



COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Wednesday 10 May 2023

Commencing at 7:00pm

Wycheproof Supper Room

367 Broadway, Wycheproof

**Wayne O'Toole
Chief Executive Officer
Buloke Shire Council**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 10 May 2023 commencing at 7:00pm in the Wycheproof Supper Room, 367 Broadway, Wycheproof**PRESENT****CHAIRPERSON:**

Cr Alan Getley Mallee Ward

COUNCILLORS:

Cr Bernadette Hogan Mallee Ward
Cr David Pollard Lower Avoca Ward
Cr Graeme Milne Mount Jeffcott Ward
Cr Bronwyn Simpson Mount Jeffcott Ward
Cr Daryl Warren Mount Jeffcott Ward

OFFICERS:

Wayne O'Toole Chief Executive Officer
Hannah Yu Director Infrastructure and Delivery
Travis Fitzgibbon Director Community Development
Michelle Stedman Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

AGENDA**1. COUNCIL WELCOME****WELCOME**

The Mayor Cr Alan Getley welcomed all in attendance.

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who maybe here today.

2. RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

Cr Carolyn Stewart Lower Avoca Ward

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**MOTION:**

That Council adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 12 April 2023.

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.
(R077/23)**

4. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Nil

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NIL

9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

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The Meeting may be closed to members of the public to consider confidential matters.

9.1.1 CEO PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

If the meeting has been closed it will be brought back into open session by resolution

10. MEETING CLOSE

NEXT MEETING

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD IN WYCHEPROOF SUPPER ROOM, 367 BROADWAY, WYCHEPROOF ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JUNE 2023 AT 7:00PM.

Wayne O'Toole
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Nil

7. PROCEDURAL ITEMS**7.1 REPORT OF COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES**

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/05/04

MOTION:

That the Council note the report of Councillor Assembly Meetings held 5 and 19 April 2023.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR DARYL WARREN

CARRIED.

(R078/23)

- Attachments:**
- 1 Councillor Briefing Record - 5 April 2023
 - 2 Councillor Briefing Record - 19 April 2023

KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Transparency is a fundamental principle of democratic governance.

The Local Government Act 2020 (The Act) Section 9 (2) (i) provides that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

In accordance with Section 57 of The Act, Council at its September 2020 Ordinary Meeting, adopted a Public Transparency policy, designed to improve public transparency in Council's decision-making processes and to assist the community in understanding the information that is accessible to them.

As per the Council Meeting Schedule adopted 9 November 2022, Councillor Briefings are held for Councillors to meet to consider matters that are likely to be the subject of a Council decision or for the exercise of delegation.

A record of the Councillor Briefings held on 5 and 19 April 2023 is attached for public information.

7.2 CORRESPONDENCE INITIATED BY COUNCIL

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/06/06

PURPOSE

This report notes and records correspondence initiated by Council and informs the Council of the responses received from this correspondence.

MOTION:

That the Council notes the record of correspondence initiated by Council and the responses received.

MOVED: CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

CARRIED.

(R079/23)

Attachments: Nil

TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCE

Council Initiative	Sent to	Sent	Response	Purpose of Letter/Response
Concerns over the closure of Bendigo Bank – Sea Lake Branch	Marnie Baker, Chief Exec Officer Head Office Bendigo & Adelaide Bank	18.04.2023		Letter sent to find out what the Bank's intentions are and if they would consider continuing provision of service to the Sea Lake community.

7.3 LETTERS OF CONGRATULATIONS AND RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT/AWARDS

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: CR/13/01

PURPOSE

This report acknowledges and congratulates community persons and/or groups for their success in being recognised for a significant achievement or for being a recipient of an honourable award.

The report also informs Council of any letters of congratulations or any recognition of achievement that Council has received or been awarded in the past month.

MOTION:

That the Council acknowledge and congratulate the persons and/or groups mentioned in the report for their achievements.

MOVED: CR DARYL WARREN

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.
(R080/23)**

Attachments: Nil

RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT ITEMS

Provider	Recipient	Date	Purpose for Recognition
Buloke Shire Council	To the Volunteers Wycheproof Op Shop		Having raised \$200,000 funds since commencement of its operation, with the funds having been donated to the community.
Buloke Shire Council	King Charles III	6.5.23	Congratulating King Charles III for being crowned as King of the United Kingdom and the fourteen other Commonwealth realms at the Coronation Ceremony held in London on 6 May 2023.

7.4 BUILDING PERMITS - MONTHLY UPDATE

Author's Title: Statutory Administration Support

Department: Community Development

File No: DB/14/01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on Building Permits approved by staff from 1 April 2023 to 30 April 2023.

The information published in the list provided, is in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

MOTION:

That the Council note information contained in the report on Building Permits approved by staff from 1 April 2023 to 30 April 2023.

