



CORANGAMITE
SHIRE

Minutes

Council Meeting

Tuesday 25 June 2024

Held in the Killara Centre
At the Camperdown Community
Centre
Commenced at 7:00 pm

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Order of Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Corangamite Shire Council
held in the Killara Centre at the Camperdown Community Centre,
210-212 Manifold Street, Camperdown Victoria 3260
At 7:00 pm on Tuesday 25 June 2024

The Mayor, Cr Kate Makin declared the Council Meeting open at 7:00 pm.

Present

Councillors

K. Makin (Chairperson), J. Beard, N. Cole, G. Conheady, R. Gstrein, L. Hickey, J. Vogels

Officers

David Rae, Chief Executive Officer
Justine Linley, Director Sustainable Development
Shaun Broadbent, Director Works and Services
Chris Asenjo, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Aaron Moyne, Manager Planning and Building Services
Jacqui Thomas, Manager Finance
John Kelly, Manager Assets Planning
Lyall Bond, Manager Environment and Emergency
Peter Rogers, Manager Works

1 Prayer

We ask for guidance and blessing on this Council. May the true needs and wellbeing of our communities be our concern. Help us, who serve as leaders, to remember that all our decisions are made in the best interests of the people, culture and the environment of the Corangamite Shire.

Amen.

2 Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land around Corangamite Shire, the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung people.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal Elders and peoples past, present and emerging.

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Cr Jamie Vogels declared a general conflict of interest in Agenda item 8.1, Planning Permit Application 2023/152 - Two Lot Subdivision (Excision of Dwelling) - 65 Noaks Track, Scotts Creek, and left the meeting before any discussion or vote on the matter.

Cr Kate Makin, declared a material conflict of interest in Agenda item 9.18, Special Charge Scheme Final Costs - Neil Avenue Road Upgrade, and left the meeting before any discussion or vote on the matter.

No further conflicts of interest were declared

5 Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Corangamite Shire Council meeting held on 28 May 2024 be confirmed as correct.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole
Seconded: Cr Geraldine Conheady

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

6 Deputations and Presentations

The Mayor, Cr Kate Makin, invited members of the public who had requested to address Council to make their presentations.

No Items were submitted.

Cr Jamie Vogels declared general conflict of interest Agenda Item 9.1 and left the meeting before any discussion or vote on the matter at 7:05pm.

7 Committee Reports

Nil

8 Planning Reports

8.1 Planning Permit Application PP2023/152 - Two Lot Subdivision (Excision of Dwelling) - 65 Doaks Track, Scotts Creek

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Melanie Osborne, Planning Coordinator

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - Planning Permit Application PP2023/152 [8.1.1 - 24 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Copy of Objection PP2023/152 [8.1.2 - 1 page]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Melanie Osborne

In providing this advice to Council as the Planning Coordinator, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

Council must consider a planning permit application seeking approval for a two (2) lot subdivision (excision of dwelling) at 65 Doaks Track, Scotts Creek.

Council has received one (1) objection to the application.

The application has been assessed against the Corangamite Planning Scheme and the key issues raised in the objection have been considered. It is considered that the proposed subdivision, which creates an isolated rural-residential lot within the Farming Zone, does not provide an acceptable response to the relevant strategic direction, planning policy and controls of the planning scheme.

It is recommended that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit.

Introduction

Planning Permit Application PP2023/152 was received on 19 October 2023 for a two-lot subdivision to excise a dwelling from the balance farmland. The reason the subdivision is sought is to enable the applicant (owner) to retain the dwelling and sell the balance farmland.

Council has given public notice of the application and one (1) objection to the application was received. The key issue raised can be summarised as follows:

- The ongoing purchase of land by blue gum tree companies to neighbouring farms in the Scotts Creek area is of great concern;
- Losing good productive farming land to trees (timber production);
- Local Real Estate Agents not considering neighbouring farms and contacting tree plantation companies to purchase farms.

This report provides a planning assessment of the application.

History

The following planning permit history applies to the subject land:

- Planning Permit PP2009/031 was issued for development of a dwelling at a reduced setback from a road under the Farming Zone.
- Planning Permit PP2016/2016 was issued for a two-lot subdivision under the Farming Zone where both lots met the minimum lot size requirements. The subdivision created the subject site and a second lot of approximately 55ha.
- Planning Permit PP2017/018 was issued for development of a shed at a reduced setback from a road under the Farming Zone.

Subject Land

The subject site has a total area of 40ha and consists of:

- Single dwelling
- Several sheds
- Multiple dams and a waterway that runs through the centre of the site.
- The subject site is regular in shape where access to the dwelling is via Doaks Track that comes off Doaks Road.

Surrounding Area

The main land use characteristics within the surrounding area include:

- The topography of the site is undulating where it has a downward slope to the southeast.
- The site abuts Cooriemungle Creek to the east.

- Doaks Track is a gravel access road and maintained for all weather access to the dwelling only. The tracks within the road reserve along the north and west boundaries beyond the house driveway, provides dry weather access only.
- Surrounding land uses are predominantly associated with agriculture – grazing animal production, including dairy, beef and sheep.

Figures 1 and 2 include a planning zone map and aerial images of the site and surrounds.



Figure 1: Planning Zone Map



Figure 2: Aerial showing subject site and surrounds

Proposal

The application seeks approval for a two-lot subdivision comprising of:

- Lot 1 – 1.5ha consisting of existing dwelling and farm sheds
- Lot 2 – 38.37ha of balance farmland

A copy of the planning permit application is provided under separate cover.

Policy and Legislative Context

Zoning

The subject land is in the Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1).

A permit is required to subdivide land in the Farming Zone. Each lot must be at least 40 hectares. However, a permit may be granted to create smaller lot if the following applies:

- *The subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling. The subdivision must be a two lot subdivision.*

The proposal complies with this provision. The purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone need to be considered in the assessment of this application.

Overlays

There are no planning overlays applying directly to the site.

Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework

The following clauses are considered relevant to this permit application:

Clause 02 Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause 02.01 Context; The Shire is a renowned farming region, producing dairy, wool, beef, prime lamb, crops and grain. Agricultural production and processing, along with their ancillary services, are the largest economic drivers for the municipality.

Clause 02.02 Vision

Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity (Bushfire, flooding, erosion and land slip)

Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management (Agriculture); seeks to limit further fragmentation of rural land and avoid subdivision of land for dwellings where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' of existing rural properties or removes land from agricultural production; and avoid land use conflicts between agriculture and sensitive uses (i.e. dwellings).

Clause 02.03-6 Housing (Rural Living); supports rural-residential use and development adjacent to existing townships to sustain population levels and communities and seeks to avoid rural-residential development in farming areas which can lead to the inefficient use of land.

Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity

Clause 13.07-1S Land Use Compatibility; seeks to protect amenity and ensure that use and development is compatible with adjoining uses and avoid location uses in areas that may be affected to off-site impacts.

Clause 14 Natural Resource Management

Clause 14.01-1S Agriculture – Protection of agricultural land; seeks to avoid the permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the State’s agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors and to prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas. Key strategies require consideration of the impacts on the continuation of agriculture and land use compatibility.

Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture – Protection of agricultural land; seeks to minimise conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in rural areas and avoid rural-residential subdivision of productive agricultural land, unless it can be demonstrated that it is required to maintain the productive agricultural use of the land.

Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture – Subdivision in the Farming Zone;

- discourages subdivision unless the subdivision will enhance farm consolidation and trading of lots between farms and will not adversely impact on the ability to use the land for agriculture.
- discourages subdivision that increases the potential for future dwellings.
- discourages excisions of lots unless all of the following apply:
 - *It can be demonstrated that farming can be continued on the balance of the lot unhindered.*
 - *The dwelling is not required for the farming use of the property.*
 - *The dwelling is in a habitable condition.*
 - *The dwelling is at the front of the property.*
 - *The dwelling is serviced by a road.*
 - *The lot is designed in a manner that does not prejudice surrounding rural production activities.*
- discourages excisions that create long narrow lots or battle axe lots; ensure that the excision of a dwelling and creation of a lot smaller than what is specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone (i.e. 40ha) is consistent with the purposes of the zone.

Clause 16 Housing

Clause 16.01-3S Residential Development – Rural residential development; seeks to manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development and discourages the development of small lots in rural zones for residential use.

Particular Provisions

Not applicable.

Clause 65 Decision Guidelines

Council must decide whether the proposal will provide an acceptable outcome in terms of the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone, and the direction outlined in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework which contains strong policy which seeks to protect agricultural land.

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Under section 46 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, a mandatory cultural heritage management plan is required for a proposed activity if the regulations require the preparation of the plan for that activity.

If required, an approved cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) must be submitted to Council before deciding on a planning permit application.

The Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 stipulate that unless an activity is specified as being an exempt activity, a cultural heritage management plan is required if:

- a) all or part of the activity area for the activity is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity; and
- b) all or part of the activity is a high impact activity.

The subject land (activity area) is not in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, and the subdivision of land into two lots is not specified as a high impact activity in the regulations. Therefore, a mandatory CHMP is not required for the proposed subdivision.

Internal / External Consultation

Referrals

There are no statutory referrals for this application.

Advice on the application was sought from the following Council Departments.

Internal Department	Response
Assets Planning	If a new or upgraded access is required to the lots then a separate Vehicle Crossing permit will be required from Council.
Environmental Health	Standard comments for a rural subdivision in relation to wastewater management for a dwelling on a small lot.

Advertising

Notice of the application was given in accordance with Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, including:

- Sending notices to the owners and occupiers of adjoining land.
- Notice of Council's website.

One objection was received to the application. The issues raised in the objections can be summarised as follows:

- Ongoing purchases of neighbouring farms in Scotts Creek by blue gum tree companies is a concern.
- Losing good productive farm land to trees (timber production).
- Local Real Estate Agents not considering neighbouring farms and contacting tree plantation companies to purchase farms.

A copy of the objection is provided under separate cover.

Consultation

Consultation for the application was undertaken and included:

- 17 May 2024: The applicant was informed that planning officers had outstanding concerns with the application and it was unlikely it could be supported.
- 4 June 2024: A planning site inspection was held and attended by Councillors, Council officers, the applicant, and objector to discuss the proposal, planning considerations and issues raised in the objection.

Assessment

The assessment of the permit application will consider how the proposal responds to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone and the strategic and policy direction outlined within Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

The Corangamite Planning Scheme discourages the creation of small rural-residential lots in productive agricultural areas which have the potential to impact on the continuation of agriculture and cause land use conflict. The southern parts of Corangamite Shire include areas of high agricultural value and productivity, which need to be protected from land use change to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture as the primary industry in the local economy given its State and regional importance.

The application raises key issues for Council to consider, including the need to protect and avoid fragmentation of agricultural land, which may impact on the 'right to farm' due to land use conflict and impede the long-term viability of agriculture within Corangamite Shire.

Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework

The objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) recognise the importance of agriculture and the need to protect productive land from inappropriate subdivision which fragments agricultural land and creates isolated small rural-residential lots which can be incompatible with adjoining farming operations and growth, and lead to land use conflict.

These objectives are further supported through the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and local planning policy. The agricultural sector is identified as the largest and most important industry in the Corangamite Shire, employing approximately one third of the Shire's workforce. A key issue for the Council, is the need to manage the subdivision of land to reduce potential impacts on productive agricultural land and uses.

The proposed subdivision seeks to subdivide a dwelling onto a small lot, separating it from the balance farmland and thus creating a rural-residential lot of 1.5ha in a productive agricultural area. Whilst it has been indicated that there is interest for the balance land to be purchased and used for timber production (blue gum plantation), the application instead suggests that the subdivision is required as part of 'farm succession planning', with the owners to remain in the existing dwelling and the balance land (Lot 2) to be transferred. After a request from planning officers, no further supporting information or justification has been provided to demonstrate the need or beneficial agricultural outcome as a result of the subdivision.

The proposed subdivision is sought to sell off the vacant farmland, with the owner to reside in the dwelling, which creates a rural-residential allotment. The proposal fails to provide an appropriate response to local planning policy for the following reasons:

- The subdivision will lead to land use change with a dwelling on a rural-residential-lot disconnected from agriculture, where, without adequate justification, there is greater value in maintaining the property as whole entity and protecting the agricultural value of the land.
- The benefits of the rural-residential subdivision do not outweigh the impacts through land use change, conflict and restriction on the continuation and growth of agricultural uses.
- The proposal doesn't minimise conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in rural areas and does not address the long-term impacts of the subdivision.
- Insufficient justification and information has been provided regarding the need for subdivision and there is greater planning benefit in retaining the dwelling on the land for long-term connection with agriculture.
- The subdivision will create an isolated rural-residential use within a productive agricultural area, which State and local policy seeks to carefully manage and protect.

Overall, the application does not provide an appropriate response to the strategic direction and policy objectives of the Planning Scheme which seek to prioritise the protection of productive agricultural land from incompatible land uses and prevent inappropriate urban activities in rural areas which may prejudice the ongoing operation of agriculture.

Local strategic direction in the MPS, more specifically, discourages subdivision where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' and create land use conflict. In addition, subdivision should be discouraged unless it will clearly advance and agricultural outcome on the balance land and not adversely impact on the ability to use the balance land for agriculture.

Council is at a critical stage in considering the future of agriculture in the Shire and the protection of productive agricultural land. Progressive decisions to fragment farmland have the potential to lead to long-term negative cumulative outcomes, restricting the continuation and growth of this key industry of local, regional and State significance.

Farming Zone

The purpose of the Farming Zone is to provide land for agricultural uses, retain productive agricultural land and ensure that non-agricultural uses such as dwellings do not adversely affect farming activities.

The application must be considered against the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone. The following comments are made with regard to the decision guidelines:

- The application provides insufficient justification as to how the proposed subdivision will enhance the agricultural productivity of the subject land by creating an isolated rural-residential lot with a high risk of land use conflict and incompatibility between land uses.
- The proposal will result in a permanent change of land use, removing the dwelling from any association with the farm and ongoing agricultural production.
- Future residents are likely to be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land, by way of noise, smell and the impact of ongoing farming operations. Conversely, the residents of the dwelling have the potential to restrict future agricultural use of the balance land through reverse-amenity expectations.
- Rural-residential lots must be located in areas which don't have the potential to restrict the continuation of agriculture and are compatible with the current and future use of surrounding land. Residential growth and development should be directed to existing settlements which have the services and facilities to support this use.
- The existing use and possible future development of the land has been considered. The land is productive and valuable farming land, and orderly planning directs that isolated rural-residential lots and potential land use conflict should be avoided to preserve the Shire's agricultural base.

Response to Objections

The key issues raised in the objection and an officer response are provided below.

Internal Department	Response
<p>Ongoing purchases by Blue Gum Tree Companies of neighbouring farms is of great concern.</p>	<p><u>Objection not supported</u> Whilst recognising the current local concern regarding land use change for timber production, Council is not currently in a position to speculate or control this type of land use which is 'as of right' and does not require a planning permit.</p> <p>The application has not been submitted on the basis that the subdivision is required to enable the future use of land for timber production. Council can only assess the application based on the information provided and relevant planning policy direction and controls.</p>
<p>Losing good productive farm land to trees (timber production).</p>	<p><u>Objection supported (in part)</u> Whilst the application has not been made to Council with any reference to timber production, the loss and fragmentation of highly productive and valuable farmland is a relevant consideration and is sought to be discouraged by strategy and planning policy.</p> <p>Continued rural-residential subdivision and land use change, without clear and adequate justification, could cumulatively impact and erode the Shire's agricultural base.</p>
<p>Local Real Estate Agents not considering neighbouring farms and contacting tree plantation companies to purchase farms.</p>	<p><u>Objection not supported</u> This is a speculative claim and not a planning consideration that Council has any direct control over, however, the Planning Scheme seeks to ensure the protection and continuation of agriculture, and Council encourages opportunities through sale or subdivision which supports the growth and expansion of agriculture.</p>

Options

Council has the following options:

1. Issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit based on the grounds set out within the recommendation. **(Recommended option)**
2. Issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit subject to conditions.

Conclusion

The application for a two-lot subdivision (excision of dwelling) at 65 Doaks Track, Scotts Creek is not supported. The application for the subdivision of land which creates a rural-residential lot, has not been adequately justified and is inconsistent with local and state planning policy. The current and future agricultural use of the land does not warrant or justify the need for subdivision and, at present and based on the information provided, there is greater planning benefit in retaining the dwelling on the land for long-term connection with agriculture.

The proposal will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land and creates a rural lifestyle property in an established and highly productive farming area which is in direct conflict with the purpose of the Farming Zone and the strategic directions and policy objectives of the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

It is recommended that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit.

RECOMMENDATION - 8.1

That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. PP2023/152 to be given under Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit under the provisions of the Corangamite Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Lot 1 PS 7438220P, 65 Doaks Track, Scotts Creek, for a two lot subdivision (excision of dwelling), based on the following grounds:

1. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Municipal Planning Strategy Clause 02.03-4 which seeks to avoid subdivision of land for dwellings where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' of existing rural properties and create land use conflict.
2. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Planning Policy Framework Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land.
3. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Planning Policy Framework Clause 14.01-1L Protection of agricultural land.
4. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone.
5. The subdivision has the potential to lead to land use conflict between the rural-residential land use and the ongoing agricultural use of the balance farmland.
6. The subdivision will not result in the proper and orderly planning of the area.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 6 / 0

Cr Jamie Vogels returned to the meeting at 7:10 pm.

8.2 Planning Permit Application PP2023/175 - Two Lot Subdivision (Excision of Dwelling) - 230 Guys Road, Cooriemungle

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Melanie Osborne, Planning Coordinator

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - Planning Permit Application PP2023/175 [8.2.1 - 20 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - S55 CFA Referral Response PP2023/175 [8.2.2 - 1 page]
3. Under Separate Cover - Copy of Objection PP2023/175 [8.2.3 - 1 page]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Melanie Osborne

In providing this advice to Council as the Planning Coordinator, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

Council must consider a planning permit application seeking approval for a two (2) lot subdivision (excision of dwelling) at 230 Guys Road, Cooriemungle.

The application has been assessed against the Corangamite Planning Scheme and it is considered that the proposed subdivision, which creates an isolated rural-residential lot within the Farming Zone, does not provide an acceptable response to the relevant strategic direction, planning policy and controls of the planning scheme.

It is recommended that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit.

Introduction

Planning Permit Application PP2023/175 was received on 15 December 2023 for a two (2) lot subdivision to excise a dwelling from the balance farmland. The owner of the property wishes to retain the land for timber production (blue gum plantation) and sell the dwelling as they have no use for it.

Council has given public notice of the application and one (1) objection to the application was received as follows:

- Does not provide an appropriate response to housing deficiencies.
- Restrict continued farming practices
- Land use conflict
- On-site wastewater management of dwelling lot
- Doesn't benefit the wider community
- Sets a precedent for future dwelling excisions, leading to land use change
- Contradicts Corangamite Planning Scheme
- Financial advantage

This report provides a planning assessment of the application.

History

There is no recent planning permit history for the site.

Subject Land

The subject site has a total area of 67.97ha and consists of:

- Single dwelling.
- Several sheds and a disused dairy.
- Multiple dams and waterways, including numerous shelter belts.

Surrounding Area

The main land use characteristics within the surrounding area include:

- The subject site is irregular in shape and has a 921.6m of road frontage to Guys Road.
- The site is part of a larger property consisting of two lots which have been converted to a timber plantation. Council received a Plantation Development Notice in December 2023 for a 71ha blue gum plantation.
- Surrounding land uses are predominantly associated with agriculture – grazing animal production, including dairy, beef and sheep and timber production.
- An existing timber plantation is located directly south of the site.
- The Cooriemungle Creek Flora Reserve is located to the south-west.
- The topography of the site is undulating where it slopes downwards to the northwest.

Figures 1 and 2 include a planning zone map and aerial images of the site and surrounds.



Figure 1: Planning Zone Map

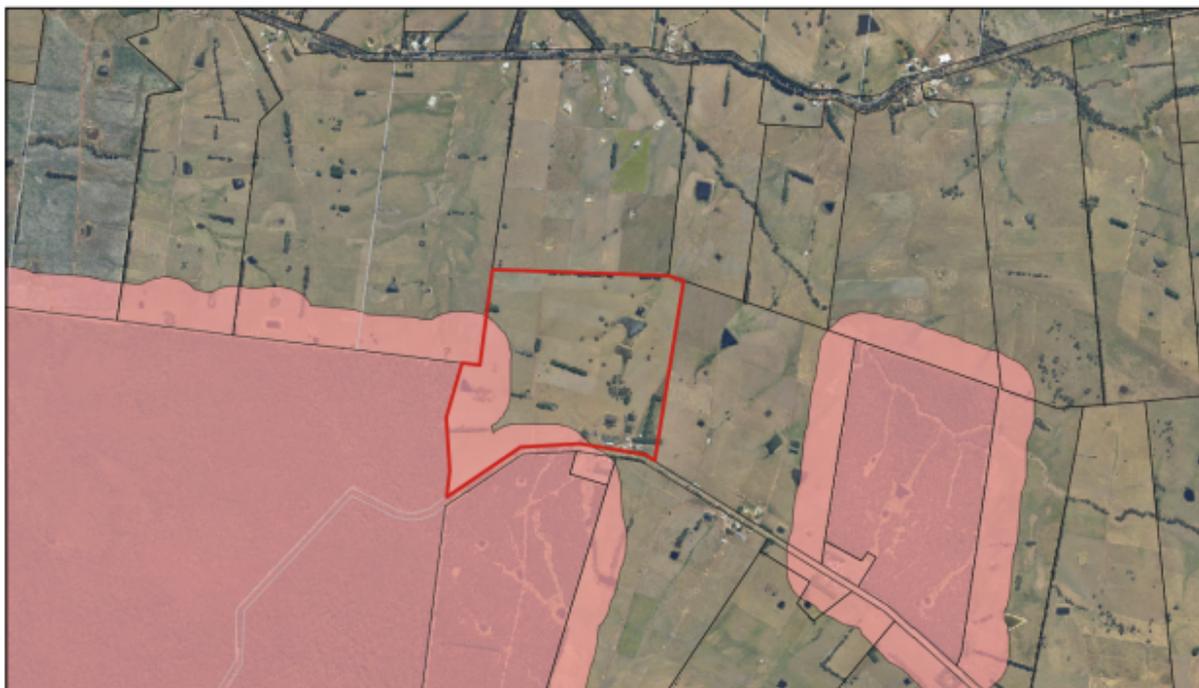


Figure 2: Aerial showing subject site and surrounds and area affected by BMO (shaded red)

Proposal

The application seeks approval for a two (2) lot subdivision comprising of:

- Lot 1 – 1.956ha consisting of existing dwelling and multiple outbuildings/farm buildings, including a former dairy.
- Lot 2 – 66.01ha of balance farmland.

