorian Auditor-General Office "*Results of 2022-23 Audits: Local Government*" Report - Results of 2022–23 Audits: Local Government

### **11.4.2 Council Policy Review: Draft Open Data Policy**

Author: Manager Digital Innovation and Technology

Responsible Director: Director People and Governance

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The revised draft Open Data Policy has been developed to define Open Data Principles and associated governance, and to enable Council to proceed with publishing datasets online for public to access without having to call Customer Service staff.

This policy provides direction on the release, licensing and management of data so that it can be used and reused by the community and businesses. By enabling greater public access to information, the intent of the policy is:

- To enable public access to Council data to support research and education, promote innovation, support improvements in productivity, and stimulate growth in the local economy.
- To enhance sharing of, and access to, information-rich resources to support evidence-based decision making.

An internal review of the revised draft policy has now been completed. This Policy has been updated to Council's new policy template and only minor changes have been made to wording, grammar and the responsible officer, reflecting Council's current structure and positions. No changes of significance were made to this policy.

This report recommends Council adopt the revised draft Strathbogie Shire Council Open Data Policy.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

***That Council:***

- 1. Adopt the draft Open Data Policy; and***
- 2. Place the policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper columns and social media pages informing the community about the adoption of the policy.***

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of the draft Open Data Policy to enable future opportunities to publish data.

Requests for Open Data are becoming more frequent. Users of Open Data include App designers, Developers, Tourism, and other commercial enterprises. Data can be uploaded by Council for free and data users can access the data without contacting Council for use in their specific projects. This is a very time saving, cost effective measure for both Council and data users. As we move further with business transformation, initiatives such as Open Data will prove invaluable. We require a formal adopted policy to ensure staff are clear on what we can and can't publish in the open data space.

#### 11.4.2 Council Policy Review: Draft Open Data Policy (cont.)

##### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Council's intent for Open Data is to:

- Enable public access to Council data to support research and education, promote innovation, support improvements in productivity, and stimulate growth in the local economy, and
- Enhance sharing of, and access to, information-rich resources to support evidence-based decision making.

This Policy has been reviewed and updated to Council's new policy template and only minor changes have been made to wording, grammar and the responsible officer, reflecting Council's current structure and positions. No changes of significance were made to this policy.

##### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Community engagement is not considered required for the Open Data Policy as this policy is for internal use.

##### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

###### Council Plans and Policies

This tender aligns with the below two strategic focus areas in the Council Plan:

- Strategic focus area 2.2 Develop and promote information to increase awareness of the services available across the Shire and the referral pathways to access them.
- Strategic focus area 4.3 Upgrade online and automated processes for approvals and permits wherever possible to support the construction sector.

###### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

The following state plans have been taken into consideration as part of the review:

- Victorian Government DataVic access policy guidelines.
- Municipal Association of Victoria Open Council Data Toolkit.



11.4.2 Council Policy Review: Draft Open Data Policy (cont.)

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risk has been identified:

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Reputational risk if outdated data is provided via Open Data	Possible	Minor	Low	Data Custodians will ensure the datasets they are responsible for is maintained on a regular basis. Data Custodians will be made fully aware of the importance of keeping Open Data up to date

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The recommendation has no legal or statutory implications which require the consideration of Council. A “no warranty” clause will be included with all datasets as well as third party attribution where required.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This matter is being discussed in a Council meeting open to the public.

**SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

**Economic**

The author of this report considers that the recommendation has no significant economic implications for Council or the broader community.

#### 11.4.2 Council Policy Review: Draft Open Data Policy (cont.)

##### **Social**

There will be community benefits as a result of Open Data being published. For example, if tourists know there is a dog off leash area, or playground, they may break their journey at these points. App developers can take data from every LGA and create a waste collection App. As other layers are uploaded, Developers may access drainage information, eliminating initial consultation and design redrafting, saving both Shire Engineers and Developers time and money. Open Data means Council only has to maintain their datasets, and the public can download them and use them for their own purposes – mapping, app design, AutoCad drawings, and spatial analysis.

##### **Environmental**

One example of where this Open Data Policy will be environmentally beneficial is where the Roadside Conservation Values are displayed in Open Data, this can guide the public as to where the High/Medium/Low conservation areas are located.

##### **Climate change**

No climate change impacts have been identified.

##### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

This Open Data Policy will allow the publishing of various datasets online which will enable 24/7 access to published datasets, removing the need to wait for business hours and phone customer service staff.

##### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The author of this report considers that the recommendation does not limit any human rights under the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

##### ***CONCLUSION***

Publishing Open Data online has numerous benefits for the community and businesses. This report seeks the formal adoption of the revised draft Strathbogie Shire Council Open Data Policy.

##### ***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Draft Open Data Policy

**Attachment 2:** Policy Impact Assessment Tool – Draft Open Data Policy

### **11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy**

Author: Acting Manager Community and Culture

Responsible Director: Acting Executive Manager Communications and Engagement

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The draft Fair Access Policy (the Policy) and associated Fair Access Action Plan (Action Plan) seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure in Strathbogie Shire. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Strathbogie Shire Council (Council) in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to Council's community sports infrastructure.

The scope of the Policy and Action Plan is to support Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure. The policy and Action Plan will strategically prioritise, improve, develop and manage Strathbogie Shire's recreational facilities and opportunities. Officers have worked closely with the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation throughout the development of this Policy and Action Plan.

An adopted Policy and Action Plan is also a future requirement from the Victorian Government for Local Government Authorities wishing to apply for funding through the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund. This is consistent with the Victorian Government's commitment to Gender Equality through the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

***That Council:***

- 1. Adopt the Draft Fair Access Policy and Fair Access Action Plan;***
- 2. Place the Fair Access Policy and Action Plan on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper columns and social media pages informing the community about the adoption of the policy; and***
- 3. Engage with relevant State, Regional and Local Sporting Bodies, and Local Facility Managers and Committees to support the application of this Policy and the implementation of the Action Plan.***

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this report is to present the draft Policy and draft Action Plan for approval and to be released for community engagement.

The Victorian Government's 2022 Fair Access Policy Roadmap (Roadmap) requires local government authorities to improve gender equitable access and use of publicly owned community sports infrastructure including sporting fields, pavilions, recreation centres and leased and licensed facilities. This position is consistent with Council's responsibilities under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

### 11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy (cont.)

The *Gender Equality Act (2020)* aims to improve workplace gender equality in the Victorian Public Sector. The Victorian Government is committed to developing an environment for all Victorians to live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources, and opportunities, and are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. A reform agenda has been developed to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality by designing an enduring structure that requires implementation and tracking of progress over time. This reform agenda includes addressing the traditional structures and the way community sport and recreation organisations operate.

As the level of government closest to the community, Victorian Councils have a mandate to create healthy, safe, and inclusive communities. Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of the community's culture and identity. Sport and Recreation provides opportunities for enriching our community through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all people, while also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of all Victorians. As the owner and manager of several sport and recreation facilities, Council is well placed to support equitable and fair access to each of these facilities.

From July 2024, all local governments applying for funding through the Victorian Government community sport infrastructure funding programs will be required to show evidence of a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan.

For Strathbogie Shire Council, the Policy applies to the following community sports infrastructure:

Facility		Location
1	Nagambie Recreation Reserve	Vickers Road, Nagambie
2	Violet Town Recreation Reserve	Tulip Street, Violet Town
3	Strathbogie Recreation Reserve	62 Spring Creek Road, Strathbogie
4	Friendlies Reserve	Gobur Street, Euroa
5	Longwood Recreation Reserve	2A Down Street, Longwood
6	Ruffy Recreation Reserve	36 Noye Lane, Ruffy
7	<i>Euroa Memorial Oval (DEECA)</i> Note: Council has less of a sphere of influence on DEECA owned facilities which are operated by a DEECA appointed Public Land Management Group.	2 Dunn Street, Euroa
8	<i>Avenel Recreation Reserve (DEECA)</i> Note: Council has less of a sphere of influence on DEECA owned facilities which are operated by a DEECA appointed Public Land Management Group.	33A Anderson Street, Avenel

### 11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy (cont.)

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Council is required to have a gender equitable access and policy and associated action plans (or equivalent) in place by 1 July 2024. Further, Council must have the ability to demonstrate progress against the policy and associated action plan.

Council commits to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment on all current community sports infrastructure access and use policies and processes, and to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in accordance with the Fair Access Principles outlined in the Draft Policy in Attachment 1 of this report.

The draft Policy provides overarching guiding principles, objectives and key criteria to guide the equitable and transparent allocation and use of community sport and recreation facilities. The Action Plan outlines the high impact initiatives proposed to make sport and recreation more equitable and increase participation, including a commitment to undertake a review of Council's facilities as well as training and support for clubs and other user groups.

The introduction of Fair Access will be a smooth transition for some community sport and recreation groups and others may find it more challenging and require additional support to adopt more equitable practices. Council is committed to working with and supporting all user groups through the implementation of the Policy and Action Plan.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

No community engagement was undertaken in the development of this draft policy and action plan. Following adoption, the Policy and Action Plan will be placed on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper columns and social media pages informing the community about the adoption of the policy.

Council Officers will also engage with the Regional Sports Assembly, State and Local Sporting Associations, Clubs and Local Facility Managers and Committees to support the application of the Policy and implementation of the Action Plan.

11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy (cont.)

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Council Plans and Policies

The development of this policy and action plan is consistent with the values outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25. This policy will help to deliver the below Strategic Focus Areas:

- Engage. Create. Unite.
  - Live. Access. Connect
  - Inclusive. Productive. Balanced
  - Strong. Healthy. Safe

The policy and action plan will also intersect with the below plans and policies:

- Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2021-2025
- Gender Equity Action Plan

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

The Policy enables effective and efficient integration of the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and the below additional legislative frameworks:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

Risks have been considered in the development of this policy and action plan and are detailed in table 1 below.

Table 1. Risk Considerations

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Non-compliance with policy	Possible	Minor	Low	Regular monitoring and reporting of performance against policy.
Action plan not delivered	Possible	Minor	Low	Regular review of action plan and deliverables.  Review allocated resourcing remains adequate to deliver action plan.  Key partners have been identified to deliver and potentially resource areas of the action plan where there is mutual benefit.

### 11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy (cont.)

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

As highlighted in the report, this draft Policy and Action Plan is consistent with the following legislation:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report is being considered in an open council meeting, that is available for the community to attend.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The action plan will be delivered within the existing staff allocation, and no additional funds will be required to deliver this Action Plan.

#### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Environmental sustainability issues were not considered relevant to this report. There are also no significant climate change impacts associated with this report. There are social sustainability impacts arising from this policy and action plan as detailed below.

### 11.4.3 New Council Policy – Draft Fair Access Policy (cont.)

#### **Social**

The Policy and Action Plan aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Council and sport and recreation facility managers in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality. The Policy and Action Plan are based on six (6) principles of inclusivity, full participation, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality.

#### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The adoption of this policy and action plan is a continuation of the implementation of the Fair Access Policy Roadmap which addresses recommendations from the Victorian Government's inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation.

#### ***COLLABORATION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

This policy has been informed by Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, in consultation with representatives from local government and the state sport and recreation sector.

#### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The Policy and Action Plan supports the upholding of human rights specifically the "right to equality". This Policy and Action Plan aims to deliver equitable access to Council's sporting infrastructure. Everyone has the right to fully participate in sport and reach their full potential. Without this change, women and girls will continue to face unfair circumstances and experience more barriers to sport than men and boys.

#### ***CONCLUSION***

This Fair Access Policy and Action Plan addresses known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure.

The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Council in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sports infrastructure. Council is required to formally adopt a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan by 1 July 2024.

#### ***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Draft Fair Access Policy and Action Plan

**Attachment 2:** Policy Impact Assessment Tool – Fair Access Policy and Action Plan



#### **11.4.4 Council Policy Review: Community Funding Policy**

Author: Community Development Officer

Responsible Director: Acting Executive Manager Communications and Engagement

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Organisational policies provide the framework and structure for Council's business operations to ensure application of good governance, risk and compliance.

The purpose of this Policy is to establish clear principles and a framework to support and guide the implementation of the provision of Community Funding.

Community Funding enables Council to enter into partnership with community organisations and groups through the distribution of funds, to deliver activities, projects and initiatives for mutual benefit. This helps the Council and Community to deliver on Strathbogie Shire's Community Vision and Council Plan. It helps to address community needs, support local networks, encourage participation in community life, facilitate innovation and responsiveness in community service provision, and promote access, inclusion and acceptance of diversity.

This Policy outlines Council's commitment to providing the community with access to funding for activities, projects and initiatives that align with Council's strategic direction and the Council Plan and provides a governance framework that ensures the Community Funding program is delivered in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

This re-named Policy replaces the previous Community Funding and Investment Policy, first adopted in 2019, as it better reflects Council's current approach to community funding, and is consistent with the recommendations from VAGO's *Fraud Control over Local Government Grants Review*.

This policy is scheduled for review two years from the date of adoption.