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.
(R081/23)

Attachments: Nil

LIST OF BUILDING PERMITS APPROVED BY COUNCIL SURVEYOR

Council Ref.	Permit No.	Address	Project Description	Date Approved
NIL				

LIST OF BUILDING PERMITS APPROVED BY PRIVATE BUILDING SURVEYOR

Council Ref.	Permit No.	Address	Project Description	Date Approved
PBLD23052	6849407420790	Nullawil-Birchip Road Nullawil VIC 3529	Construction of Machinery Shed	12/4/2023
PBLD23057	1597877789560	Nullawil-Birchip Road Whirily VIC 3483	Extension to Existing Farm Shed	14/4/2023
PBLD23061	9778479539501	Kinnabulla West Road Kinnabulla VIC 3483	Farm Shed	14/4/2023
PBLD23063	1852838415582	Byrne Street Donald Vic 3480	Shade Sail Structure	19/4/2023

7.5 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED - MONTHLY UPDATE

Author's Title: Planning Officer

Department: Community Development

File No: LP/09/01

PURPOSE

This report provides information on planning applications under consideration by staff and the status of each of these applications.

MOTION:

That the Council note information contained in the report on planning applications under consideration by staff and the status of each of these applications.

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR DARYL WARREN

CARRIED.

(R082/23)

Attachments: Nil

LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The information published in the list provided, is in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Application No	Address	Date Rec	Summary of Proposal	Status
PA22006	High Street, Wycheproof (Lot 1 TP516215)	15/11/2022	Extension to a dwelling in HO	Permit Issued
PA22007	Campbell Street, Birchip and Hillgrove Street, Birchip (CA 2002, CA 12L Sec. 5, CA 12N Sec. 5 & CA 12O Sec. 5, Township of Birchip, PC166801P)	29/11/2022	Boundary realignment of 5 existing titles into 2 new titles	Permit Issued
PA23010	Broadway, Wycheproof (Lot 1 PS826773L)	16/01/2023	Six-lot subdivision of land and the development of land for six dwellings	Objection

Application No	Address	Date Rec	Summary of Proposal	Status
PA23012	Main Street, Culgoa (Lot 1 TP751938G)	24/01/2023	Extend hours of trade for existing business	Objection
PA23013	Hannon Street, Sea Lake (Lot 1 TP251694)	25/01/2023	Five-lot subdivision of land	Notice of application Referral
PA23014	Hannon Street, Sea Lake (Lot 14 LP004936)	24/01/2023	Five-lot subdivision of land and the development of land for five dwellings	Awaiting report
PA23015	Birchip-Wycheproof Road, Narraport	24/01/2023	Two-lot subdivision of land and the use and development of land for a veterinary clinic and associated dwelling	Notice of application Referral
PPA928/21	Campbell Street, Birchip (Lots 6, 7, 8 & 9 LP58023)	14/02/2023	Amend application after notice - for the use and development of land for a service station (fuel cell), business identification sign, alter access to TRZ2	Referral
PA23016	Jenkins Street, Charlton (Lot 5, Sec C, LP492)	06/03/2023	Building and Works in LSIO (extend carport and construct verandah)	Awaiting report
PA23017	Donald Street, Charlton (CA 8, Sec 12, Parish of Charlton)	22/03/2023	Use and development of land for a store (domestic shed Township Zone)	Awaiting report
PA23018	Messines Street, Nandaly (CA 3, Sec 3, Parish of Bimbourie)	28/03/2023	Works in a Heritage Overlay (roof mounted solar panels)	Awaiting report
PA23019	Borong Highway, Gil Gil (CA 2 Sec. 5 Parish of Banyenong)	22/03/2023	Place of Assembly (Events Centre)	Request for further information

7.6 STATUS OF ACTION OF PAST COUNCIL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/05/04

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a list of the Status of Action (SOA) of Council Resolutions outstanding for action and the SOA for the 12 April 2023 Council Meeting Resolutions.

MOTION:

Council to note the Status of Action Report for Council resolutions documented on this list.

Moved: CR GRAEME MILNE

Seconded: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.
(R083/23)

Attachments: 1 Actions Taken on Council Resolutions - On Outstanding items and 12 April 2023 Council Meeting

KEY POINTS/ISSUES

The Local Government Act 2020 (The Act) Section 9 (2) (i) provides that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

In accordance with the Council's Governance Rules adopted August 2022, Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured and is a fundamental principle of democratic governance.

Attached to this report for public information is a list of the SOA of Council Resolutions outstanding and introducing the SOA for the 12 April 2023 Council Meeting Resolutions.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 POLICY REPORTS

Nil

8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8.2.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 8 FEBRUARY 2023

Author's Title: Governance Officer

Department: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** FM/02/09

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

To provide Council with the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 8 February 2023.

SUMMARY

The Audit and Risk Committee minutes are attached for the information of Council.