A copy of the planning permit application is provided under separate cover.

Policy and Legislative Context

Zoning

The subject land is in the Farming Zone – Schedule 1 (FZ1).

A permit is required to subdivide land in the Farming Zone. Each lot must be at least 40 hectares. However, a permit may be granted to create smaller lot if the following applies:

- *The subdivision is to create a lot for an existing dwelling. The subdivision must be a two lot subdivision.*

The proposal complies with this provision. The purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone need to be considered in the assessment of this application.

Overlays

The subject site is partly affected by Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). The BMO area is shaded red in Figure 2.

A permit is required to subdivide land under the BMO.

Only a small area of the land is impacted by the BMO along the western and southern boundary of the site and it does not affect the existing dwelling to the southwest. Therefore, an assessment is not required to be provided against the purpose and decision guidelines of the overlay.

Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework

The following clauses are considered relevant to this permit application:

Clause 02 Municipal Planning Strategy

Clause 02.01 Context; The Shire is a renowned farming region, producing dairy, wool, beef, prime lamb, crops and grain. Agricultural production and processing, along with their ancillary services, are the largest economic drivers for the municipality.

Clause 02.02 Vision

Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity (Bushfire, flooding, erosion and land slip)

Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management (Agriculture); seeks to limit further fragmentation of rural land and avoid subdivision of land for dwellings where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' of existing rural properties or removes land from agricultural production; and avoid land use conflicts between agriculture and sensitive uses (i.e. dwellings).

Clause 02.03-6 Housing (Rural Living); supports rural-residential use and development adjacent to existing townships to sustain population levels and communities and seeks to avoid rural-residential development in farming areas which can lead to the inefficient use of land.

Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity

Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire - Bushfire planning, seeks to strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.

Clause 13.07-1S Land Use Compatibility; seeks to protect amenity and ensure that use and development is compatible with adjoining uses and avoid locating uses in areas that may be affected to off-site impacts.

Clause 14 Natural Resource Management

Clause 14.01-1S Agriculture – Protection of agricultural land; seeks to avoid the permanent removal of productive agricultural land from the State's agricultural base without consideration of the economic importance of the land for the agricultural production and processing sectors; and prevent inappropriately dispersed urban activities in rural areas. Key strategies require consideration of the impacts on the continuation of agriculture and land use compatibility.

Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture – Protection of agricultural land; seeks to minimise conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in rural areas and avoid rural-residential subdivision of productive agricultural land, unless it can be demonstrated that it is required to maintain the productive agricultural use of the land.

Clause 14.01-1L Agriculture – Subdivision in the Farming Zone;

- discourages subdivision unless the subdivision will enhance farm consolidation and trading of lots between farms and will not adversely impact on the ability to use the land for agriculture.
- discourages subdivision that increases the potential for future dwellings.
- discourages excisions of lots unless all of the following apply:
 - *It can be demonstrated that farming can be continued on the balance of the lot unhindered.*
 - *The dwelling is not required for the farming use of the property.*
 - *The dwelling is in a habitable condition.*

- *The dwelling is at the front of the property.*
- *The dwelling is serviced by a road.*
- *The lot is designed in a manner that does not prejudice surrounding rural production activities.*
- discourages excisions that create long narrow lots or battle axe lots.
- ensure that the excision of a dwelling and creation of a lot smaller than what is specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone (i.e. 40ha) is consistent with the purposes of the zone.

Clause 14.0-3S Agriculture – Forestry and timber production; seeks to facilitate the establishment, management and harvesting of plantations by identifying areas that may be suitably used for plantation timber production and promotes the establishment of softwood and hardwood plantations on predominantly cleared land.

Clause 14.01-3L Agriculture – Forestry and timber production; encourages the expansion of timber production on cropping and grazing land, where road infrastructure requirements allow.

Clause 16 Housing

Clause 16.01-3S Residential Development – Rural residential development; seeks to manage development in rural areas to protect agriculture and avoid inappropriate rural residential development and discourages the development of small lots in rural zones for residential use.

Particular Provisions

Clause 53.02 Bushfire

This clause sets out objectives that must be achieved to ensure that development of land prioritises the protection of human life and ensures that the location and design of development (including subdivision) respond appropriately to the bushfire hazard identified through the BMO.

As only a small area of the land is impacted by the BMO, the applicant was not required to provide an assessment.

Clause 65 Decision Guidelines

Council must decide whether the proposal will provide an acceptable outcome in terms of the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone, and the direction outlined in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework which contains strong policy that seeks to protect agricultural land.

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Under section 46 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, a mandatory cultural heritage management plan is required for a proposed activity if the regulations require the preparation of the plan for that activity.

If required, an approved cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) must be submitted to Council before deciding on a planning permit application.

The Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 stipulate that unless an activity is specified as being an exempt activity, a cultural heritage management plan is required if:

- a) *all or part of the activity area for the activity is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity; and*
- b) *all or part of the activity is a high impact activity.*

The subject land (activity area) is not in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and the subdivision of land into two lots is not specified as a high impact activity in the regulations. Therefore, a mandatory CHMP is not required for the proposed subdivision.

Internal / External Consultation

Referrals

The following referrals were undertaken for this application:

Section 55 Referral	Response
Country Fire Authority (CFA) – Recommending referral authority	Does not object to the grant of a permit with no permit conditions.

Internal Department	Response
Assets Planning	A new access is required to proposed Lot 2, including modification to the existing access, where a vehicle crossing permit will be required from Council.
Environmental Health	Standard comments for a rural subdivision in relation to wastewater management for an existing dwelling on a small lot.

Advertising

Notice of the application was given in accordance with Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, including:

- Sending notices to the owners and occupiers of adjoining land.
- Notice of Council’s website.

One (1) objection was received to the application as follows:

- Provides financial advantage not afforded to other landowners in the area.
- No housing benefit achieved by the subdivision.
- Precedent of planning outcome.
- Compromise and discriminate against traditional farming practices.

- No guarantee that the farming use will be continued, would devalue the farmland itself, as well as other nearby properties and any excision of the dwelling would restrict other farming practices in the future.
- The subdivision establishes a rural-residential use and leads to land use conflict.
- Environmental impacts of existing wastewater system.

Consultation

Consultation for the application was undertaken and included:

- 2 May 2024: The applicant was informed that Planning Officers maintained their concerns with the application and advised of a planning site inspection meeting to be held.
- 4 June 2024: A planning site inspection was held and attended by Councillors, Council officers and the plantation manager on behalf of the applicant, to discuss the details of the application, key issues and planning considerations.

Assessment

The assessment of the permit application will consider how the proposal responds to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone and the strategic and policy direction outlined within Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.

The Corangamite Planning Scheme discourages the creation of small rural-residential lots in productive agricultural areas which have the potential to impact on the continuation of agriculture and cause land use conflict. The southern part of Corangamite Shire includes areas of high agricultural value and productivity, which need to be protected from land use change to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture as the primary industry in the local economy given its State and regional importance. Whilst the proposed subdivision may enable the existing dwelling to be sold and continue to provide housing disconnected directly from agriculture, a greater level of weight needs to be given to the protection of valuable agricultural land over short-term housing needs.

The application raises key issues for Council to consider, including the need to protect and avoid fragmentation of agricultural land, which may impact on the 'right to farm' due to land use conflict and impede the long-term viability of agriculture within Corangamite Shire.

Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework

The objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) recognise the importance of agriculture and the need to protect productive land from inappropriate subdivision which fragments agricultural land and creates isolated small rural-residential lots which can be incompatible with adjoining farming operations and growth and lead to land use conflict.

These objectives are further supported through the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and local planning policy. The agricultural sector is the largest and most important industry in the Corangamite Shire, employing approximately one third of the Shire's workforce. A key issue for the Council, is the need to manage the subdivision of land to reduce potential impacts on productive agricultural land and uses.

The proposed subdivision seeks to subdivide a dwelling onto a small lot, separating it from the balance farmland and thus creating a rural-residential lot of 1.95ha in a productive agricultural area of significance. The small rural-residential lot is to be sold separately, with the balance land retained by a timber plantation company and used for timber production (blue gum plantation) currently being established to be planted.

The proposed subdivision is sought to sell the dwelling, which creates a rural-residential allotment. The proposal fails to provide an appropriate response to local planning policy for the following reasons:

- The subdivision will lead to land use change with a dwelling on a rural-residential-lot disconnected from agriculture, where there is greater value in maintaining the property as a whole entity and protecting the agricultural value of the land.
- The short-term benefits of the rural-residential subdivision do not outweigh the impacts through land use change, conflict and restriction on the continuation and growth of agricultural uses.
- The subdivision creates a balance lot greater than 40ha where the use of land for a dwelling will be as of right, increasing the potential for future dwellings and further eroding its agricultural value and viability into the future.
- The proposal doesn't minimise conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in rural areas and does not address the long-term impacts of the subdivision.
- The current and future agricultural use of the land for timber production does not warrant or justify the need for subdivision and there is greater planning benefit in retaining the dwelling on the land for long-term connection with agriculture.
- There is no guarantee that the introduction of new residents on the excised lot will not adversely impact or restrict the ability to use the land for agriculture.

- The subdivision will create an isolated rural-residential use within a productive agricultural area which State and local policy seeks to carefully manage and protect.

Overall, the application does not provide an appropriate response to the strategic direction and policy objectives of the Planning Scheme which seek to prioritise the protection of productive agricultural land from incompatible land uses and prevent inappropriate urban activities in rural areas which may prejudice the ongoing operation of agriculture.

Local strategic direction in the Municipal Planning Statement (MPS), more specifically, discourages subdivision where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' and create land use conflict.

Council is at a critical stage in considering the future of agriculture in the Shire and the protection of productive agricultural land. Progressive decisions to fragment farmland can lead to long-term negative cumulative outcomes, restricting the continuation and growth of this key industry of local, regional and State significance.

Farming Zone

The Farming Zone provides land for agricultural uses, retains productive agricultural land and ensures that non-agricultural uses such as dwellings do not adversely affect farming activities.

The application must be considered against the purpose and decision guidelines of the zone. The following comments are made with regard to the decision guidelines:

- The application does not adequately justify how the proposed subdivision will enhance the agricultural productivity of the subject land by creating an isolated rural-residential lot with a high risk of land use conflict and incompatibility between land uses.
- The proposal will result in a permanent change of land use, removing the dwelling from any association with the farm and ongoing agricultural production.
- Future residents are likely to be adversely affected by agricultural activities on adjacent and nearby land, by way of noise, smell and the impact of ongoing farming operations. Conversely, the residents of the dwelling have the potential to restrict future agricultural use of the balance land through reverse-amenity expectations.
- Rural-residential lots must be located in areas which do not have the potential to restrict the continuation of agriculture and are compatible with the current and future use of surrounding land. Residential growth and development should be directed to existing settlements which have the services and facilities to support this use.
- The proposed subdivision creates a balance lot of 66.01ha, where the use of the land for a dwelling would be as-of-right and has the potential to increase the number of dwellings in the area, further restricting the viability of agricultural production.
- The existing use and possible future development of the land has been considered. The land is highly productive and valuable farming land, and orderly planning directs that isolated rural-residential lots and potential land use conflict should be avoided to preserve the Shire's agricultural base.

Response to Objections

The key issues raised in the objection and an officer response are provided below:

Objection	Officer Response
<p>Does not provide an appropriate response to housing deficiencies.</p>	<p><u>Objection supported (in part)</u></p> <p>The provision of key worker housing, including for rural/farm workers, is of critical importance within Corangamite Shire to support the long-term operation and growth of the industry.</p> <p>The subdivision of land will establish an isolated, rural-residential dwelling, which is disconnected from agriculture, but provides no ongoing certainty that the dwelling will provide accommodation for workers in agriculture or another relevant sector.</p>
<p>Restrict continued farming practices</p>	<p><u>Objection supported</u></p> <p>The creation of a rural-residential lot in a productive agricultural area has the potential to prejudice and limit the operations and expansion of adjoining and nearby agricultural uses. The proposed subdivision is not necessary to facilitate the change in the agricultural use of the land and will lead to a permanent land use change, with the creation of a separately disposable rural-residential property.</p>
<p>Land use conflict</p>	<p><u>Objection supported</u></p> <p>Should the subdivision be approved, the dwelling will be sold which has the potential to attract residents not familiar or aware of agricultural activities. Any future residents may consider noise, smell and intensive farming operations, including those of neighbouring farms, to be unreasonable which increases the risk of land use conflict and restriction of ongoing agricultural production.</p>
<p>On-site Wastewater Management</p>	<p><u>Objection not supported</u></p> <p>Council cannot speculate on potential future compliance issues. Should a permit be granted, it would be standard to include a permit condition requiring evidence that the onsite wastewater management system is compliant and if not, the system is upgraded before the issue of Statement of</p>

Objection	Officer Response
	Compliance and the registration of the proposed plan of subdivision.
Sets a precedent for future dwelling excisions, leading to land use change.	<p><u>Objection not supported</u></p> <p>Whilst commonly raised, precedence is not a relevant planning consideration and each individual application must be assessed on its merits.</p> <p>However, as mentioned, Council is at a critical stage in considering the future of agriculture in the Shire and the protection of productive land, where progressive decisions to fragment farmland may have the potential to lead to long-term, negative cumulative outcomes that may impact the viability of the agricultural industry.</p>
Contradicts Corangamite Planning Scheme	<p><u>Objection not supported</u></p> <p>The proposal complies with the application requirements under the Farming zone, in that a permit may be granted for the proposed two-lot subdivision which seeks to create a small lot for an existing dwelling. While a permit may be granted, this does not imply that a permit is appropriate and should be granted. Council’s decision on the application must consider the policy direction and objectives of the planning scheme, as outlined in this assessment.</p>
Financial advantage	<p><u>Objection not supported</u></p> <p>There is no financial advantage for the applicant over other landowners. The requirements of the Corangamite Planning Scheme apply to all land and landowners and financial considerations are not relevant in deciding upon a planning application in accordance with the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>. A planning decision must be made having regard to the policy objectives, relevant planning provisions and decision guidelines of the Corangamite Planning Scheme.</p>

Options

Council has the following options:

1. Issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit based on the grounds set out within the recommendation. (**Recommended option**)
2. Issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit subject to conditions.

Conclusion

The application for a two (2) lot subdivision (excision of dwelling) at 230 Guys Road, Cooriemungle, is not supported. The application for the subdivision of land which creates a rural-residential lot is inconsistent with local and state planning policy.

The current and future agricultural use of the land for timber production does not warrant or justify the need for subdivision and there is greater planning benefit in retaining the dwelling on the land for long-term connection with agriculture or maintaining the property as a whole entity. A strategic view must be taken with respect to the State significance of the land and agricultural industry within Corangamite Shire.

The proposal will result in the fragmentation of agricultural land and creates a rural lifestyle property in an established and highly productive farming area which is in direct conflict with the purpose of the Farming Zone and the strategic directions and policy objectives of the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

It is recommended that Council issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit.

RECOMMENDATION - 8.2

That Council having caused notice of Planning Application No. PP2023/175 to be given under Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and having considered all the matters required under Section 60 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to Refuse to Grant a Permit under the provisions of the Corangamite Planning Scheme in respect of the land known and described as Crown Allotment 134 Parish of Cooriejong, 230 Guys Road, Cooriemungle, for a two (2) lot subdivision (excision of dwelling), based on the following grounds:

1. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Municipal Planning Strategy Clause 02.03-4 which seeks to avoid subdivision of land for dwellings where it has the ability to impact on the 'right to farm' of existing rural properties and create land use conflict.
2. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Planning Policy Framework Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land.
3. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the Planning Policy Framework Clause 14.01-1L Protection of agricultural land.
4. The subdivision does not provide an acceptable response to the purpose and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone.
5. The subdivision has the potential to lead to land use conflict between the rural-residential land use and the ongoing agricultural use of the balance farmland.
6. The subdivision will not result in the proper and orderly planning of the area.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey

Seconded: Cr Jo Beard

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9 Officer's Reports

9.1 Budget 2024-2025

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services

Author: Jacqui Thomas, Manager Financial Services

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Corangamite Shire Council Budget 2024-2025 [9.1.1 - 66 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Public Feedback following the Draft Budget 11 June 2024 [9.1.2 - 9 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Jacqui Thomas

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Financial Services, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report is to consider and adopt the 2024-2025 Budget, incorporating the 2024-2025 Fees and Charges Schedule in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The 2024-2025 Budget is attached to this report. The budget aims to maintain Council's stable financial position in a challenging environment and includes significant capital works.

Introduction

The budget allocates resources annually to support the Council Plan delivery, particularly the strategic initiatives and annual action plan. It aims to meet these objectives in the most financially sustainable manner possible whilst continuing to provide quality services to all sections of our community.

The 2024-2025 budget for the financial year commencing 1 July 2024, has been developed in consultation with the community, Councillors and officers and with reference to the long-term financial plan, asset management plans and community plans. The budget is a short-term plan which specifies the resources required to fund the Council's services and initiatives over the next 12 months and subsequent three financial years.

Council is operating in a difficult economic climate marked by inflation, rising costs, decreasing government grants, and limited contractor and material availability. This combination of adverse factors is creating significant pressure on Council's financial resources and operational capacity.

In a rate-capped environment, where the Council cannot easily increase rates to raise additional revenue, these financial challenges become even more pronounced. Rate capping limits Council's ability to adjust its primary source of income to meet rising costs.

Balancing the budget into the future is an increasingly difficult task. It requires meticulous financial planning, prudent fiscal management, and strategic decision-making to ensure essential services are maintained, and statutory obligations are met.

- The budget document has been prepared based on the legislative requirements contained in the 'model budget' as developed by the Local Government industry taskforce and issued to all municipalities across Victoria.

In accordance with the Act, the budget includes linkages to the Council Plan 2021-2025 and details:

- Activities and initiatives to be funded.
- How the activities and initiatives will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives.
- The service performance indicators.

Public Exhibition and Submissions

Council resolved at an Ordinary Meeting on May 28, 2024, to release the draft budget for public exhibition and public submissions. It was advertised through the newspapers, our website and social media with an exhibition period from the 29 May 2024 to the 10 June 2024.

Community members were invited to complete the public submissions online through the Council's website or via mail. In total seven public submissions were received. None of the submitters chose to exercise the opportunity to present their submission in person or speak to Council on the 11th of June 2024.

Changes to the 2024-2025 Draft Budget

There have been amendments to the budget following the consideration of the public submissions. As indicated at the May Council meeting, Council considered an additional project to develop the Camperdown and Terang Structure Plan for inclusion in the 2024-2025 Budget.

Following budget public consultation and feedback, this project has been incorporated into Council's non-recurrent operating budget. It is funded through a higher-than-expected increase in Financial Assistance Grants (\$210k) and the

removal of the Unlocking Housing Program (\$40k) and an additional allocation to Business Assistance Grants (\$50k), resulting in a net-zero change to the overall budget.

Project	\$
Camperdown and Terang Structure plans	\$300,000
Financial Assistance grants	(\$210,000)
Corangamite Unlocking Housing Program	(\$40,000)
Business assistance Grants - additional allocation	(\$50,000)
Net movement	\$0

Details on the consideration of public submissions can be found in the Internal/External Consultation section below.

Budget Overview

An operating surplus of \$3.87 million has been budgeted with a capital works program of \$28.57 million which includes the completion of the Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation project. Key performance indicators include delivery of a year-end unrestricted working capital ratio of 179.63%. Council's underlying increase in Rates and Charges is 2.75% which is within the State Government set Rate Cap.

The Budget is an essential planning and resource tool produced annually and is vital to the ongoing operational and financial viability of Council. It sets out the expected income and expenditure of both operational and capital activities for the coming year and incorporates Council's rating and borrowing strategies. The Budget also ensures the accountability of Council's operations and forms part of the public accountability process.

The Budget has been prepared to ensure that Council continues to maintain its services and meet the objectives of Council's asset management framework and long-term financial plan. The principles of sound financial management require Council to deliver recurrent operating surpluses, continue to invest in asset renewal and maintain adequate liquidity; the Budget presented delivers these outcomes. The Budget document details the processes to be undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 (the Regulations). As required by the Regulations, the Budget also includes the prescribed performance indicators.