##### **RECOMMENDATION**

###### ***That Council:***

- 1. Adopt the revised Community Funding Policy; and***
- 2. Place the new policy on Council's website, along with the publication of a notice in Council's newspaper columns and social media pages informing the community about the adoption of the policy.***

##### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

This Policy replaces Council's Community Funding and Investment Policy which was first adopted in May 2019.

#### 11.4.4 Council Policy Review: Community Funding Policy (cont.)

Community Funding programs are one way that Council can enter into partnership with community organisations and groups through the distribution of funds, to deliver activities, projects and initiatives that deliver mutual community benefit.

This helps the Council and Community to deliver on Strathbogie Shire's Community Vision and Council Plan. It helps to address community needs, support local networks, encourage participation in community life, facilitate innovation and responsiveness in community service provision, and promote access, inclusion and acceptance of diversity.

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Officers have reviewed the Policy and made substantial changes to the content of the Policy so that it more accurately reflects the way in which Council currently distributes Community Funding.

The revised Policy provides a robust governance framework and approach to Council's Community Funding. The policy now on the new Policy template, reflects Council's current approach to community funding and has been benchmarked against similar policies from other organisations.

Officers have also strengthened the Policy to reflect the recommendations from the VAGO 2022 *Fraud Control over Local Government Grants Review* (VAGO Review), ensuring greater transparency, rigor and accountability for decision making.

The revised Policy outlines Council's commitment to providing community funding and also sets out a series of guiding principles (outlined below) that will underpin best practice in funding, grant management and administration that will be applied throughout the funding lifecycle:

#### **3.1 Social Justice**

Our funding approach encompasses the key values of social justice that aim to decrease inequity and establish environments that are inclusive, connected, supportive of all people and improve areas of social isolation, this includes Council's commitment to Gender Equality.

#### **3.2 Sustainability and Climate Action**

We support and encourage:

- Environmentally sustainable practices in the way we manage our funding
- The application of sustainable approaches to community funded projects and services
- Consideration of localised responses to community funded projects and services

#### 11.4.4 Council Policy Review: Community Funding Policy (cont.)

##### **3.3 Robust Planning and Design**

Our funding administration is efficient, effective and ethical with a continuous quality improvement approach and the establishment of effective risk management processes

##### **3.4 Governance and Accountability**

We have a strong governance framework in place that:

- Defines Council and community roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities
- Establishes the policies, procedures and guidelines necessary for funding recipient selection
- Supports public accountability for decision making and funding administration

##### **3.5 Transparency**

Our program administration ensures our funding decisions are impartial, transparent and well documented, and that appropriate reporting and fraud measures are in place.

##### **3.6 Maximise Outcomes**

Our funding program is aligned with our strategic directions to deliver maximum value for money and the best possible outcomes for the community.

##### **3.7 Flexibility and responsiveness**

Our program responds to changing economic, environment and community needs.

#### ***COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

No community engagement was undertaken to inform the revision of this Policy, however significant engagement was undertaken as a part of the redesign of the Community Funding Model which this Policy informs.

#### ***POLICY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

#### **Council Plans and Policies**

This policy is consistent with the values outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025 of being ethical, open and transparent. This policy helps Council to achieve deliverables across all six Strategic Focus Areas, as grants are available to the community to support activities, projects and initiatives across all six.

This Policy, providing a governance framework for community funding, contributes directly to Strategic focus area 6; Accountable. Transparent. Responsible.

11.4.4 Council Policy Review: Community Funding Policy (cont.)

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Good governance and legislative obligations may be jeopardised if robust policies are not in place	Unlikely	Minor	Low	The application of this policy by officers provides a framework that ensures the Community Funding program is delivered in a fair and transparent manner
Fraud and misuse of public monies	Unlikely	Minor	Low	The application of this Policy ensures that a robust and transparent process is followed to enable the distribution of Council funds.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

This draft Policy is consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

This report is being considered in a council meeting which is open to the public to attend in person or online. The policy will be available on Council's website should it be endorsed.

**FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

There are no financial impacts arising from this report.

Community Funding allocation is determined by Council's annual budgetary process.

#### 11.4.4 Council Policy Review: Community Funding Policy (cont.)

##### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

##### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The regular update of policies provides an opportunity to review the existing content and make changes over time to continuously improve their application and understanding.

##### **HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

Activities, projects and initiatives delivered as a result of community funding may support and protect a number of Human Rights.

It is considered that the adoption of this Policy has no direct material impact on the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

##### **CONCLUSION**

Officers have reviewed the Community Funding and Investment Policy, and have made a number of significant changes to the policy to reflect Council's current approach to community funding, this includes renaming the policy to the Community Funding Policy.

The revised Policy provides a robust governance framework and approach to Council's Community Funding, and outlines Council's commitment to community funding as well as identifying a set of guiding principles.

This revised draft Policy now also aligns with Council's most recent Community Funding Model and the recommendations following the recommendations from VAGO *Fraud Control over Local Government Grants Review*.

##### **ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1:** Draft Community Funding Policy

**Attachment 2:** Policy Impact Assessment Tool - Community Funding Policy

### **11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25**

Author: Community Development Officer

Responsible Director: Acting Executive Manager Communications and Engagement

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Council's Community Funding Model provides an opportunity for groups to undertake projects that complement the Community Vision and strategic focus areas identified in the Strathbogie Shire Council Plan 2021-25. Council has a long history of providing community funding to groups in the Municipality to support the delivery of important community projects.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the proposed changes and improvements to the Community funding Model and Grant Guidelines for 2024/25, following an annual review. The review takes the below into consideration:

- officer feedback,
- community feedback, and
- the Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants report from the Victorian Auditor Generals' Office

The proposed Community Funding Model includes a new stream of Grants; *Reducing Emissions* grants for up to \$20,000, for projects that deliver a positive environmental change through community infrastructure improvements on Council owned assets that reduce emissions. The model also references Pitch My Project 2024/25 recognising that is an avenue for the delivery of important community projects, determined by the community.

This report presents to Council the revised Community Funding Model and relevant Funding Guidelines for all Council Grant Programs in 2024/25.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

1. ***Adopt the proposed Community Funding Model 2024/25 and associated guidelines for Community Grant Guidelines and Event Grant Guidelines for 2024/25; and***
2. ***Authorise Officers to implement the model through the promotion and release of grant guidelines and information on Council's Website, local media, publications and broadly through a range of networks, with:***
  - ***the Community Strengthening and Reducing Emissions 2024/25 grant programs opening on 17 April 2024 and closing on 28 May 2024,***
  - ***the Quick Response Grants program remaining open all year round, or until funds are expended, and***
  - ***the Event Grants remaining open all year round, or until funds are expended.***

#### 11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

##### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

Council's Community funding model enables Council to support a range of important community projects. Council operates multiple community funding programs.

Following an extensive review undertaken in 2023, the Community Funding Programs offered in 2023-24 were as follows:

- Community Grants Program, including Community Strengthening (up to \$10,000), Quick Response (up to \$1,000) and Community Conversation grants (one off grants for 2023/24),
- Event Grants (formally known as Sponsorship Grants and a funding pool of \$50,000), and
- Community Planning Reference Group (Action Groups) administration (\$1,000) and community engagement funding(\$500.00)

After the successful implementation of the 2023/24 Community Funding Model, officers have undertaken an annual review to ensure continuous improvement of the program. The review took into consideration feedback from community members, council officers, as well as Council's assessment panel, benchmarking against other Council's regarding current best practice.

The community feedback response rate from previous applicants was 60%, providing Officers valuable feedback for the review and providing key points for consideration when updating the guidelines for 2024/2025 program.

##### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The Community Grants Program provides an opportunity for not-for-profit community groups to undertake projects that complement the focus areas of the 2021-2025 Council Plan.

The proposed 2024-25 Community Funding Model intends to support a more accessible grants program and respond to identified areas of improvement from the review including improving the capacity of the community to deliver larger projects and Community Plans, and supporting the community to reduce emissions and energy costs in the local Council facilities that they manage.

While most applicants were satisfied with the level of support from Council officers and with the resources provided, the review identified areas for improvement including:

- Not enough time from funds receipt to acquittal for larger Community Strengthening projects to be delivered,
- Aligning project outcomes with the 2021-2025 Council Plan remained confusing and time consuming,
- Difficult to provide a 3:1 matching component for the \$10,000 Community Strengthening grants if the application was for equipment only,
- Confusion regarding matching components, in kind calculations and budgets

11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

- Council Officer resource demand for the assessment process remained high,
- The model does not support Committees of Management of Council owned community facilities to reduce emissions and rising electricity costs.
- Environmental sustainability i.e. reducing our impact on the environment and adopting practices that use natural resources sustainably, is not addressed in the assessment process.

One applicant provided feedback on the difficulty of budgeting for a project when there is no option for a contingency allocation that can't be quoted on. Benchmarking identified this is not common practice in Community Grants programs across other Councils and not be included in the 2024-25 Community Funding model.

The Community Funding Model continues to be informed by the Victorian Auditor General's Office 2022 Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants Report with the review using the nine recommendations from this report to identify areas for improvement including:

- strengthen assessor feedback on funding recommendations, and
- standardise the acquittal review process,

Applications are required to support the 2021-2025 Council Plan by aligning with the objectives of the Community Grant and Event grant program of bringing people together to connect, collaborate, celebrate, upskill, share resources, and put ideas into action.

The recommended changes are detailed in Table 1. Recommended changes to community funding and associated rationale.

**Table 1: Recommended changes to community funding and associated rationale**

Recommended Change	Rationale
1. Timing of Grant Rounds: It is proposed to open grants earlier, move application closing date to 28 <sup>th</sup> May, with the final grant acquittal due date 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Will give applicants almost a full financial year to complete projects.
2. Alignment: Align the project/event outcomes response in the application with the objectives of Community & Event Grants. <i>Refer Table 2. Proposed 2024-25 Community Funding Model</i>	The objectives are the foundation for the preferred outcomes which directly support the 2021-2025 Council plan.  The objectives provide a clearer, broader base for applicants to respond to.



11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

<p>3. Matching Contribution                  3 (a) It is proposed to reduce the matching contribution from Community Strengthening grants.</p> <p>3 (b) Decrease matching contribution for Event Grants from 3:1 to 4:1</p>	<p>Applications for equipment only found it very difficult to provide the 3:1 matching contribution.</p> <p>Applications for Community Strengthening grants 2024-25 must provide a contribution in their budget but without a minimum amount ensuring that grants for equipment only will not be disadvantaged.</p> <p>Difficult for applicants to calculate 3:1. It is suggested that a 4:1 contribution will simplify process.</p>
<p>4. Event Approvals                  Event Grant applicants must have submitted an Event Application to be eligible for funding and will not receive any grant funds until the event is approved.</p>	<p>This ensures that event grant funds are not paid to events that do not receive approval.</p>
<p>5. Municipal Boundaries                  Eligible groups based outside of the Shire can apply for Event Grants if the event is being held in Strathbogie Shire.</p>	<p>Several long-standing successful events in the Shire are delivered by community organisations based outside of the municipality, this now allows them to apply.</p>
<p>6. Sporting Bodies State sporting organisations or governing bodies will be ineligible to apply for Event Grants</p>	<p>Following an application for an Event Grant from a State sporting organisation, it was recognised that although this does not align with the Guidelines it wasn't stated in the ineligibility criteria and needed to be added.</p> <p>Event grants support local community groups implement accessible events that they design and deliver.</p> <p>They may be eligible for a Strategic Funding Agreement.</p>
<p>7. Auspice Arrangements                  Auspice for an Incorporated Association that is eligible to apply will not be accepted.</p>	<p>An application for an Event Grant under auspice from an Incorporated Association that was eligible to apply themselves was received creating additional layers of administration and risk.</p>
<p>8. Harms from Gambling                  A group or organisation that receives revenue from electronic gaming machines is not eligible to apply for funding from the Community Funding program.</p>	<p>Has not previously been included in the ineligibility criteria</p>

11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

<p>9. Streamlined Assessment Revise the assessment process to reduce Council Officer resource demand ensuring assessments remain equitable and transparent.</p>	<p>Support the Assessment Panel with more pre-assessment screening, to ensure panel are only assessing relevant material. Refine the process to further streamline assessments</p>
<p>10. Climate Change Initiatives Introduce a Reducing Emissions Grant stream to Community Grants for the installation of energy saving initiatives at community managed, Council owned facilities during the 2024-25 financial year including upgrades to energy efficient appliances and moving from gas to electrical appliances.</p>	<p>Support Council's Climate Change Action Plan to reduce emissions. Will assist community groups save on energy costs.</p>
<p>11. Additional Assessment Criteria Impacts of projects on the natural environment and environmental sustainability will be assessed by the Assessment Panel and mitigation strategies will be included in any funding agreements.</p>	<p>Addresses one of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> that the environmental sustainability of the municipal district is to be promoted. Supports Council's Climate Change Action Plan to protect our natural environment.</p>
<p>12. Variations authority and process</p>	<p>The authority to determine Variations both financial, timing and scope has been clarified in the model as it wasn't clear before, also reflected in the guidelines and funding conditions.</p> <p><b>Variations under \$1000</b> reviewed and approved by the CEO reported via the Exceptions Report for noting.</p> <p><b>Variations over \$1000</b> go to Council for decision, through the Exceptions Report</p> <p><b>Variations to time, or minor changes to scope</b> are determined by the CEO, and communicated in writing to the applicant.</p>