MOTION:

That Council notes the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 8 February 2023.

Moved: CR DARYL WARREN

Seconded: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.
(R084/23)

Attachments: 1 Audit and Risk Committee Minutes 8 Feb 2023

DISCUSSION

The Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) is a statutory committee of Council which considers matters of governance, finance and risk management. The Committee is comprised of three independent members the Mayor and one Councillor. The Committee provides advice on the integrity and effectiveness of Council's financial reporting and risk management system.

At the meeting held, the Committee considered the following matters:

- Outstanding Action Items
- Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan
- Asset Management quarterly update
- Legislative Compliance Register
- Internal Audit Status Report and update
- Victorian Auditor-General's Office Status Report – December 2022
- Councillor and CEO reimbursements
- Draft Financial Statements as at 31 December 2022

RELEVANT LAW

Council is required under the *Local Government Act 2020* to establish and maintain an Audit and Risk Committee.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Committee was established by Council at its meeting held on 12 August 2020. The most recent Audit and Risk Committee Charter was adopted by Council on 9 November 2022.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Committee provides guidance and recommendations that result in improvements to methods and systems of Council.

COLLABORATION

Councillors and senior staff are invited to attend, and present as required at Committee meetings. Recommendations from the Committee are communicated to relevant staff members for action.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The costs associated with the Committee are considered in the Annual Budget.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter was adopted by Council on 9 November 2022.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Audit and Risk Committee is considered an essential element of good governance, monitoring Council's financial and performance reporting, monitoring and providing advice on risk management and overseeing internal and external audit functions. The draft minutes are provided to Council to consider the activities undertaken by the Committee.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest.

8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

8.3.1 FINANCE REPORT AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

Author's Title: Manager Financial Strategy

Department: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** FM/19/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

To present to the Council the financial statements for the period ending 31 March 2023.

SUMMARY

The year-end surplus in the adopted budget was set at \$3.7M. The current forecast surplus has been revised down to \$1.2M mainly due to delays in capital projects, resulting in a delay in capital grants income recognition.

Operating grants are forecast to be \$3.3M higher than budget which is offset by a forecast increase in materials and services expenditure. These increases are mainly attributed to the flood recovery works.

During the January to March 2023 quarter there has been a significant accounting change in relation to purchase order accruals. The existing practice was to accrue an expense for all approved purchase orders. This process has now ceased to give users more meaningful financial reports and to assist with ongoing management reporting. Information relating to all approved and committed purchase orders will continue to be available and provided to budget managers in a separate format.

Further discussion around non-timing variances in financial reports is outlined below.

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Financial Performance Report for the period ending 31 March 2023; and
2. Receives and notes the Capital Works Statement for the period ending 31 March 2023.

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.
(R085/23)

Attachments: 1 Quarterly Finance Performance Report March 2023
2 Capital Works Statement March 2023

DISCUSSION

Report title	Report explanation	Year to date (YTD) performance to budget and forecast commentary
Income Statement	<p><i>The Income Statement provides a summary of the total income and total expenditure relating to Council's annual operations for the reporting period. Capital grant income is included in this statement, but any related expenditure is not reflected as this is reported as increased assets on the Balance Sheet. To exclude potential distortion of underlying operations in the Income Statement, capital income is reported separately to identify the Operating Net Surplus/(Deficit).</i></p>	<p>Grants – Operating The forecast is \$10.4M (\$3.3M positive variance to budget), mainly due to the receipt of additional non-recurrent grants in Community Development, Emergency Management and Road services. The Financial Assistance Grants revenue data for 2023/24 is yet to be released however details regarding any potential advance payment is anticipated to be received in May/June 2023.</p> <p>Other Income The forecast is \$1M (\$800K positive variance to budget). This mainly relates to an increase in interest on investments for the current year as a result of interest rate rises.</p> <p>Other increases in this area relates mainly to WorkCover reimbursements.</p> <p>Materials and services The forecast is \$14M (\$3.7M negative variance to budget). This principally relates to non-recurrent grant expenditure (October 2022 flood event) offsetting the forecast increase in operating grants.</p> <p>Other forecast increases in this area relate to IT service provision and consulting, contractor backfill for vacant positions, recruitment costs and asset valuation services to meet VAGO audit requirements.</p> <p>Bad and doubtful debts Further analysis relating to debt recoverability is to be assessed in April to June.</p> <p>Other expenses The forecast is \$918K (\$124K negative variance to budget). This relates mainly to the late payment of 2021/22 Recreational Reserve payments to Wycheproof and Sea Lake committees.</p> <p>Capital Income The forecast is \$10M (\$3M negative variance to budget). Uncertainty remains around capital grants and the timing of the completion of grant funded capital works.</p> <p>Actual capital grants revenue as at 31 March 2023 is \$880K. As at 30 June 2022 there was</p>