2024-2025 Budget Outcomes

Key financial outcomes for the 2024-2025 Budget on a cash basis are as follows:

	2023-2024 Adopted Budget	2024-2025 Budget	2025-2026 Budget	2026-2027 Budget	2027-2028 Budget
Operating expenditure	37,040,135	39,782,973	41,107,396	41,488,457	42,378,748
Capital expenditure	16,994,240	28,573,661	16,414,712	21,315,469	16,823,051
Transfers to reserves	242,500	532,696	343,564	344,453	345,364
Total budget commitments	54,276,875	68,889,330	57,865,671	63,148,378	59,547,163
Rates and charges income	23,946,837	25,938,412	26,648,372	27,570,832	28,321,602
Rate Cap Increase	3.50%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Net operating result	3,790,542	3,868,090	1,981,632	6,859,036	1,891,675
Underlying net operating result	0.73%	2.95%	(0.17%)	2.28%	2.41%
Projected unrestricted cash/investment balance	10,527,140	16,000,718	15,159,972	15,121,573	14,981,126
Unrestricted working capital ratio	324.07%	179.63%	185.93%	182.03%	177.42%
Capital expenditure	16,994,240	28,573,661	16,414,712	21,315,469	16,823,051
Asset renewal/upgrade ratio	103.30%	151.50%	94.42%	100.63%	100.65%

Rate Income

Rates and Charges will account for 46% of total Council revenue in 2024-2025. An increase in rate income is required to meet Council's aspirations and community expectations for new and existing infrastructure. The budget includes rate increases equal to an estimate of CPI over the next four years.

The proposed underlying increase in rates and charges subject to the rate cap for 2024-2025 is 2.75% year-on-year, with the impact of supplementary rates this becomes a 2.89% increase on the 2023-2024 forecast (see table below). The waste management charge per eligible household will increase by 5.35% from \$411.00 in 2023-2024 to a proposed \$433.00 in 2024-2025. This will increase waste management income by 5.76% with the impact of supplementary rates. The increase reflects the impact of inflation on the costs associated with the service and includes the introduction of a new kerbside glass collection service.

The overall increase in rates and charges including the waste management charge and rating agreements will be 3.21% over the 2023-2024 forecast.

This is detailed below:

Type of Charge	2023-2024 Forecast	2024-2025 Budget	Increase	Comments
General Rates	20,560,095	21,163,015	2.93%	Increase in rates in line with 2.75% rate cap along with supplementary rates.
Municipal Charge	1,878,734	1,924,884	2.46%	Increase in rates in line with 2.75% rate cap along with supplementary rates.
	22,438,829	23,087,899	2.89%	
Waste Management Charge	2,317,089	2,450,513	5.76%	Direct result of increased charges in relation to kerbside waste contracts including the introduction of kerbside collection for glass and increased state government levy.
Rating Agreements	376,000	400,000	6.38%	Increase in indexation and a new solar farm agreement to begin in 2024-2025.
TOTAL	25,131,918	25,938,412	3.21%	

Council is responsible for collecting the Victorian State Government Fire Services Property Levy. The levy appears on rate notices as a separate charge. Council does not derive any benefit and is required to remit amounts collected to the State Revenue Office quarterly. Council is also responsible for collecting the Landfill Levy on behalf of the State Government.

Differential Rates

Section 4.1 of the Budget includes details on the differential rates contained within the Revenue and Rating Plan. The differential rates include a reduction in the Farm Rate from 87.50% to 87% and increase in vacant industrial land from 142.50% to 150% in accordance with the adopted Revenue and Rating Plan.

User Fees and Charges

User fees and charges are projected to increase by 10.71% or \$0.78 million to \$8.09 million. This is mainly due to an increase in volumes at the Landfill (\$0.48 million), Mobile Childcare occupancy (\$0.24 million) and general CPI increases which are partly offset by the change in treatment for free kindergartens (\$0.49 million) which has moved to operating grants.

All user fees have been set with a view to minimise Council subsidy where possible and to provide equity across user group

Operating Expenditure

The council's total expenditure forecast on an accounting basis for 2024-2025 is \$53.13 million. After excluding \$13.33 million in non-cash transactions, such as depreciation and amortisation, the budgeted operating expenditure for 2024-2025 will be \$39.80 million on a cash basis.

This represents an increase of \$2.53 million, or 6.84% over the 2023-2024 adopted budget.

The recurrent expenditure is anticipated to increase by \$1.29 million which relates to additional landfill costs due to higher volumes (\$0.54 million), election year costs (\$0.25 million), the management contract for swimming pools (\$0.28 million) and general CPI increases.

The non-recurrent expenditure is budgeted to increase by \$1.26 million and largely relates to a number of one-off operating initiatives and community projects to be applied for and funded by respective grant programs which will result in a council contribution if successful.

Major Operating Budget Initiatives

Some major budget initiatives included in the 2024-2025 budget include:

Project	Amount
Council Grants Programs	\$415,000
Camperdown and Terang Structure Plans	\$300,000
Grow and Prosper Events delivery	\$200,000
Lower Curdies Flood Study	\$200,000
Digitisation of Building and Planning Permits	\$100,000
Climate Change Strategy Implementation	\$40,000

Capital Expenditure

The total capital works program will be \$28.57 million, of which \$23.79 million will come from Council operations, \$4.55 million from external grants and the balance from contributions and proceeds of sale on plant and equipment. Details are provided in Section 4.2.2 of the attached Budget document. Council will continue to heavily invest in its road network through capital renewal, which is also supplemented by programmed maintenance.

The 2024-2025 Capital works program includes:

- Completion of the multi-year Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation Project (\$11 million)
- Roads (\$8.30 million) – including rehabilitation, strategic local road upgrades, resheeting and resealing. Excluding Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation Project listed separately.
- Waste Management (\$2.99 million) – including investment in the Naroghid landfill site to accommodate for the increased volumes, renewal of buildings at the Skipton and Port Campbell transfer stations and a Composting system trial.

- Buildings (\$1.09 million) including floor replacement at Terang Hall and Timboon stadium, library façade and furniture refresh and solar battery power project at Council's landfill.
- Plant and Equipment (\$3.66 million) including significant investments of a compactor at landfill, a replacement jet patcher for road maintenance, street sweeper and ongoing cyclical replacement of the plant vehicle fleet.

A substantial proportion of the capital works program is based on existing asset management plans. Other projects have been included to take advantage of external funding opportunities and to deliver community planning outcomes.

The Council's asset renewal ratio for 2024-2025 is projected to be 151.5% against a long-term target of 100%. The Council's four-year budget forecasts an average annual renewal ratio of over 100% with the 2025-2026 budget lower than target due to a large purchase of plant and equipment being bought forward into the year 2024-2025.

The 2024-2025 budget is also anticipating the completion of a major project, the Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation Project which was scheduled to be completed over multiple years.

Borrowings

The Budget provides for no new borrowings in the 2024-2025 financial year.

Reserve Transfers

Defined Benefit Fund

It is anticipated there will be future calls on Council for the Defined Benefit Fund. The Council decided in the 2014-2015 Budget to allocate \$400,000 to a "cash backed" reserve each year until sufficient provision has been made for a future call. The projected reserve balance as of 30 June 2025 will be \$1.74 million. No additional reserve transfers are proposed in the budget, the reserve will be increased by a nominal interest amount to preserve the balance.

Landfill Restoration

The Naroghid landfill previously had an estimated remaining life of greater than 50 years, however, due to an increase in the annual volumes the estimated remaining life is expected to be reduced to less than 30 years. The current net present value estimate for restoration and monitoring is \$3 million. The draft budget includes an increased amount of \$240,000 (previously \$120,000) transfer to the landfill restoration reserve to take account of the reduced remaining life. This additional allocation will create a reserve of \$1.37 million as at 30 June 2025.

Future Large-Scale Projects

A new reserve was created in 2018-2019 to hold funds required for future large-scale projects which have been identified by the Council. The project reserve balance is expected to be \$1.165 million as at 30 June 2025.

Statutory Disclosures

The 2023-2024 Budget includes the disclosure requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. The required statutory information pertaining to Rates and Charges is detailed within Section 4.1.1.

Integrated Strategic Planning

The budget has been prepared in accordance with the:

- Council Plan
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Asset Plan
- Financial Plan

Changes to these documents may require amendments to the budget.

Policy and Legislative Context

Council is required under the *Act* to adopt the Budget by 30 June 2024. Council is required to undertake community engagement as part of the process. The Budget is Council's annual financial strategic document and is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices
Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position
We listen to and engage with our community
Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Internal / External Consultation

Council is required to undertake community engagement in accordance with the Corangamite Shire Community Engagement Policy (2021) as instructed under the Act.

The 2024-2025 Budget has sought and proposes additional community input as follows:

- Pre budget submission were requested via the website in December 2023.
- The submissions were collated into themes and presented to Council during a briefing session to help inform the 2024-2025 budget process.
- Submissions and business cases were collated and evaluated by a panel of senior officers to provide Councillors with a ranked list of new initiatives for consideration.

- Councillors participated in budget workshops with officers to review budget documentation including submissions and provide direction.
- Draft Budget was prepared by officers.
- Draft Budget will be made available on Council's website following the May Council meeting for a period of 14 days calling for public feedback.
- Community engagement through local news outlets and social media.
- Following community engagement, Council's Budget will be updated with any changes in consultation with Councillors.
- Draft Budget (with any revisions) presented to June Council meeting for adoption.

Below is a summary of the submissions received for the draft budget that were considered by the Councillors and officers. Council received 7 responses in total, which was an increase from 5 in the previous year. Below is a summary of themes that the responses touched on:

(note 1 submission may have had multiple themes)

Theme	Number of Budget Submissions mentioning this theme
Camperdown Theatre	1
Council Management	2
Footpaths / Walking trails	1
Port Campbell	2
Roads	4
Total Submissions	10

Financial and Resource Implications

The Budget has been prepared in accordance with the direction provided by Council and in accordance with Council's Long-Term Financial Plan. The Budget has been prepared within the following parameters:

- A 2.93% increase in rates and charges which results from a 2.75% increase to capped rates (including municipal charge) and 5.35% increase in the waste management charge.
- An operating surplus of \$3.87 million.
- A capital works program of \$28.57 million.
- An unrestricted working capital ratio of 180% to maintain a solid liquidity buffer for Council to meet short-term obligations.
- Capital budgets have been prepared in accordance with good asset management principles.

Contained within the 2024-2025 Budget document is:

- Detailed information on project initiatives, staffing and resources.
- Detailed capital works program including proposed future capital expenditure (Section 4.2).2024-2025 Fees and Charge Schedule

Options

Council may choose to either:

1. Adopt the 2024-2025 Budget, incorporating the 2024-2025 Fees and Charges Schedule, as attached without amendment, or
2. Adopt the 2024-2025 Budget, incorporating the 2023-2024 Fees and Charges Schedule, as attached with amendments. If amendments are proposed that result in additional cost, Council should consider alternate savings.

Conclusions

The 2024-2025 budget maintains Council's stable financial position with a commitment to maintaining services, complemented by a significant capital works program.

The 2024-2025 budget presented to Council is balanced and has regard to the key indicators that reflect Council's financial sustainability. The attached Budget has been prepared in accordance with the best practice "model budget".

RECOMMENDATION - 9.1

That Council:

- 1. Adopts the Budget as presented.**
- 2. Adopts the following determinations on the rates and charges and other matters for the 2024-2025 financial year:**
 - a. That an amount of \$ 25,938,412 be declared as the amount which Council intends to be raised by rates and charges for 2024-2025, calculated as follows:**

Residential (100% of general rate)	\$ 6,146,865
Commercial (100% of general rate)	\$ 537,641
Industrial (100% of general rate)	\$ 1,536,002
Farm (87% of general rate)	\$ 12,910,048
Vacant Industrial Land (150% of general rate)	\$ 27,129
Recreation and Cultural (50% of general rate)	\$5,330
Municipal Charge	\$ 1,924,884
Waste Management Charge	\$ 2,450,513
Rating Agreements	\$ 400,000
Total Amounts to be Raised	\$ 25,938,412

GENERAL RATES

- b. General rates be declared for the period commencing on 1 July 2023 and concluding 30 June 2024.**
 - i. It be further declared that general rate income be raised by the application of a general rate being 0.229229 cents in the dollar.**
 - ii. It be confirmed that the general rate for all rateable land within the Corangamite Shire be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of rateable land by the rate in the dollar.**

DIFFERENTIAL RATES

- c. That differential cents in the dollar of CIV be declared for different classes of property.

Residential	0.229229
Commercial	0.229229
Industrial	0.229229
Farm	0.199429
Vacant Industrial Land	0.343844
Recreation and Cultural Land	0.114615

MUNICIPAL CHARGE

- d. A Municipal Charge be declared for the period commencing on 1 July 2024 and concluding on 30 June 2025.
- The Municipal Charge be declared for the purpose of covering some of the administrative costs of Council.
 - The Municipal Charge be fixed at \$222.35 for each rateable land (or part) in respect of which a Municipal Charge may be levied.

ANNUAL SERVICE CHARGE

- e. Annual service charge be declared for the period commencing on 1 July 2024 and concluding on 30 June 2025.
- That this charge be referred to as the Waste Management Charge.
 - Waste Management Charge covers kerbside waste collection and disposal where available, public education programs and costs associated with contract administration and dealing with customer service inquiries. “Kerbside waste” includes general waste, green waste (including organics), recyclables and glass.
 - That the Annual Service Charge be based on \$433.00 per eligible assessment.

CONSEQUENTIAL

- f. The Rate Revenue Coordinator be authorised to levy and recover the general rates, the municipal charges and annual service charges described in this resolution.

INTEREST RATE

- g. In accordance with Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires any person to pay interest on any amounts of rates and charges which:
 - i. That person is liable to pay.
 - ii. Have not been paid by the date specified for their payment.
 - iii. The interest rate is to be calculated at or below the rate fixed by the Minister under Section 172A(1).

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.2 Council Plan Review and Annual Action Plan 2024-2025

Directorate: Civic Support
Author: David Rae, Chief Executive Officer
Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 [9.2.1 - 7 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

It is good governance practice for Council to regularly review its four-year Council Plan. Council historically adopts an Annual Action Plan for each budget year. The Annual Action plan sets out the actions and activities that will be undertaken that year to support implementation of the Council Plan.

Introduction

The Council Plan 2021-2025 was adopted by Council in June 2021. The Council Plan sets the broad strategic direction for the Council over a four-year period. While the new *Local Government Act 2020* no longer requires Council to have an annual plan it is considered good practice to do so.

The Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 is a key document that demonstrates what actions and activities will be undertaken in the financial year. The Annual Action Plan has been developed concurrently with the Budget. The Annual Action Plan 2024-2025 provides an important means for tracking progress in delivering the Council Plan.

Issues

The Council Plan 2021-2025 includes:

1. A vision: A connected and thriving community.
2. A mission statement: We will foster opportunities, celebrate our identity and lifestyle, and provide high quality and responsive services.
3. The values of Council: Teamwork, Integrity and Respect.
4. Five major themes containing a range of objectives and strategies that describe how the objectives will be achieved. The themes consist of:
 - i. A Connected Community
 - ii. A Thriving Community
 - iii. A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community
 - iv. Improving Our Environment
 - v. Community Leadership.

A review of the Council Plan has been undertaken with Councillors. The consensus was that the plan remains current and relevant. The Themes reflect the key priorities of the Council and there is a strong alignment between the themes and development of the annual action plan and budget, as well as strong alignment with the Corangamite Shire community vision.

The Annual Action Plan has been developed concurrently with the Council budget. The Annual Action Plan sets out approximately 61 actions that all relate to the themes and strategies contained in the Council Plan. The Annual Actions include a wide range of activities to be undertaken, including:

- Advocacy actions, for example advocacy for improvements to State Government managed roads, roadside weed control and improvements to telecommunications.
- Completion of Family & Children's Services Early Years Plan and commencement of implementation.
- Action related to economic development including the implementation of the Grow and Prosper Corangamite Framework.
- Delivery of key capital works projects including town Structure Plans and new footpaths.
- Preparation for an incoming Council post October 2024 election including development of a new Council Plan and Community Vision refresh.
-

Regular reports to Council on progress in implementing the Annual Action Plan will occur and the Plan is an important means by which Council can demonstrate how it is progressing in implementing its Council Plan.

Policy and Legislative Context

Council is required by section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020* to prepare and adopt a four-year Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election. In developing the Council Plan, Council is required to apply the strategic planning principles outlined in section 89 of the Act, including addressing the Community Vision which informed the Plan.

Internal / External Consultation

The Annual Action Plan was developed concurrently with the budget and a number of briefing sessions were held with Councillors in relation to the Annual Action Plan's development.

Financial and Resource Implications

Projects identified within the Annual Action Plan have been included in the Draft Budget, as such there should be no additional resource implications.

Options

Council can choose to adopt the Annual Action Plan for 2024-2025 with or without changes.

Conclusions

The Council Plan is Council's key strategic document. A review of the plan has shown that changes to the plan are not required and it remains reflective of the strategic direction of Council. The Annual Action Plan for 2024-2025 has been developed concurrently with the Budget 2024-2025 and it is important for demonstrating progress in delivering the Council Plan 2024-2025.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.2

That Council adopt the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.2

That Council adopt the Annual Action Plan 2024-2025.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Jo Beard

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.3 Community Satisfaction Survey 2024

Directorate: Civic Support

Author: Chris Asenjo, Manager Governance and Civic Support

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - CSS 2024 Corangamite Shire Council Report [9.3.1 - 109 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Chris Asenjo

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report provides Council with the outcomes of the 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey for Corangamite Shire Council. The survey is undertaken by the Department of Government Services on behalf of all Victorian councils.

Corangamite Shire Council continues to perform significantly better than the averages of Large Rural Shires and the State-wide average.

Introduction

Corangamite Shire Council participated in the 2024 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey. The Survey provides results on the community's satisfaction with Council across a range of performance measures, which is compared against Council's past performance, as well as the performance of participating councils via statewide and large rural shire group averages. The results identify the best performing areas of Council and areas for improvement. Council's participation also supports its statutory reporting obligations outlined in the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

A total of 400 interviews were completed during the period 1 June 2023 and 18 March 2024. Minimum quotas of gender within age groups were applied during the fieldwork phase. Post survey weighting was then conducted to ensure accurate representation of the age and gender profile of the Corangamite Shire Council population. It is noted that the current survey results are taken from a quarterly survey. Future surveys will be undertaken annually and is due in March 2025.

Issues

Core Performance Measures

Corangamite experienced a slight fall in core performance measures compared to last year's result. However, Corangamite's slight decrease is in line with the rest of the local government sector, with the large rural shire averages and the state-wide averages having a comparable decrease.

The results for 2024 indicate a continuation of strong satisfaction with Council's performance by residents when compared to the large rural shires group and the State as a whole. Corangamite outperforms the large rural shires results by a total of 14 points and outperforms all core measures individually. Corangamite also outperforms the state-wide results by 10 points across all core measures and outperforms the average on all measures except Sealed Local Roads and Art Centres and Libraries for which Corangamite was 5 points and 1 point lower than the state-wide average respectively.

Customer service is again Council's highest performing core measure at 76 points (9 points above the State total and 11 points above the large rural shires total). Other significant results were in Consultation and Engagement and Community Decisions (both 12 points higher than the state-total), Planning and Building Permits (11 points higher than the State-total), and Overall Performance, Emergency and Disaster Management, Lobbying and Town Planning Policy (all 10 points higher than the State-wide average).

In general, 65+ year olds continue to rate Council highest on the range of performance measures. The survey results also indicate improved performance from those surveyed in the north of the Shire. Those aged between 18-34 years of age from across the whole of the shire showed a decrease in overall performance.

A comparison of index scores for each of the core measures is provided in Table 1. Like previous year's reports, changes to the index scores for large rural shires and Statewide scores since last year are indicated by green text for an increase to the previous year, red text for a decrease to the previous year, and black text for no change. Change indicator text has also been added to Corangamite's 2024 scores. The ubiquity of red text reflects the downward trend to index scores across the sector

Core Performance Measures	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Large Rural Shires 2024	State-wide 2024
Customer Service	76	76	78	76	76	65	67
Overall Performance	65	71	66	66	64	50	54
Waste Management	67	71	67	68	68	65	67
Making Community Decisions	63	67	63	61	62	46	50
Value for Money	n/a	63	60	61	57	43	48
Community Consultation	64	66	62	62	63	48	51
Overall Council Direction	56	58	54	52	54	42	45
Sealed Local Roads	41	50	49	41	40	34	36

Table 1 – Core Performance Measure Results

Individual Service Areas

The Local Government sector has seen a decline in its results across all individual service areas, with the large rural shires average seeing an increase in only six measures, art centres and libraries, business and community development which both increased by two points, and family support services, disadvantaged support services, appearance of public areas and emergency and disaster management which all increased by one point. Likewise, the Statewide average saw a decline or no change in every category except two, appearance of public areas and waste management which both increased by one point.

In contrast, Corangamite has seen improvements in 12 measures and has five measures which had no change from last year’s result. Corangamite also continues to perform well relative to our peers in almost all individual service areas, with most measures remaining well above the large rural shires and Statewide averages.

There were particularly strong results in:

- Decisions made in the interest of the community (12 points higher than State-wide average and 16 points higher than Large Rural Shires average)
- Planning and Building Permits (11 points higher than State-wide average and 15 points higher than Large Rural Shires average);

- Community consultation and engagement (12 points higher than State-wide average and 15 points higher than Large Rural Shires average)
- Lobbying on behalf of the community (ten points higher than State-wide average and 13 points higher than Large Rural Shires average); and
- Council's general town planning policy (ten points higher than State-wide average and 12 points higher than Large Rural Shires average)

The five measures which achieved an increase despite the general downward trend across the state were:

- Community consultation and engagement
- Lobbying on behalf of the community
- Decisions made in the interest of the community
- Enforcement of local laws
- Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area

In terms of general index score results, emergency and disaster management (index score of 75) is the area where Council performed best in 2024. The appearance of public areas (74) is Council's next highest rated service area, followed by Recreational facilities and Art centres and libraries (both 72), COVID-19 response (70), Community and cultural activities (69), and Family support services and Waste management (both 68).