**Table 2: Proposed 2024-25 Community Funding Model**

Engage. Create. Unite. Live. Access. Connect. Protect. Enhance. Adapt. Inclusive. Productive. Balanced. Strong. Healthy. Safe. Accountable. Transparent. Responsible

<p align="center"><b>COMPETITIVE</b></p> <p align="center">Open to not-for-profit community groups, <u>organisations</u> or clubs; Community Action Groups &amp; Community Houses</p> <p align="center"><b>COMMUNITY GRANTS &amp; EVENT GRANTS</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Objectives</b></p> <p align="center">Council values the role community plays in building a resilient, inclusive, vibrant Strathbogie Shire.</p> <p align="center">Community Grants and Event Grants contribute funds to community-led projects and events that align with the 2021-2025 Council Plan bringing people together to connect, collaborate, celebrate, upskill, share resources, and put ideas into action.</p> <p align="center"><b>Outcomes</b></p> <p align="center">Outcomes of funded projects and events may include, for example, social connection, inclusion, health, wellbeing, safety, community arts, positive cultural or environmental outcomes, upskilling of local volunteers, economic development, and increased visitor economy. <i>This may include Christmas events and decorations if it can be demonstrated they contribute to the above outcomes, and it is consistent with the Council Plan.</i></p>			<p align="center"><b>NON-COMPETITIVE</b></p> <p align="center"><b>COMMUNITY PLANNING / ACTION GROUPS \$11.5k</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1,000 admin</li> <li>• \$500 Community Engagement</li> <li>• \$500 <i>Community Engagement when Community Plan due</i> x 2 = \$1k</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>COMMUNITY GRANTS</b></p> <p align="center">2024/25 Budget allocation \$173,000</p>		<p align="center"><b>EVENT GRANTS</b></p> <p align="center">Budget allocation \$50,000</p>	<p align="center"><b>Pitch my Project</b></p> <p align="center">2024/25 \$300,000</p>
<p><b>Community Strengthening</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to <b>\$10,000</b></li> <li>• Open 17 April – 28 May</li> <li>• One round only</li> <li>• Applicant contribution</li> <li>• Acquit by EOFY</li> <li>• Exclusions: infrastructure maintenance &amp; upgrades; appliances</li> <li>• Approved by Council</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quick Response \$10k</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to <b>\$1,000</b></li> <li>• Open 1 July – 31 May</li> <li>• Approved under CEO delegation.</li> <li>• Applicant notified within 4 weeks</li> <li>• Acquit w/in 6 months</li> <li>• Exceptions Report to Council for noting</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reducing Emissions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to <b>\$20,000</b></li> <li>• Open 17 April – 28 May</li> <li>• One round only</li> <li>• Applicant contribution</li> <li>• For solar panels &amp; 4 star plus energy rating appliance upgrades</li> <li>• Council owned assets only</li> <li>• Acquit by EOFY</li> <li>• Approved by Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to \$50,000</li> <li>• 1 project per Strategic Focus Area</li> <li>• Open 13 Dec-23 Feb</li> <li>• Deliberative engagement as part of Budget process</li> <li>• Decided by community vote</li> <li>• Approved by Council</li> <li>• Delivered by Council</li> </ul>
<p><b>Variations under \$1000</b> reviewed and approved by the CEO - Exceptions Report to Council for noting. <b>Variations over \$1000</b> go to Council for decision, through the Exceptions Report. <b>Variations to time, or minor changes to scope</b> are determined by the <u>CEO, and</u> communicated in writing to the applicant.</p>			

#### 11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

The Proposed Grant Guidelines for Community Grants and Events Grants are attached as Attachment 1 and 2 to this report.

##### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

The recommended changes have been developed through a continuous quality improvement process and are informed by feedback received from the community during the 2023/24 Community Grants Program including a survey of applicants, and Council Officers involved in the administration of the grants.

The changes aim to strengthen and improve the program for the municipality.

Council will deliver a series of information sessions to the community to introduce the updated model and support the community in applying for funding in the upcoming 2024/2025 program.

Furthermore, opportunities will be provided for individual meetings to be booked to meet with Council staff for additional support if required.

##### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

###### Council Plans and Policies

The report is consistent with Council Policies, key strategic documents and the Council Plan, in particular, aligning with:

- Community Funding and Investment Policy, adopted May 2021
- 2021-2025 Council Plan, specifically:
  - Strategic focus area 1: Engage. Create. Unite
  - Strategic focus area 4: Inclusive. Productive. Balanced
  - Strategic focus area 5: Strong. Healthy. Safe
  - Strategic focus area 6: Accountable. Transparent. Responsible

###### Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

There are no regional, state, or national plans or policies relevant to this report.

The guidelines, model and assessment process is consistent with the 9 recommendations outlined in the Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants report from the Victorian Auditor General's Office.

It is also consistent with the draft Community Funding Policy that is being considered at the April 2024 Council Meeting.

11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Assessor conflict of interest	Unlikely	Low	Low	Conflict of Interest declared prior to assessment of applications
Over allocation of budget	Rare	Low	Low	Community Strengthening & Reducing Emissions will have funding recommendations in line with the budget. Events and Quick Response grant streams close automatically when funds expended
Updated model not well received by community	Unlikely	Low	Low	Updates are based on community feedback. Community workshops to promote and improve understanding of model provided. C&E Plan to promote updated model
Community Strengthening and Reducing Emissions grants oversubscribed	Possible	Low	Low	Transparent assessment process Clear feedback to unsuccessful applicants

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

There is no specific legislation governing the establishment of community funding models, however under the *Local Government Act 2020* Council must be accountable for how public funds are spent and governance arrangements around decision making.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

**Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

In the interest of transparency and open and honest communication with our community it is recommended that these changes to Council’s Community Funding Model be acknowledged in a public forum providing full disclosure of the changes to the community.

***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

There is an allocation of \$234,500 for Community Funding in the 2024/25 draft budget. The following table details the breakdown of this proposed allocation across the Community Funding Model for the 2024/25 financial year, subject to Council’s adoption of the Budget 2024/25. This proposed allocation considers the actuals incurred in 2023/24, to best utilise funds for community benefit, across all programs.

Grant Type	Proposed 2024/25 allocation
Community Strengthening	\$165,000
Reducing Emissions	
Quick Response	
Events	\$40,000
Community Planning Groups – non-competitive for administration & community engagement, and insurance reimbursement	\$29,500
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>\$234,500</b>

***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The Community Funding Model provides an opportunity for groups to undertake projects and events that complement the focus areas identified as priorities in the 2021/2025 Council Plan in turn addressing sustainability considerations.

**Economic**

Community Funding supports economic growth across the Shire. Local businesses benefit from increased visitor economy with projects and events assisting in an increase of visitors as well as an increase in the average length of stay of those visitors. Applicants are also encouraged to buy from local suppliers where possible.

**Social**

The Community Funding model encourages social impact projects and events that will support building a vibrant, inclusive and connected community.

#### 11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

##### **Environmental**

Environmental sustainability is promoted at various stages of the grants process.

Community grant applicants must identify if or how their project supports Council's Climate Change Action plan 2022-2027 which includes protecting our natural environment.

Impacts of projects and events on the natural environment will be assessed in the assessment process and mitigation strategies included in funding agreements.

##### **Climate change**

The updated Community Funding model supports Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2022-2027 through a designated funding stream targeting emissions reduction. This will be achieved by supporting the community to reduce electricity consumption, install solar powered and batteries, and upgrade gas appliances to electric.

Community Strengthening, Quick Response and Event grant applications need to consider climate change such as minimising waste going to landfill and ensure that their project or event is minimising harmful impacts on our natural environment.

Event grant funds will only be provided with Event Application approval. For an Event Application to be approved, applicants must complete a Waste Wise Plan which includes the ban on single use plastics.

##### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The changes to the proposed community funding model demonstrate a continuous improvement approach taking into consideration community feedback, benchmarking against other Council programs and key learnings from the delivery of the 2023-24 community funding program.

##### ***COLLABORATION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

Benchmarking against other Council's has occurred to ensure Council's community funding model is fit for purpose and reflects best practice grant/community funding principles.

##### ***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The recommendation does not limit any human rights under the Victoria *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

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#### 11.4.5 Revised Community Funding Model and Funding Guidelines for 2024/25 (cont.)

##### **CONCLUSION**

Community funding provides an opportunity for groups to undertake projects that complement the focus areas identified as priorities for the Strathbogie Shire Council. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the review of Council's community funding model, undertaken by Council, providing opportunities for improvement in an updated model. The review took into consideration community and officer feedback, VAGO recommendations, and benchmarking against other Council's.

The report presents a proposed community funding model and associated guidelines and for the 2024/25 financial year.

##### **ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1:** Community Grant Guidelines

**Attachment 2:** Event Grant Guidelines



#### **11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment**

Author: Acting Chief Financial Officer

Responsible Director: Director People and Governance

##### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

In accordance with the requirements of section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the 2020 Act), Council has prepared a draft budget and fees and charges for the financial year ending 30 June 2025.

The draft budget and fees and charges have been developed in accordance with the 2020 Act's financial management principles in accordance with section 96(1)(a). A Revenue and Rating Plan was prepared in 2021 under new requirements introduced by section 93 of the 2020 Act.

It should be noted that currently general rates, municipal charges service rates/charges and special charges/rates are to be declared under Part 8 of the *Local Government Act 1989* as these provisions have not been included in the 2020 Act.

Community engagement has already been undertaken to inform the preparation of the draft budget during the development of the Council Plan and Pitch My Project submissions.

It is proposed that further consultation is undertaken through a 28-day consultation period in accordance with the Communications and Engagement Plan whereby written submissions will be received and submitters provided with an opportunity to make a verbal submission to Council at a dedicated meeting to hear and consider budget submissions.

To facilitate further engagement, eligible Pitch My Project submissions will be uploaded onto the Share Strathbogie platform concurrently with the 28-day consultation period to enable community members to vote on the most important projects to them. In addition to online voting, physical voting stations will also be placed throughout the municipality to enable hard copy voting.

Council will also use Share Strathbogie to seek Budget feedback. It is proposed that written submissions will need to be received by 5.00 pm on Friday 24 May 2024 and be considered by Council at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 4 June 2024.

##### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That:***

- 1. Council accept the draft 2024/25 Budget and draft Fees and Charges;***
- 2. The draft 2024/25 Budget and draft Fees and Charges be initialled by the Administrator (for identification) and presented as the Budget prepared by Council for the purposes of sections 94 and 96 of the Local Government Act 2020;***

11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

*RECOMMENDATION (cont.)*

3. ***The Chief Executive Officer be authorised to give public notice of the preparation of such budget for a period of 28 days in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and section 96(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 through notices in locally circulating newspapers and newsletters, on Council's social media pages and on Council's website;***
4. ***The closing time for the receipt of written submissions will be 5.00 pm on Friday 24 May 2024;***
5. ***Council consider written and verbal submissions on any proposal (or proposals) contained in such budget at an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 4 June 2024, commencing at 6.00 pm at the Euroa Community Conference Centre;***
6. ***Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake minor editorial changes to the draft Budget and Fees and Charges, if required;***
7. ***Council allocate up to \$300,000 towards Pitch My Project submissions informed by the community voting process and to be included in the final draft 2024/25 Budget; and***
8. ***The 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget be considered at the Council meeting to be held on Tuesday 18 June 2024, commencing at 6.00 pm at the Euroa Community Conference Centre.***

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the requirements of section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council has prepared a budget for the financial year ending 30 June 2025.

The process for preparing the draft budget and capital works program and a review of the strategic indicators has been undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee at an Extraordinary meeting on 5 April 2024.

The Committee suggested that minor amendments be made to the budget document, these were:

- the inclusion of benchmarking, such as data comparable to other small rural councils (where possible)
- addition of a note explaining other financial assets under the Balance Sheet
- removal of total line under 4.1.1(g) as it is not relevant

The Audit and Risk Committee raised commentary around investment on maintenance and renewal of assets, highlighting that the renewal indicator in future years needs to be a key consideration of the newly elected council.

#### 11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

##### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

In preparing the 2024-2025 Budget and Fees and Charges, Council has considered many factors to try and balance community expectations and benefits with financial responsibilities.

Council has attempted to minimise rate increases and has prepared the Budget based on a 2.75 per cent increase in the average rate per property. This is in line with the increase allowed for under the State Government's 'Fair Go Rates' legislation.

The Valuer General has issued advice to the effect that the 2024 general valuation has a relevant date of 1 January 2024 and is based on market conditions at, and immediately before that date. Any market changes occurring now or in the future will be applicable to future valuation cycles.