Income Statement (Continued)		<p>\$4.9M capital grants received in advance. Once these capital projects have been completed, the revenue will be recognised.</p> <p>Roads to Recovery funding is expected to be received in May/June 2023 as projects are delivered. Capital projects nominated for Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) funding may not be delivered by 30 June 2023 as a result of the construction period being extended to 30 June 2024.</p>
Balance Sheet	<p><i>The Balance Sheet summarises the value of Assets (what Council owns) and our Liabilities (what Council owes), and the difference between assets and liabilities (Net Assets or Equity) reflects Council's net worth as at the end of the month reported.</i></p>	<p>Cash and cash equivalents Cash balances (incl. investments) are \$31.4M, which has remained steady since 30 June 2022.</p> <p>Trade and other receivables \$2.4M relates to grants receivable, mainly LRCI phase 3 which is expected to be received in May/June 2023. \$2.3M relates to rates debtors. This continues to decrease as debts are followed up on now that the 'pay in full' date has passed.</p> <p>Trust funds and deposits This related mainly to the Fire Services Property levy of which \$700K remained payable as at 31 March 2023. This has now been paid.</p>
Cashflow Statement	<p><i>The Cashflow Statement reflects actual results for the reporting period in line with statutory financial reporting.</i></p>	<p>\$4.2M has been used to support the capital works program as at 31 March 2023.</p> <p>Overall, there has been a reduction in cash of \$671K since 30 June 2022 and 31 March 2023.</p>
Cashflow Forecast	<p><i>The Cashflow Forecast is a projection of cashflow for the remainder of the year based on the month-end cash balance, the monthly budgets, specified timing parameters (such when BAS/super are due and quarterly rate receipts) and capital expenditure.</i></p> <p><i>The Cashflow Chart visually depicts the cashflow forecast and the updated format is illustrated in a dual design, based on best practice reporting.</i></p>	<p>Timing assumptions have been made regarding capital project income and expenditure for 2022/23. While this is still being confirmed in accordance with capital project delivery, all income and expenditure is reported in June 2023 by default unless otherwise specified.</p> <p>The cashflow forecast across the next 12 months results in a reduction of approximately \$4M.</p>
Capital Works Statement	<p><i>The Capital Works Statement lists the expenditure for each project incurred to date.</i></p>	<p>The total capital works program for 2022/23, including carry forwards from prior years, was \$21.6M. The total delivery as at 31 March 2023 was \$4.2M, representing 19%. The capital works program has been significantly impacted by the October 2022 flood event.</p> <p>The total anticipated carry forward projects currently equate to \$6.7M which is made up of 13 projects (highlighted in yellow). These will</p>

Capital Works Statement (Continued)		continue to be reviewed until 30 June 2023 as invoices are received and paid. A final list of carry forwards will then be brought to EMT for adoption.
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RELEVANT LAW

This report is consistent with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Council adopted its Annual Budget 2022-23 on 29 June 2022.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

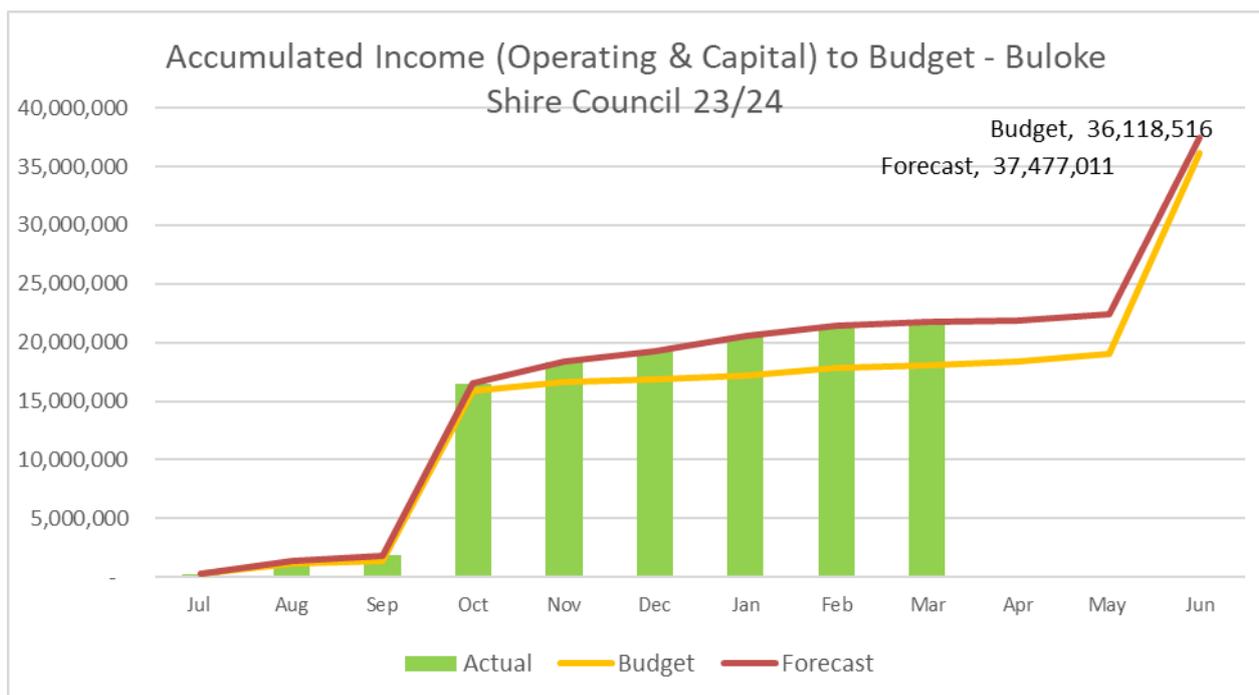
Not applicable.