There are some areas where Council was rated lower than its peers. These are the exception, but two measures were lower than the Statewide average with no measures lower than the large rural shires average in 2024. These are as follows:

- The condition of sealed local roads in your area (five points lower than State-wide, but two points higher than large rural shires); and
- Art centres and libraries (1 point lower than Statewide, but two points higher than large rural shires)

In terms of general index score results, Council rates lowest in maintenance of unsealed roads (index score of 36), which saw a decline of one point since 2023. Ratings of Council's next lowest rated area was sealed local roads (40), dropped slightly from the 2023 results by one point after an eight point drop in 2023 from the 2022 results. Notably, ratings of unsealed roads and sealed local roads are lowest in the southern part of the Shire and the 35-49 age group. A comparison of performance scores for individual service areas is contained in Table 2.

Service Performance Measure	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Large Rural Shires 2024	State-wide 2024
Community consultation and engagement	64	66	62	62	63	48	51
Lobbying on behalf of the community	62	64	60	58	60	47	50
Decisions made in the interest of the community	63	67	63	61	62	46	50
The condition of sealed local roads in your area	41	50	49	41	40	38	45
Informing the community	69	72	69	68	65	53	56
The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area	59	62	63	59	57	46	52
Enforcement of local laws	66	68	69	65	67	60	61
Family support services	72	73	71	68	68	62	63
Elderly support services	76	75	75	69	64	62	63
Disadvantaged support services	66	69	66	63	63	59	58
Recreational facilities	73	76	72	73	72	64	68
The appearance of public areas	76	78	77	75	74	66	68
Art centres and libraries	72	74	68	71	72	71	73
Community and cultural activities performance	70	69	68	66	69	64	66
Waste management	67	71	67	68	68	65	67

Service Performance Measure	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Large Rural Shires 2024	State-wide 2024
Council's general town planning	63	64	62	58	60	48	50
Planning and building permits	61	60	58	59	56	41	45
Environmental sustainability	63	63	63	63	64	58	60
Emergency and disaster management	76	79	47	73	75	65	65
Roadside slashing and weed control	39	50	51	45	49	43	45
Maintenance of unsealed roads	38	44	39	34	36	34	36
Business and community development	64	67	64	64	64	59	57
Tourism development	66	68	64	66	66	61	59
COVID-19 response	n/a	78	79	72	70	66	65

Table 2 – Individual Service Areas

Best Aspects and Areas for Improvement

As part of the survey, residents were asked two open-ended questions:

1. Please tell me what is the one best thing about Corangamite Shire Council? It could be about any of the issues or services we have covered in this survey or it could be about something else altogether?
2. What does Corangamite Shire Council most need to do to improve its performance?

Customer service was nominated as the Shire’s top best attribute for the sixth year in a row (by 18% of respondents) followed by Community Engagement/Involvement/ Consultation/Approachable (by 11% of respondents).

Sealed road maintenance continued to be the top attribute identified as an area for improvement, with a decrease on last year’s result (37%, down from 42%). 8% of residents said nothing required improvement, although this is a decrease on the 10% of residents who had concurred last year.

Tables 3 and 4 below show the best aspects of Council and those in greatest need of improvement, as identified by residents.

Best aspects	% of all respondents 2024	% of all respondents 2023	% of all respondents 2022	% of all respondents 2021
Customer Service	18	14	18	22
Community Engagement/Involvement/ Consultation/ Communication	11	11	8	6
Generally Good/No Complaints	9	6	8	6
Councillors	6	6	4	4
Road/Street Maintenance/Streetscape	4	6	Not ranked	4
Community Support Services	4	5	7	8
Recreation/Sporting Facilities	3	4	4	4
Public Areas	3	3	5	6
Parks and Gardens	3	Not ranked	Not ranked	Not ranked
Location	3	Not ranked	3	Not ranked

Table 3 – Best Aspects

Areas for Improvement	% of all respondents 2024	% of all respondents 2023	% of all respondents 2022	% of all respondents 2021
Sealed Road Maintenance	37	42	33	24
Nothing	8	10	8	11
Median Strips/Nature Strips	8	8	7	4
Community Consultation	6	7	9	9
Unsealed Road Maintenance	5	6	6	5
Informing the community	5			
Rural/Regional communities	4	5	7	Not ranked
Financial Management	4	4	Not ranked	Not ranked
Town Planning/ Permits/Red Tape	4	Not ranked	Not ranked	4

Table 4 – Areas for Improvement

Communication with Residents

For the sixth year, Council included an optional measure to identify preferred methods of communication with residents. Participants were asked how they would prefer Council to contact them about news, information, and upcoming events.

Overall, 32% of participants prefer to receive Council’s newsletter via mail (up slightly from 30% in 2023). Following an increase, rising to 21% in 2023 from 11% the year prior. Social media has seen a decrease, dropping to 15% in 2024. All other forms of communication remained steady in their popularity in 2024.

The under 50s demographic has seen a decrease of preference for social media, while it remains the preferred method of communication for those residents, this form of communication has dropped significantly to 27% (down from 42% in 2023). This was accompanied by an increase in their preference for Council newsletter via mail, rising to 26% from 21% last year. This was accompanied by a decrease in the preference for Council newsletter via email, down to 22% from 26% last year.

In contrast, residents over 50 have seen a decrease in their preference for physical newsletters, falling to 35% from 37% last year. The preference for Council newsletter via email remained steady at 20% in 2023, as it has done so since 2022. Residents over 50 also remained steady in their preference for social media, with 7% of over 50's saying that was their preferred form of communication, as in 2023.

Table 5, below, shows the full results for the best form of communication. Percentages do not add up to 100 due to responses in the other and don't know / can't say categories.

Method of Communication	Overall % 2021	Overall % 2022	Overall % 2023	Overall % 2024	Under 50's % 2024	Over 50's % 2024
Council Newsletter via Mail (Corangamite News)	38	35	30	32	26	35
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter)	15	11	21	15	27	7
Council Newsletter via Email (Corangamite News email)	13	21	22	21	22	20
Advertising in a Local Newspaper (Noticeboard in the Standard, WD Newspapers and community newsletters)	13	13	9	11	4	16
Text Message (provided for pet registration reminders)	7	4	5	5	7	3
Council Website	1	1	1	2	4	1
Council Newsletter as Local Paper Insert (not currently provided)	10	11	8	9	5	12

Table 5 – Best Form of Communication

Other observations

Roads remain an area of improvement for many in our community, and generally this is associated with the state's arterial road network. Whilst Council continues to advocate for improvements in the network, there is the opportunity to better inform the community. In terms of value for money, it is the officers view the cost of living pressures are impacting this measure.

Policy and Legislative Context

Participation in the Community Satisfaction Survey is consistent with the following commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

- Theme Five - Community Leadership
- Having strong governance practices
- We listen to and engage with our community
- Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

In accordance with the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, some of the core performance results obtained through the Community Satisfaction Survey 2024 will form part of the mandatory reporting in the Annual Report of Operations and Performance Statement, which will be included in the 2023-2024 Corangamite Shire Annual Report.

Survey results for individual service areas will also be used to provide a qualitative assessment of the performance of Council against the Council Plan and will be published in the Annual Report.

Internal / External Consultation

Results of the Community Satisfaction Survey 2024 have previously been provided to Councillors and discussed during the 11 June Councillor Briefing. Results have also been provided to the senior officers and Leadership Group to assist them with the departmental planning and reporting processes. It is proposed that results are made available on Council's website for the general public to review.

Financial and Resource Implications

Participation in the state-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey allows for more cost-effective surveying than would be possible if councils commissioned surveys individually. The cost of this year's survey was \$18,110.

Conclusions

Corangamite Shire Council continues to outperform the Large Rural Shires and State-wide averages in the majority of core and individual performance areas. While Council has in general seen declines in its performance, these are largely in line, and often better, than the declines seen across the sector broadly. While there are some areas of improvement, these results should be well-received.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.3

That Council acknowledges the 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey results and publishes them on the Corangamite Shire website.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

**Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole**

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.4 Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics & Garden Organics Collection Policy 2024

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Lyall Bond, Manager Environment and Emergency

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Council Policy Kerbside Landfill Recyclables Glass and Food Organics Garden Organics [9.4.1 - 11 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Council Policy Kerbside Landfill Recyclables Glass and Food Organics Garden Organics Track Changes [9.4.2 - 12 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Lyall Bond

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Environment and Emergency, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is for Councillors to approve the reviewed Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy 2024.

Introduction

Corangamite Shire Council is committed to providing high quality waste services that are accessible to the community.

The purpose of the Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy is to provide a framework to guide Council Officers in the administration and service of the Kerbside Collection Contract and assist residents in making service requests.

The updated policy also addresses changes in Victorian Government Law resulting from the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021*.

Issues

The purpose of the Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy is to ensure Council Officers and residents have clear guidance on the provision of kerbside collection services and associated issues that arise during the operation of kerbside waste collection.

The policy has been updated to reflect the addition of the glass kerbside collection service, along with definitions of accepted glass materials, recyclable materials and food organics and garden organics materials in line with the new State Government regulations.

Additions to the Policy have also been made to address the issue of insufficient provision of built infrastructure for Council's kerbside collection to take place. The Policy states that where land developers do not accommodate Council's recommendations to the Traffic Impact Assessment for waste collection service vehicles, Council may direct the developer to provide alternate waste disposal services to the properties.

This also extends to the developer providing appropriate storage locations for bins on premises, and adequate kerbside area allowed for each premise to be collected.

Community Groups are an emerging group that require a guiding framework for resolution of service claims. Community groups that approach Council for kerbside collection services may receive additional kerbside collection services if they receive a rates notice for a premise and have a base kerbside collection service as the default service.

The Policy now includes direction on the provision of Waste Exemption Cards for community not-for-profit groups who provide services to our community. The intent of these cards is to assist not-for-profits who may receive donated materials for repurposing and as a result have unsuitable or dumped items for disposal. These groups are typically volunteer-run Op-Shops. The cards provide a limited number of 25 disposals per card and there is one card issued per 12 month period.

Policy and Legislative Context

This policy aligns with the *Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021* by supporting the provision of glass collections services and increased resource recovery.

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Corangamite's townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community

Improving the health and wellbeing of our residents

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Protecting and improving our built and natural environment

Providing high quality waste services, including sustainable management of the regional landfill at Naroghid

Reducing the carbon footprint of Council operations

Helping our community plan and respond to climate change

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

A Gender Impact Assessment was undertaken on the Policy, which included intersectionality considerations. The assessment found that there was potential for adverse impacts relating to gender and intersectionality. These concerns have been addressed through the proposed Policy updates and how the Policy is implemented. Two key changes included the ability to provide additional landfill and recycling services to eligible premises and for the Manager Environment and Emergency to have discretion on the allocation of these additional services.

Internal / External Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with internal stakeholders to review the policy and prepare the Gender Impact Assessment.

Councillors were notified of the Policy review at a briefing and feedback from community has been obtained during the roll-out of the purple-bin (glass bin) fleet.

Council officers have also been involved in ongoing community consultation regarding service improvements while working with customers to address specific issues.

Financial and Resource Implications

The proposed policy amendments will have a neutral impact on Council's budget and resourcing. The kerbside collection service is provided with revenue generated from the garbage charge applied to properties within the kerbside collection areas.

Options

Council may decide to adopt the Policy, with or without amendments, or defer a decision on the Policy until further amendments are made.

Conclusions

The Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy is due for review. Several amendments were made to this policy to align with the new services and directions from government and provide clearer guidelines on the kerbside collection service for the community and Council officers.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.4

That Council:

1. **Revoke the Kerbside Garbage, Recyclables and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy dated May 2015; and**
2. **Adopt the Kerbside Landfill, Recyclables, Glass and Food Organics and Garden Organics Collection Policy 2024 dated June 2024.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jamie Vogels
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.5 Special Rates and Charges Policy Review

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: John Kelly, Manager Assets Planning

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Policy Council Special Rates and Charges June 2024 [9.5.1 - 8 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Policy Council Special Rates and Charges June 2024 with Tracked Changes [9.5.2 - 8 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – John Kelly

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Assets Planning, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The Special Rates and Charges Policy outlines Council's process for raising contributions from property owners who receive special benefit from infrastructure improvements. The policy has been reviewed and updated and is recommended for adoption.

Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to establish a strategic framework for the application of the "user pays" principle and to ensure a fair and equitable basis to levying a special rate and/or charge.

The principle of "user pays" allows councils to retain the ability to recover reasonable contributions from people who will derive special benefits from particular works or services. The result is that these special benefits do not need to be subsidised by general ratepayers.

The Special Rates and Charges Policy sets out how Council implements Special Charge Schemes in a reasonable and consistent manner.

Issues

The current Special Rates and Charges Policy was adopted by Council on 29 June 2021 and is due for review.

The key aspects proposed in the attached updated policy include:

- A Special Charge Scheme will continue to apply in circumstances where there is an upgrade or an expansion to infrastructure such as kerb and channel, footpaths and urban road reconstructions.
- The extent of Council contribution to the total cost of a Special Charge Scheme will continue to depend on the benefit of the infrastructure upgrade to the wider community compared with the special benefits to specific property owners.
- The minimum Council contribution to the total cost of a Special Charge Scheme will remain at 35%.
- Consultation for a Special Charge Scheme will continue to include an initial written survey and/or an onsite meeting with benefitting property owners when it is yet to be ascertained whether or not there is support from owners to the scheme.
- The consultation process as a minimum is to be in accordance with requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2020*. A flowchart stepping out this statutory process is included in the policy to assist Council officers in complying with the requirements.
- A Special Charge Scheme will continue to come into effect when the total project cost is \$15,000 or greater.
- Dust suppression works are exempt from Special Charge Schemes and are addressed separately by Council's Dust Suppression Policy

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Corangamite's townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Under Section 163 of *The Local Government Act 1989* Council is permitted to declare a special charge, for the performance of a function, where ratepayers will receive a special and specific benefit from works or services delivered.

Council implements special charge schemes in accordance with the Special Rates and Charges Ministerial Guidelines prepared by Local Government Victoria in September 2004.

Internal / External Consultation

Community consultation and participation plays an important part in the development of projects subject to Special Charge Schemes.

Current Council practice for commencing engagement with the owners benefitting from the improvement projects is to forward to them a written survey seeking their comments on the proposal. An onsite meeting may also be held between Councillors, Council officers and the owners to discuss the proposal further. Generally, the process for implementing the scheme will only be continued if there is significant support from the property owners.

If the process for implementing the scheme continues, consultation is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Steps taken in the statutory process for the scheme are:

- Placing a public notice in a local paper advising of the intention to declare the special charge scheme and inviting submissions for the next 28 days.
- Providing a letter and a copy of the public notice to owners involved in the scheme within three working days of the publication.
- 28 days after publication of the public notice, a report including submissions received from the public is prepared and put to Council for consideration.
- Council then makes a declaration or otherwise on the special charge scheme.
- Scheme contributors are advised of Council's decision. Levy notices are sent to the contributors if the scheme is declared.
- Aggrieved contributors are given 30 days to object to VCAT regarding the proposal.
- If no objections are received, construction of works may commence.
- Once works are completed and costs finalised, invoices are forwarded to contributors for payment.

If Council proposes to contribute an amount equal to or greater than 50% of the proposed scheme's total cost, it may declare the scheme without considering objections.

Financial and Resource Implications

Given the administrative cost associated with a special charge scheme, Council's current policy is that projects under \$15,000 in costs do not invoke a scheme.

Also Council's current policy is that it will contribute a minimum of 35% towards the total cost of a special charge scheme, with the benefitting property owners contributing the remainder of costs.

The percentage of Council contribution to a scheme is determined from the ratio between the estimated community benefits of a project and estimated special benefits to abutting property owners. Examples of this are as follows:

- The construction of a footpath leading to a school, hospital or shopping strip may have a high community benefit. Council contribution could be 75% and property owners' contribution could be 25%.
- The sealing of a "no through" road within a cul-de-sac has minimal benefit to the community. Council's contribution to the scheme would be the minimum 35% and the benefitting property owner's contribution would be 65% in accordance with the policy.

Council officers use the steps set out in the previously referred Special Rates and Charges Ministerial Guidelines in determining the benefit ratios for the schemes.

Council ensures that the apportionment of costs between benefitting property owners is fair and equitable. The apportionment of costs may be determined from a variety of scenarios including:

- an equal split of the cost between lots
- apportionment based on the frontage length of lots
- a combination of apportionment methods.

In the instance where a property located on a corner is included in a special charge scheme the apportionment of this property may be based on the lesser of the property's frontage and sideage length. This takes into consideration that the property may be incorporated in the schemes of two separate streets.

Contributors have an option to pay in full within 30 days of receiving an invoice or pay 20 instalments over five years with an added rate of interest linked to the official Cash Rate (as listed by the Reserve Bank of Australia) plus 1%. Differing payment arrangements may be considered for special circumstances.

Options

Council can opt to adopt the Special Rates and Charges Policy as proposed or choose to make amendments to the policy.

Conclusions

The proposed policy provides confirmation of Council's process for raising contributions from property owners who receive special benefit from infrastructure improvements.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.5

That Council:

- 1. Revokes all previous Special Rates and Charges policies.**
- 2. Adopts the Special Rates and Charges Policy dated June 2024.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.6 South West Councils ICT Alliance Joint Venture Extension

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services
Author: David Harrington, Director Corporate and Community Services
Previous Council Reference: Nil
Attachments: 1. Under Separate Cover - South West Councils ICT Alliance Joint Venture Agreement [9.6.1 - 49 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – David Harrington

In providing this advice to Council as the Director Corporate and Community Services, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The report recommends Corangamite Shire Council affirm participation in the South West Councils Information Communication Technology (ICT) Alliance as required by the existing (October 2022) Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) and extend participation for the specified term of 5 years.

In October 2022 the three councils of Corangamite, Moyne and Warrnambool formalised the shared service alliance by adopting a JVA. The adoption of the JVA set the mechanisms by which the three councils could work and plan together and resolve any issues related to the operation of this shared services venture.

The establishment of the JVA facilitated participation in the Local Government Victoria's Rural Council Transformation Program (RCTP). The alliance received \$4,500,000 under this program to deliver the specified business case, which included an integrated shared service Enterprise Resource Platform (ERP).

The JVA, which is attached under separate cover, requires that the three councils affirm their participation at least 12 months before the original term's expiry (Clause 2.2), being June 2025.

Introduction

Corangamite Shire, Moyne Shire and Warrnambool City were successful in securing a State Government grant of \$4.5 million in June 2019 under the State Government's Rural Councils Transformation Program (RCTP) to implement a business case covering 5 years to transition the respective Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform of each council into a shared service model. An ERP is the corporate digital platform that delivers the core business information systems of an organisation.

A key component of securing this funding was the establishment of a Joint Venture, the South West Councils ICT Alliance.

Under the South West Councils ICT Alliance Joint Venture Agreement, now known as Coastal Connect and adopted in October 2022, the three councils agreed that (clause C) the Joint Venture is:

- "C1. An ongoing program that the councils commenced prior to this Agreement, and
- C2. Is, at the time of this Agreement is intended to operate for a period of around 5 years and is intended as a program that works towards delivering a shared Enterprise Resource Planning platform across the councils."

Issues

In order for this Agreement to extend beyond the initial period which expires on 30 June 2025 (under Clause 2.2), each of the three joint venture councils need to resolve by 30 June 2024 whether they wish to extend the current agreement for a period of five years after its initial expiry date of 30 June 2025.

The operations of the South West Councils ICT Alliance (Coastal Connect) are managed by the Joint Venture Governance Committee (JVGC) established as required by the Joint Venture Agreement. The membership of this Committee is the CEO and Director of Corporate Services at each Council, plus an independent Chair, a governance advisor, and the project team.

The benefits arising from the initial agreement were set out to be:

- Significant cost saving from economies of scale by being part of the larger Information Technology (IT) implementation.
- Improvements arising from the implementation of up-to-date cloud-based software including more secure platforms with better cyber-security and elimination of a range of manual and less integrated processes.
- Increased staff engagement with, and understanding of the new software
- Opportunity for improvements to the community engagement and customer service experiences through more flexible on-line responses
- Reduced back-end costs and enhanced productivity through reduction of duplicated processes.

- Ability to share knowledge and resources with other Councils in the joint venture leading to more agile and elegant solutions.

A Joint Venture Governance Committee (JVGC) has been established with the power and responsibility for the operation of the Joint Venture to enable the performance of its functions and to achieve its purpose in accordance with the JVA (Clause 5.2.1).

The Council has previously appointed the following members to the JVGC:

- The Chief Executive Officer
- The Director Corporate and Community Services

There is no change to these appointments with the consideration of the JVA extension.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices
Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position
Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Internal / External Consultation

The project has actively involved internal stakeholders across the three councils since its inception. A communication strategy was developed to ensure consistent consultation and engagement with staff. The strategy identifies the key stakeholders, the communication channels, the frequency and the key messages.

The communication strategy is designed as a live document, allowing for continuous adaptation. Feedback from council staff is incorporated, ensuring the strategy remains responsive to the evolving needs of the project and its stakeholders.

The project has implemented strong governance controls which include:

- Joint Venture Governance Committee (across the councils)
- Project Control Group (across the councils)
- Project Control Group (Corangamite Shire Council)

The extension of the Joint Venture Agreement was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee during their June 2024 meeting. Following their review, the Committee recommended that Council approve the extension.

Financial and Resource Implications

A business case was provided to the funding body Local Government Victoria via their Rural Council Transformation Program. This business case was approved and funding of \$4,500,000 provided for the delivery of the outcomes by the established Joint Venture.

The business case concluded in a shared service environment that a positive Net Present Value of \$73,247 is achieved across the five-year project timeline. The benefits are detailed in the funded business case and extend over the five-year period.