Rate outcomes for individual properties will vary, depending on how that property's valuation has changed when compared to the average increase.

The rate increase allows for maintenance of existing service levels, funding of several significant new initiatives and the allocation of sufficient funds for the continuing strategic renewal of Council's infrastructure.

The following factors have been considered in relation to waste charges:

- The costs of rehabilitation of the Violet Town landfill which has been funded by borrowings with a cost of approximately \$280,000 per year,
- New waste collection contracts which will apply from 1 July 2025 and will see reduced costs,
- New landfill disposal contract that will apply from 1 July 2025 and will see increased costs,
- One off costs of bins related to new contracts,
- Implementation of a fourth bin for glass collection from 1 July 2025 which will see increased cost and offsetting revenue, and
- Application of overhead costs to the waste service as recommended by Government and a recent Internal Audit report.

In light of these factors, this has presented an opportunity to restructure and simplify waste charges by:

- Maintaining a revenue increase for kerbside collections for 2024/25 in line with previous predictions (4%),
- Discontinuing the former Tree Management Levy (currently \$32 per property),

#### 11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

- The combination of these two changes will see a reduction in revenue of approximately 3.2%, and
- Maintaining expenditure on tree maintenance estimated at \$1,254,478 in 2024/25.

In 2025/26 after allowing for the above factors the aim will be to contain increases at or below CPI.

The budget details the resources required over the next year to fund the large range of services that Council provides to the community and proposes maintenance of existing service levels and the creation of a dedicated reseal preparation crew to improve the quality of works.

This Budget provides a significant amount for renewal of existing assets as well as the creation of new assets. Addressing the community feedback regarding the conditions of the road network have also been considered which has resulted in a significant uplift of funding to this area.

Included in the Capital programs are:

- \$632,000 for replacement of Council's major Information Technology systems to improve efficiency and customer service. This is part of a regional transformation project with Murrindindi, Mansfield and Benalla Councils and has attracted significant State Government funding,
- \$1.548 million for resealing of the road network including the creation of a dedicated reseal preparation crew to improve the quality of the works,
- \$1.242 million for Rehabilitation of existing sealed road pavement,
- \$565,000 for re-sheeting of gravel roads,
- \$2 million for construction of roadworks and drainage in Hovell Street, Avenel – this contingent on and will require external funding,
- \$296,000 for works on existing bridges and culverts,
- \$344,000 for footpath and cycleway works,
- \$640,000 for Female Friendly amenities at Longwood Recreation Reserve (subject to successful grant application), and
- \$500,000 for improvements to Nagambie Splash Park.

Capital works expenditure in future years lies between \$8.2 and \$17.7 million.

Council will continue to provide significant funding for renewal works on our ageing and outdated infrastructure, based on the requirements of the Road Management Plan and taking into account financial constraints.

#### 11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

##### **RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risk consideration has been identified:

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Budget not adopted within statutory timeframes	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Ensure budget timetable is adhered to

##### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The draft budget and capital works program have been developed in accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

##### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The strategic financial indicators show that targets are met in future years on the whole, however liquidity measures and renewal measures require further focus but this situation should improve once grant income from State and Federal governments become known for future years.

##### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Community engagement on budget priorities has begun through the December 2023 launch of the Pitch My Project initiative.

The draft budget has allocated \$300,000 for the Pitch My Project initiatives to ensure we are funding the projects and initiatives that matter to our community.

The decision-making on the final Pitch My Project applications is in the hands of the community through a public vote. This will occur via Council's online platform Share Strathbogie and through physical polling stations placed throughout the municipality. Voting will occur concurrently with the budget submission period.

An extensive community engagement campaign to promote written submissions and feedback from the public in response to the draft budget and fees and charges will commence after the Council meeting to be held on 16 April 2024. This will be achieved via paid advertising, social media, website content, media releases, letters seeking feedback, eNews and voting stations throughout the Shire.

Our engagement is ranked on the International Association Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum as Involve. This means the goal is to:

- *Work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. Submissions will close at 5.00 pm on Friday 24 May 2024.*

#### 11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

Submissions will close at 5.00 pm on Friday 24 May 2024.

##### ***POLICY CONSIDERATIONS***

###### **Council Plans and Policies**

The budget document provides financial resources to achieve the Council Plan objectives, deliver services to the community and provide a capital works program for the benefit of the community.

As outlined previously, the proposed community engagement process is in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

###### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

###### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Community engagement has already been undertaken to inform the preparation of the draft budget during the development of the Council Plan and Pitch My Project Initiative.

Further community consultation and feedback is proposed during the 28-day exhibition period.

The draft Budget and draft Fees and Charges will be considered by Council at a series of meetings open to the public and streamed online via Council's website.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee were presented with the range of draft budget documents on 5 April 2024 acting in its capacity as an independent means of review, accountability and transparency.

##### ***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Within the Budget are a number of provisions which allocate funding to environment and sustainability programs.

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11.4.6 Draft 2024/25 Strathbogie Shire Council Budget - Preparation of Draft Budget, and Draft Fees and Charges for Exhibition and Comment (cont.)

**Social**

The Budget provides funding for a range of programs which are designed to improve:

- (a) sense of community – e.g. cultural activities, stakeholder participation, recognition of diversity, cultural heritage or social cohesion
- (b) community services – e.g. range and quality of services for different groups (children and families, young people, elderly people and people with disabilities), accessibility of services or cost of services
- (c) community health and well-being – e.g. recreation facilities, public safety, health services and facilities or public health implications
- (d) transport – e.g. safety for travellers, emissions and fuel consumption, public transport usage, walking and cycling or transportation needs of all people.

**Climate change**

Council is mindful of the requirement under section 9(2)(c) of the 2020 Act relating to overarching governance principles to mitigate and plan for climate change risks.

The Budget identifies resourcing to deliver and investigate actions in Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

**CONCLUSION**

This report allows for the draft Budget to be placed on public exhibition to seek final community feedback in accordance with the Consultation and Engagement Plan, and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment 1:** 2024/25 Draft Budget Document

**Attachment 2:** 2024/25 Draft Fees and Charges

#### **11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025**

Author: Director People and Governance

Responsible Director: Chief Executive Officer

##### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

The 2021-25 Council Plan was adopted in October 2021. It is considered prudent to align the time of review and update of the Council Plan with the budget cycle, as has been standard practice for many years, even though the new *Local Government Act 2020* is silent on the Council Plan review process.

The Council Plan ([Strathbogie Shire Council 20212025 Council Plan.pdf](#)) is currently in its third year of delivery, with the fourth year of delivery set to commence 1 July 2024. This will be the final review of the current plan, with a new Council Plan 2025-2029 to be developed once the elected Council forms in late 2024.

The review and update ensure that the resources required to implement the Community Vision and the six Strategic Focus Areas outlined in the plan are allocated, where possible, through the annual budget process.

A number of key initiatives have been included in the draft 2024/2025 Year 4 actions with some actions due for completion prior to 30 June 2025. These draft actions include:

- Adoption of the updated Rural Land Use and Rural Residential Strategies
- Adoption of the Urban Growth Strategy
- Creating a Significant Tree Register
- Undertaking a Waste Management and Transfer Station Rationalisation Study
- Undertaking the development of the Euroa Railway Precinct Master Plan
- Understanding the outcomes of the civic accommodation study and present findings and recommendations to Council
- Completing the Arts and Culture Strategy to support the community in driving diversity in activities and events
- Review and implementation of actions from the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan to support growth within existing townships and mitigate health risks from wastewater
- Reviewing the Euroa Saleyards Masterplan to enhance its viability and minimise environmental impacts
- Reviewing the Violet Town District Strategic Development Plan to guide future development and growth while maintaining local character; and
- Participating in the newly established Goulburn Regional Tourism Inc.

It is recommended that the draft updated 2021-25 Council Plan (Year 4 actions 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025) be released for community comment in parallel with the draft 2024/2025 Budget, with the ability to make a written submission for a period of 28 days, with submissions closing on Friday 24 May 2024.



11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025  
(cont.)

**RECOMMENDATION**

***That Council:***

- 1. Endorse the draft updated 2021-25 Council Plan (Year 4 actions 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025) for the purposes of seeking community input through written submissions, with the closure day for receipt of submissions being 5pm Friday 24 May 2024; and***
- 2. Hear any verbal submissions in relation to the 2021-25 Council Plan review at an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held 6pm, Tuesday 4 June 2024.***

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The 2021-25 Council Plan (the Plan) was adopted in October 2021 following several months of deliberative community engagement. The Plan is updated annually and as part of our commitment to ensure accountability and transparency to our community, a six-monthly progress report is presented to Council.

It is considered prudent to align the time of review and update of the Council Plan with the budget cycle, as has been standard practice for many years, even though the new *Local Government Act 2020* is silent on the Council Plan review process.

This will be the final review of the current plan, with a new Council Plan to be developed once the elected Council forms in late 2024.

**ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The 2021-25 Council Plan ([Strathbogie Shire Council 20212025 Council Plan.pdf](#)) is the key strategic document that governs the allocation of human and financial resources and outlines the actions and strategies to be employed by Council to achieve the Community Vision.

It is essential that the Council Plan be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to not only reflect the actions that have been completed, but to ensure that the Plan remains relevant and responds to any unforeseen issues or significant changes that impact our community.

Actions have also been moved from the broad 2021-25 timeframe to form part of the 2024/2025 Action Plan in recognition of funding priorities and initiatives in the draft 2024/2025 budget. New initiatives such as advocating for funding for the implementation of the Strathbogie Shire Drainage Strategy, understanding the outcomes of the Civic Accommodation Study and present findings and recommendations to Council and participating in the newly established Goulburn Regional Tourism Incorporated have also been included in the final year of actions.

#### 11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 (cont.)

Performance indicators have also been updated to reflect recent data and new targets developed to underpin our emphasis on continuous improvement in our performance.

A number of key initiatives have been included in the draft 2024/2025 Year 4 actions:

- Adoption of the updated Rural Land Use and Rural Residential Strategies
- Adoption of the Urban Growth Strategy
- Creating a Significant Tree Register
- Undertaking an Alternative Waste Management and Transfer Station Rationalisation Study
- Undertaking the development of the Euroa Railway Precinct Master Plan
- Understanding the outcomes of the civic accommodation study and present findings and recommendations to Council
- Completing the Arts and Culture Strategy to support the community in driving diversity in activities and events
- Review and implementation of actions from the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan to support growth within existing townships and mitigate health risks from wastewater
- Reviewing the Euroa Saleyards Masterplan to enhance its viability and minimise environmental impacts
- Reviewing the Violet Town District Strategic Development Plan to guide future development and growth while maintaining local character; and
- Participating in the newly established Goulburn Regional Tourism Inc.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

In developing its Council Plan, section 90 (3) of the Act requires a deliberative engagement process to be undertaken. This consisted of a range of 'town hall' style workshops, market stalls, online surveys and the creation of a Community Panel of around 35 people. The Community Panel developed the Community Vision and had significant input into the development of Council Plan actions and strategies.

Community feedback into the draft updated Council Plan is being sought through written submission in parallel with the draft 2024/2025 Budget process. The same ability to make a verbal submission to the Extraordinary Council meeting on Tuesday 4 June 2024 for budget submissions will be extended to those wishing to comment on the draft updated Council Plan.

11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 (cont.)

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Council Plans and Policies

The purpose of this report is to ensure the Council Plan remains up to date and drives the allocation of Council resources to ensure the Council and Administration work towards achieving the 2040 Community Vision.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

Various actions and strategic priorities in the Council Plan are consistent with regional, Stat and National plans and policy directions, such as implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan and delivery of the Gender Equity Plan.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risk was identified:

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Council Plan not relevant and/or responsive to any unforeseen issues or significant changes that impact our community	Low	Low	Low	Council Plan updated annually to ensure the plan remains relevant

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare and adopt a Council Plan of at least the next four financial years within 12 months of a general election.

The Council Plan must include:

- (a) the strategic direction of the Council,
- (b) strategic objectives for achieving the strategic direction,
- (c) strategies for achieving the objectives for a period of at least the next four financial years,
- (d) strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives,
- (e) a description of the Council's initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity, and
- (f) any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

#### 11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 (cont.)

The new *Local Government Act 2020* is silent on the need for Council to review and update the plan, in contrast to its predecessor from 1989.

##### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

##### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

It is considered prudent to align the time of review and update of the Council Plan with the budget cycle, as has been standard practice for many years, even though the new *Local Government Act 2020* is silent on the Council Plan review process. Presenting the draft 2024/2025 actions allows community an opportunity to review the actions and make a submission for Council's consideration if required.

##### ***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The review and updating of the Council Plan ensure that Council's strategic priorities and actions to be resourced where possible in the following financial year are clearly identified and communicated to the municipal community.

##### ***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

##### **Economic**

There are several economic actions and initiatives that form part of the Council plan to support the economic prosperity of the municipality, with a focus on the visitor economy and lobbying other levels of government to provide the key infrastructure required to support our economy.