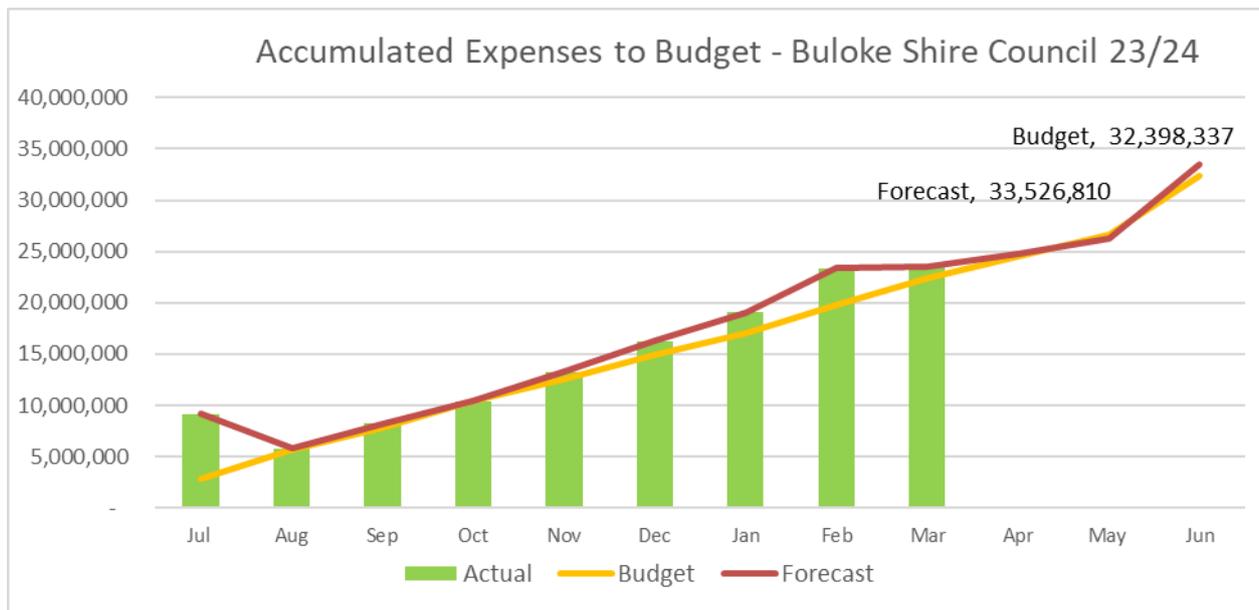
COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The tables below provide an overview of Council’s financial performance against Adopted budget income and expenses as at 31 March 2023.





REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council adopted its Annual Budget 2022/23 in June 2022. The Buloke Shire Council Plan 2021-25 outlines Council’s commitment to providing clear and concise reporting on a quarterly basis to Council.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Financial reporting ensures the Council and the Buloke community are aware of financial implications of decisions and actions. Reporting Council’s financial position allows the Council to monitor and respond to financial risk.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest.

8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

8.4.1 BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2023 - 2024

Author's Title: Manager Financial Strategy

Department: Corporate and Organisational Performance **File No:** FM/05/02

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to propose the endorsement of the Draft 2023-2024 Annual Budget (Draft Budget) and the commencement of a public submission process in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy as defined by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

SUMMARY

The Buloke Shire Council Draft Budget 2023-2024 (the draft Budget) has been developed over a number of workshops and briefings held with Councillors to allow discussion and debate. This has resulted in a draft budget that is reflective of Council's priorities as outlined in Buloke Shire Council's Long Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025.

In order to maintain provision of important services and capital works to the Buloke community, Council is proposing an increase to general rates and the municipal charge of 3.50 per cent, in line with the State Government's rate cap.