All contributions to the on-going operations and activities of the Joint Venture are governed by the individual Councils business-as-usual annual budget process. This is a requirement of Clause 6.2 of the Joint Venture Agreement and ensures compliance with Individual Councils' processes.

Corangamite Shire's minimum commitment to extending the Joint Venture Agreement includes covering the cost of Technology One license fees and funding the agreed-upon core services. These services may encompass modifications or enhancements to the shared platform. These costs have been incorporated into Council's budget for 2024-2025 and its long-term financial plan.

Options

Council may or may not choose to extend the South West Councils ICT Alliance Joint Venture Agreement.

Conclusions

The South West Councils ICT Alliance Joint Venture is a key component for the delivery of the funded business case and the achievement of the benefits documented.

RECOMMENDATION - {item-noext}

That Council:

- 1. Under Clause 2.2 of the Agreement, authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Agree in writing to the Joint Venture Governance Committee and to the other two participating Councils to the extension of the Joint Venture Agreement for a further five years to June 2030.**
 - b) Exercise Council's rights and powers under the Joint Venture Agreement on Council's behalf.****

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Jo Beard
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.7 Contract 2024005 Panel Consultancy Services

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Justine Linley, Director Sustainable Development

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - 2024005 Panel of Consultancy Services [9.7.1 - 5 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Evaluation Table Consultancy Panel [9.7.2 - 3 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Justine Linley

In providing this advice to Council as the Director Sustainable Development, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to award Contract 2024005, Provision of Consultancy Services (Panel Contract) for a two-year period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026.

Introduction

Council has undertaken a tender process to engage a panel of suitable contractors/consultants for the provision of Consultancy Services.

Categories of service provision may include, but be limited to the following:

1. Legal Services
2. Registered Building Architects
3. Landscape Architects
4. Quantity Surveyors
5. Engineers –
 - Civil
 - Mechanical
 - Structural
 - Environmental
 - Geotechnical
 - Landfill
 - Climate Change
6. Landfill related services
 - Auditing
 - Design
 - CQA
 - EMPs
 - Rehabilitation designs
 - Hydrogeological
7. Land Surveyors
8. Environmental monitoring services
 - Water
 - Air
 - Dust
 - Noise
9. Town Planning
 - Open space
 - Heritage Advisors
 - Heritage Architects
 - Transport Planners
 - Urban and Public Realm Designers
10. Economic and Community Development
 - Economists
 - Placemakers
 - Community Engagement
 - Videographers
 - Marketers and Promoters
 - Advocacy and Lobbying services
 - Visual Recorders
 - Demographers
 - Statisticians
 - Agricultural and Agribusiness analysts
 - Small Business Advisors

Issues

The tender document was released through Eprocure to all registered suppliers and was publicly advertised in the Herald Sun on 13 March 2024.

Ninety eight (98) tender submissions were received via Eprocure and were released to the assessment panel after the closing date on 10 April 2024.

On review and evaluation of the submissions it is proposed that multiple contractors/consultants be appointed to the Panel under the 10 categories outlined in the tender brief.

An Evaluation Report provides an assessment of the tender submissions and is provided under separate cover.

Recommended contractors will form a panel of suppliers whereby Council may undertake a secondary procurement process, based on the requirements of the work being proposed to be undertaken. It should be noted that no work is guaranteed to any contractor under this tender.

This Contract commences on 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026 and is for a period of 2 years. The Contract will be a schedule of rates contract, paid on an agreed hourly rate.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Infrastructure and services that deliver population growth and new housing

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Protecting and improving our built and natural environment

Helping our community plan and respond to climate change

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

The tender was advertised and the evaluation conducted in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy 2021.

Internal / External Consultation

An evaluation panel was established to assess the submissions against the evaluation criteria.

Each member of the panel who conducted the evaluation was considered to have appropriate experience to undertake the evaluation.

Financial and Resource Implications

Services to be provided under this contract are incorporated in Council's budget allocations in each budget year. The best value for Council is not always necessarily reflected by the lowest price.

Options

Council may choose to award the Contract (Panel) to the recommended contractors/consultants or decline to award.

Conclusions

Council has invited tenders from suitably experienced and qualified consultancies/contractors. Ninety-eight (98) submissions were received through this process and seventy-one (71) have been assessed as suitable for inclusion in the Panel across ten categories.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.7

That Council awards Contract 2024005, Provision of Consultancy Services (Panel Contract) for a two-year period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026 by letter of award to the following contractors:

Reference	Tenderer
1	Hurcon
3	Glen Rundell Consulting
5	JJR Consulting
6	Thompson Berrill Landscape
7	Slattery
8	SMEC
9	Currie and Brown
10	Emerge Associates
12	Ratio Consultants
15	Partnear
16	Maker Eng
17	K20 Architecture
18	Fraser Design Collaborative
19	CoFutures
20	Mesh Liveable Urban Communities
21	Presna
22	Four18
23	AEC Group
24	Dock4
25	PT Tomkinson
26	Bajwa Consulting
27	Peter Wright and Associates
28	FMG Engineering
29	TRACT
31	GroupGSA
32	Ethos Urban
34	Hansen Partnership
36	Engeny
37	RLW
38	Russell Kennedy Lawyers
39	ST Surveyors
40	Kelly Architects
41	Trenchless
43	Traffix Group
44	Planology
45	Spiire
46	Transect Planning

47	Zinc Cost Management
48	Hunt and Hunt Lawyers
49	Saba Civil Management
50	BCBA
52	Turner Townsend
53	Measured Pty Ltd
55	Architecture Matters
58	HWL Ebsworth
59	Head and Humphrys
60	Stantec
61	One Mile Grid
62	Extent Heritage
64	Justin Staggard
65	Hamilton Survey Group
66	Dartmouth
70	Optimum Migilic McLeod
73	Haskell Architects
74	Beveridge Williams
75	Pardo
77	DP Planning
78	Marcus Lane Group
79	WSP Group
81	Landserv Environment
84	Plico Design Studio
85	Berkowitz and Associates
86	AA Roadmaint Consulting Pty Ltd
87	Gestalt Engineers
88	Tetra Tech Coffey
89	Tony McGann
91	Loetis
93	McIntosh Planning
94	Conway Planning
95	AER Consulting
96	Planit Consulting

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.8 Contract 2025006 for Long Term Dozer Hire for Landfill

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Sumitt Mittal, Landfill Projects Engineer

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Tender Evaluation Report
2025006 [9.8.1 - 10 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular the attachment contains information regarding pricing and technical information relating to tender submissions.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Sumitt Mittal

In providing this advice to Council as the Landfill Projects Engineer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider awarding Contract 2025006 for Long Term Dozer Hire, Corangamite Regional Landfill, Corangamite Shire.

Introduction

The waste specific dozer is required to undertake construction and waste management tasks at Corangamite Regional Landfill including but not limited to performing the following tasks:

- Movement and placement of waste and compost material.
- Haul road construction and maintenance.
- Excavation and movement of material to design levels and grades.
- Construction and maintenance of Landfill cells.

The tender specifically relates to the dry hire of a dozer fitted with waste management guarding and blade with optional GPS capabilities. This specialised equipment enables Council to continue to manage its waste facility at Naroghid without potential disruption or non-compliance with EPA regulations. This equipment is not currently offered on Council's Plant Hire Contracts. Council does not own a piece of equipment capable of undertaking the works that are required at the Landfill.

The successful tenderer will be required to supply a dozer for use at the Corangamite Regional Landfill, which includes all associated servicing and maintenance for a five-year period. It is anticipated that the annual usage rate will be at least 2250hrs-2500hrs (43-48 hours per week).

When considering the current construction and other works required at the Landfill, it is anticipated that there will be a far greater workload required for the dozer in this new contract period.

The term of the contract will be for up to five years with an option to extend the contract for a further five year term.

Issues

Tenders were sought from heavy equipment plant hire companies for the long-term hire of a dozer, as specified in the tender document. This included the supply and maintenance of a dozer equipped to work in an operating landfill environment.

Council received eleven tender submissions for "Long Term Dozer Hire, Corangamite Regional Landfill, Corangamite Shire".

Two tenders, tenderer-9 and tenderer-10 have been assessed as non-conforming tenders and were not considered in the tender evaluation.

The remaining nine tender submissions were assessed by a tender evaluation panel that included Lyall Bond – Manager Emergency and Environment; Malcolm Lewis, Senior Accountant and Sumitt Mittal, Landfill Project Engineer.

The tenders were assessed against the following tender evaluation criteria with the associated weightings applied:

- Pricing (Value for money) (40%)
- Meet Specifications (20%)
- Demonstration of Environment and sustainability consideration (10%)
- After Delivery Servicing (25%)
- Local content (5%).

The tender submission from William Adams CAT Rental Services was ranked highest overall in the assessment process. The assessment details for each of the eleven submissions are detailed in the Tender Evaluation Report attached under separate cover.

The William Adams CAT Rental Services tender price for five-year term was \$1,144,000 including GST and including monthly standard maintenance and servicing. Their tender submission offers Council value for money and the offered plant is new with specifications suitable for landfill works and waste handling. The company also has the capability to provide after delivery service and maintenance.

The William Adams CAT Rental Services submission provides Council with confidence in their ability to meet the requirements and specification. As they are providing a new machine, this aspect will minimise the downtimes, operation and maintenance costs.

William Adams CAT Rental Services scored highest during the evaluation of the tender submissions:

Contractor		Total Score Out of 100
1	Tenderer - 1	57.05
2	William Adams Pty Ltd (Tenderer – 2)	75.07
3	Tenderer - 3	52.29
4	Tenderer - 4	54.94
5	Tenderer - 5	72.56
6	Tenderer - 6	59.42
7	Tenderer - 7	66.72
8	Tenderer - 8	65.33
9	Tenderer - 11	48.39

Based on this assessment, the tender evaluation panel recommends that Council award Contract 2025006: Long Term Dozer Hire, Corangamite Regional Landfill, Corangamite Shire to William Adams CAT Rental Services.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Providing high quality waste services, including sustainable management of the regional landfill at Naroghid

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

The tender process and awarding of this contract, is in accordance with the requirements of Council's procurement policy.

Internal / External Consultation

This tender was advertised on 24 April 2024 in the Herald Sun newspaper and eProcure with a closing date of 09 May 2024.

Financial and Resource Implications

Prior to commencing the tender process, an assessment was undertaken to determine if purchasing a landfill specific dozer and undertaking maintenance in-house would provide increased value for money for Council. The review determined that at this point in time hiring a dozer with maintenance included, was the more cost effective option for Council.

Budgeting for these works is included as part of the annual budget process. The price of the proposed works falls within the available budget allocated.

As the Corangamite Regional Landfill operates as a cost-recovery business, all expenditure associated with this contract will be funded through the facility's user fees.

The total estimated spend for this contract will be \$1,144,000 including GST, over the 60-month term of the contract. There is provision for a further extension period at the discretion of Council, which can be considered during the first contract period.

Options

Council may decide to award Contract 2025006 to William Adams CAT Rental Services as recommended by the tender evaluation panel.

Alternatively, Council may decide to award the contract to another tenderer with consideration to the tender evaluation criteria.

Council may also decide to re-advertise the tender.

Conclusion

Council advertised for tender submissions for Long Term Dozer Hire at the Corangamite Regional Landfill. Council received eleven tender submissions, out of which two tenders were non-conforming and were not considered in the tender evaluation.

The tender evaluation panel recommends that Council award Contract 2025006: Long Term Dozer Hire, Corangamite Regional Landfill, Corangamite Shire to William Adams CAT Rental Services. This contractor offers Council value for money and the proposed plant item is new, has specifications suitable to landfill works and waste handling. The company also has the capability to provide efficient after-delivery servicing and maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.8

That Council:

- 1. Award Contract 2025006: Long Term Dozer Hire, Corangamite Regional Landfill to William Adams CAT Rental Services for the sum of \$1,144,000 including GST, which includes monthly standard maintenance and servicing for a term of five years, with an expected usage rate of between 2,250 and 2,500 hours per year.**
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to approve variations for up to 20% of this contract sum, in accordance with the contract terms, Council's Procurement Policy and within budget.**
- 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the William Adams CAT Rental Services Rental Agreement and if required, affix the Common Seal of Council.**
- 4. Delegates to the CEO approval to enter into a five (5) year extension of this contract subject to satisfactory completion of the initial five (5) year contract term.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole
Seconded: Cr Geraldine Conheady

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.9 Contract 2025001 - Provision of Electrical Services 2024

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Jane Hinds, Sports and Recreation Coordinator

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Provision of Electrical Services Technical Evaluation Report June 2024 Contract 2025001 FINAL [9.9.1 - 4 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the attachment contains information regarding the commercial pricing and terms of the submitted tenderers.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Jane Hinds

In providing this advice to Council as the Sports and Recreation Coordinator, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to award Contract 2025001 for the provision of electrical services to the Corangamite Shire for a three-year period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.

Introduction

Council has undertaken a tender process for electrical contractors to provide electrical services to the Shire. The contracts detail hourly rates, out of hours rates and travel costs that assist Council officers in determining best value for money when arranging maintenance and upgrade works.

Generally, contractors are awarded work based on considerations of location, urgency of works, nature of works and contractor availability following a secondary procurement process in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

This contract relates to all maintenance electrical work procured by Council. In accordance with Councils Procurement Policy, quotations are sought for major works and projects to ensure best value for Council.

Issues

Council has tendered for the provision of electrical services at Council facilities. The contract requested tenderers to submit an hourly rate to perform the required duties, which is inclusive of wages and travel costs. This has provided Council with information to undertake an evaluation of contractors who have submitted to undertake the works.

The works are to be contracted over a three (3) year period.

Five submissions were received from experienced and qualified tradespeople in the electrical industry.

An evaluation was undertaken by a panel with each of the evaluation criteria scored in accordance with the relevant weighting by each panel member. A panel meeting was held to validate the evaluations, aggregate the scores, and provide a recommendation of award for Council decision.

Tenderer	Evaluation Score	Recommendation
CW Electrical	75.33	Recommended
Dickinson Electrical / KMS	60.33	Recommended
Hickey Electrical	67.00	Recommended
Hillec Electrical Services	77.00	Recommended
Murfett and Whiting Electrical	67.00	Recommended

The financial benefit to Council was measured by the estimated cost of a one hour job undertaken by each contractor, both during business hours and out of hours incorporating travel to and from the job from the contractor’s office base. The tendered rates were also compared to the previous electrical contract.

The attached Technical Evaluation Report provides a detailed assessment of the tender submissions.

On review of the submissions it is proposed that by appointing multiple contractors across a broad geographic base within the Shire, that works will be completed efficiently and economically for Council.

Projects of reasonable scale will be subject to a three quote process and contractors will be invited to quote on these in accordance with Council’s Procurement Policy.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Internal / External Consultation

An evaluation panel was established to assess the submissions against the evaluation criteria.

Each member of the panel who conducted the evaluation was considered to have appropriate experience to undertake the evaluation.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the tender was advertised in Western District Newspapers, The Warrnambool Standard and E-procure.

Financial and Resource Implications

Works under this contract are incorporated in Council's recurrent budget allocations for maintenance or minor improvement allocations in each budget year.

The best value for Council is not always necessarily reflected by the lowest price.

Best value can also be achieved by procuring from a contractor who may have a higher hourly rate or travel cost but who is intimately aware of the facility or property and/or the specific issue and may be able to deliver the works in a timelier manner. Council officers will allocate works based on the cost to Council, location, urgency, nature of works (other than urgent works) and contractor availability.

Options

Council can award the Contract to multiple contractors or may choose to use a single contractor across the Shire.

Conclusions

Council has invited tenders from suitably experienced and qualified contractors for the electrical services contract. Five submissions were received through this process, all with high levels of experience, services offered and financial benefit to Council.

Following an evaluation of tenders received, it is proposed the best outcome and financial benefit for Council is achieved by awarding the contract to multiple contractors.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.9

That Council;

- 1. Awards contract 2025001 Provision of Electrical Services for the period of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027 by letter of award to the following contractors by letter of award:**
 - **CW Electrical**
 - **Dickinson Electrical / KMS**
 - **Hickey Electrical**
 - **Hillec Electrical Services**
 - **Murfett and Whiting Electrical**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.10 Contract 2025002 - Provision of Plumbing Services 2024

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Jane Hinds, Sports and Recreation Coordinator

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Provision of Plumbing Services Technical Evaluation Report June 2024 Contract 2025002 FINAL [9.10.1 - 4 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the attachment contains information regarding the commercial pricing and terms of the submitted tenderers.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Jane Hinds

In providing this advice to Council as the Sports and Recreation Coordinator, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to award contract 2025002 for the provision of plumbing services to the Corangamite Shire for a three-year period from 1 July 2024 to June 2027.

Introduction

Council has undertaken a tender process for plumbing contractors to provide plumbing services to the Shire. The contracts detail fixed price hourly rates, out of hours rates and travel costs for the term of the contract that assist Council officers in determining best value for money when arranging maintenance and upgrade works.

Generally, contractors are awarded work based on considerations of location, urgency of works, nature of works and contractor availability following a secondary procurement process in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

This contract will be for all maintenance plumbing work procured by Council. In accordance with Council’s Procurement Policy, quotations are sought for major works and projects to ensure best value for Council.

Issues

Council has tendered for the provision of plumbing services at Council facilities. The contract requested tenderers to submit an hourly rate to perform the required duties, which is inclusive of wages and travel costs. This has provided Council with information to undertake an evaluation of contractors who have submitted to undertake the works.

The works are to be contracted over a three (3) year period.

Five submissions were received from experienced and qualified tradespeople in the plumbing industry.

An evaluation was undertaken by a panel with each of the evaluation criteria scored in accordance with the relevant weighting by each panel member. A panel meeting was held to validate the evaluations, aggregate the scores, and provide a recommendation of award for Council decision.

Tenderer	Evaluation Score	Recommendation
Dutton Plumbing	54	Recommended
Poole Plumbing	75	Recommended
Molan Plumbing and Civil	80	Recommended
Warrnambool Emergency Plumbing	57	Recommended
Sargeant Plumbing	67	Recommended

The financial benefit to Council was measured by the estimated cost of a one hour job undertaken by each contractor, both during hours and out of hours and incorporating travel to and from the job from the contractor’s office base. The tendered rates were compared to the previous contract.

The attached Technical Evaluation Report provides a detailed assessment of the tender submissions.

On review of the submissions it is proposed that by appointing multiple contractors across a broad geographic base within the Shire, works will be completed efficiently and economically for Council.

Projects of reasonable scale will be subject to a three quote process and contractors will be invited to quote on these in line with Council’s Procurement Policy.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Internal / External Consultation

An evaluation panel was established to assess the submissions against the evaluation criteria.

Each member of the panel who conducted the evaluation was considered to have appropriate experience to undertake the evaluation.

In accordance with the Local Government Act, the tender was advertised in Western District Newspapers, The Warrnambool Standard and E-procure.

Financial and Resource Implications

Works under this contract are incorporated in Council's recurrent budget allocations for maintenance or minor improvement allocations in each budget year.

The best value for Council is not always necessarily reflected by the lowest price.

Best value can also be achieved by procuring from a contractor who may have a higher hourly rate or travel cost but who is intimately aware of the facility or property and/or the specific issue and may be able to deliver the works in a timelier manner. Council officers should allocate works based on the cost to Council, location, urgency, nature of works (other than urgent works) and contractor availability.

Options

Council can award the Contract to multiple contractors or may choose to use a single contractor across the Shire.

Conclusions

Council has invited tenders from suitably experienced and qualified contractors for the plumbing services contract. Five submissions were received through this process, all with high levels of experience, services offered and financial benefit to Council.

Following an evaluation of tenders received, it is proposed the best outcome and financial benefit for Council is achieved by awarding the contract to multiple contractors.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.10

That Council awards contract 2025002 Provision of Plumbing Services for the period of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027 by letter of award to the following contractors:

- **Dutton Plumbing**
- **Poole Plumbing**
- **Molan Plumbing and Civil**
- **Warrnambool Emergency Plumbing**
- **Sargeant Plumbing**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.11 Contract 2025004 - Supply and Loading or Supply and Delivery of Roadmaking Materials

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Pulkit Pahwa, Projects Engineer

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - Technical Evaluation Report - 2025004 - Supply and Loading or Supply and Deli [9.11.1 - 6 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Schedule of Rates - Internal [9.11.2 - 7 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Pulkit Pahwa

In providing this advice to Council as the Projects Engineer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report seeks Council approval for the award of Contract 2025004 Supply and Loading or Supply and Delivery of Road Making Materials for a period of 2 years, commencing 1 July 2025 and expiring 30 June 2027.

Introduction

The Corangamite Shire road network consists of approximately 915km of sealed roads and 1,228km of unsealed roads across an area of 4,400 square kilometres. An extensive construction and maintenance program for the road network is developed annually and the supply of road making materials from external suppliers is critical in the delivery of the annual road program across the Shire.

Issues

The Corangamite Shire does not own or operate any quarries and therefore requires the supply of roadmaking materials from external suppliers to deliver Council's annual road program. Council's current contract for Supply and Loading of Roadmaking Materials is due to expire on the 30 June 2024.

Tender submissions were sought for Contract 2025004 Supply and Loading or Supply and Delivery of Road Making Materials from registered quarries. The tender was advertised through Eprocure and Warrnambool Standard newspaper during the month of April with a closing date of 06 May 2024.

Eight tender submissions were received for this Contract. Five out of eight suppliers have supplied roadmaking materials to the Shire previously. Five of the tender submissions were on the previous Contract list for 2022-2024. All tender submissions were assessed against the evaluation criteria.