##### **Social**

Actions that create social benefit form the basis of the entire Council Plan, including a focus on public health and wellbeing initiatives. There are several actions around identifying and planning for future social infrastructure to support population growth and to respond to changes across our population.

##### **Environmental and Climate change**

Climate change related initiatives underpin the Council Plan, not only through an action to prepare and adopt a Climate Change Action Plan, but other initiatives around tree planting, community resilience, review of planning scheme controls and improved resource recovery and waste management.

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11.4.7 2021-25 Council Plan Update – Draft Year 4 Actions 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 (cont.)

***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The inclusion of updated performance indicator targets reflects Council's focus on continuous improvement in our services and facilities.

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

There are no implications arising out of this report in relation to the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act*.

***CONCLUSION***

An update of the Council Plan is vital in ensuring its ongoing relevance and responsiveness to the changing issues, challenges and opportunities our community faces. Significant progress has been made in the delivery of the Council Plan 2021-2025 as we move into the final year of its delivery. This report seeks approval for the draft updated 2021-25 Council Plan (Year 4 actions 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025) to be released for community comment, in parallel with the draft 2024/2025 Budget, with the ability to make a written submission for a period of 28 days, with submissions closing on Friday 24 May 2024.

***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** 2021-2025 Council Plan Draft Year Four Actions – 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

**Attachment 2:** 2021-2015 Council Plan

#### **11.4.8 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee – Confirmed Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1 March 2024**

Author: Coordinator Governance and Records Management

Responsible Director: Director People & Governance

##### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

This report presents the confirmed minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 1 March 2024 endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting held 5 April 2024.

The items considered by the Committee at the meeting were as follows:

##### **Business:**

- 2023/2024 Mid-Year Review for Period Ending 30 June 2024
- Update 2024/2025 Budget Preparation
- Reappointment of Two Independent Community Members under Exceptional Circumstances
- Appointment of Administrator
- Collaborative Digital Transformation Project (CODI) update
- Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) and 2024 Local Government Election Update
- Electoral Structure Review update
- Climate Change Action Plan Update
- Proposed Audit & Risk Committee Meeting Dates 2024/2025
- Internal Audit Updates – RSD Audit
- External Audit Updates – Crowe Australasia
- Outstanding Internal Audit Items update
- Policy Review update
- Risk Management update
- 2023/2024 Audit & Risk Committee Work Plan update
- Human Resources update – Key Strategic Indicators Report
- Councillor Reimbursements quarterly report
- Chief Executive Officer Purchasing Card quarterly report
- Fraud Risk Management Report
- Investment and Borrowings Report quarterly report
- Items raised by the Committee

The confirmed minutes from the above meeting are presented for Council's noting.

##### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That Council receive and note the Confirmed Minutes of the Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee meeting of 1 March 2024.***

##### ***PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND***

The Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee is a Committee appointed by Council and pursuant to section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

#### 11.4.8 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee – Confirmed Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1 March 2024 (cont.)

The primary objective of the Audit and Risk Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for compliance with Council policies and legislation, sound financial reporting and financial management, oversight of risk management including the Strategic Risk Register, good corporate governance, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.

##### ***ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

The independence of the Audit and Risk Committee ensures there is a 'watchdog' over Council operations at all times, which helps ensure the best interests of the municipal community are achieved through Council operations and decisions.

The advice received from the Committee influences strategic financial management, policy, risk management and good governance and decision-making frameworks.

##### ***COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Consultation on this matter is not required under Council's Community Engagement Policy given the operational nature of the committee and its operation under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

##### ***POLICY CONSIDERATIONS***

###### Council Plans and Policies

The work of the Committee is consistent with Strategic Focus Area 6: Accountable. Transparent. Responsible, which outlines several strategies:

*As a Council we will:*

- *Achieve the highest level of good governance across the organization and as an elected Council*
- *Be accountable for the decisions we make and the quality of services we deliver*
- *Maximize public transparency and accountability around our performance and decision-making processes*
- *Be financially responsible achieving the greatest possible community benefit from the programs, initiatives, and services we fund.*

The Audit and Risk Committee plays a key role in monitoring implementation of these strategies.

11.4.8 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee – Confirmed Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1 March 2024 (cont.)

The work of the Committee is consistent with Strategic Focus Area 6: Accountable. Transparent. Responsible, which outlines several strategies:

*As a Council we will:*

- *Achieve the highest level of good governance across the organisation and as an elected Council*
- *Be accountable for the decisions we make and the quality of services we deliver*
- *Maximize public transparency and accountability around our performance and decision-making processes*
- *Be financially responsible achieving the greatest possible community benefit from the programs, initiatives, and services we fund.*

The Audit and Risk Committee plays a key role in monitoring the implementation of these strategies.

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state, and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

The Audit and Risk Committee has been established under State government legislation, while its Workplan and Charter have been developed in accordance with State government guidelines.

**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risks have been considered below:

<b>Risk(s)</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>
Not meeting the requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> Division 8 – Audit and Risk Committee	Unlikely	Major	Medium	Internal systems in place to support requirements for the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the requirements of the Audit and Risk Committee.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The Audit and Risk Committee has been established under State Government legislation, while its Workplan and Charter have been developed in accordance with State Government guidelines.



#### 11.4.8 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee – Confirmed Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1 March 2024 (cont.)

##### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

##### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The appointment of an Audit and Risk Committee, along with noting the confirmed minutes through this Council agenda at a public meeting, ensures transparency around the operation of the Committee and the issues that it is considering/monitoring.

##### ***FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The independent overview of Council's financial management processes and performance is a key task undertaken by the Committee to ensure Council's ongoing financial sustainability.

##### ***SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

The Audit and Risk Committee assists Council in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities including financial management, occupational health and safety, risk, privacy, and governance.

##### ***INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The input of the Audit and Risk Committee into key governance and financial management tools such as the strategic risk register and policy reviews ensures continuous improvement is achieved across the organisation.

Service and value for money improvements are achieved through the internal and external audit process, the former of which is overseen by the Committee.

##### ***COLLABORATION***

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

The Committee endures collaboration with independent members, internal auditors and external auditors appointed by the VAGO.

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11.4.8 Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee – Confirmed Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 1 March 2024 (cont.)

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The Audit and Risk Committee's activities are consistent with the implementation of the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* in terms of its role in ensuring Council adheres to legislative requirements.

***CONCLUSION***

This report recommends the noting of the confirmed minutes of the Strathbogie Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 1 March 2024.

***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Confirmed Audit and Risk Committee Minutes – 1 March 2024

## **11.5 GOVERNANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **11.5.1 Updated Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules**

Author: Director People and Governance

Responsible Director: Chief Executive Officer

#### ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

A requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) is a Council must develop, adopt, and keep in force governance rules.

The Governance Rules outline the procedures for Council meetings and set the rules of behaviour for those participating and present at the meeting. The also outline the process or contain information relating to the following:

- The process for the appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor,
- Meeting procedures and conduct directives for Council, Delegated Committees and Community Asset Committees meetings,
- Disclosures of conflict of interests, and
- Election Period Policy.

An extensive review (including community engagement and consultation) of Council's Governance Rules was undertaken in 2023 and the Governance Rules were endorsed by Council in October 2023.

A requirement of Section (69) of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that a Council must also include an Election Period Policy in its Governance Rules.

Since the review in 2023, further amendments have been identified to address anomalies to improve the implementation of the Governance Rules. In addition, the Election Period Policy has been updated in preparation for the Local Government elections in October 2024.

A period of community engagement will take place resulting from the amendments as required by Section 60 (4) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

##### ***That Council:***

- 1. Endorse the release of the draft Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules for broad community consultation for a period of 28 days commencing on 17 April 2024; and***
- 2. Receive a further report at the June 2024 Council Meeting to consider the final Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules detailing the outcomes of the community consultation on the draft Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules.***

11.5.1 Updated Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules (cont.)

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the updates to the Governance Rules and the Election Period Policy is to provide greater robustness and clarity around Councils governance and legislative obligations under the *2020 Local Government Act 2020*.

The current Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules were adopted by Council on 17 October 2023.

Since the review in 2023 further amendments have been identified to address anomalies to improve the implementation of the Governance Rules. In addition, the Election Period Policy has been updated in preparation for the Local Government elections in October 2024.

**ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Good governance is paramount in achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community and the Governance Rules provides critical direction, processes and procedures to ensure Council is meeting its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Continued improvement around our governance structure will only be achieved by constant review and oversight over our key strategic documents including the Governance Rules and Election Period Policy, and making necessary changes and amendments, when and where anomalies are identified and need rectification.

The following sections within the Governance have been identified as areas requiring amendment:

Section	Amendment
Section 4.1 Definitions for Governance Rules	Authorised Officer definition deleted
Section 12 Election of the Mayor	12.1 to read: “The Chief Executive Officer must open the meeting at which the Mayor is to be elected and invite nominations for the office of Mayor from those Councillors present”.  12.2 to read: “Nominations for the office of Mayor do not require a seconder”.  12.2.1 to read: “The Chief Executive Officer shall ask each nominee, other than when self-nominated, if they accept the nomination”.  12.3 to read: “Once nominations for the office of Mayor have been received and accepted, the following provisions will govern the election of the Mayor:”

11.5.1 Updated Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules (cont.)

<p>Section 35 Question Time</p>	<p>35.7 to read:</p> <p>“If the person who has submitted the question is not present at the meeting, either in person or virtually, the question will not be read out. A response will be made directly to the person who submitted the question”.</p>
<p>Section 36 Petitions &amp; Joint Letters</p>	<p>36.2.7 to read: “a petition must be received 30 hours prior to the Council meeting”.</p> <p>36.5 amended to refer to petitions being presented to <i>ordinary scheduled meetings only</i>.</p>
<p>Section 37 Representations &amp; Deputations</p>	<p>37.10 amended to requires those wishing to make representation or deputations on an item on the Council meeting agenda must be made <i>30 hours prior to the Council meeting</i>.</p>
<p>Chapter Four Election Period Policy</p>	<p>The policy has been reformatted to bring it into line with the standard policy format for Strathbogie Shire Council.</p> <p>The major substantive changes relate to:</p> <p>1. ‘Purpose’ to read</p> <p><i>The Local Government Act 2020</i> (the Act) requires the Council to include and adopt an Election Period Policy (Policy) in its Governance Rules.</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure transparency and accountability around the behaviour and actions of Councillors, Council officers, contractors, registered Council volunteers and candidates during an election period.</p> <p>The ‘election period’ as defined by the Act for the 2024 local government elections will commence on 24 September 2024 and end at 6 pm on election day, 26 October 2024.</p> <p>5. Definitions – ‘definition of Election period’ to read</p> <p>means the period that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• starts at the time that nominations close on nomination day, and</li> <li>• ends at 6 pm on election day</li> </ul> <p>For the 2024 Local Government election, the election period commences on:</p> <p>24 September 2024 and ends at 6 pm on election day, 26 October 2024</p>

11.5.1 Updated Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules (cont.)

Other	Other formatting and editing changes as required.
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**RISK CONSIDERATIONS**

The following risk was identified:

Risk(s)	Likelihood	Consequence	Rating	Mitigation Action
Good governance and legislative obligations may be jeopardised if robust policies, rules and frameworks are not in place	Unlikely	Minor	Low	The application of the Governance Rules and Election Period Policy identifies key processes and standards to meet the requirements under Section (60) of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision-making.

There are also supporting principles relating to community engagement and public transparency that further promote community participation in Council decision making processes and Council meetings.

A period of community engagement will take place resulting from the amendments as required by Section 60 (4) :

“A Council must ensure that that a process of community engagement is followed in developing or amending its Governance Rules.”

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

Council Plans and Policies

This report addresses the Council Plan area of Accountable. Transparent. Responsible. and particularly the following goals:

- Achieve the highest level of good governance across the organisation and as an elected Council
- Maximise public transparency and accountability around our performance and decision-making processes

Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

### 11.5.1 Updated Strathbogie Shire Council Governance Rules (cont.)

This report addresses existing best practice from across the state and has considered potential government directions set out by Local Government Victoria

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The Governance Rules have been drafted and will be publicly exhibited in accordance with the requirements of section 60 the Act. The original Governance Rules were developed under the guidance of an experienced governance lawyer and the department of Local Government Victoria.

The Rules provide a comprehensive and consistent framework to ensure Council, its Committees and its Officers comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020* relating to decision making, consultation and conflicts of interest.

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers and/or contractors involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The public display of the draft Governance Rules and public nature of this report demonstrates the transparency of the process of amending the Governance Rules and Election Period Policy.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

There are no financial cost costs of developing the amended Governance Rules.

#### **INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is the pursuit of innovation and continuous improvement.

The Governance Rules themselves promote best practice in Council operations and to ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the municipality.

#### **COLLABORATION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that collaboration with other councils, levels of government and statutory bodies is to be sought.

No formal collaboration was undertaken in the production of this report.

11.5.1 Updated Strathbogrie Shire Council Governance Rules (cont.)

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

There are no human rights implications for this report.

***CONCLUSION***

A requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) is the review of Council's Governance Rules one year before scheduled Victorian Council elections. The Act requires that a process of community engagement be followed in amending the Governance Rules.

***ATTACHMENTS***

**Attachment 1:** Updated Strathbogrie Shire Council Governance Rules



### **11.5.2 Monthly Performance Report**

The April 2024 Monthly Performance Report includes reports as follows:-

- Building Department – March 2024 Statistics
- Planning Department – Planning Application Approvals – Development Cost (Capital Improved Value) – March 2024
- Customer Enquiry Analysis Report – Report for March 2024
- Waste Management Reporting ~ Year to Date – March 2024
- Transfer Station Date - March 2024
- Actioning of Council Reports Resolutions – Council Meeting Tuesday 19 March 2024
- Outstanding Actions of Council Resolutions to 31 March 2024
- Review of Council Policies and Adoption of new Policies – March/April 2024
- Records of Informal Council Briefings / Meetings – 1 to 31 March 2024

By reporting on a monthly basis, Council can effectively manage any risks that may arise. The Business Management System will also incorporate Council's corporate goals and objectives.

#### ***RECOMMENDATION***

***That the report be accepted.***

**BUILDING ACTIVITY**

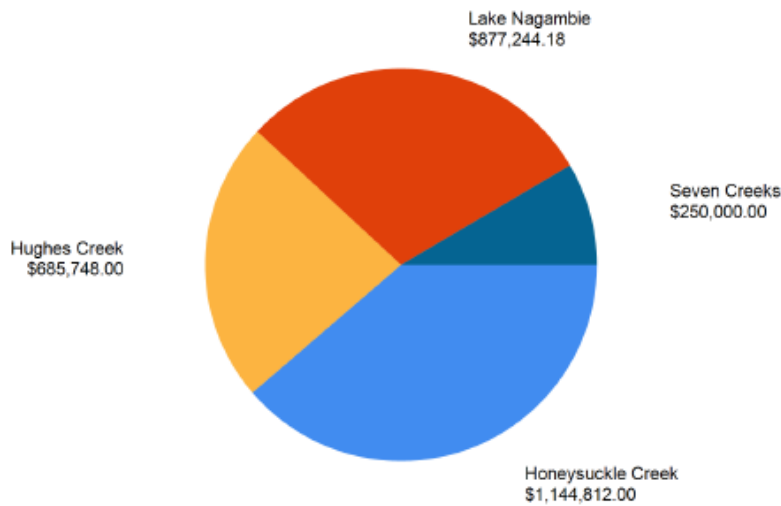
**MARCH 2024**



**Building Activity**

A report on new building permits recorded in Council's building permit register in March 2024

Ward	Number of Lodgements	Cost Of Works
Honeysuckle Creek	4	\$1,144,812.00
Hughes Creek	5	\$685,748.00
Lake Nagambie	7	\$877,244.18
Seven Creeks	1	\$250,000.00
	17	\$2,957,804.18



**Honeysuckle Creek**

Permit Number	Permit Date	Works	Building Use	Town	Cost Of Works
5465630482124	14/03/2024	Construction of	Dwelling & Garage	Violet Town	\$480,132.00
6995576398118	22/03/2024	Installation of	Swimming Pool, Swimming Pool Barrier	Balmattum	\$57,390.00
7491610342086	22/03/2024	Construction of	Dwelling	Violet Town	\$200,000.00
5497592066796	26/03/2024	Construction of	Dwelling	Violet Town	\$407,290.00
					<b>\$1,144,812.00</b>

### Hughes Creek

Permit Number	Permit Date	Works	Building Use	Town	Cost Of Works
5329105273288	05/03/2024	Alteration to	CFA Fire Station	Longwood	\$251,224.00
9127146746115	06/03/2024	Construction of	Dwelling & Garage	Avenel	\$344,000.00
8483194339406	06/03/2024	Construction of	Shed	Avenel	\$28,701.00
2070946515031	14/03/2024	Demolition of	Dwelling & Outbuilding	Longwood	\$25,000.00
4638982770601	28/03/2024	Restump of	Dwelling	Avenel	\$36,823.00
					<b>\$685,748.00</b>

### Lake Nagambie

Permit Number	Permit Date	Works	Building Use	Town	Cost Of Works
4798467121173	04/03/2024	Construction of	Swimming Pool Barrier	Nagambie	\$108,900.00
9060726031293	05/03/2024	Construction of	Swimming Pool, Swimming Pool Barrier	Nagambie	\$69,760.18
1246446512254	12/03/2024	Extension to	Shed	Nagambie	\$15,000.00
8283337327501	15/03/2024	Construction of	Farm Shed	Nagambie	\$34,302.00
9483701770183	20/03/2024	Construction of	Dwelling & Garage	Nagambie	\$557,271.00
8364109304107	24/03/2024	Demolition of	Dwelling	Mitchellstown	\$18,000.00
1387823555788	24/03/2024	Construction of	Farm Shed	Tabilk	\$74,011.00
					<b>\$877,244.18</b>

### Seven Creeks

Permit Number	Permit Date	Works	Building Use	Town	Cost Of Works
9464006988837	29/03/2024	Extension to	Dwelling	Euroa	\$250,000.00
					<b>\$250,000.00</b>

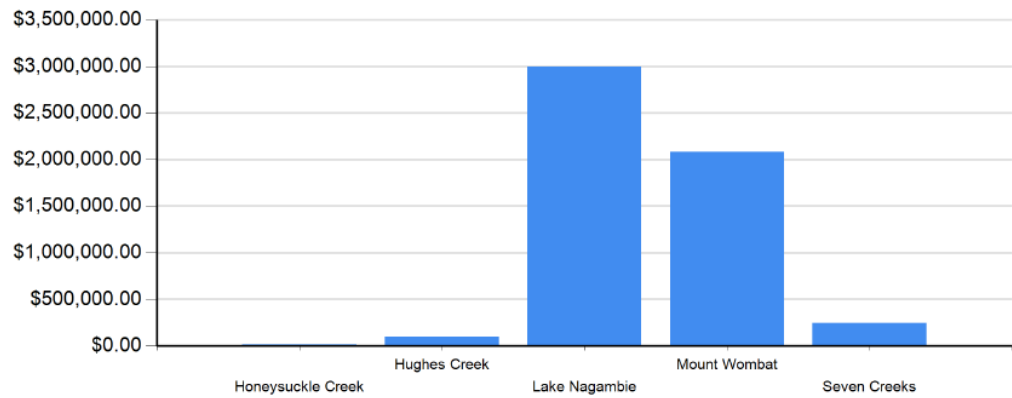
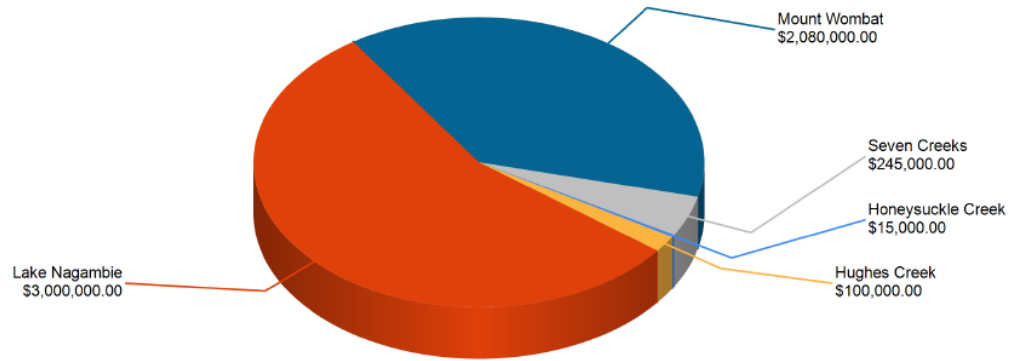
**PLANNING APPLICATION APPROVALS – DEVELOPMENT COST (CAPITAL IMPROVED VALUE)**  
**MARCH 2024**



**Planning Applications Determined**

March 2024

<b>Honeysuckle Creek</b>	<b>\$15,000.00</b>
Violet Town	\$15,000.00
<b>Hughes Creek</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>
Avenel	\$100,000.00
<b>Lake Nagambie</b>	<b>\$3,000,000.00</b>
Tabilk	\$3,000,000.00
<b>Mount Wombat</b>	<b>\$2,080,000.00</b>
Creightons Creek	\$280,000.00
Longwood East	\$1,800,000.00
<b>Seven Creeks</b>	<b>\$245,000.00</b>
Euroa	\$95,000.00
Euroa	\$150,000.00
<b>Total Value</b>	<b>\$5,440,000.00</b>



### CUSTOMER ENQUIRY ANALYSIS REPORT - REPORT FOR MARCH 2024

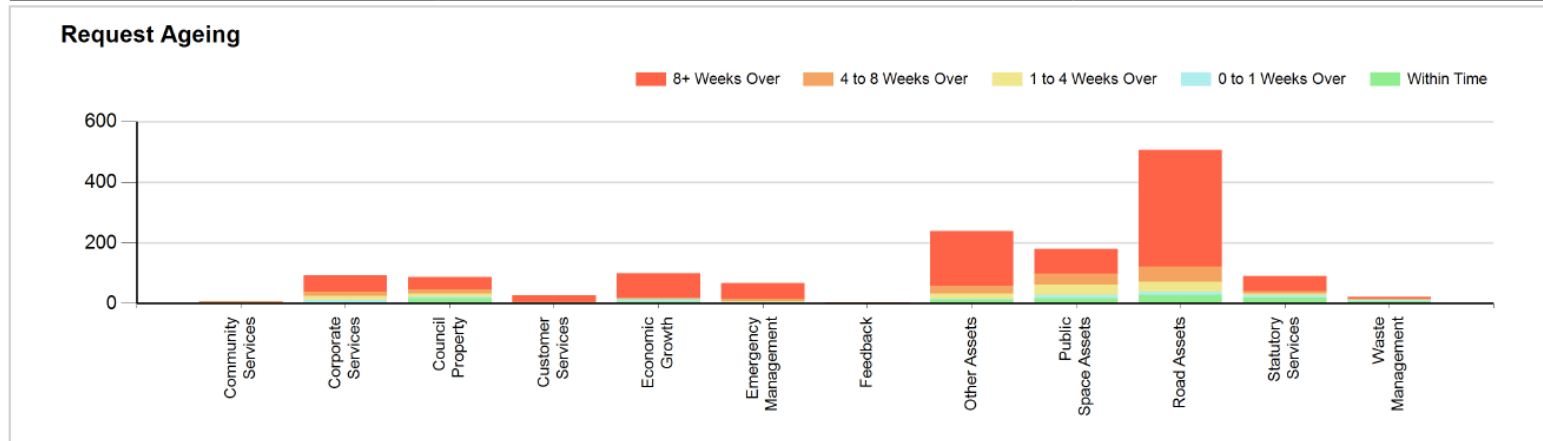


## Request Throughput Analysis

01/03/2024 to 31/03/2024

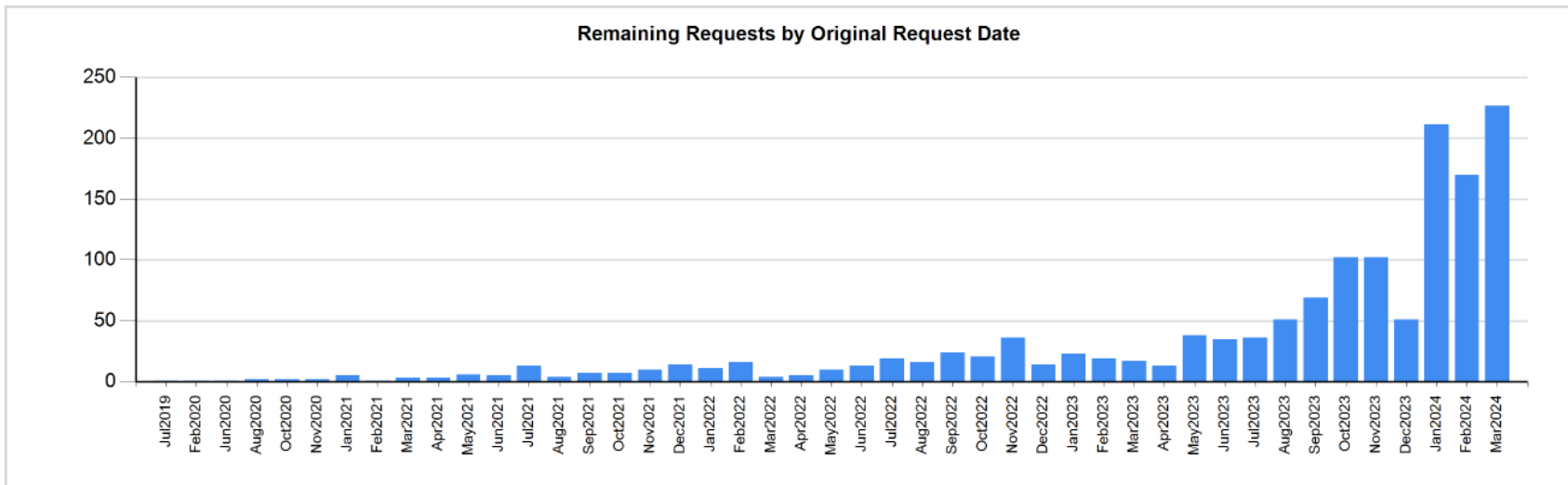
C N O R	Complete / New	<span style="color: green;">✔</span> > 80%	<span style="color: yellow;">⚠</span> 50-80%	<span style="color: red;">✘</span> < 50%
	Overdue / Remaining	< 33%	34-70%	> 70%

Service Area	Existing Requests	New Requests	Completed Requests	Remaining Requests	C N	Within Time	Over Time	O R	Pending Resources	Service Area Usage
Community Services	15	24	30	9	✔	2	7	✘	0	
Corporate Services	104	84	94	94	✔	3	91	✘	0	
Council Property	87	60	60	87	✔	17	70	✘	0	
Customer Services	30	10	13	27	✔	0	27	✘	0	
Economic Growth	90	150	140	100	✔	7	93	✘	0	
Emergency Management	79	34	46	67	✔	2	65	✘	0	
Feedback	7	2	5	4	✔	0	4	✘	0	
Other Assets	233	31	25	239	✔	13	226	✘	0	
Public Space Assets	188	61	59	184	✔	17	164	✘	6	
Road Assets	536	71	97	508	✔	28	480	✘	2	
Statutory Services	102	145	156	91	✔	20	71	✘	0	
Waste Management	33	41	52	22	✔	8	14	⚠	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1504</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>1432</b>		<b>117</b>	<b>1312</b>		<b>8</b>	



**Service Usage**





	Community Services	Corporate Services	Council Property	Customer Services	Economic Growth	Emergency Management	Feedback	Other Assets	Public Space Assets	Road Assets	Statutory Services	Waste Management
2019									1			
2020	July											
	February											1
	June						1					
	August				2							
	October		1		1							
2021	November								1	1		
	January		3		1							1
	February								1			
	March			1				2				
	April							2		1		
	May							2		4		
	June			1				3	1			
	July							9		4		
	August		1							3		
	September			1	1	1		1	1	2		

2021	October			2					2	3		
	November			1				1		8		
	December			1			1	4		8		
2022	January	5		1				1	2	2		
	February			1				4	3	8		
	March			1					1	2		
	April							2		3		
	May	1						2	1	4	1	1
	June							3		9	1	
	July	1				1		3		14		
	August			1	1	2		6	1	3	2	
	September		1		2	1		1	6	2	9	2
	October				1	3			8		6	3
	November				4	4			11	1	12	4
	December		1			2			2		5	4
2023	January	1			8	1	4		1	1	6	1
	February	1	1			5			1	2	6	3
	March	4						1	3		7	1
	April	1				1				4	6	1
	May	3			1	10			9	3	9	3
	June	1	1			3			10	2	18	
	July	2	1	1	1	4			9	2	13	4
	August	2	5	1	1	1	1		7	3	27	4
	September	3	2			8			8	5	40	3
	October	4	2			13	1		18	7	51	6
	November	10	7			5	2		11	15	48	3
	December	5	2	1	1	6	4		4	7	18	3
2024	January	2	6	14		8	41	1	41	37	57	4
	February	2	17	10	2	3	6		21	48	48	10
	March	4	21	31	4	14	7		24	36	45	28
Total	9	94	87	27	100	67	4	239	190	510	91	22

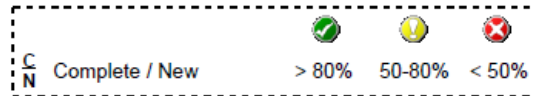


**Definitions**

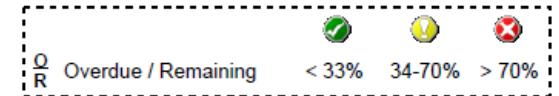
Service Area	Grouping of services by area of responsibility
Existing	Requests open prior to reporting period
New	Requests made during reporting period
Within Time	Remaining Requests where defined deadline is after reporting period
Pending Resources	Requests where additional resources are required to continue. This includes labour, materials, and financial resources.

Service	Activities that provide value to the customer
Remaining	Requests incomplete at end of reporting period
Completed	Requests completed during reporting period
Over Time	Remaining Requests where defined deadline is before the end of the reporting period

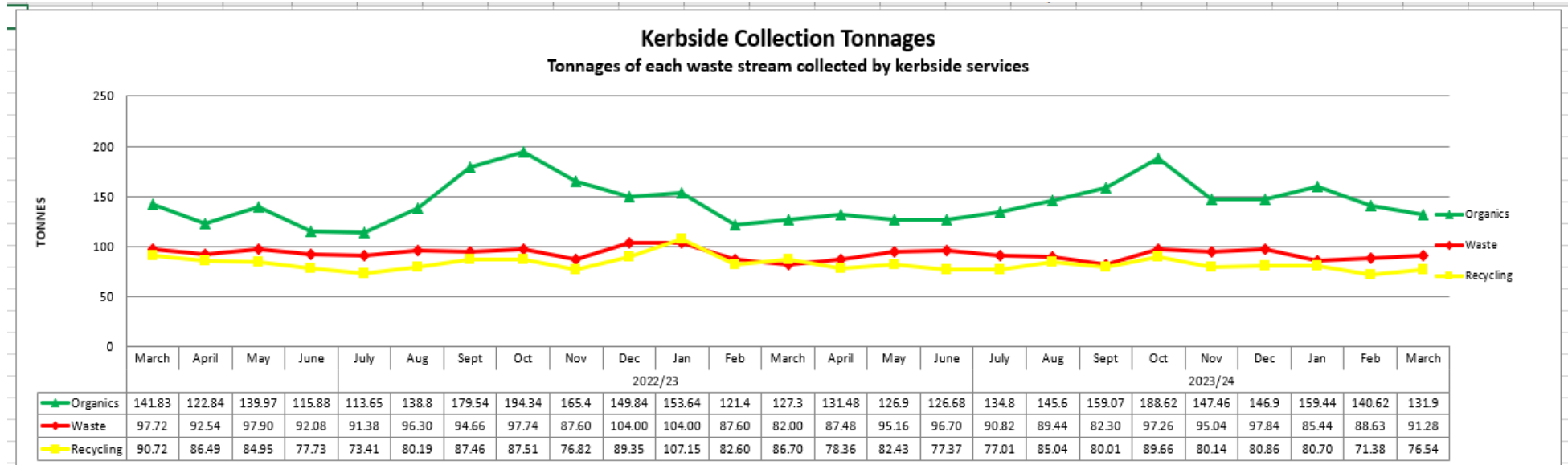
**Complete  
New** An indicator showing the ratio of Completed requests and New requests. Designed to represent how well we are keeping up with the demand for a service.

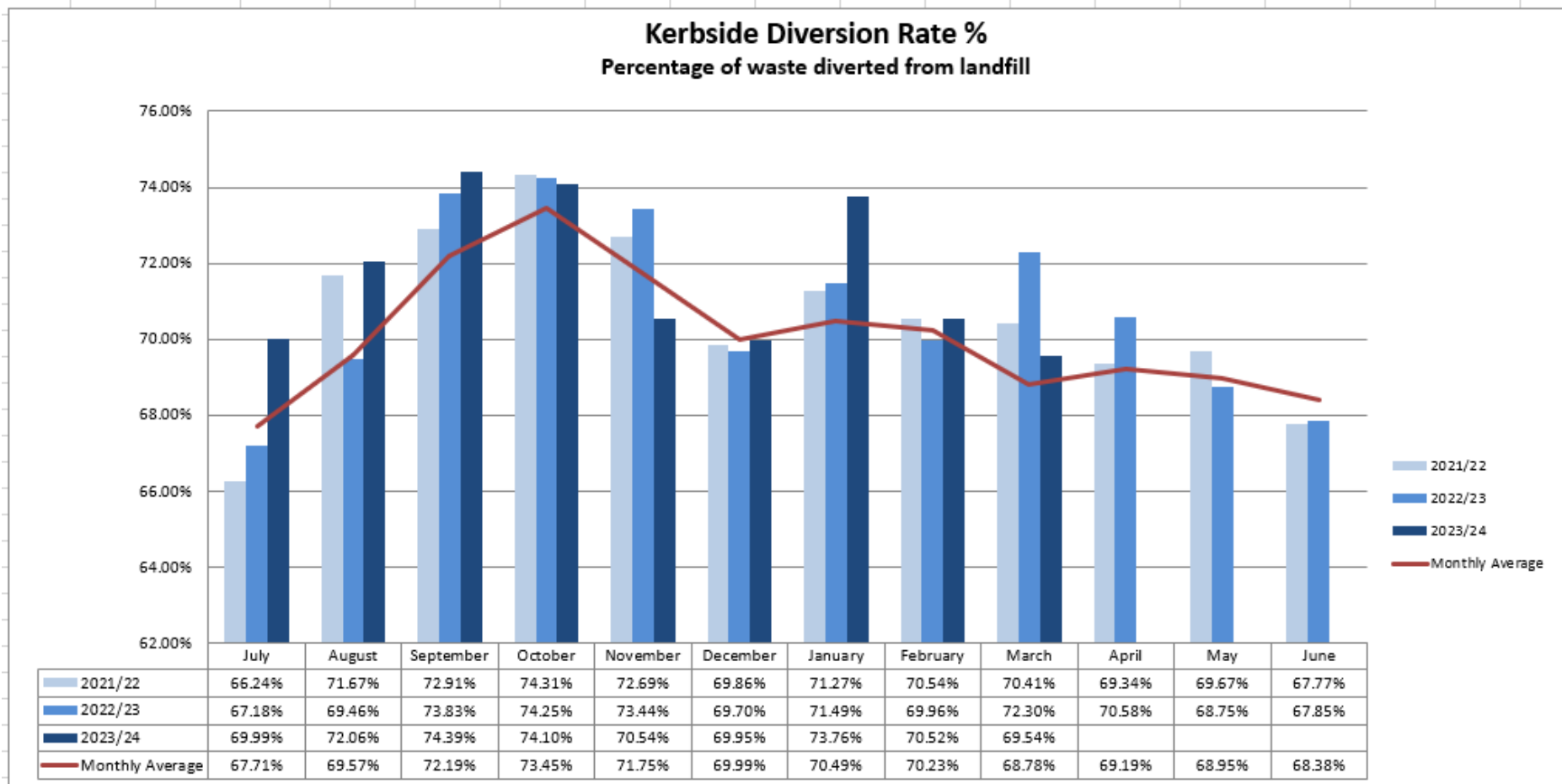


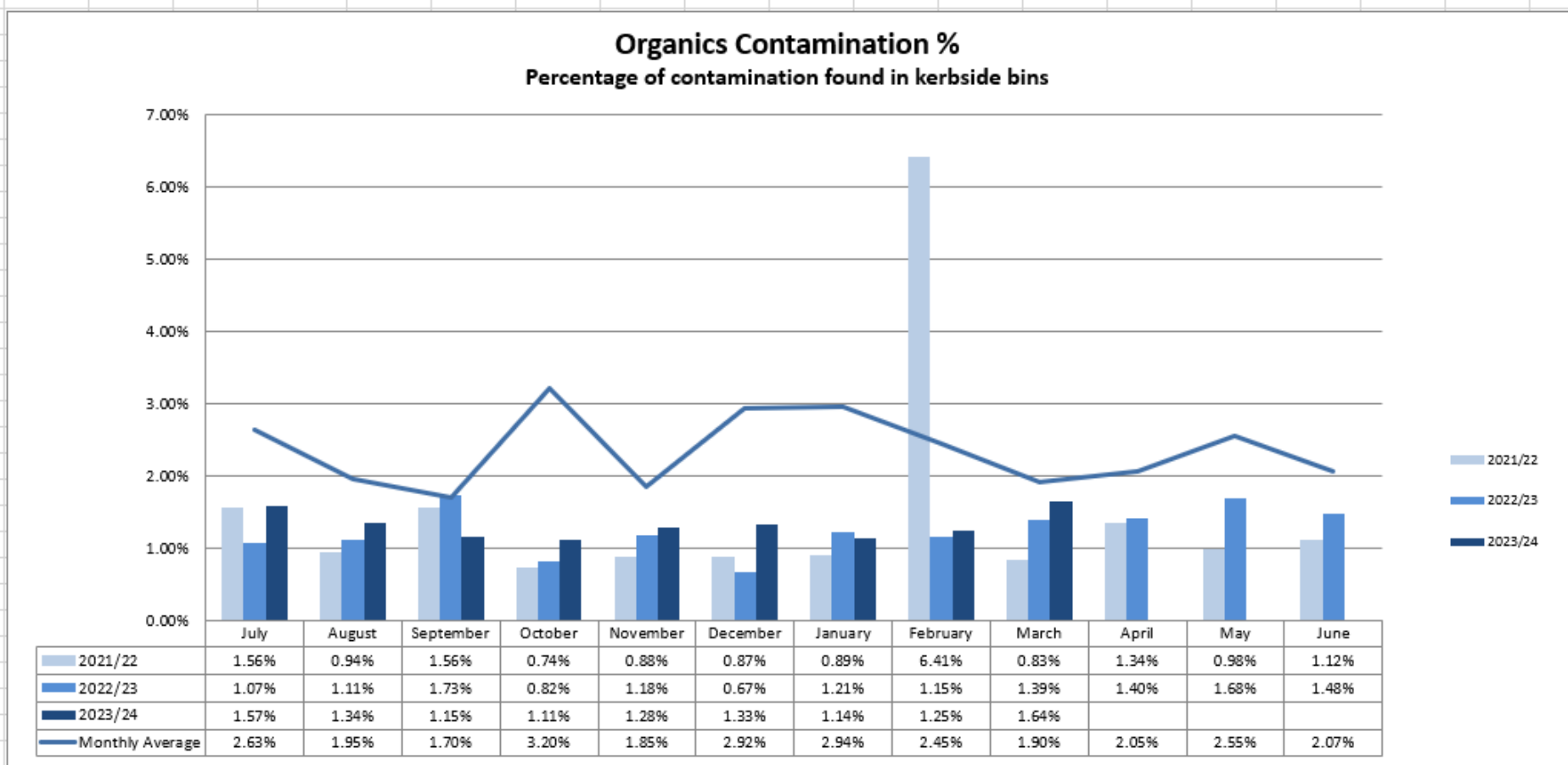
**Overdue  
Remaining** An indicator showing the ratio of Overdue requests and Remaining requests. Designed to represent how well we are keeping to the defined deadlines.



**WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORTING**  
**YEAR TO DATE - MARCH 2024**







### TRANSFER STATION DATA – MARCH 2024



**ACTIONING OF COUNCIL REPORTS RESOLUTIONS**  
**COUNCIL MEETING – TUESDAY 19 MARCH 2024**



**OUTSTANDING ACTIONS OF COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS TO  
31 MARCH 2024**

*This Report is to advise the Administrator, Executive Leadership Team and the community of the status of previous Council resolutions which are in progress but are yet to be finalised.*

<b>Council Meeting Date</b>	<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Description</b>
20/02/2024	11.4.5	Master Inland Rail Development Agreement – Australian Rail Track Corporation

**REVIEW OF EXISTING COUNCIL POLICIES  
AND ADOPTION OF NEW POLICIES**

<b>Review of Policy / New Policy</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Details</b>
Review	Draft Open Data Policy	Refer to Item 11.4.2
New	Draft Fair Access Policy	Refer to Item 11.4.3
Review	Community Funding Policy	Refer to Item 11.4.4

**RECORDS OF INFORMAL COUNCIL BRIEFINGS / MEETINGS**

**FOR PERIOD 1 TO 31 MARCH 2024**

Record in accordance with Council’s Public Transparency Policy 2020

*Note: Details of matters discussed at the meeting that have been designated confidential under Rule 103 of the Governance Rules and sections 3 and 125 of the LG Act 2020 are described in a separate “confidential addendum” that will be reported to the next closed Council meeting*

**Name of Meeting:** Informal Council Briefings / Meetings

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday 12 March 2024

**Location:** Nagambie Lakes Regatta Centre

**Time:** 12.45 pm – 4.15 pm (Items 1 – 4)  
4.30 pm – 6.30 pm (Item 5)

**Attendees:**

Administrator

Peter Stephenson

Officers

Julie Salomon (Chief Executive Officer)

Amanda Tingay (Director People and Governance)

John Harvey (Director Sustainable Infrastructure)

Rachael Frampton (Acting Director Community and Planning)

Braydon Aitken (Manager Planning and Investment) *[Item 4]*

1. Euroa Caravan Park Lease
2. Euroa Hub
3. Review of draft March 2024 Council Meeting Agenda/Confidential Business/Confidential Appendices
4. Planning Matters Update
5. Talk to the Administrator

Declaration of Interest/s under *Local Government Act 2020* (General Conflict of Interest - Section 127 / Material Conflict of Interest – Section 128)

Officer/s

Matter No.	LGA 2020 Interest Section	Names of Officer/s who disclosed interest	Did the Officer/s leave the meeting?
3 / CB 1	128	Chief Executive Officer	Yes <i>(left meeting at 2.36 pm / returned at 2.42 pm)</i>



**Record of Informal Council Briefings / Meetings**

Record in accordance with Council’s Public Transparency Policy 2020

*Note: Details of matters discussed at the meeting that have been designated confidential under Rule 103 of the Governance Rules and sections 3 and 125 of the Local Government Act 2020 are described in a separate “confidential addendum” that will be reported to the next closed Council meeting*

**Name of Meeting:** Informal Council Briefings / Meetings

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday 19 March 2024

**Location:** Euroa Community Conference Centre

**Time:** 6.00 pm to 7.45 pm

**Attendees:**

Administrator

Peter Stephenson

Officers

Julie Salomon (Chief Executive Officer)

John Harvey (Director Sustainable Infrastructure)

Rachael Frampton (Acting Director Community and Planning)

**Apologies:**

Amanda Tingay (Director People and Governance)

1. March 2024 Council Meeting

Declaration of Interest/s under *Local Government Act 2020* (General Conflict of Interest - Section 127 / Material Conflict of Interest – Section 128)

Officer/s

Matter No.	LGA 2020 Interest Section	Names of Officer/s who disclosed interest	Did the Officer/s leave the meeting?
1 / CB 1	128	Chief Executive Officer	Yes <i>(left meeting at 7.35 pm / returned at 7.40 pm)</i>

## 11.6 **EXECUTIVE**

### 11.6.1 **Appointment of Interim Chief Executive Officer**

Author: Chief Executive Officer

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Strathbogie Shire Council Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Julie Salomon announced her resignation on 3 April 2024, effective 4 July 2024. Council will now need to fill that vacancy.

Council's Administrator, Mr Peter Stephenson, has determined that the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer should be one of the first tasks of the newly elected Councillors post the 26 October 2024 elections. As such, Mr Stephenson seeks to appoint an Interim Chief Executive Officer.

The recently adopted CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy is silent in regard to the appointment process of an Interim CEO under such extraordinary circumstances where Council is not governed by elected representatives and the role of the CEO becomes vacant.

As such, the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee recently met to clarify a process. It was determined that an Interim CEO will be appointed for a period of up to 12 months via a selected invitation process targeting experienced former Local Government CEOs. The roles and responsibilities of the Interim CEO would include inter alia:

- to fulfill the role and responsibilities of the CEO in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020,
- ensure business continuity and stability for the organisation over a period of up to 12 months until a longer-term CEO is appointed,
- to lead the Councillor Induction Program, post the 26 October 2024 Council Elections, and
- assist the newly elected Councillor team with the recruitment, selection and decision making for the onboarding of the new CEO.

The appointment of the Interim Chief Executive officer is consistent with the principles as enunciated in Division 7, sections 44 and 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

##### ***That Council:***

1. ***Note the resignation of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Julie Salomon, effective 4 July 2024;***
2. ***Note that the recently adopted Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy is silent in regard to the appointment process of an Interim CEO for a period of up to 12 months;***

### 11.6.1 Appointment of Interim Chief Executive Officer (cont.)

#### *RECOMMENDATION (cont.)*

3. ***Following a meeting with the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee, note that an Interim CEO will be appointed by way of selected invitation targeted to experienced former Local Government CEOs; and***
4. ***Following the appointment and signing of a Contract, announce the appointment of the Interim CEO at the next scheduled Council meeting.***

#### **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

Strathbogie Shire Council Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Julie Salomon announced her resignation on 3 April 2024, effective from 4 July 2024. Council will now need to fill that vacancy.

This report details the process for the appointment of an Interim CEO and subsequent longer-term CEO.

#### **ISSUES, OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

Strathbogie Shire Council Administrator, Mr Peter Stephenson, has determined that the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer should be the one of the first tasks of the newly elected Councillors, post the 26 October 2024 elections.

The recently adopted Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy is silent in regard to the appointment process of an Interim CEO under such extraordinary circumstances where Council is not governed by elected representatives and the role of the CEO becomes vacant.

As such, the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee recently met to clarify a process. It was determined that an Interim CEO will be appointed for a period of up to 12 months via a selected invitation process targeting experienced former Local Government CEOs. The roles and responsibilities of the Interim CEO would include inter alia:

- to fulfill the role and responsibilities of the CEO in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020,
- ensure business continuity and stability for the organisation over a period of 12 months until a longer-term CEO is appointed,
- to lead the Councillor Induction Program, post the 26 October 2024 Council Elections, and
- assist the newly elected Councillor team with the recruitment, selection and decision making for the onboarding of the new CEO.

#### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

### 11.6.1 Appointment of Interim Chief Executive Officer (cont.)

Council is not required to undertake community consultation in relation to the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer.

#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision-making.

The appointment of the Interim Chief Executive officer is consistent with the principles as enunciated in Division 7, sections 44 and 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

#### **Council Plans and Policies**

The appointment of the Interim CEO is consistent with Strategic Focus Area 6 of the 2021-25 Council Plan – Accountable. Transparent. Responsible in that it assists Council to achieve the highest level of good governance across the organisation.

Action 6.4 also relates to the provision of an ongoing good governance program for Councillors.

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Councils appoint a CEO to manage the day-to-day operations of the Council and its employees in accordance with the plans and policies set by the councillors. Furthermore, the CEO provides advice to Council and ensures that Council decisions are implemented.

#### **Conflict of Interest Declaration**

All officers, and/or contractors, involved in the preparation of this report have signed a written declaration that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

#### **Transparency**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

The purpose of this report is to inform our community of the proposed approach for the appointment of an Interim CEO and a longer-term CEO for Strathbogie Shire Council.

#### **FINANCIAL VIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

One of the overarching governance principles in section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured.

The remuneration costs of an Interim CEO will be met from within existing budget allocations for the 2023-24 financial year and the draft budget for the 2024-25 financial year.

11.6.1 Appointment of Interim Chief Executive Officer (cont.)

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The matters discussed in this report do not adversely impact on the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

***CONCLUSION***

The appointment of an Interim CEO will ensure the continuity of business operations, oversee the Councillor Induction program and support the newly elected Councillors in the process to appoint a Chief Executive Officer in 2025.

***ATTACHMENTS***

Nil

**12. NOTICES OF MOTION**

**13. NOTICES OF RESCISSION**

**14. URGENT BUSINESS**

**15. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive Officer has declared the following item -

*“The Hub” – Tenancy Options*

to be Confidential in accordance with Section 66(2)(A) and Part 1, Section 3 Definitions of the *Local Government Act 2020* –

- (g) *private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that –*
  - (ii) *if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage*

This ground has been applied to this matter as it relates to a review of the current lease arrangements and future occupancy of Shop 1, 46 Binney Street, Euroa, which is tenanted by Strathbogie Shire Council for the ‘The Hub’ / Visitor Information Centre (refer to the Confidential Business Certificate attached).

***CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC TO CONSIDER MATTERS DEEMED CONFIDENTIAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 66(2)(A) AND PART 1, SECTION 3 DEFINITIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020***

***MOTION***

***That Council, in conformance with section 66(2)(a) and the definitions for confidential matters under Part 1, section 3 the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), resolve to close the meeting to members of the public for the purpose of considering item/s relating to:-***

***“The Hub” – Tenancy Options***

*..... pm*

***The public gallery will close and livestreaming of the meeting to the public will cease***

*..... pm*

***The public gallery will reopen and livestreaming of the meeting to the public will recommence***

**RECOMMENDATION**

***That the meeting be re-opened to the public.***

**Confirmation of Confidential Business Decision/s**

***Confidential Business Decision/s***

C.B. 1 “The Hub” – Tenancy Options

**RECOMMENDATION**

***That the decisions made in camera be ratified by Council.***

**Confidential Appendices**

These appendices have been classified as being confidential in accordance with section 66(2)(a) and Part 1, section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as they relate to:

- (g) *private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that –*
  - (ii) *if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage*

- C.A. 1 (g) Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 22/23-68:  
Euroa Railway Precinct Masterplan
- C.A. 2 (g) Tender for Contract 23/24-48:  
Nagambie-Locksley Intersection Rehabilitation
- C.A. 3 (g) Tender Evaluation for Contract No. 23/24-47:  
Strathbogie Streetscape – Construction
- C.A. 4 (g) Tender Evaluation Contract No 23/24-45:  
Consultancy to provide the Municipal Stormwater Strategy

**NEXT MEETING**

The next monthly meeting of the Strathbogie Shire Council is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 21 May 2024, at the Euroa Community Conference Centre, at 6pm

***THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING CLOSED AT..... PM***