The year-end surplus in the 2023-2024 draft Budget is proposed to be \$6.6M. This can be compared to an audited surplus in 2021/22 of \$9.1M and a forecast surplus for 2022/23 of \$1.2M.

Income and expenditure relating to independence support currently still remains in the draft budget. The net cost to Council is approximately \$250K per annum on average, which includes direct costs and indirect costs (support functions of Council). Once it is determined by Council what the best use of these funds will be in the future, this budget will be redistributed accordingly.

The total capital works program equates to \$19.9M, including an estimated \$6.7M of carry forward projects. Further explanation around various items within the draft Budget have been outlined in the table below.

In accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy, community engagement will be undertaken on the draft Budget prior to Council's final consideration of the 2023/24 Annual Budget in June. It is proposed that this engagement period commences following Council's endorsement of the Draft Budget, and concludes at 12 noon, 1 June 2023.

An invitation will also be extended to people making a submission to present those submissions at the Council Meeting to be held on 14 June 2023. A Community Forum Summit is also proposed for 16 May 2023 which will provide a dedicated opportunity for community members to discuss elements of the Draft 2023/24 Annual Budget with Council.

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Having prepared the Draft 2023/24 Annual Budget and schedule of fees in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, gives notice of its endorsement;
2. Invites submissions in relation to any proposal contained with the Draft 2023/24 Annual Budget until 12 noon, 1 June 2023; and
3. Allows presentations in support of submissions to be heard at the Council Meeting to be held on 14 June 2023.

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE**SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN****CARRIED.****(R086/23)****Attachments:** 1 Draft Budget 2023/24 - Buloke Shire Council**DISCUSSION**

Item	Commentary
Rates charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general rates and municipal charge is proposed to increase by 3.50 per cent. The waste charge per service is proposed to remain unchanged at \$422. • There has been large increases in the draft Capital Improved Value (CIV) of properties. Most notably the farming category which has increased by 41%. • There is a proposed change to the differentials with the aim to evenly distribute the rates increase in 2023/24. Differentials are proposed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residential - 100% of general rates - Commercial and industrial – 115% of general rates (from 100%) - Farming – 53% of general rates (from 60%) • The proposed rates increase is compliant with Fair Go Rates System.
Capital grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is \$12.9M of capital grants budgeted for in 2023/24. The timing of such grants remains uncertain due to recent program extensions such as Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCl). • The Roads to Recovery program is entering the final year of funding and its future remains uncertain. • There is \$1.9M relating to funding dependent projects.
Employee costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total FTE including capitalised labour and grant funded positions is proposed to be 130 FTE, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 117 FTE establishment staff. - 1.8 FTE new position requests. - 5.5 FTE grant funded positions. - 5 FTE capitalised labour. - 1 FTE long term leave replacement. • The EBA negotiations are continuing and it is hoped to be agreed upon prior to 30 June 2023.
Materials and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenditure in this area is expected to return to 'pre-flood

	<p>event' levels in 2023/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 30th April 2023 onward, flood recovery works will be for road reconstruction projects that are expected to be capital in nature.
Cash balance projection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash is projected to decline across the next four years, mainly due to capital grants budgeted conservatively in the outer three years projected. Council expects to see non-recurrent grant income increase throughout these year as grants applications are successful.
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition assessments and revaluation of our roads, bridges and footpath assets is currently in progress and is anticipated to be completed prior to 30 June 2023. All other asset categories requiring revaluation will then be prioritised as soon as practicable.
Provisions	<p>This includes provisions for the following. All of which are expected to remain consistent but will be reviewed prior to 30 June 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - landfill rehabilitation. - gravel pit restoration. - employee entitlements, such as annual leave and long service leave. - Redundancies.
Lease liability	<p>Council has no borrowings however light fleet operating leases exist. This is expected to remain consistent.</p>
Reserves	<p>Reserves are currently held for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capital project initiations. - Grant opportunities. - Defined benefits super. - Sustainability fund. - Unspent grants. <p>In the near future a waste reserve will be created and modelling developed to track future surpluses in this area, to offset future waste related activities as they arise.</p>
Capital works program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The capital works program total equates to \$19.9M, including \$6.7M of carry forward projects. There is \$11M of renewal projects and \$8.9M of new, upgrades or expansion projects.
Flood recovery	<p>Council does not proactively budget for such events and associated costs. These events are expected to be nearly fully cost recovery. The eligibility of flood recovery costs continues to be analyzed on a frequent basis.</p>
Targeted performance indicators	<p>This is a new requirement in the 2023/24 budget in which Councils are required to set a forecast, budget and three-year projection of eight performance indicators (four service related and four financial related).</p> <p>Further improvement with regard to forward planning in these areas is required.</p>
Fees and charges	<p>A 3.50 per cent increase to the majority of non-statutory fees and charges has been applied.</p> <p>There are other fees that are set by statute and charged by</p>

	Council in addition to this listing. These are statutory fees, and are made in accordance with legislative requirements. These fees are updated as of 1 July 2023 and will be reflected on Council's website.
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RELEVANT LAW

The draft Budget has been prepared in accordance with relevant statutory requirements, including the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014* (the Regulations).

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council will be commencing community engagement for the Draft Budget through a community forum summit proposed for 16 May 2023.

OPTIONS

Council Officers modelled the financial implications of reducing general rates below the gazetted rate cap (3.50%). Modelling indicates a reduction of general rate revenue would impact Council's ability to sustain current service level standards and its ability to generate income through matched government grants over a 10-year period.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report, however the Draft Budget does include planned resource allocations toward sustainability, social and environmental services and projects.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Draft Budget engagement process will comprise media information across print, social and radio media. A copy of the Draft Budget will be made available to community forums and be placed on the Council's website. The process of community engagement is consistent with the Council's community engagement policy.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

There are no direct innovation and continuous improvement activities associated with this report.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Draft Budget is for the year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, and contains financial statements including a budgeted Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash flows, Statement of Capital Works and Statement of Human Resources.

These statements have been prepared for the year ending 30 June 2024 in accord with the Act and Regulations. They are consistent with the annual financial statements prepared in accord with the Australian Accounting Standards.

The Draft Budget also includes information about the rates and charges to be levied, the capital works program to be undertaken, the human resources required, and other information Council requires in order to make an informed decision about the adoption of the Budget.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Consideration has been given to other regional, state and national plans and policies as required throughout the preparation of this budget.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

The Draft Budget provides resourcing to enable continued implementation of Council's current plans and strategies.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council's engagement approach provides for receipt and consideration of submissions to the Draft Budget at a Council Meeting which is open to the public.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report had a conflict of interest.

8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Mayor's Month

ABC Interview - Emu working group

ABC Interview - VNI-West

Advance Sea Lake Meeting

Weekly Meetings with CEO Wayne O'Toole

Monthly Briefings

Council Meeting

Attend St Arnaud - VNI West Meeting with Cr Milne & Cr Warren

Attend Charlton Park - VNI West Meeting with Cr Warren, Cr Milne, Cr Simpson & Cr Pollard

Zoom Meeting with MAV Regional Meeting

Flow FM Shire Issues

Meet Community Members in Wycheproof re Emu's

ANZAC Day Services - Berriwillock, Charlton & Wycheproof

ABC Interview - Aged Care exit

ABC Interview (Swan Hill) - VNI West Transmission lines

CEO & Sal Corp de brief - CEO Review

Camp Draft Charlton Meeting with Cr Pollard CEO Wayne O'toole

Nullawil Progress Meeting

Take several Phone calls rate payers Emus & AEMO

Meeting with Dr Anne Webster & Jade Benham

Attend with Wayne & Kerrie Soulsby - VNI West fortnightly meeting including VFF, NGSC and AEMO

Loddon, Campaspe & Mallee Mayors & CEO's at Castlemaine

Loddon, Campaspe, Mallee Mayors & CEO's Meeting with AEMO re VNI West

Brief AEMO on farming practises and crop rotations etc.

Meeting Charlton Weir re weir boards closure

Phone hook up MAV Planning issues

Phone Meeting with Cr Murray Emerson Northern Gramps - VNI West

Cr Alan Getley

Mayor

Report from Cr Daryl Warren - Mount Jeffcott Ward

13/4/23 Workspace Meeting Bendigo
17/4/23 VFF Meeting in St Arnaud re AEMO Powerlines
19/4/23 Councillor Briefing Watchem
20/4/23 Meeting with Donald Bowls Club and Council Officers
Meals on Wheels Donald
24/4/23 Pick up Wreaths for ANZAC Day in Charlton
25/4/23 ANZAC Day Service Donald
26/4/23 DCP Meeting Donald
Donald 2000 Meeting
1/5/23 VFF Meeting AEMO - Charlton
Buloke Tourism Meeting - Birchip
3/5/23 Audit and Risk Meeting - Wycheproof
Councillor Briefing - Charlton
5/5/23 Attended and Opened the Donald Art Show
10/5/23 Council Meeting - Wycheproof

Cr Daryl Warren
Councillor

9. OTHER BUSINESS**9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION****9.1.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - VNI WEST PROPOSED TRANSMISSION LINE**

Author's Title: Councillor Getley

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/09/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Community Wellbeing

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider writing to the Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the State Electricity Commission as well as the CEO of AEMO, Daniel Westerman asking them to ensure future consultation on the VNI West Interconnector is done in a transparent and considered way, ensuring the views of the community and others are considered and responded to in an appropriate manner.

MOTION:

That Council write to the Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the State Electricity Commission as well as the Chief Executive Officer of Australian Energy Market Operator, Daniel Westerman, imploring them to:

1. Consult with the community in a genuine and deliberative manner, ensuring transparency is at the forefront of all consultation; and
2. Listen in a genuine and sympathetic manner to the concerns of the community and relevant subject matter experts and respond in a respectful and considered fashion.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

AMENDMENT TO MOTION PUT BY CR POLLARD:

That Council write to the Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the State Electricity Commission as well as the Chief Executive Officer of Australian Energy Market Operator, Daniel Westerman, imploring them to:

1. Consult with the community in a genuine and deliberative manner, ensuring transparency is at the forefront of all consultation;
2. Listen in a genuine and sympathetic manner to the concerns of the community and relevant subject matter experts and respond in a respectful and considered fashion; and
3. Support our ratepayers with their views.

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

NO SECONDER:

NOT SUPPORTED BY CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

ORIGINAL MOTION PUT:

That Council write to the Minister for Climate Action, Energy and Resources and the State Electricity Commission as well as the Chief Executive Officer of Australian Energy Market Operator, Daniel Westerman, imploring them to:

1. Consult with the community in a genuine and deliberative manner, ensuring transparency is at the forefront of all consultation; and
2. Listen in a genuine and sympathetic manner to the concerns of the community and relevant subject matter experts and respond in a respectful and considered fashion.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

**CARRIED.
(R087/23)**

Attachments: Nil

DISCUSSION

The Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) project will provide new transmission infrastructure to deliver clean energy to some consumers. This high-capacity transmission line will connect Western Renewables Link (WRL) in Victoria to EnergyConnect in New South Wales.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) published a consultation report in February 2023 calling for submissions up to 5 April, this timeframe was extended to members of the Victorian Farmers Federation for a further two weeks.

The subsequent consultation conducted by AEMO is considered by the community as being of a poor standard with non-experts initially sent to hand out question and answer sheets and take further questions on notice. Council agrees with the stance taken by many of the Buloke community in that the consultation has been lack lustre with very limited detail, creating fear in the community.

Feedback provided by eminent subject matter experts appears to have been dismissed by AEMO, this response by AEMO is very concerning to Council.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Not applicable

QUESTION FROM CR MILNE AND CR WARREN – Given timeframes of reports being provided to Government, do Council need to formulate another Notice of Motion at a later stage or can we address the matter tonight in “Urgent Business”?

THE MAYOR RESPONDED: Council can address the matter tonight in Urgent Business.

9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

9.2.1 CR WARREN – NRMA MEDIA RELEASE- EV CHARGING STATIONS

QUESTION FROM CR WARREN – Making reference to a Media Release from National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA) which outlined all Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations being rolled out right across Australia, which included Sea Lake in their roll out. Cr Warren made reference to Sea Lake already having an EV station. Can we investigate with NRMA if they could consider another location for this roll-out, rather than duplicate this service in Sea Lake, expressing concern there is none situated in the Sunraysia.

RESPONSE PROVIDED BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – A response will be prepared and sent to raise this matter with the NRMA.

9.2.2 CR MILNE – INFORMATION SOUGHT - EMAIL REGARDING PLANNING CONTROLS

QUESTION FROM CR MILNE: Cr Milne requested more information on an email regarding Planning Controls. And the potential of that to leave our remit is there any further information or place we can seek the opportunity to discuss this proposal.

RESPONSE PROVIDED BY MAYOR – The Mayor advised that there is a meeting being held on Friday on this matter, and that all information received from that meeting will be relayed back to the Councillors.

9.2.3 CR MILNE – ERAP FINAL REPORT FROM VEC

QUESTION FROM CR MILNE: Cr Milne asked when the Electoral Representation Advisory Panel's (ERAP) Final Report from Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) can be expected, understanding it was due today.

ANSWER PROVIDED BY DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: Council staff have not been advised by VEC on when to expect the final report, after a late change to the report finalisation methodology.

9.3 URGENT BUSINESS**9.3.1 MATTER OF URGENCY – VNI WEST PROJECT****MOTION:**

That Council accept the inclusion of the VNI West Project matter to be addressed in “Urgent Business”.

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

**CARRIED.
(R088/23)**

MATTER OF URGENCY – VNI WEST PROJECT**MOTION:**

That Buloke Shire Council advocate to the Minister for Energy and Resources, Lilly D’Ambrosio, to suspend the installation of the VNI West Project within the Buloke Shire, and implore her to consult in a genuine and open manner to those to be potentially impacted by the installation of the proposed project.

MOVED: CR DARYL WARREN

SECONDED: CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

**CARRIED.
(R089/23)**

9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nil

9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC**MOTION:**

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain confidential information on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 9.5.1 | CEO PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | (f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs

CEO performance review |
|-------|---|---|

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.

(R090/23)

10. MEETING CLOSE

Meeting closed at 7.57pm