Tender Evaluation Criteria:

	Weighting %
(a) Tendered Price	50%
(b) Compliance with Specification	20%
(c) Quality of Product	20%
(d) Availability of Product	5%
(e) Local Content	5%

As the area of the Shire is extensive, the supply of a variety of materials across multiple locations is critical to ensure cost-effective, high-quality delivery of projects to the designed scope and budget. Further, it is important to ensure that all suitable submissions are accepted for this specific Contract to allow council staff the option to evaluate and select a variety of suppliers and materials to be utilised across the Shire which are best suited on individual projects.

Whilst multiple tenderers are recommended for inclusion in the contract, it is important to note that preferred suppliers will be determined on an individual project basis to meet the material properties outlined in the design.

Vic Roads Classified materials were specifically requested in the tender specification. Material properties and standards were included in the specification to ensure materials met Vic Roads classifications. Other materials which did not meet the specified criteria and not Vic Roads classified were permitted as part of the tenderer's submission.

There is a diverse range of materials offered by each of the tenderers. After a detailed evaluation of all tenders, the assessment panel have recommended that seven tenders be accepted under Contract 2025004.

One tender is not recommended due to material rates that are almost 150% higher when compared to the rates of similar material supplied by other suppliers. This supplier does not offer any benefit in terms of cost and material quality when compared to local suppliers.

A pricing structure will be considered at the time of procuring materials for each project to ensure best value for Council.

Tenderer	Evaluation Score	Recommendation
DE Quarry Solutions	70	Recommended
Green Valley Lime Co Pty Ltd	55	Recommended
Holcim Australia Pty Ltd	75	Recommended
Mibus Bros (Aust) Pty Ltd	60	Recommended
Moyne Shire Council	63	Recommended
RL Blake Pty Ltd	79	Recommended
Titan Willows T/As WA Molan and Sons Pty Ltd	82	Recommended
Tenderer 8	40	Not recommended

Policy and Legislative Context

The contract for the provision of supply and loading or supply and delivery of road making materials is advertised for all registered suppliers on Eprocure, as required by Council’s Procurement Policy and the *Local Government Act*, as it will involve cumulative purchases greater than \$250,000.

This report is also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Roads that are fit for purpose

Footpaths that provide access to key destinations in our towns

Infrastructure that enables industry and business growth

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Corangamite’s townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

Internal / External Consultation

The tender was released to all registered suppliers via Eprocure tendering portal.

The tender was advertised on Council website for more than 3 weeks in April.

Internal consultation was completed via the assessment of tenders by the Works and Services directorate with a direct interest in the contract. Each member of the panel had relevant, extensive experience and knowledge in the variety of materials, procurement policies and financial information provided in the submissions.

Financial and Resource Implications

Financial implications have been considered in the assessment of the tender submissions. On an average Council spends approximately \$2 million annually on the purchase of road making materials for its construction, re-sheeting and road maintenance works. An investigation into the rates provided by all tenderers concludes that the rates are relevant/reasonable and can be accommodated within the budgeted requirements of upcoming annual road programs. This conclusion is confirmed by a comparison of previous contract rates and consideration for relevant inflation rate which have occurred. A comparison of rates for suppliers included in the previous contract highlights an overall average increase in rates of 8%. However, it is noted that some rates have increased by a high margin of 10 -12% in comparison to the previous contract.

Resources provided in the tender submissions ensure that Council can meet the scope and design requirements of road projects, with most recommended suppliers having VicRoads classified materials available for purchase. There is sufficient variety of materials in the recommended tender submissions to complete all projects in the annual road program for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 financial years using VicRoads Classified materials. Not all submissions met the specified VicRoads standards and geotechnical tolerances for material properties. Tenderers have submitted other materials which do not meet the VicRoads specifications; however, these would offer sufficient flexibility and variety for projects other than roads.

Options

Council may choose to award the contract to all suppliers, the recommended suppliers or none of the suppliers.

If the Contract is awarded to all suppliers, Council will have the ability to choose the most suitable material and location for each individual project. However, there may be multiple suppliers on the Contract who will not be engaged for the supply of materials or for only a small quantity of materials over the period of the contract.

If the Contract is awarded to the recommended suppliers from evaluation, Council will have the ability to choose the most suitable material and location for each individual project whilst encouraging competitive rates.

If the Contract is not awarded to any of the tender suppliers, council will risk the supply of any materials to complete the upcoming road programs, resulting in significant dissatisfaction of relevant stakeholders including residents and rate payers in the Corangamite Shire.

Conclusions

All elements of Council's Procurement Policy were adhered to in this tender process. All tender submissions were received in accordance with the Procurement Policy, tender timeframes and offer a wide variety of materials for use in the upcoming road delivery programs. The assessment panel have concluded that seven submissions met the financial and resource requirements of the Contract and therefore seven submissions are recommended for acceptance for the upcoming two financial years.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.11

That Council;

Awards Contract 2025004 Supply and Loading or Supply and Delivery of Road Making Materials, by letter of award, to:

- **DE Quarry Solutions**
- **Green Valley Lime Co Pty Ltd**
- **Holcim Australia Pty Ltd**
- **Mibus Bros (Aust) Pty Ltd**
- **Moyne Shire Council**
- **RL Blake Pty Ltd**
- **Titan Willows T/As WA Molan and Sons Pty Ltd**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.12 Contract No 2025008: Consultancy Services for Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA) and Geotechnical Inspection and Testing Authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16 A & Cell 16 B) Construction Works, Corangamite Regional Landfill

Directorate: Sustainable Development
Author: Sumitt Mittal, Landfill Projects Engineer
Previous Council Reference: Nil
Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - 2025008 Technical Evaluation Report [9.12.1 - 6 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

- (i) relates to trade secrets; or
- (ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular the attachment contains information regarding supplier pricing and information which would not be publicly available outside of this tender process.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Sumitt Mittal

In providing this advice to Council as the Landfill Projects Engineer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider awarding Contract 2025008 for providing Consultancy Services for Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA) and Geotechnical Inspection and Testing Authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16A & Cell 16B) Construction Works at the Corangamite Regional Landfill, Naroghid.

Introduction

Council is planning to construct a new waste cell and it has been planned to construct it in two stages cell 16A and cell 16B. Each cell stage will have 2.7 years of airspace. Due to this, cell 16A will be constructed in 2024-2025 and cell 16B is expected to be constructed in 2026-27. Actual timelines will be finalised after the approval of the cell design by EPA.

Under EPA requirements, Council is required to appoint a Geotechnical Inspection Testing Authority (GITA) and Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) Inspector to inspect construction of landfill cells. Accordingly, Council is seeking to engage a suitably qualified and experienced consultant to provide the following services as CQA / GITA for the construction works of Cell 16 at the Corangamite Regional Landfill:

- (i) Pre-construction and construction compliance testing of clay material and other materials to be used in construction to demonstrate compliance with the EPA approved Technical Specification report and design.
- (ii) Geotechnical Inspection and Testing (GITA) services at LEVEL-1 Responsibility in accordance with the Section 8 of Australian Standard 3798-2007 (or any new, updated requirements) including all geotechnical testing of subgrade, compacted clay liner and any other required testing in compliance with the EPA approved Technical Specification report and design.
- (iii) Full-time Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA), testing for Geosynthetic component of the works and the construction of the Leachate Collection System and at other times, for construction of Cell 16 as outlined in EPA approved design, technical specification report and EPA publications.
- (iv) Provide all relevant details, reports in written form required for the construction process and compliance with the requirements of EPA approved technical specifications, designs, auditor or Council in a timely manner for satisfactory completion of work.

The successful consultant is required to have previous experience as GITA / CQA Auditor, undertaking inspection of the construction of landfill cells and liners. The successful consultant (GITA / CQA) is required to be, or be managed by, a GRI Certified CQA Geosynthetic and Compacted Clay Liner Inspector (GCI-ICP Certified Inspector). The successful consultant is also required to be NATA Accredited for the relevant test methods if undertaking in-situ, laboratory testing and laboratory testing of geosynthetic materials and is also required to liaise with auditors for all compliance.

The expected term of the contract will be from the award date until June 2028. The construction of Cell 16 will be undertaken in accordance with the final approvals from EPA.

Issues

Submissions were sought from experienced Consultants for providing consultancy services for construction quality assurance inspector (CQA) and geotechnical inspection and testing authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16A & Cell 16B) construction works at the Corangamite Regional Landfill, Naroghid.

The submission process was undertaken using the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Vendor Panel from a contract that was previously subject to a full tender process undertaken by MAV as a collaborative tender, on behalf of Victorian Local Government in accordance with section 108(3)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020. The contract is CL7700-2021 – Contaminated Land, Landfill and Environmental Audit Consultancy Services.

At the conclusion of the Vendor Panel submission period, Council received two submissions.

All submissions were assessed by a suitably qualified evaluation panel.

The submissions were assessed against the following evaluation criteria with the associated weightings applied:

- Value for money (30%)
- Capability (25%)
- Demonstration of Environment and sustainability consideration (10%)
- Technical Knowledge, Relevant Experience, Quality of Previous Performance (30%)
- Local content (5%).

The submission from Senversa Pty Ltd was ranked highest overall in the assessment process. The assessment details for each of the two submissions is detailed in the Technical Evaluation Report attached under separate cover.

The Senversa Pty Ltd quoted price was \$320,958 including GST and their submission offers the best service for Council. It is not the lowest price overall however the time allowances and service provided does provide Council with the best service offering. Senversa has the required and ongoing experience with landfills as GITA, CQA and previously demonstrated that they have the capability to execute the work to the satisfaction of Council.

The Senversa Pty Ltd submission provides Council with confidence in their ability to meet the requirements and a supporting schedule of rates for variation purposes as these works are highly variable and dependent on external factors including weather and earthworks, variations to the construction design and EPA requirements. The proposed works delivery strategy by Senversa Pty Ltd conforms with the technical specification.

Senversa Pty Ltd demonstrated relevant experience as CQA and GITA on landfills for construction of waste cells. Council has previously engaged Senversa Pty Ltd for landfill works at the Corangamite Regional Landfill and has been satisfied with the quality of work completed.

Senversa Pty Ltd scored highest overall during the evaluation of the submissions:

Contractor		Total Score Out of 100
1	Senversa Pty Ltd (Tenderer-1)	82.42
2	Tenderer-2	77.17

Based on this assessment, the evaluation panel recommends that Council award Contract 2025008 for providing Consultancy Services for Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA) and Geotechnical Inspection and Testing Authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16A & Cell 16B) Construction Works to Senversa Pty Ltd.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community
Infrastructure that enables industry and business growth

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment
Providing high quality waste services, including sustainable management of the regional landfill at Naroghid

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

The process and awarding of this contract, is in accordance with the requirements of Council's procurement policy.

Internal / External Consultation

Council sought submissions through a process undertaken by MAV. Submissions were lodged through the MAV Vendor Panel on 23 April 2024 with closing date of 15 May 2024.

In accordance with section 108(3)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council will first give consideration to collaboration with other Councils and public bodies or utilise Collaborative Procurement Arrangements, when procuring goods, services and works in order to take advantage of economies of scale. Accordingly, Council had sought submissions through a Vendor Panel established by MAV from a contract that was previously undertaken as a collaborative tender on behalf of Victorian Local Government. That contract is CL7700-2021 – Contaminated Land, Landfill and Environmental Audit Consultancy Services.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council has provided an allocation in the 2024-2025 Budget for the design, construction and operation of the new waste cell – Cell 16A & B. Construction of subgrade and bund walls of new waste cells (Cell 16A) is scheduled for late 2024/2025.

As the works span multiple financial years further cell construction allocations will be made as part of Council's annual budget process.

A schedule of rates has been included in tender submissions for variation purposes as these works are highly variable and require on site alterations to delivery.

Options

Council may decide to award Contract 2025008 to Senversa Pty Ltd Ltd as recommended by the evaluation panel.

Alternatively, Council may decide to award the contract to another tenderer with consideration to the evaluation criteria.

Council may also decide to re-advertise the tender.

Conclusions

Council sought submissions through a process undertaken by MAV through Vendor Panel for Contract 2025008 for providing Consultancy Services for Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA) and Geotechnical Inspection and Testing Authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16A & Cell 16B) Construction Works. The evaluation panel recommends that Council award Contract 2025008 to Senversa Pty Ltd. This contractor offers Council with the best service offering and has the required and ongoing experience with landfills as GITA, CQA and previously demonstrated that they have the capability to execute the work.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.12

That Council:

- 1) Award Contract 2025008 - Consultancy Services for Construction Quality Assurance Inspector (CQA) and Geotechnical Inspection and Testing Authority (GITA) for Cell 16 (Cell 16A & Cell 16B) Construction Works, Corangamite Regional Landfill to Senversa Pty Ltd for the sum of \$320,958 including GST.**
- 2) Authorise the Manager Environment and Emergency and CEO to approve variations in accordance with Council's procurement policy up to 20% of the total contract amount, the provided schedule of rates, CPI increases and within budget.**
- 3) Affixes the Common Seal of Council to the Contract.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.13 Supply One Motor Grader with Mast-less 3D GPS

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: Peter Rogers, Manager Works

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Motor Grader Technical Evaluation [9.13.1 - 5 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this report and its attachments as confidential on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular the attachment contains information regarding pricing and technical information relating to tender submissions.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Peter Rogers

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Works, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider awarding contract 2024006 for the purchase of one motor grader with 2D/3D GPS mast-less technology with attachment roller as part of the strategic capital plant renewal program.

Introduction

Council's road network is one of the largest and most expensive asset classes. This proposed new grader will replace an existing grader and complement the current fleet of heavy plant.

The grader is primarily for road construction works however can also be utilised for:

- Shoulder grading
- Gravel road re-sheeting
- Gravel road maintenance grading
- 4D road formation grading

An important element included in the specification was 2D/3D GPS mast-less technology. This component allows the use of advanced technology improving accuracy in road construction and ultimately reducing the cost of construction to Council through increased efficiency.

The tender was released through Vendorpanel in December 2023 in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Three submissions were received from three suppliers. An evaluation of tenders was undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Policy.

Issues

A panel of suitably qualified and experienced Council staff undertook a rigorous evaluation of all tenders.

An assessment of conformance and mandatory requirements deemed one tenderer non-conforming as they failed to meet the specification requirements for a mast-less 2D/3D GPS technology. A second tenderer did not submit a price.

The tenders were each assessed against the evaluation criteria:

Financial Benefit	50%
Reliability of plant, service and support	20%
Compliance with Conditions of Tendering and Specifications	15%
Warranty	10%
Timely Delivery	5%

Table 1 provides an aggregate of the scores for each tender submission against the criteria and with the applied weightings.

2024006	Financial Benefit (50%)	Proven Reliability & high levels of Support & Service (20%)	Compliance with Conditions of Tendering & Specifications (15%)	After Sales Service / Warranty (10%)	Timely Delivery (5%)	Total	Comments
Tenderer 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Did not Tender a Price
Tenderer 2	43.3	13.3	12	7.3	3.3	72.83	Does not meet specification with 3D Mast-less System
William Adams Pty Ltd	34.3	14.7	12	7.3	4.3	72.67	Met all required specifications

Table 1: Aggregate Scores

Williams Adams Pty Ltd demonstrated their capacity to deliver in an acceptable timeframe and the ability to meet the specification. A trade in offer for the existing P3000 Cat 12M grader was also received by Williams Adams Pty Ltd of \$140,000 ex GST.

Based on this assessment, the tender evaluation panel recommends that Council award Contract 2024006: supply and delivery of one motor grader to William Adams Pty Ltd.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community
Roads that are fit for purpose

The tender for the acquisition of a road grader and attachment roller was advertised and assessed in accordance with Council’s Procurement Policy.

Internal / External Consultation

An evaluation panel was established to assess the submissions against the evaluation criteria. Each member of the evaluation panel was considered to have appropriate experience in the appropriate field to undertake the evaluation. All panel members indicated there were no conflicts of interest to declare.

Financial and Resource Implications

Budgeting for heavy fleet replacement is included as part of the annual budget process. The preferred tender, William Adams Pty Ltd has tendered a purchase price of \$704,900 and trade in offer of \$140,000 ex GST.

This purchase cost can be accommodated within the existing 2023 - 2024 heavy fleet budget.

It is recommended options are evaluated for the disposal of the existing grader including trade in, auction and private sale to determine the most beneficial outcome for Council.

Options

Council may choose to award the Contract to Williams Adams Pty Ltd as recommended by the tender evaluation panel.

Alternatively, Council may decide to award the contract to another tenderer with consideration to the tender evaluation criteria.

Council may also decide to re-advertise the tender.

Conclusions

The tender has sought suitably experienced and qualified companies to supply a modern motor grader with 2D/3D GPS mast-less technology system with roller attachment. Three submissions were received, two submissions were evaluated and one was considered non-confirming. The evaluation panel recommends the best value outcome for Council will be achieved by awarding the Contract to William Adams Pty Ltd for the Caterpillar 140 Joy machine.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.13

That Council:

1. Award Contract 2024006 to William Adams Pty Ltd for the Caterpillar 140 JOY grader with Mast-less 2D/3D GPS and roller attachment for the sum of \$775,390 inc GST.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to determine the most beneficial option for Council for the disposal of the existing grader including trade in, auction or private sale.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Laurie Hickey
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.14 Victorian Transmission Investment Framework - Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Submission

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Aaron Moyne, Manager Planning and Building Services

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - Corangamite Shire Council Submission Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan 2024 [9.14.1 - 5 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - VicGrid Draft Community Benefits Plan 2024 [9.14.2 - 24 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Aaron Moyne

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Planning and Building Services, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

VicGrid has released the Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan (CBP) for public consultation until 25 June 2024. The CBP has been prepared to deliver benefits to communities hosting new transmission and renewable energy infrastructure across the State.

A draft Council submission has been prepared in response to the CBP for Council to consider its approval to submit as part of the consultation.

Introduction

The need for VicGrid to prepare the CBP has arisen from the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF), which identifies community engagement and benefits as one of its core principles.

The CBP has been informed by recent consultation undertaken by VicGrid via Engage Victoria in late-2023 and early-2024. In July 2022, Council also made a submission on the VTIF which identified the importance of targeted and genuine engagement with rural and regional communities, as an important component to Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) planning and development.

Preparation of the CBP precedes the first planned Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP), scheduled to be published in July 2025, along with strategic land use assessments (SLUA), to inform the identification and declaration of REZ within Victoria.

The CBP has been prepared to consider the creation of benefits for:

- Landholders
- Regional Communities
- Traditional Owners
- Significantly Impacted Neighbours

Legislation is planned to be introduced into the Victorian Parliament in early-2025 to give effect to proposed REZ community energy funds and payment regimes, with funding for host communities available once a REZ has been declared. The first REZ is scheduled for declaration after the VTP is published in mid-2025.

Issues

A draft Council submission has been prepared for consideration, provided under separate cover. The submission notes that recent public engagement undertaken by VicGrid has been poor, providing limited opportunity for community awareness and participation. Future engagement must be targeted to affected communities within or nearby a proposed REZ and should not just be aimed towards regional centres or metropolitan areas, which are not directly impacted by transmission or renewable energy infrastructure.

The submission notes that aspects of the CBP present a valuable opportunity to refine and establish community energy fund parameters, however, a significant shortfall of the CBP exists in it being released for consultation before any further work has been released on the VTP, REZ review and SLUA. This creates a high level of uncertainty and a 'cart before the horse' scenario', in terms of having clear understanding of appropriate REZ development locations.

The focus of the submission builds upon previous matters raised by Council regarding REZ planning and development, with a particular focus given to local communities in Corangamite Shire through the establishment of a community energy fund and its governance arrangements.

Missing Strategic Direction

The submission identifies that further clarification is required within the CBP as to when companies/developers are required to contribute to a community energy fund and what transitional arrangements exist for approved, proposed, under construction and operational projects. VicGrid needs to be clear around when and how a contribution is required into the community energy fund.

Without any current information on the VTP and future REZ locations, there is uncertainty around whether all future renewable energy generation must occur within a REZ and, if not, can projects still be approved outside these areas and will community funding obligations still apply?

Plans to establish REZ locations also raise questions around their location, development thresholds, infrastructure proposed and potential impacts on the community, environment and rural amenity, with the submission querying how this proportionality is factored into contributions and allocation.

The submission highlights Council's strategic focus and aim to prioritise agricultural production and processing, whilst managing loss and land use change of State and regionally significant farmland. Broad REZ identification currently exists in earlier strategic work by VicGrid and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), however, Council has no line of sight around how a REZ may apply within the Shire, its impacts and how to ensure community benefits are best structured for local benefit. This is likened to a 'Trojan Horse' analogy, with advantages and benefits being promoted without any awareness of what this means and what the future outcomes will be.

Before any CBP and community energy fund arrangements are finalised, strategic planning must occur via planned SLUA and within the VTP, to inform any proposed REZ identification and involve stakeholder engagement. A significant risk exists in promoting rural and regional benefits of future transmission and generation/storage without any awareness of potential impacts on rural communities.

Project Funding and Eligibility

The submission acknowledges the intent of the CBP to establish the community energy fund to direct contribution into energy supply, reliability, efficiency and affordability, along with creating other benefits into projects that build renewable energy supply chains, research, and innovation, or help attract investment. These are notable commitments.

Further clarification is required around eligibility requirements in relation to a REZ, as uncertainty exists around the application and definition of a REZ, who and what will be in or out in terms of eligibility criteria, and how preferential access or weighting is given to areas or communities that are directly impacted, as opposed to external locations or centres.

If a REZ were declared within or over part of Corangamite Shire, Council's focus would be to ensure that benefits and funding are kept locally, instead of being diverted to regional centres which are subject to low or negligible impacts.

The submission notes potential opportunities of contributory funding into projects such as the Camperdown Production Precinct (CPP), to support the delivery of a net-zero precinct and shared renewable energy outcomes, to promote development opportunities and investment attraction.

The CBP and community energy fund must also consider other opportunities, such as the investment into the upgrade of local electricity networks for residential and commercial growth, business modernisation and service delivery, and facilitation of power purchase agreements (PPA) to be obtained for townships, residential and business to offset direct electricity usage and costs or to build microgrid networks.

Importantly, the submission notes that the community energy funds need to be established to in a way which encourages and sets obligations on transmission companies and generation/storage developers to maintain ancillary community benefits funds which support local capital investment into community projects and initiatives, which lead to tangible and highly valuable outcomes at a grass roots level.

The submission also identifies the importance of retention of the Payment in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) framework established under the *Electricity Industry Act 2000* being retained, requesting that further consideration of an increase in both the payable fixed and variable rate components, as a result of localised project impacts on community and potential concentration within a declared REZ.

Funding Outcomes and Governance

The submission highlights that Council is firmly of the view that local impacts need to have local decisions and it is fundamental that local communities are involved in the allocation of community energy funds.

The submission notes the proposed two-pronged approach to funding; utilising community reference groups to identify and recommend funding opportunities; and a cross-government reference group providing decision making guidance. This approach seems logical provided clear criteria and a framework is established to guide decision making and monitor allocation and accountability.

The submission flags that the use of Regional Partnerships as the body to administer community energy funds is not appropriate or aligned with the best interest decision making of locals. Regional Partnership groups and membership should not be used as a vehicle to draw funding allocation away from a declared REZ and affected community,

It is therefore critical that any proposed community reference group makeup be provided with clear guidance through the CBP around eligibility criteria and award of funding, including proportionality of impacts and consideration of both short and long-term values.

As an alternative approach to Regional Partnerships, it is recommended that VicGrid establish new representative community reference groups for a REZ, which reflect the localised mix of interests, representative bodies and sector-based organisations, helping to develop capabilities, knowledge and community linkages, whilst ensuring that localised benefit is obtained and kept through the community energy fund.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Infrastructure that enables industry and business growth

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Recognising the vital role agriculture plays within the Shire

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Capitalising on opportunities created by new energy, and minimising impacts on key industry sectors, landscape values and natural assets

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Council advocates strongly and respectfully on issues that matter to our community

We listen to and engage with our community

Internal / External Consultation

Consultation on the CBP is being undertaken by VicGrid via Engage Victoria until 25 June 2024. The consultation provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to put forward views and priorities regarding the CBP and REZ community energy funds.

Council officers have been kept directly engaged with VicGrid, whilst VicGrid have also briefed Council in February 2024 on continued work associated with the VTIF.

Preparation of the CPB has been informed by earlier consultation undertaken by VicGrid in late-2023 and early-2024, also through Engage Victoria, which appears to have lacked community awareness and participation within Corangamite Shire and, more broadly, across the South-West region. Therefore, it is imperative now that Council and community remain engaged in the CBP and upcoming VTP and REZ planning.

Financial and Resource Implications

Making a submission does not present any direction financial or resource impact on Council but may influence and benefit future project and community outcomes through funding opportunities arising from the community energy fund, should a REZ be declared in Corangamite Shire.

Options

It is recommended that Council resolve to approve the submission attached to the report and submit it for the CBP.

Alternatively, Council may choose to approve an alternate submission, or not make a submission on the CBP at all.

Conclusions

A draft Council submission has been prepared in response to the CBP. The submission builds upon previous matters raised regarding REZ planning and development by VicGrid, but focuses on the core components outlined within the CBP.

The submission is presented for Council's approval to submit as part of the CBP consultation.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.14

That Council resolve to:

1. Approve the *Corangamite Shire Council Submission Renewable Energy Zone Community Benefits Plan 2024*
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign the approved submission and submit it to VicGrid.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.15 Submission - Inquiry into Food Security

Directorate: Sustainable Development
Author: Justine Linley, Director Sustainable Development
Previous Council Reference: Nil
Attachments: Nil

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Justine Linley

In providing this advice to Council as the Director Sustainable Development, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Katie Hearn

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Community Services I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to authorise the CEO to make a submission to the Legislative Council of the Victorian State Government on the inquiry into food insecurity in Victoria. Submissions close on 26 July 2024.

Introduction

On 29 November 2023, the Legislative Council of the Victorian State Government agreed to the following motion:

That this House requires the Legal and Social Issues Committee to inquire into, consider and report, by 14 November 2024, on the impacts and drivers of, and solutions for, food security in Victoria, including but not limited to —

- (1) the impact of food insecurity in Victoria, on —*
 - (a) physical and mental health;*
 - (b) poverty and hardship; and*
- (2) options available to lower the cost of food and improve access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food.*

The Inquiry was opened for submissions on 3 June 2024.

In late 2023 the Commonwealth Government issued findings into a related inquiry into food security, *Australian Food Story: Feeding the National and Beyond 2023* and Council is currently in the consultation phase in the preparation of *Grow Corangamite: Securing our Agriculture Future*, a strategy to address land-use, economic and social impacts on food and fibre production.

Most recently, South West Healthcare (SWH) Health Promotion completed an investigative report, *Food Insecurity in the Corangamite Shire 2023*, exploring food affordability in Corangamite and how to address food insecurity. This report was released on 19 June 2024 and the findings are important evidence for this submission. A copy of the report has been circulated under separate cover.

Background

Corangamite is a renowned agricultural district producing a large percentage of Australia's milk, as well as beef, lamb, grain, and wool. Agriculture is the single largest sector of the Corangamite economy, generating \$805 million of economic output in 2020-2021 (30% of total output), and accounting for 2,442 jobs (32% of total employment). Excellent soils, reliable rainfall and mild climate underpin the productivity and versatility of Corangamite's agricultural sector. The Shire's success comes from skilled producers utilising modern technology to boost productivity and efficiency and achieve increasing levels of sustainability.

Food manufacturing is the second largest sector by economic output and the sixth largest employer in the Shire. It generated \$408 million of economic output in 2020-2021 (15% of total output) and accounted for 483 jobs (6% of total employment). Agriculture and food manufacturing drive a thriving service sector with benefits flowing to the construction, transport, warehousing, utility services and professional services sectors, and increasing links to local tourism with a growing reputation for its local produce and gourmet food experiences.

Conversely, many residents in the Shire at the same time experience the impacts of food insecurity. Healthy eating has far-reaching impacts on health and wellbeing and is a vital protective measure against many chronic diseases. However, the ability to consume a healthy diet is inextricably linked with the social determinants of health, with some members of our community experiencing greater barriers to consume a nutritious diet. Considering the affordability and accessibility of food within our community is important to ascertain what barriers are most prohibitive locally and ensure strategies meet the community's needs.

Local data indicates that residents in the Corangamite Shire are not consuming the recommended serves of fruit and vegetables, signifying the need for assessment of barriers and more localised support.

In 2017, the Victorian Population Health Survey found that only 2% of adults in Corangamite Shire were meeting the vegetable consumption guidelines and 37% were meeting the fruit consumption guidelines.

The Great South Coast Health Behaviours study showed that in 2019, only 21% of participating year 4 and year 6 students in Corangamite Shire were meeting the vegetable consumption guidelines and 68% were meeting the fruit consumption guidelines.

With the cost of living impacts, the daily challenge of consuming a well-balanced and nutritious diet is getting harder. For many, the increased cost for essentials such as rent/mortgage, energy bills and fuel, can result in food becoming a discretionary expense. This means that many people may not have enough money to be able to afford adequate and nutritious food, resulting in food insecurity. This raises several concerns given the role the Shire has as a high-value agricultural food production area in our economic and community profile.

Issues

Food security for the purposes of this report and submission is defined as “when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets the dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation).

This definition is underpinned by four pillars, namely Availability, Access, Utilisation and Stability. A further two pillars were included as part of the Commonwealth’s 2023 inquiry, namely Agency and Sustainability.

- **Availability:** Having a quantity and quality of food sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances and acceptable within a given culture, supplied through domestic production or imports.
- **Access:** Having personal or household financial means to acquire food for an adequate diet at a level to ensure that satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised; and that adequate food is accessible to everyone, including vulnerable individuals and groups.
- **Utilisation:** Having an adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met.
- **Stability:** Having the ability to ensure food security in the event of sudden shocks (e.g. an economic, health, conflict or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity).

- **Agency:** Individuals or groups having the capacity to act independently to make choices about what they eat, the foods they produce, how that food is produced, processed, and distributed, and to engage in policy processes that shape food systems. The protection of agency requires socio-political systems that uphold governance structures that enable the achievement of Food Security and Nutrition for all.
- **Sustainability:** Food system practices that contribute to long-term regeneration of natural, social and economic systems, ensuring the food needs of the present generations are met without compromising the food needs of future generations

Food insecurity exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain. (SWH Health Promotion: *Food Insecurity in the Corangamite Shire 2023*).

Australian Food Story: Feeding the Nation and Beyond, November 2023

In November 2023 the House Standing Committee on Agriculture released a report and findings following an Inquiry that was referred to the Committee in October 2022. The report examines calls for a national food security strategy, food production consumption and export, inputs, the supply chain, climate change and biosecurity and food insecurity. It includes 35 recommendations with a number having direct relevance to Corangamite Shire residents, agricultural producers and other businesses.

The first recommendation is that the Australian Government, in consultation and cooperation with State and Territory Governments, relevant industries, sectors and the community, develop a comprehensive National Food Plan providing for the food security, including nutritional security, of the nation and its people. The National Food Plan must have clear objectives and measurable targets set out in regular updates and action plans, and subject to regular review.

Recommendation 4 states as part of the National Food Plan, and in conjunction with industry, the Government develop a specific strategy for reinvigorating the Australian dairy industry, one which lifts profitability and production while addressing the economic and environmental sustainability of the industry, and identifies the resources and pathways required to achieve this.

Several recommendations explore further the role of innovation and value adding in food production to enhance food security (Recommendations 7, 8) and others look at skill development and employment (Recommendations 9,10,11).

Recommendation 12 recommends supporting the development and expansion of the domestic production and manufacturing of essential inputs, such as fertiliser and agricultural chemicals.

There are recommendations that address food waste, food hubs, circular economy, recovery and recycling of packaging and review of labelling and 'best before' and 'use-by' dates and eligibility of agriculture for Australian Carbon Credit Units (Recommendations 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23). Several recommendations look at capital, investment and research and development (Recommendations 24, 25).

Biosecurity and protection of the food system is also addressed (Recommendations 27, 28) and the remaining recommendations (Recommendations 29 to 34) address education and access to nutritious food throughout the nation.

Of particular interest are Recommendations 13 and 14, namely:

"The Committee recommends the Australian Government, in conjunction with State, Territory and Local governments, develop a strategic plan to protect agricultural land from urban sprawl and utilisation for non-agricultural purposes." (Recommendation 13); and

"The Committee recommends that as part of the development of a National Food Plan, the Australian Government coordinate with industry in the development of a National Food Supply Chain Map, identifying:

- where products are grown or produced and in what quantity;
- how they are transported;
- where they are processed;
- what the major transport routes are;
- the main centres for the collection and distribution of product;
- where transport routes are vulnerable; and
- what happens if they are cut.

This map should also identify key inputs and vulnerabilities to lack of supply. The Australian Government should consider options for technical innovation in the collection, access to and dissemination of this information and data."(Recommendation 14).

Both recommendations 13 and 14 have direct relevance to Council in terms of how food is grown, produced and distributed, having a direct impact on access to affordable, nutritious food.

Grow Corangamite: Securing our Agriculture Future

Council is preparing an Agricultural Strategy to cement its position as a significant agricultural producer and food manufacturer into the future. The Grow Corangamite: Sustaining our Agriculture Future project will provide:

- A comprehensive understanding of the physical, social, and economic attributes that underpin agriculture and the challenges and opportunities confronting the industry.

- An economic development and planning framework to support and grow agriculture into the future.

The Grow Corangamite strategy will ultimately establish a strategic vision for agriculture in the Shire. In doing so, it will consider:

- Land use planning outcomes, including environmental/sustainability values, diversification and adaption, tourism, cultural heritage, land capability, quality and value of agricultural land, land use conflicts, infrastructure etc.
- Economic opportunities and market challenges.
- Long-term strategies, competitive strengths, and locational-specific advantages.
- Strategies and actions that respond the issues and opportunities identified.

As part of the background work to inform the overall strategy, a Background Report has been prepared and is currently out for community feedback. It brings together desktop research and analysis to understand the current state of the agricultural sector; identify the key strengths and weaknesses facing the agricultural sector in the Shire; and the opportunities and threats (those external factors) which the Strategy should seek to address.

The Background report, and in turn the Strategy, seek to identify the economic and land use planning directions Council could adopt to enable the ongoing viability and growth of the agricultural sector and the local community it supports.

One core tenet of the Strategy will be to identify mechanisms to enhance and protect food production (growing, processing and distribution) in the Shire and to identify opportunities to also ensure local access to local produce.

SWH Health Promotion: Food Insecurity in the Corangamite Shire 2023

The SWH Health Promotion report identified 6 recommendations to address food insecurity in Corangamite Shire. In summary these are:

- Continue to advocate for increased income support rates and increase flexibility of emergency relief to support families on low incomes;
- Increase access to healthy foods through wider promotion of local producers and initiatives offering local produce;
- Use food initiatives and existing assets as a way to bring the community together including food swaps, redistributing excess produce, community houses and community meals;
- Promote the benefits of eating more fruit and vegetables to support cost-savings at the supermarket as well as health and wellbeing;
- Increase educational opportunities around food, shopping and cooking literacy to support households with meal planning and cooking on a budget; and
- Investigate opportunities for healthier retail environments – high cost of food is a consistent theme.

The SWH Health Promotion food insecurity investigation confirmed that the increasing cost of living, high food costs and challenges of living in rural areas have a significant impact on residents' ability to access and afford nutritious food. This has led to people in Corangamite not consuming the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables, impacting on health and wellbeing outcomes. The investigation found that further investment and support for local initiatives that reduce barriers to food, increase household and community resilience and improve affordability of food are vital for mitigating the impacts of food insecurity.

The investigation modelled the costs of a healthy diet that aligns with Australian dietary guidelines and the current Australian diet. In Corangamite, the cost of the recommended diet for a family of four ranged from \$757.52 to \$894.12, a difference in cost of \$136.60 from the least expensive to the most expensive supermarket. The cost of the current diet for a family of four ranged from \$907.94 to \$1105.37, a difference in cost of \$197.43 from the least expensive to the most expensive supermarket. In Warrnambool the recommended diet cost a family of four an average of \$697.75 which is 14% more affordable than the average cost of \$815.45 in Corangamite. Prices were found to be 8% higher in the North Ward compared to the Central ward and the highest levels of disadvantage, along with a lower density of essential food stores, were also found in the North Ward. Based on the median household income in Corangamite a recommended diet would cost a family of four 30% - 35% of their household income. Research literature suggests that food stress occurs when food costs account for 25% or more of a household income and becomes unaffordable when food costs account for 30% or more of income.

To address the issue of food insecurity across the Corangamite Shire, greater awareness of the significant cost of food, and the implications of food stress needs to be shared. Collaborative initiatives and grass roots approaches driven by community members and service providers are an effective method to alleviate food insecurity, and are valued by the local community. The report also concluded that the Corangamite community has solid foundations to build on and many opportunities for Council and local organisations to work together to support our communities to create an equitable, affordable and resilient food system for good health.

It is proposed that the submission to the Legislative Council's Inquiry reference the Commonwealth Inquiry, the Grow Corangamite: Securing our Agriculture Future background report and community feedback, and the SWH Health Promotion Food Insecurity in the Corangamite Shire 2023 report. The submission will use information that has specific relevance to Corangamite Shire and will be made under two headings, namely Impacts and Solutions.

Impacts

A description of the current food production and food security landscape in Corangamite Shire, drawing on evidence contained in the SWH Regional Health Promotion Report and the Grow Agriculture Background paper including:

- Demographics
- Distribution networks and access to nutritious food
- Food availability and affordability specific to Corangamite Shire (e.g. prices of essential food are 8% higher in the North Ward compared to the Central Ward)
- Food production and supply chain including transport
- Land-use competition from non-food sectors

Solutions

Recommendations from the SWH Regional Health Promotion report and feedback from the Grow Agriculture Background paper including:

- Education – working with community organisations, schools, supermarkets
- Promotion of local producers and local produce
- Community-led initiatives (food swap, share, markets, gardens)
- Food waste reduction
- Land-use planning to secure local agriculture/food production
- Improved transport connections – for people and produce to market.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Access to infrastructure that supports a healthy and active lifestyle for our community

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Recognising the vital role agriculture plays within the Shire

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community

Improving the health and wellbeing of our residents

Access and inclusion is improved

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Helping our community plan and respond to climate change

Piloting the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local level

Internal / External Consultation

Council officers were consulted together with the Campderdown Community House, Simpson Community Centre, Terang Mortlake Health Service, Timboon District Health Service and the South West Healthcare Health Promotion team in the Food Insecurity report investigations and preparations.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications associated with making a submission to the Legislative Council Committee Inquiry.

Options

It is proposed that Council authorise the CEO to make a submission to the Inquiry in accordance with the themes identified in the report. Alternatively Council may wish to add to or adjust the themes or to decline to make a submission.

Conclusions

Food security, or insecurity, is of relevance to Corangamite Shire on a number of levels. There can be little argument that Agriculture is the most important industry to the economic wellbeing and prosperity of our communities throughout the municipality. The work Council is currently undertaking in the preparation of the *Grow Corangamite: Securing our Agricultural Future* Strategy takes up several of the recommendations contained in the Commonwealth Government's *Feeding the Nation and Beyond* report particularly relating to land-use conflict, the importance of highly productive food producing land and distribution networks.

Equally, it is therefore difficult to reconcile the evidence that our residents continue to face a daily challenge of consuming a well-balanced nutritious diet as outlined in the most recent SWH Health Promotion report on Food Insecurity in Corangamite. In providing a submission to the Legislative Council Inquiry, Council can put forward the experiences and describe the impacts of food insecurity on our communities, and offer potential, considered solutions that are specific to this municipality, it's residents and farm businesses.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.15

That Council authorise the CEO to make a submission to the Legislative Council of the Victorian State Government on the inquiry into food insecurity in Victoria.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

**Moved: Cr Jamie Vogels
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey**

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.16 Submission - State inquiry into Local Government funding and services

Directorate: Civic Support
Author: Chris Asenjo, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Previous Council Reference: Nil
Attachments: Nil

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Chris Asenjo

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The State Legislative Council - Economy and Infrastructure Committee has commenced a new inquiry into Local Government Funding and Services. This report recommends that Council make a submission to the Committee. Submissions are due by 28 June 2024.

Introduction

Council has received correspondence from The State Legislative Council - Economy and Infrastructure Committee chair Ms. Georgie Purcell on an inquiry into local government funding and services. As part of the inquiry, the Committee will examine financial sustainability and funding frameworks of local governments, alongside service delivery and the effects of cost shifting from Commonwealth and State governments to local councils.

The Terms of Reference are as follows:

The State Legislative Council - Economy and Infrastructure Committee inquiry into local government funding and services, terms of reference:

- *The effects of cost shifting from the Commonwealth and State governments to local councils in an examination of vertical and horizontal fiscal imbalances;*
- *Whether local councils are adequately delivering on their core service delivery objectives;*
- *The overall revenue structure of local government;*
- *Whether the existing revenue structure is sustainable and appropriate or if alternative models of funding would be more sustainable and appropriate;*
- *Any other related matters.*

It is proposed that the inquiry attend Camperdown in early August 2024, to conduct a hearing, with local councils, community groups and individuals offered the opportunity to provide submissions to the inquiry. The proposed hearing in Camperdown is to be confirmed.

Further information about the inquiry is available at: [Inquiry into Local Government funding and services \(parliament.vic.gov.au\)](https://parliament.vic.gov.au/inquiry-into-local-government-funding-and-services)

Issues

The Committee is seeking to understand the challenges faced by local governments in funding, revenue and providing services and related infrastructure requirements across Victorian local councils.

The Corangamite Shire submission will address all the terms of reference and will have the following focus:

- Funding and revenue streams, including council rates and rate caps, fees and charges, grant funding and the ongoing financial sustainability of local government.
- The ability of Corangamite Shire to assess and maintain sustainable service delivery to the community.
- The role of State and Commonwealth governments in supporting local government funding and services.
- Highlighting the differences between metropolitan, regional and rural local councils from a revenue and service delivery perspective.

Victorian councils, especially rural councils, generally have very few options available to raise revenue other than from rates, which are capped by the Victorian State Government. Council can of course decrease spending and Corangamite Shire is constantly looking at ways of doing things more efficiently and increasing productivity.

The 2018 Victorian Government inquiry into the sustainability and operational challenges of Victoria's rural and regional Councils reported that several key differences between metropolitan and regional councils, including rural councils, were evident to the inquiry and that these differences needed to be considered in understanding the sustainability of regional and rural councils. These differences included regional and rural councils incurred higher costs than metropolitan councils and that regional councils had less ability to raise revenue than metropolitan councils. These two factors are critical in identifying how State and Commonwealth governments funds are disseminated to councils.

Local councils are at times significantly impacted by legislation and policy change of State and Commonwealth governments. Changes that are intended to improve industry sectors, work practices and outcomes for communities often impact local governments' ability to deliver sustainable high-quality services. Councils provide services and programs to communities in a not-for-profit scope. Any mandated change to structures, legislation or policy needs to be considered by Council in terms of sustainability of service, cost and workforce.

In the past councils have advocated strongly for a greater share of Commonwealth and State revenue. In 2015, almost ten years ago, the Commonwealth Government released its taxation white paper. Contained within this paper was a breakdown of the allocation of every tax dollar. There is a clear disparity in funding when the levels of government are compared. From each tax dollar, just 3 cents goes towards funding Local Government, 16 cents goes to the State Government and 81 cents to the Commonwealth Government. What is at issue is not whether there is a rate cap, but instead the inadequacy of the current funding models for the core, community-focused, essential work of local government.

It is proposed that the CEO be authorised to make a submission to the Inquiry, highlighting the impacts of previous reforms, both positive and negative, and to support change to the funding models to enable a greater opportunity for the direct contribution of the Commonwealth and State towards council services and infrastructure provision.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council advocates strongly and respectfully on issues that matter to our community

Internal / External Consultation

Discussion has occurred with the Executive Leadership Team and officers in the preparation of the submission.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no direct financial or resource implications.

Options

Council may authorise the CEO to make a submission or may choose not to make a submission at this time.

Conclusions

Opportunities to advocate on behalf of the Corangamite community at the State Government level are often limited. Council has previously participated in reform programs and initiatives at both Commonwealth and State Government levels with varying degrees of success. The invitation to make a submission to this State Government Inquiry provides Council with an opportunity to have the voices of the community and council heard at the State level.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.16

That Council;

1. That Council authorise the CEO to make a submission to the State inquiry into Local Government funding and services 2024.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.17 Special Charge Scheme Final Costs - Neil Avenue Road Upgrade

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: John Kelly, Manager Assets Planning

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. Under Separate Cover - Apportionment Neil Avenue Terang Upgrade SCS Final Costs [9.17.1 - 1 page]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – John Kelly

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Assets Planning, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

Works have been completed on the upgrade of the existing gravel road to sealed road and associated works in Neil Avenue, Terang, from Cameron Street to approximately 485m east of Cameron Street. Costs associated with the Special Charge Scheme for these works have been finalised.

The final costs are less than those estimated at the time of the declaration of the Special Charge Scheme.

Approval is sought from Council to vary the cost of the Special Charge Scheme as shown below and to serve notice to the benefitting property owners seeking their contribution.

Introduction

Council, at its meeting on 22 November 2022, declared a Special Charge Scheme for the purposes of defraying expenses associated with the upgrade of Neil Avenue from gravel road to sealed road which was completed in December 2023.

Issues

The actual cost of sealing the road on completion was less than the cost of construction estimated at the time of the declaration. The initial estimate to the Scheme were based on similar projects previously undertaken in the Shire and market rates.

Minor cost savings are proposed to be passed on to the property owners contributing to the Scheme.

Details on the estimated and final cost for the scheme and cost to property owners are provided in the Financial and Resource Implications section below.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community
Roads that are fit for purpose

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

The Special Charge was declared pursuant to Section 163 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, and 65% of the cost associated with the Scheme is to be recovered from property owners benefiting from the works.

The process for finalising costs for the special charge scheme is in accordance with Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy.

Internal / External Consultation

The Special Charge Scheme has previously been through a formal consultation process in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and Council policy.

The Scheme, which was declared at the Council Meeting on 22 November 2022, is to be varied in respect of the final cost and property owners are to be notified of the required contribution.

Following the Council meeting, letters were forwarded to the benefitting property owners advising of the declaration. The letters also advised of the estimated amount of contribution from each owner as well as the owners' rights of appeal.

Since the declaration there were no appeals made to VCAT objecting to the works.

Financial and Resource Implications

The upgrade works on Neil Avenue, Terang are now complete and Scheme details are outlined in Table 1.

	TOTAL SCHEME COST		COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS	
	Estimated	Final	Estimated	Final
Neil Ave, Terang	\$72,111	\$68,643	\$46,872	\$44,618

Table 1: Details of Scheme Costs

The schedule of final costs to be apportioned to each owner is attached to this report. Added costs associated with sealing property driveways by prior agreement with the owners are included in the schedules. These costs are at the full expense of the owners and do not form part of the Scheme.

Other costs for the project which did not form part of the Scheme included earthworks associated with widening the road to a minimum standard carriageway width for Council and asphalt surfacing of the end court bowl.

Options

Council can choose to return the minor savings arising from finalisation of the Scheme to the contributing property owners. This is consistent with Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy. Alternatively, Council can treat the cost savings as general revenue.

Conclusions

The sealing of Neil Avenue has improved the amenity of those living in the street and is considered to benefit the property owners.

The project has been managed efficiently to ensure that residents making contributions are not financially disadvantaged.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.17

That Council, with respect to the Special Charge Scheme declared on the 22 November 2022 for the purpose of defraying the expenses incurred for the upgrade of the existing gravel road to sealed road and associated works in Neil Avenue, Terang, from Cameron Street to approximately 485m east of Cameron Street:

- 1. Varies the above Special Charge Scheme to acknowledge the final costs as per the attached schedule pursuant to Section 166(1) of the Local Government Act 1989, and issues notices to be served on the property owners pursuant to Section 166(2) of the Act.**
- 2. Serves notices to property owners benefitting from the works for the final costs for full payment within thirty days of the owner receiving notice or by twenty quarterly instalments as approved by Council, bearing interest at the rate of interest set by Council Policy “Special Charge Schemes – Interest on Payment”.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Ruth Gstrein

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Mayor Kate Makin declared material conflict of interest in Agenda Item 9.18 and left the meeting before any discussion or vote on the matter at 8:41pm. Deputy Mayor Laurie Hickey resume position of chair.

9.18 Special Charge Scheme Final Costs - Curdies River Road Upgrade

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: John Kelly, Manager Assets Planning

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. Under Separate Cover - Apportionment Curdies River Road Timboon Upgrade SCS Final Costs [9.18.1 - 1 page]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – John Kelly

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Assets Planning, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

Works have been completed on the upgrade of the existing gravel road to sealed road and associated works in Curdies River Road, Timboon, from just north of the golf course to approximately 280m north of Colcott Street. Costs associated with the Special Charge Scheme for these works have been finalised.

The final costs are less than those estimated at the time of the declaration of the Special Charge Scheme.

Approval is sought from Council to vary the cost of the Special Charge Scheme as shown below and to serve notice to the benefitting property owners seeking their contribution.

Introduction

Council, at its meeting on 24 October 2023, declared a Special Charge Scheme for the purposes of defraying expenses associated with the upgrade of Curdies River Road from gravel road to sealed road which was completed in April 2024.

Issues

The actual cost of sealing of the road on completion was less than the cost of construction estimated at the time of the declaration. The initial estimate to the Scheme were based on similar projects previously undertaken in the Shire and market rates.

Minor cost savings are proposed to be passed on to the property owners contributing to the Scheme.

Details on the estimated and final cost for the scheme and cost to property owners are provided in the Financial and Resource Implications section below.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community
Roads that are fit for purpose

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

The Special Charge was declared pursuant to Section 163 of the Local Government Act 1989, and 8% of the cost associated with the Scheme is to be recovered from property owners benefiting from the works.

The process for finalising costs for the special charge scheme is in accordance with Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy.

Internal / External Consultation

The Special Charge Scheme has previously been through a formal consultation process in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989 and Council policy.

The Scheme, which was declared at the Council Meeting on 24 October 2023, is to be varied in respect of the final cost and property owners are to be notified of the required contribution.

Following the Council meeting, letters were forwarded to the benefitting property owners advising of the declaration. The letters also advised of the estimated amount of contribution from each owner as well as the owners' rights of appeal.

Financial and Resource Implications

The upgrade works on Curdies River Road, Timboon are now complete and Scheme details are outlined in Table 1.

	TOTAL SCHEME COST		COST TO PROPERTY OWNERS	
	Estimated	Final	Estimated	Final
Curdies River Road, Timboon	\$220,500	\$214,093	\$17,640	\$17,127

Table 1: Details of Scheme Costs

The schedule of final costs to be apportioned to each owner is attached to this report.

Other costs for the project which did not form part of the Scheme included earthworks associated with widening the road to a minimum standard carriageway width for Council.

Options

Council can choose to return the minor savings arising from finalisation of the Scheme to the contributing property owners. This is consistent with Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy. Alternatively, Council can treat the cost savings as general revenue.

Conclusions

The sealing of Curdies River Road has improved the amenity of those living in the street and is considered to benefit the property owners.

The project has been managed efficiently to ensure that residents making contributions are not financially disadvantaged.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.18

That Council, with respect to the Special Charge Scheme declared on the 23 October 2023 for the purpose of defraying the expenses incurred for the upgrade of the existing gravel road to sealed road and associated works in Curdies River Road, Timboon, from just north of the golf course to approximately 280m north of Colcott Street:

- 1. Varies the above Special Charge Scheme to acknowledge the final costs as per the attached schedule pursuant to Section 166(1) of the Local Government Act 1989, and issues notices to be served on the property owners pursuant to Section 166(2) of the Act.**
- 2. Serves notices to property owners benefitting from the works for the final costs for full payment within thirty days of the owner receiving notice or by twenty quarterly instalments as approved by Council, bearing interest at the rate of interest set by Council Policy “Special Charge Schemes – Interest on Payment”.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

**Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels**

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 6 / 0

Cr Kate Makin returned to the meeting at 8:44pm and assume the position of chair.

9.19 Ready Now Grants June Quarterly Acquittal Report

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Garry Moorfield, Community Development Officer

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Ready Now Grants June 2024 Applications and Assessment [9.19.1 - 3 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs. In particular the attachment contains personal information.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Garry Moorfield

In providing this advice to Council as the Community Development Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this quarterly report is to provide information on Ready Now Grant allocations approved between March and May 2024 inclusive.

Introduction

The Ready Now Grants Program supports the community with small timely grants to volunteer based community groups for proposals that are not readily able to be considered under the annual Community, Enabling, Events and Festivals, Facilities or Environmental Grants Programs.

Issues

The Ready Now Grants Policy was adopted by Council in September 2023. The new program replaced the previous Quick Response Grants Program which had operated for more than a decade. The Ready Now Grants Program is a targeted program focused on community benefit, supporting community groups and activities where small grants can ‘make a difference’.

The program is designed to be flexible and responsive to community needs. Applications for Ready Now Grants are assessed as they are received with approval of grant applications delegated to the CEO enabling quick turnaround of applications as the process isn’t required to meet monthly reporting timelines.

The program provides small allocations of funds of up to \$500 for beneficial projects and activities supporting community inclusion and participation and providing equipment, facilities and public spaces that are appropriate for community use. Grants are open to volunteer-based community groups operating within Corangamite Shire.

Recent Ready Now Grant Applications and Approvals

Over the last quarter (March – May 2024) 14 applications were lodged with nine grants approved over that period. Applications approved and funding provided are outlined in Table 1 below.

Project	Amount	Status	Comments
Camperdown Clocktower Quilters Incorporated <i>Purchase of materials and quilting for community quilts</i>	\$500	Invoice received and paid	Acquittal due 30 September 2024
Derrinallum Bowling Club Incorporated <i>Purchase of ditch step for green access</i>	\$398	Invoice received and paid	Acquittal due 30 September 2024
Camperdown and District Historical Society Incorporated <i>Reprint of Robert Burns booklet</i>	\$500	Invoice received and paid	Acquittal due 7 November 2024
South West Model Engineers Incorporated <i>Purchase of leaf and stick rake</i>	\$500	Project acquitted	

Project	Amount	Status	Comments
Scotts Creek and Cowleys Creek Public Hall Incorporated <i>Purchase of folding tables (5)</i>	\$500	Invoice received and paid	Acquittal due 7 November 2024
Lismore Cemetery Trust Incorporated <i>Purchase and installation of security cameras and lights</i>	\$422	Invoice received and paid	Acquittal due 2 November 2024
Skipton progress Association Incorporated <i>Purchase of market banners X 2</i>	\$472	Invoice received and paid.	
South Western District Restoration Group Incorporated <i>Replace Club entrance signage</i>	\$500	Approved. Invoice awaited	
Cobden and District Historical Society <i>Purchase of two roadside promotional signs</i>	\$440	Approved. Invoice awaited	

Table 1: Approved Ready Now Grants, March to May 2024

Five additional applications were received which did not comply with relevant Council policies. Following discussions with the applicants three were withdrawn. One application seeking \$500 for garden maintenance was not supported. Further information was requested in regard to an incomplete application, but as yet has not been supplied.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Arts and culture that is supported and accessible

Corangamite's townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community

Access and inclusion is improved

Our community groups and clubs are engaged and supported and facilities are fit for purpose

Internal / External Consultation

The Ready Now Grants policy, adopted by Council in September 2023, was prepared taking into consideration community feedback. The application forms for the Ready Now Grants Program are available from Council's website or by contacting Council's Community Development Officer who can assist applicants through the application process.

Financial and Resource Implications

The 2023-2024 Quick Response Grants/ Ready Now Program (adjusted) budget allocation is \$24,253. Grants to a total value of \$17,531.64 have been awarded as at 31 May 2024.

Conclusions

The Ready Now Grants Program provides financial assistance to eligible volunteer-based community groups to undertake beneficial projects and activities. The applications approved for funding are in accordance with the Ready Now Grants Policy and provide positive outcomes for Corangamite communities.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.19

That Council notes the quarterly report (March to May 2024) for the Ready Now Grants program.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Nick Cole
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

9.20 Business Assistance Scheme - June Grants

Directorate: Sustainable Development

Author: Katy McMahon, Manager Economy & Prosperity

Previous Council Reference: Nil

Attachments: 1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Business Assistance Scheme Application Assessment Summary June 2024 [9.20.1 - 5 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this attachment as confidential on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular the attachment contains commercial and personal information.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Katy McMahon

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Economy and Prosperity, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the assessment and recommended funding allocation for the June 2024 round of the Business Assistance Scheme (BAS). Four applications have been assessed and meet the relevant streams aim, objective and assessment criteria and relevant policies. Three applications require a planning permit and are recommended conditional on a planning permit being approved.

Introduction

As part of Grow and Prosper Corangamite, Council has consolidated its approach to economic and community development, inclusive of arts, culture, tourism and the circular economy. The Grow and Prosper Framework outlines new programs including the BAS.

The BAS enables Council to support local businesses, big or small, community enterprises, creative industries and new businesses looking to establish in the municipality.

Issues

The BAS provides business, building owners and community the opportunity to apply for support, including financial assistance. Applications are assessed on merit, considering the eligibility criteria and available funds.

The BAS is a new way to support our community. The BAS policy was adopted by Council September 2023. The Scheme is ongoing across the year enabling businesses to submit when suitable for their proposed project and provides four streams:

1. Business Façade Improvement – providing support to businesses that have street frontage in towns to undertake high quality façade improvements, that are visible from the front of the property and enhance the visual appearance and function of the building.
2. Creative Industries and Placemaking – supporting and building the capacity of entrepreneurs, creatives and established businesses to create and deliver inclusive and vibrant projects in public spaces or areas that are accessible to the public.
3. Community Enterprise - encouraging the development of enterprise skills, building economic capacity and employment opportunities in communities, by supporting entrepreneurs, creatives and community-led businesses to create and deliver inclusive projects throughout Corangamite.
4. Fees and Enabling Infrastructure - encouraging development that is significant to the community to occur within a shortened timeframe, assist new businesses to establish by reducing the up-front costs and provide some certainty to those preparing to invest in the municipality.

There are four (4) applications that have been assessed and are recommended for assistance to be considered by Council for determination.

The four applications recommended for assistance are:

Stream 1 Business Façade Improvement

1. George Taylor Stores: this project includes cleaning, repainting and installation of signage to the front of the building, facing Manifold Street Camperdown. The funding assistance requested is \$2882.50. Note elements of this project require a planning permit (signage) and the project is recommended for approval subject to a planning permit being approved.

2. ProDairy Timboon: this project includes repainting of the façade and deck at the front of the shop (Note: the shop is within a building of four shops, with two of the four shops seeking support through the BAS program. The two applications will bring the four shops in the building into an aligned colour scheme and up to a higher visual amenity overall. This application is for facade painting and reoiling of the deck outside shop 2 only and whilst aligned is separate to the application below). The funding assistance requested is \$486.93.

3. Babche Timboon: this project includes repainting of the façade and deck at the front of the shop alongside new signage to the door and window including a lightbox sign above the door and additional signage to the south side of the shop. (Note: the shop is within a building of four shops, with two of the four shops seeking support through the BAS program. The two applications will bring the four shops in the building into an aligned colour scheme and up to a higher visual amenity overall. The application is for facade painting and reoiling of the deck outside shop 3 only alongside signage for shop 3 and whilst aligned is separate to the application above). The funding assistance requested is \$2181.48. Note elements of this project require a planning permit (signage) and the project is recommended for approval subject to a planning permit being approved.

Stream 2 Creative Industries & Placemaking.

4. Excuse Me Katie's Camperdown: this project proposes installation of a professional artist mural on the highway-facing wall of shop 243 Manifold Street. The funding assistance requested is \$2000. Note this project requires a planning permit and the project is recommended for approval subject to a planning permit being approved and compliance with Council's public art policy and guidelines.

The BAS scheme is an ongoing grant and business support scheme that is open for applications year-round. Council officers work with applicants to enable applications to be 'grant ready'. Applications are assessed against the relevant stream criteria and evaluated by an assessment panel. Applications are assessed to ensure they meet all assessment criteria and align with the program's objectives and if so, are recommended for approval.

All four applications meet the relevant streams aim, objective and assessment criteria. Applications 1 George Taylor Stores, 3: Babche and 4: Excuse Me Katies require a planning permit and are recommended conditional on a planning permit being approved.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Corangamite's townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud

The Business Assistance Scheme policy, adopted by Council September 2023, guides the administration of the scheme enabling council to provide targeted assistance, including advice and financial assistance.

Internal / External Consultation

Extensive external promotion and consultation about the BAS has occurred across the Shire including media releases, Council's social media channels, Corangamite News, Corangamite E-News and Corangamite Business E-News.

On receipt of applications internal consultation is undertaken with relevant teams (e.g. planning, building and environmental health) to ensure all aspects of proposals are considered and applicants are supported through the permit processes.

Financial and Resource Implications

The current round of applications is seeking a total commitment of funds of \$7,550.91. Planning fees for three planning permits are proposed to be waived by Council as part of the program to encourage participation, at a cost of approximately \$644.10. Any relevant building permit fees still apply.

Council's 2023-2024 adopted budget includes an allocation of \$50,000 towards the previous Business Façade Grant Scheme which is being expended through the new BAS with a remaining budget of approximately \$29,296. Eligible fee waivers will be budgeted through Council's planning fee waiver budget.

Applications 1, 2 and 3 are Stream 1 applications – Business Façade Improvements. Applications under this stream are applied on a minimum \$1:\$1 basis to complete improvements to their façades with the amount capped at \$3,000 per business for physical works and \$500 for landscaping. Funding for Stream 1 projects will be provided to the businesses following the conclusion of the project and once the acquittal process has been completed, all necessary permits having been approved.

Options

Officers have assessed the applications and recommend them for assistance under the BAS the options are:

1. Allocate funds of \$7,550.91 excl GST to the four Business Assistance Scheme applicants and waive planning permit fees to the value of \$644.10.
2. Not allocate funding through the program.

Conclusions

The BAS provides businesses, building owners and community enterprises with the opportunity to apply for support, including financial assistance. The four applications recommended for support all meet the objectives of the BAS program and contribute to the growth and prosperity of Corangamite.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.20

That Council approve the four Business Assistance Scheme applications for funding being:

1. **George Taylor Stores: \$2882.50. excl GST.**
2. **ProDairy Timboon: \$486.93 excl GST.**
3. **Babche Timboon: \$2181.48 excl GST.**
4. **Excuse Me Katie's Camperdown: \$2000 excl GST.**

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Geraldine Conheady
Seconded: Cr Laurie Hickey

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

10 Other Business

Cr Jo Beard addressed the ongoing Cobden Street Scape project, which has faced delays due to COVID-19. The initiative received support from both Councillors and Council staff. A recent enhancement to Cobden's streets included the installation of four benches wrapped in Western Star Butter branding. This collaboration involved a local cabinet maker from the initial design phase through to completion. Cr. Beard extended her appreciation to John Kelly, Manager of Assets Planning, for his contributions to the project. She also expressed gratitude to her fellow Councillors and Council staff for their support throughout the project.

Cr Laurie Hickey shared his thoughts on the Robbie Burns Celtic Festival, which he attended over the weekend. He noted the presence of both locals and visitors at the event and commended the organizers and staff for their efforts. He expressed anticipation for next year's festival and opened to hear potential ways for the community to participate further.

Cr Laurie Hickey remarked on June 25, 2024, marking the final trading day of the Camperdown Livestock Exchange. Reflecting on memories spanning from childhood to recent weeks at the saleyard, he emphasized the council's search for a new operator capable of resuming local sales. He encouraged the public to explore the Expression of Interest opportunities listed on the website

11 Open Forum

The Mayor, Cr Kate Makin, invited members of the public to ask a question or make a statement.

- Online submission - Comment on Customer Satisfaction Survey. Improvements need to be made once calls are transferred.
- Online submission - Planning matters.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That standing orders be suspended to move into confidential items.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Standing orders were suspended at 08:59 pm.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That standing orders be resumed.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

Standing orders were resumed at 9:05pm.

12 Confidential Items

RECOMMENDATION

That pursuant to the provisions of Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to enable consideration of the following reports as they relate to Council business information and personal information.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Jamie Vogels

That the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

The meeting moved into confidential items at 9:05 pm.

12.1 Contract Variation Approval Glenn Rundell Consulting

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020 the Chief Executive Officer has designated this report and its attachments as confidential on the grounds that it contains Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. Specifically it pertains to a submission from an existing contractor which Council is presently considering.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Ruth Gstrein
Seconded: Cr Nick Cole

That the meeting move out of confidential items.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7 / 0

The meeting moved out of confidential items at 9:09pm.

13 Close Meeting

Mayor, Cr Kate Makin declared the Council Meeting closed at 9:09 pm.

I hereby certify that these minutes have been confirmed and are a true and correct record.

CONFIRMED:

Chairperson

DATE:
