



Council Meeting **Agenda**

Wednesday 16 July 2025

Commencing at 7:00 pm

Wycheproof Supper Room
367 Broadway, Wycheproof

Wayne O'Toole
Chief Executive Officer



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1 COUNCIL WELCOME AND STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

WELCOME

The Mayor Cr Alan Getley will welcome all in attendance.

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Mayor Cr Alan Getley will acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

2 RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18 June, 2025.

4 REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

5 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Section 130 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* Councillors who have a conflict of interest in respect of a matter being considered at this meeting, must

- a) Disclose the conflict of interest in the manner required by the Council's Governance Rules 2022; and
- b) Exclude themselves from the decision-making process in relation to that matter, including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting or delegated committee, and any action in relation to the matter.

Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

6 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

7 PROCEDURAL ITEMS**7.1 REPORT OF COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES****Author's Title:** Executive Assistant to CEO**Directorate:** Office of the CEO**File No:**
GO/05/04**PURPOSE**

To report on the Assembly of Councillors from 12 June – 9 July 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council note the Assembly of Councillors from 12 June – 9 July 2025.

Attachments: 1. Attachment 7.1.1 - Councillor Briefing Record - 2 July 2025

Date	Cr Attendees	Meeting Item
18/6/25 7pm Wycheproof Hall Supper Room	Cr Getley, Cr Milne, Cr Delaney, Cr Hogan, Cr Barratt	Council Meeting
2/7/25 3pm Charlton Shire Office Council Chamber	Cr Getley, Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Barratt, Cr Delaney (Cr Stafford via teams)	Councillor Briefing



Councillor Briefing Record

Build a Better Buloke – a healthy, connected, inclusive and prosperous community

Date:	2 July 2025	Time	3:00pm
Location:	Charlton Council Chamber		
Acknowledgement of Country:	The Mayor will acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting and pay our respects to their Elders and to the Elders from other communities who may be here today.		

ITEMS

NO.	MATTER FOR DISCUSSION	
1.	Councillor Only time/ Welcome:	4.15pm
2.	Apologies: Markus Phillips - Charlton Neighbourhood House Leonie Burrows - Loddon Mallee Regional	
3.	Attendees: Cr Getley, Cr Milne, Cr Hogan, Cr Delaney, Cr Barratt, Wayne O'Toole, Daniel McLoughlan (DM), Jenna Allan, Gaynor Atkin	
4.	Guests: Wayne Litton - Charlton Neighbourhood House Leanne Rosewall - Loddon Mallee Regional Development Australia (RDA) Nigel MacDonald - Charlton Alycia O'Sullivan - BSC Manager Community Partnerships Lachlan Start – Aquatics Team Leader Trevor Rumbold - BSC Senior Engineer Buildings and Open Spaces	
5.	Declaration of Conflict of Interest	
6.	Confirmation of Councillor Briefing Notes – 4 June 2025	
7.	Presentations	
7.1	Charlton Neighbourhood House	
8.1	Briefing Reports End of Season Pool Report	
8.2	Briefing Report Birchip Recreation Master Plan	
7.2	Presentation Nigel MacDonald	
9.	Councillor Matters	
10.	CEO Updates	
Dinner		
	Presentation	



7.3	Loddon Mallee Regional Development Australia RDA	
11.	Next Briefing - 6 August - Nullawil Recreation Reserve 3:00pm	
12.	Close Meeting	8.30pm

7.2 STATUS OF ACTION OF PAST COUNCIL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

Author's Title: Executive Assistant to CEO

Directorate: Office of the CEO

File No:
Governance

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a list of the Status of Action (SOA) of Council Resolutions outstanding for completion of action, and the SOA for the 18 June 2025 Council Meeting Resolutions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Status of Actions Report for Council resolutions documented in the report.

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 for completion of action and introducing the SOA for the 18 June 2025 Council Meeting Resolutions.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 7.2.1 - Action Taken on Council Res - Outstanding Items and items from CM 18 June 2025 - tabled 16 July CM -

Summary of Action on Council Resolutions – Outstanding from past Council Meetings & 18 June CM – to be tabled 16 July 2025

Date	Directorate	Item	Resolution/Question	Actioning Officer/s	Status of Action	Complete or Commenced
02082023	Infrastructure & Delivery	8.2.1	That Council: 1. Notes following consultation process in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy, one submission was received to the proposed nine-lot subdivision sale of land at 110 Sutcliffe Street, Sea Lake; 2. Sells nine-lot subdivision surplus land at 110 Sutcliff St, Sea Lake by private treaty or auction in accord sec 114 of the Local Gov Act 2020 and Council's Sale of Land Policy; and 3. Authorises the CEO to execute the Transfer of Land documents and any other documents required to affect the sale of the land.	Director Infrastructure & Delivery	GWM Water approval obtained, procurement for works has commenced. Civil contractor has recommended works. 290524 - Plumbing works for water, sewer and stormwater commence in June, final civil works to follow. Valuation complete to inform sale of land process to be undertaken. (MS)	Commenced
18122024	Corporate	8.1.2	Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy. 1. Having prepared the Revised Draft Governance Rules in accordance with section 60 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , approves and commences a 9-week process of community consultation in relation to the Revised Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy, and makes the Revised Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy available for Public Exhibition via Council's website; 1. Allows persons to make submissions in writing in relation to any proposal contained	Director Corporate & Organisational Performance	Progress has been delayed due to impending legal advice that is required before returning the draft proposed rules to a Council Meeting.	Delayed

Tabled 16 July 2025 Council Meeting

Summary of Action on Council Resolutions – Outstanding from past Council Meetings & 18 June CM – to be tabled 16 July 2025

Date	Directorate	Item	Resolution/Question	Actioning Officer/s	Status of Action	Complete or Commenced
			<p>within the Revised Draft Governance Rules and/or Draft Election Period Policy; and</p> <p>2. Allows presentations in support of written submissions to be heard at the Council Meeting on 19 March 2025 prior to the proposed adoption of the Draft Governance Rules and Draft Election Period Policy at this Meeting.</p>			
19022025	Corporate	9.5.1	Sale of properties for recovery of unpaid rates and charges	Director Corporate & Organisational Performance	Brought to Council. Sale process underway	Commenced
16042025	Infrastructure & Delivery	8.2.2	Variation to Contract C125	Director Infrastructure & Delivery	Variation applied to contract	Commenced
21052025	Community Development	8.2.1	Community Grants Action the approval of community Grants	Director Community Development	Ongoing	Completed
18062025	Community Development	8.2.1	<p>Wimmera Southern Mallee Development – Membership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Withdraw membership from Wimmera Southern Mallee Development 2. CEO to provide Wimmera Southern Mallee Development with the required 12 months notice of its intention to withdraw as a Municipal Member as per the MOU 	CEO	Letter drafted and emailed to WSMD	Completed
18062025	Community Development	8.4.2	Council Plan 2025-2029	DCD DCOP		Completed

Tabled 16 July 2025 Council Meeting

Summary of Action on Council Resolutions – Outstanding from past Council Meetings & 18 June CM – to be tabled 16 July 2025

Date	Directorate	Item	Resolution/Question	Actioning Officer/s	Status of Action	Complete or Commenced
			3. Provides a written response to community members and stakeholders who provide feedback on the Draft Council Plan.			
18062025	CEO	8.5	Councillor Reports Cr Barratt – That council write a letter of congratulations to Mr Mick Giddings of Wycheproof in recognition of his recent receipt of an OAM award.	CEO	Congratulation letter from Mayor written and mailed.	Completed
18062025	CEO	9.2	Councillor Questions – Police Shortage in Buloke That Council advocate on behalf of the shire and its towns on the shortage of police officers in Buloke, to try to speed up the placement of officers.	CEO	Letter written and emailed to Anthony Carbines, Minister of Police	Completed

8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 POLICY REPORTS

8.1.1 FRAUD AND CORRUPTION REPORTING POLICY

Author's Title: Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

Directorate: Corporate and Organisational Performance

File No: CA17

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Council leadership and engagement
Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

To present to Council the reviewed Fraud and Corruption Policy for adoption.

SUMMARY

Buloke Shire Council is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics, integrity and accountability and ensuring that good governance practices are implemented across all levels of the organisation. Fraud and corruption are incompatible with these core values and will not be tolerated by Council.

Council is also committed to developing an organisational culture that prevents, detects and responds to reported instances of fraud and corruption in order to ensure that public funds and Council assets are not compromised to the detriment of the local community.

A review of the policy has been undertaken by the Executive Management Team in consultation with an engaged legal service, Macquarie Lawyers. Council staff were also provided training by Macquarie Lawyers on the topic of fraud and corruption at the recent All Staff Meeting held on 19 June 2025.

Council last reviewed the Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy in February 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1.** Adopts the Fraud and Corruption Policy
- 2.** Endorses the commencement of the planning and development of an Organisational Fraud and Corruption Control Plan as an attachment to and in support of, the Fraud and Corruption Policy

DISCUSSION

A review of the Council Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy has been completed and a revised and updated Policy has been developed. As no major material changes have been made to the content of the policy, it is not considered necessary to undertake community engagement. A copy of the tracked changes and revised Policy has been attached to this report for reference.

In summary the proposed changes presented within the reviewed policy include:

1. Inserted a definition of conflict of interest
2. Aligned definitions to the AS8001:2021
3. Streamlined reporting channels
4. Strengthened language throughout
5. Clarified the scope of the Policy to extend to those who provide services, supply goods or carry out works for Council
6. Removed redundant legislative references
7. Ensured the use of gender-neutral language

Throughout the review process, it has been identified that the previously outdated policy (due for review in 2024), would benefit from a supporting document to provide more detailed actions to extend upon and strengthen Council's policy position. This document will inform the actions and procedures of Council which are relevant to the Fraud and Corruption Policy and be named the Organisational Fraud and Corruption Control Plan.

Development of the proposed Organisational Fraud and Corruption Control Plan would require consultation with Council's Audit and Risk Committee, Councillors and Council Staff.

RELEVANT LAW

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Crimes Act 1958*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Regulations 2019*
- Buloke Shire Public Interest Disclosure Framework
- Buloke Shire Councillor Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Staff Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Employee Assistance Program Policy
- Buloke Shire Council Procurement Policy

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council last adopted the Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy in February 2022.

OPTIONS

Council may choose not to adopt the revised policy; or to adopt the policy and to not endorse the commencement of the development of an Organisational Fraud and Corruption Control Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not required.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The title of the report has been altered to reflect more accurately the broader nature of the scope and purpose of the policy.

COLLABORATION

The Executive Management Team have worked with Macquarie Lawyers to review and update the existing policy.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The review of the policy and facilitation of all staff training for fraud and corruption in local government has been through the engagement of legal services from Macquarie Lawyers. The financial impact of this engagement has been at a minimal cost to Council and budgeted for within Council's operational budget for training and development.

Training for officers and an up-to-date Fraud and Corruption Policy aims to prevent future financial risks to Council.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2025 – 2029 (Strategic Objective 5: Council Leadership and Engagement)

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officer involved in the preparation of this report or the review of this policy has declared a conflict of interest.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.1.1.1 - Tracked Amended Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy
2. Attachment 8.1.1.2 - Clean version amended Fraud and Corruption Policy 2025



POLICY LOCATION	Corporate Services	POLICY TITLE	Fraud and Corruption Policy Reporting
POLICY NUMBER	CA17	DATE ADOPTED	9 Feb 2022
REVISION NUMBER	3	REVISION DATE	June 2025 Feb-2024

Purpose

~~Buloke Shire The Council is committed has a firm commitment~~ to maintaining the highest standards of ethics, integrity and accountability and ~~ensuring that~~ good governance practices ~~are implemented across all levels of the organisation.~~

~~Fraud and corruption are incompatible with these values and will not be tolerated.~~

~~Council is also committed to developing an organisational culture that prevents, detects and responds to reported instances of fraud and corruption in order to ensure that public funds and Council assets are not compromised to the detriment of the local community.~~

~~Council does not tolerate fraudulent or corrupt activities by its Workers, nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.~~

~~Council will commence disciplinary action in respect of any person involved in fraudulent or corrupt activities.~~

~~Council expects Workers to act with propriety in all Council activities and is committed to educating Workers on their responsibilities for mitigating fraud and corruption risks and providing an organisational culture, supported by policies and procedures, to minimise, deter, detect, report, and investigate suspected fraudulent or corrupt incidents.~~

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ~~Confirm clearly document~~ Council's commitment to protecting Council property, assets, and public money against internal and external fraud and corruption;
- Provide a framework for the mitigation and control of fraud and corruption; and
- ~~Facilitate reporting~~ ~~Facilitate reporting~~ to Council of suspected fraudulent and

corrupt activities. ~~This document represents the current policy of Council until it is revised or rescinded.~~

Scope

This Policy applies to all Workers ~~which is a term defined under this Policy to include –~~

- ~~Councillors~~
- ~~Council employees~~
- ~~Persons engaged by Council as contractors or sub-contractors~~
- ~~Persons who act as volunteers for or on behalf of Council~~
- ~~External parties who supply goods, provide services or carry out works for Council.~~

Commented [GW1]: This information has been relocated below

~~of any organisation providing goods or services on behalf of Council and other approved users of Council assets.~~

~~This Policy encourages the making of protected disclosures of improper conduct to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)* and Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedures. This Policy further facilitates the reporting to Council of suspected fraudulent and corrupt activities, where disclosure to IBAC is not appropriate or chosen. This Policy therefore operates in conjunction with those documents but does not restate the provisions contained within them.~~

Definitions

In this Policy –

~~Conflict of interest~~ means a situation where a Worker's private interests interfere with or may be seen to interfere with their professional duties to Council.

~~"Corruption"~~ means a dishonest activity in which a person acts that is against the interests of Council and the abuses their of a position of trust to achieve personal gain or advantage for themselves or another person to the disadvantage of Council, oneself or others.

Examples of corruption include:



- Asking for, payment of or receiving money, gifts and bribes for personal gain;
- Accepting favours for preferential treatment;
- A ~~serious~~ conflict of interest that is not managed and which may influence a decision;
- Manipulation of procurement processes so as to favour one tenderer over another; ~~and~~
- Nepotism, where an individual is appointed to a role due to their existing relationships, rather than on merit.

~~For the purposes of this policy, Corruption includes activities which may not constitute corrupt conduct within the meaning of the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 (Vic), but for which the conduct still constitutes a dishonest activity that is against the interests of Council.~~

~~"Employee" means an employee of Council.~~

~~"Ethics" are the principles, morals and beliefs which guide us in our actions.~~

~~"Fraud" means a dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to Council, including theft of moneys or other property, involving the use of deception that causes actual or potential financial loss to Council.~~

Examples of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- Misappropriation of Council revenue in the form of cash, money orders, cheques or electronic funds transfer;
- Misuse of position to gain a financial advantage, including improperly obtaining allowances;
- Misuse or theft of Council data and information, including selling information;
- Private use of Council property, buildings, plant, equipment, vehicles or other Council assets and inventory;
- Misuse of fleet or corporate cards;
- Theft of Council assets including but not limited to property, plant, equipment or vehicles;
- Falsifying travel expenses and overtime claims on timesheets;
- False invoicing of goods or services not received or delivered, or inflating the value of the goods and services;
- Alteration or destruction or forgery of data for fraudulent purposes or misappropriation of software owned or licensed by Council;
- Business identity fraud which occurs when commercially sensitive information is used without permission to obtain credit, goods or other services fraudulently;
- Misuse of one's position to gain a financial advantage; and
- Misrepresentation of qualifications in order to secure a particular position of employment.

~~Fraud also includes but is not limited to dishonest activity that is sufficient to constitute an offence under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic).~~

~~"Risk Management" the principles, framework and processes in place for managing risk effectively.~~

~~"Risk" the effect (both positive and negative) of uncertainty on objectives.~~

~~"Workers" includes Councillors, means a Council employees, Council contractors and sub-contractors, Council volunteers and external parties who, Councillor, Chief Executive Officer or work experience student.~~



Policy Statement



Council acknowledges the importance of demonstrating to the ~~local community residents and ratepayers of the Buloke Shire~~ that Council is managing its ~~operations business~~ efficiently, effectively, and ethically to deliver results, including through:

- The adoption of a risk management approach to fraud and corruption;
- The minimisation and deterrence, detection ~~and~~ investigation, ~~and prosecution~~ of cases of fraud and corruption, ~~including taking disciplinary action where required~~; and
- The promotion and maintenance of a high standard of ethical behaviour and fraud and corruption awareness ~~amongst its Workers~~.

Fraud and corruption control is concerned with the effective utilisation of resources ~~in order to and the minimisation of waste, mismanagement and prevent, detect and respond to~~ fraudulent or corrupt activity.

Measures to mitigate fraud and corruption ~~are should be~~ continually monitored, reviewed, and developed ~~by Council~~, particularly as new systems or arrangements are introduced or modified.

Council will actively seek to minimise and deter fraud and corruption at its origin through the development and maintenance of an effective integrity framework. ~~This~~ framework provides oversight on matters including but not limited to conflicts of interest, employment, procurement, misuse of information, assets and resources, delegations and authority, and unlawful/inappropriate conduct.

Fraud and corruption flourishes in an environment where there are insufficient controls to mitigate waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Council believes an emphasis on fraud and corruption mitigation, rather than fraud and corruption investigation, will lead to a reduction of these opportunities. ~~for waste, abuse, and mismanagement~~.

Prompt action does, however, need to be taken when fraud and/or corruption are detected, both to bring the fraud and/or corruption to an end and to discourage others who may be inclined to commit similar actions.

~~Fraud is a crime which is punishable by law under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) which can result in loss or detriment to Council's reputation, damage to business relations, a decline in staff working morale and external investigation.~~

This Policy is committed to and ~~is~~ guided by the principles of:

- The highest standards of legal, ethical and moral behaviour;
- Ensuring the organisational culture and embedded controls effectively mitigate fraud and corruption;
- Natural justice; and
- Ensuring compliance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* ~~(Vic)~~ and Council's Public Interest Policy and Procedures.

Council is committed to protecting property, assets and public money against internal and external fraud and corruption. Key elements of this involve:

- Implementing effective internal control structures and procedures which aim to eliminate the opportunity for fraud and corruption to occur. This can be achieved by analysing operational risks to proactively identify potential opportunities for fraudulent acts and implementing internal controls and separating roles and functions;



- Development and maintenance of Council's risk register and fraud register in documenting risks to Council and current and proposed controls;
- Requiring all new Employees to undertake fraud and corruption awareness training during their induction and facilitating ongoing fraud awareness modules on a regular basis by the relevant Officer;
- Encouraging all Workers to report suspected fraud-related or corruption-related activity or behaviour, considering confidentiality requirements and protection for the person reporting the suspected fraud or corruption ~~either informally or~~ in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)*, as applicable;
- Confirming Council's ongoing commitment to a policy of minimisation and deterrence, detection, investigation ~~including formal disciplinary proceedings and prosecution of individual cases of fraud and corruption, including formal discipline and/or referral to the Victorian Police and/or IBAC (where applicable); and~~
- Establishing reporting protocols which require all Workers to report suspected fraud and corruption.

Commented [GW2]: If Council is prepared to allow officers to report fraud and corruption 'informally' it needs to be explained what this means i.e referral to their direct report or line manager

Commented [GW3]: Reference to prosecution has been removed as Council has no ability to prosecute individuals.

Guidelines

Reporting Fraud and Corruption

1. All Workers have a responsibility to prevent fraud and corruption as far as practicable. This includes identifying and act on fraud and corruption risks and promptly reporting incidents of suspected fraud or corruption encountered during work activities.
2. ~~Where a member of the public reports alleged fraudulent or corrupt activities of a Worker, such report shall be treated in accordance with Council's Public Interest Policy and any associated procedures.~~
3. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by another Worker, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Protected Interest Disclosure Coordinator, or immediate Supervisor or Director or in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy and any associated procedures, as applicable.
4. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by the Chief Executive Officer, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Mayor.
5. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by a Councillor, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Chief Executive Officer or the Mayor.
6. In the event of an alleged fraudulent or corrupt activity, the person against whom the allegations are made shall be notified at the earliest available opportunity. Any such person shall have a support person and/or receive assistance and support under Council's Employee Assistance Program policy and procedures during an investigation into any such conduct but is not obliged to receive such assistance if it is not required, do so.
7. ~~Workers may also do have the option to report suspected fraud or corruption directly to an external agency such as IBAC, Victoria Police or the Victorian Local Government Inspectorate. and should make themselves aware of Council's Fraud and Corruption Reporting Procedure and Public Interest Disclosure policy and any associated procedures, as applicable.~~

Commented [GW4]: Relocated to the end of this part.



8. Where a member of the public reports alleged fraudulent or corrupt activities of a Worker, such report shall be treated in accordance with Council's Public Interest Policy and any associated procedures.

This Policy encourages the making of protected disclosures of improper conduct to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 (Vic)* and Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy and Procedures. This Policy further facilitates the reporting to Council of suspected fraudulent and corrupt activities, where disclosure to IBAC is not appropriate or chosen. This Policy therefore operates in conjunction with those documents but does not restate the provisions contained within them.



Investigating Fraud and Corruption

1. The Chief Executive Officer or ~~their his or her~~ delegate will decide how any investigation into fraud or corruption will be conducted, including whether any external assistance is to be sought. ~~However Where~~ an allegation is made against the Chief Executive Officer into fraud or corruption, the Mayor is responsible for ~~investigating reporting~~ such allegations. All decisions shall be recorded and the response (if any) recorded. The provisions of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* will otherwise be followed, as appropriate.
2. Council respects the civil rights of individuals, including Workers, and is committed to natural justice and the protection ~~afforded to of~~ those making protected disclosures. In circumstances where ~~an the~~ allegation of fraud or corruption ~~is made, carries the imputation of criminal conduct, then such~~ a Worker's right to silence shall be recognised.

Roles and Responsibility

1. The Councillor Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct provides guidance to Workers regarding accepted practice and behaviour. Council values also reinforce ethical behaviour.
2. The Chief Executive Officer is the Officer responsible for fraud and corruption control within Council.
3. Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Managers are responsible for creating an environment within their departments which makes active fraud and corruption control a responsibility of all Workers.
4. Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring there are clear standards and procedures to minimise and deter fraud and corruption.
5. Senior Managers have responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment and identifying potential risk areas within their Department and establishing and monitoring controls to eliminate or reduce the fraud and corruption risk. Such controls must be documented and reviewed.
6. Senior Managers are to display a commitment to help set high standards, be vigilant about identifying problems and ethical dilemmas, and will request Workers to come forward about potential problems or concerns ~~in a supportive environment without fear of reprisal.~~
7. Senior Managers and Supervisors will ensure all contractors engaged within their department are aware of Council's Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy and Procedures and reference to these are incorporated into contracts to ensure contractors and their employees are aware of their responsibilities and acceptable behaviours.
8. All Workers must familiarise themselves with ~~this e-Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy~~ and Procedures.
9. All Workers have a responsibility to safeguard Council assets against misuse or improper use or the appearance of misuse or improper use and must not use their position with Council to improperly gain personal advantage or confer advantage or disadvantage on any other person.

Policy Review

A review of this Policy and an evaluation of fraud and corruption control arrangements is to be undertaken every two years as a minimum ~~or earlier if required.~~



Breach of this Policy




Council may take disciplinary action against an Employee who is found to ~~have~~ breached this ~~P~~policy and its associated procedures in accord with Council's Disciplinary Action policy. Such disciplinary action will be separate to any actions taken by external agencies such as Victoria Police or IBAC.

Suspected breaches of this policy by ~~all other~~ Workers will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer ~~for~~ investigation.
~~in accord with Council's mandatory notification requirements.~~

Related Policies and Legislation References

This Policy was developed in accord with:

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Crimes Act 1958* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011* ~~(Vic)~~
- ~~*Integrity and Accountability Legislation Amendment (Public Interest Disclosures, Oversight and Independence) Act 2019* ~~(Vic)~~~~
- *Local Government Act 2020* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* ~~(Vic)~~
- *Public Interest Disclosures Regulations 2019* ~~(Vic)~~
- Buloke Shire Public Interest Disclosure Framework
- Buloke Shire Councillor Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Staff Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Employee Assistance Program Policy
- Buloke Shire Council Procurement Policy

			
POLICY LOCATION	Corporate Services	POLICY TITLE	Fraud and Corruption Policy
POLICY NUMBER	CA17	DATE ADOPTED	July 2025
REVISION NUMBER	4	REVISION DATE	July 2027

Purpose

Buloke Shire Council is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics, integrity and accountability and ensuring that good governance practices are implemented across all levels of the organisation.

Fraud and corruption are incompatible with these core values and will not be tolerated by Council.

Council is also committed to developing an organisational culture that prevents, detects and responds to reported instances of fraud and corruption in order to ensure that public funds and Council assets are not compromised to the detriment of the local community.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Confirm Council's commitment to protecting Council property, assets and public money against internal and external fraud and corruption;
- Provide a framework for the mitigation and control of fraud and corruption; and
- Facilitate reporting to Council of suspected fraudulent and corrupt activities.

Scope

This Policy applies to all 'Workers' which is a term defined under this Policy to include –

- Councillors;
- Council employees;
- Persons engaged by Council as contractors or sub-contractors;
- Persons who act as volunteers for or on behalf of Council; and
- External parties who supply goods, provide services or carry out works for Council.

Definitions

In this Policy –

Conflict of interest means a situation where a Worker's private interests interfere with or may be seen to interfere with their professional duties owed to Council.

Corruption means a dishonest activity in which a person acts against the interests of Council and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve personal advantage for themselves or another person to the disadvantage of Council.

Examples of corruption include:



- Asking for payment of or receiving money, gifts or bribes for personal gain;
- Accepting favours for preferential treatment;
- A conflict of interest that is not managed and which may influence a decision;
- Manipulation of procurement processes so as to favour one tenderer over another; and
- Nepotism, where an individual is appointed to a role due to their existing relationships, rather than on merit.

Fraud means a dishonest activity causing actual or potential financial loss to Council, including theft of moneys or other property.

Examples of fraud include, but are not limited to:

- Misappropriation of Council revenue in the form of cash, money orders, cheques or electronic funds transfer;
- Misuse of position to gain a financial advantage, including improperly obtaining allowances;
- Misuse or theft of Council data and information, including selling information;
- Private use of Council property, buildings, plant, equipment, vehicles or other Council assets and inventory;
- Misuse of fleet or corporate cards;
- Theft of Council assets such as property, plant, equipment or vehicles;
- Falsifying travel expenses and overtime claims on timesheets;
- False invoicing of goods or services not received or delivered, or inflating the value of the goods and services;
- Alteration or destruction or forgery of data for fraudulent purposes or misappropriation of software owned or licensed by Council;
- Business identity fraud which occurs when commercially sensitive information is used without permission to obtain credit, goods or other services fraudulently;
- Misuse of one's position to gain a financial advantage; and
- Misrepresentation of qualifications in order to secure a particular position of employment.

Workers includes Councillors, Council employees, Council contractors and sub-contractors, Council volunteers and external parties who supply goods, provide services or carry out works for Council.

Policy Statement



Council acknowledges the importance of demonstrating to the local community that it is managing its operations efficiently, effectively and ethically to deliver results, including through:

- The adoption of a risk management approach to fraud and corruption;
- The minimization, deterrence, detection and investigation of fraud and corruption, including taking disciplinary action where required; and
- The promotion and maintenance of a high standard of ethical behaviour and fraud and corruption awareness amongst its Workers.

Fraud and corruption control is concerned with the effective utilisation of resources in order to prevent, detect and respond to fraudulent or corrupt activity.

Measures to mitigate fraud and corruption are continually monitored, reviewed and developed by Council, particularly as new systems or arrangements are introduced or modified.

Council will actively seek to minimise and deter fraud and corruption at its origin through an effective integrity framework. This framework provides oversight on matters including but not limited to conflicts of interest, employment, procurement, misuse of information, assets and resources, the exercise of delegations and authority, and unlawful or inappropriate conduct.

Fraud and corruption flourishes in an environment where there are insufficient controls to mitigate waste, abuse and mismanagement. Council believes an emphasis on fraud and corruption mitigation, rather than investigation, will lead to a reduction in these opportunities.

Prompt action needs to be taken when fraud or corruption are detected, both to bring the conduct to an end and to discourage others who may be inclined to commit similar actions.

This Policy is committed to and is guided by the principles of:

- The highest standards of legal, ethical and moral behaviour;
- Ensuring the organisational culture and embedded controls effectively mitigate fraud and corruption;
- Natural justice; and
- Ensuring compliance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* and Council's Public Interest Policy and Procedures.

Council is committed to protecting property, assets and public money against internal and external fraud and corruption.

Key elements of this involve:

- Implementing effective internal control structures and procedures which aim to eliminate the opportunity for fraud and corruption to occur. This can be achieved by analysing operational risks to proactively identify potential opportunities for fraudulent acts and implementing internal controls and separating roles and functions;



- Development and maintenance of Council's risk register and fraud register in documenting risks to Council and current and proposed controls;
- Requiring all new Employees to undertake fraud and corruption awareness training during their induction and facilitating ongoing fraud awareness training modules on a regular basis;
- Encouraging all Workers to report suspected fraud or corruption-related activity or behaviour
- Ensuring that Workers are aware of the confidentiality requirements and protection which applies to a person reporting suspected fraud or corruption in accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*;
- Confirming Council's ongoing commitment to a policy of minimisation and deterrence, detection and investigation including formal disciplinary proceedings and/or referral to the Victorian Police and/or IBAC (where applicable); and
- Establishing reporting protocols which require all Workers to report suspected fraud and corruption.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Councillor Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct provides guidance to Workers regarding accepted practices and behaviours. Council values also reinforce ethical behaviour.
2. The Chief Executive Officer is the Officer responsible for fraud and corruption control within Council.
3. Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Managers are responsible for creating an environment within their respective departments which makes active fraud and corruption control a responsibility of all Workers.
4. Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring there are clear standards and procedures to minimise and deter fraud and corruption.
5. Senior Managers have responsibility for undertaking a risk assessment and identifying potential risk areas within their Department and establishing and monitoring controls to eliminate or reduce the fraud and corruption risk. Such controls must be documented and reviewed.
6. Senior Managers are to display a commitment to help set high standards, be vigilant about identifying problems and ethical dilemmas, and will request Workers to come forward about potential problems or concerns in a supportive environment without fear of reprisal.
7. Senior Managers and Supervisors will ensure all contractors engaged within their department are aware of Council's Fraud and Corruption Reporting Policy and Procedures and reference to these are incorporated into contracts to ensure contractors and their employees are aware of their responsibilities and acceptable behaviours.
8. All Workers must familiarise themselves with this Policy and associated Procedures.
9. All Workers have a responsibility to safeguard Council assets against misuse or improper use or the appearance of misuse or improper use and must not use their position with Council to improperly gain personal advantage or confer advantage or disadvantage on any other person.



Reporting Fraud and Corruption

1. All Workers have a responsibility to prevent fraud and corruption as far as practicable. This includes identifying risks and promptly reporting incidents of suspected fraud or corruption.
2. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by another Worker, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Protected Interest Disclosure Coordinator in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Policy and associated procedures.
3. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by the Chief Executive Officer, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Mayor.
4. Any Worker who becomes aware, or has grounds to suspect, fraud or corruption has been carried out by a Councillor, must report the matter as soon as possible to the Chief Executive Officer or the Mayor.
5. In the event of an alleged fraudulent or corrupt activity, the person against whom the allegations are made shall be notified at the earliest available opportunity. Any such person shall have a support person and/or receive assistance and support under Council's Employee Assistance Program Policy and procedures during an investigation into any such conduct but is not obliged to receive such assistance if it is not required.
6. Workers may also report suspected fraud or corruption directly to an external agency such as IBAC, Victoria Police or the Victoria Local Government Inspectorate.
7. Where a member of the public reports alleged fraudulent or corrupt activities of a Worker, such report shall be treated in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosures Policy and any associated procedures.

Investigating Fraud and Corruption

1. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate will decide how an investigation into fraud or corruption will be conducted, including whether any external assistance is to be sought. Where an allegation is made against the Chief Executive Officer into fraud or corruption, the Mayor is responsible for investigating such allegations. All decisions shall be recorded and the response (if any) recorded. The provisions of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* will otherwise be followed, as appropriate.
2. Council respects the civil rights of individuals, including Workers, and is committed to natural justice and the protection afforded to those making protected disclosures. In circumstances where an allegation of fraud or corruption is made, a Worker's right to silence shall be recognised.

Breach of this Policy



Suspected breaches of this policy by a Workers will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for investigation.

Council may take disciplinary action against an Employee who is found to have breached this Policy and its associated procedures in accordance with Council's Disciplinary Action Policy. Such disciplinary action will be separate to any actions taken by external agencies such as Victoria Police or IBAC.

Policy Review

A review of this Policy and an evaluation of fraud and corruption control arrangements will be undertaken every two years as a minimum, or earlier if required.

Related Policies and Legislation

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Crimes Act 1958*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*
- *Public Interest Disclosures Regulations 2019*
- Buloke Shire Public Interest Disclosure Framework
- Buloke Shire Councillor Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Staff Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Council Employee Assistance Program Policy
- Buloke Shire Council Procurement Policy

8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8.2.1 BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Author's Title:	Manager Community Partnerships
------------------------	--------------------------------

Directorate: Community Development

File No: RC/10/26

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective:

- Built and natural environment
- Advocate and plan for, and manage community buildings, roads and transport networks
- Welcoming and accessible parks and open spaces
- Prosperous and growing economy
- Promote Buloke as a great place to visit, live and invest

PURPOSE

To present the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Master Plan for endorsement to be placed on public exhibition from Wednesday 16 July 2025 to Tuesday 5 August 2025.

SUMMARY

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan aims to provide direction to Council, the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management and user groups to guide the management and development of Birchip Recreation Reserve for the next twelve years.

The draft Master Plan was developed in close consultation with the Committee of Management, user groups, key stakeholders and Council staff to provide a sustainable community space that promotes recreation, social and business opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan to be placed on public exhibition from Wednesday 16 July 2025 to Tuesday 5 August 2025.

DISCUSSION

The Birchip Recreation Reserve is managed on behalf of Buloke Shire Council by the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management.

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan is an updated version of the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Master Plan 2010-2019 that was completed in 2010.

It has been developed with input from the Committee of Management, user groups, Council staff and key stakeholders including Government agencies and State sporting associations. It presents several priorities for the Birchip Recreation Reserve that have been identified to guide the sustainability and continuation of quality sport and active recreation opportunities in Birchip.

The updated Draft Master Plan also identifies opportunities to expand the diversity of recreational activities available at the reserve to function as a central hub for community sport and recreation in Birchip.

This aligns with the vision of the Birchip Recreation Reserve which is “To provide a sustainable community space that promotes recreation, social and business opportunities.”

The Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management will use this Master Plan to guide future developments at the recreation reserve.

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan was an action in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and was funded through Council’s 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 Annual Budget.

OPTIONS

Council has the option to not endorse the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan to go on public exhibition from Wednesday 16 July 2025 to Tuesday 5 August 2025.

Council also has the option to extend the public exhibition of the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Master Plan timeframe to more than 21 days.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmental sustainability has been considered in the development of the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Master Plan was developed in consultation with Committee of Management, user groups, Council staff and key stakeholders including Government agencies and State sporting associations

The following table details the methods of engagement and number of people contacted as part of the updated Draft Master Plan development:

Engagement Method	Contacts	Completed/Submitted
Inception meeting	1	1
Telephone calls	28	20
Submissions received	0	0

Onsite visits/meetings	N/a	1
PCG meetings and presentations		3

The consultation process was designed to gain insight into how the clubs and user groups use the Reserve, what they like about the venue and what they would like improved with the aim to better understand the future needs and aspirations for the Recreation Reserve.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan considers opportunities for innovation as well as areas for continuous improvement.

COLLABORATION

Council Officers have collaborated internally cross-departmentally, with external consultants, State Government agencies and sporting associations in the preparation of the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Master Plan.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The recommendations within the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan provide strategic guidance for Council, user groups, community and State and Federal Governments to further develop the Birchip Recreation Reserve for the betterment of the broader community.

However, delivery of identified projects will require significant investment through external funding as Council will be unable to deliver the outcomes within the draft Master Plan in isolation.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

The updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan aligns with the facility guidelines of the relevant State Sporting Associations including but not limited to AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria, Hockey Victoria, Bowls Victoria and Tennis Victoria.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council Plan 2026-2029

Buloke Inclusiveness Plan

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report recommends that the updated Draft Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan is placed on public exhibition from Wednesday 16 July 2025 to Tuesday 5 August 2025 to enable the public to make submissions and provide feedback on the proposed recommendations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

- Attachments:**
1. Attachment 8.2.1.1 - @leisure Buloke Birchip Recreation Reserve Master Plan Draft Report 2 July 2025

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Draft Report
July 2025



About this document

This document is the Draft Master Plan for the Birchip Recreation Reserve prepared by @leisure Planners.

Previous documents related to this study include:

- Birchip Recreation Reserve Site Analysis
- Birchip Recreation Reserve Options

The views expressed in the consultation section of this document are those provided by the Birchip community. They do not necessarily reflect the views held by @leisure or Council.

Acknowledgements

@leisure would like to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by:

Darci Tierney, Recreation and Facilities Project Manager, Buloke Shire Council

Trevor Rumbold, Coordinator Project Delivery, Buloke Shire Council

We would also like to thank the representatives of the sports clubs and user groups who were interviewed and those who sent in comments regarding the project.

Buloke Shire Council and @leisure Planners acknowledge that the Birchip Recreation Reserve is situated on the land of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk Nations.



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1. Introduction

1.1. Project aim

The project aim is to develop a Recreation Reserve Master Plan that provides:

1. Clear guidelines regarding the level and standard of sporting facilities at the Birchip Recreation Reserve
2. A four to twelve year costed strategy for the development and future provision of sporting facilities within the Reserve
3. Clear priorities and standards for the maintenance and development of infrastructure upon the sporting Reserve
4. Clear definition of Council's, other resource partners, and the community's role in the development of facilities, and
5. Identification of gaps in provision of recreation facilities, and appropriate location for identified gaps, whether within existing Reserve or elsewhere.

1.2. Objectives

The objectives of this project are to:

1. Undertake a demographic analysis of the Birchip catchment area and identify existing and future population trends that may impact upon the growth or decline of specific recreation activities, including sustainability of user clubs
2. Liaise with local and peak sporting/recreation bodies and industry groups to identify trends that may impact future demand for sporting and recreation facilities at the Reserve

3. Identify development priorities for the future planning, development and/or upgrade of existing and/or new recreation facilities within the Reserve in response to identified needs
4. Research and identify the short, medium and long term needs of users occupying this Reserve to enable the provision of an appropriate range and standard of recreation infrastructure to match current and future needs
5. Review and assess the current provision of recreation facilities, programs and services provided at the Birchip Recreation Reserve in terms of community need, usage, gaps in service provision and adequacy
6. Identify environmental considerations in any future developments, with specific focus on water management and renewal energy initiatives
7. Consider the possible co-location, relocation or rationalization of existing recreation facilities at the Reserve
8. Review the role of Council and the community in the development of recreation infrastructure, i.e., what should be the Council's responsibility and what should be the user group/committee of management responsibility
9. Develop a strategic business plan for the Reserve Committee of Management
10. Develop a master plan, which links to existing plans and strategies, and is responsive to community expectations, as well as being achievable, realistic and attainable within the funding options available.

1.3. Outcomes

The project is required to achieve the following outcomes:

Analysis of sport and recreation issues to be resolved through:

- Assessing demographic information that will assist in predicting population growth
- Identifying and clarifying sport and recreation demands and user preferences
- Identifying gaps in sport and recreation offering and barriers to resident participation
- Identify non-users and reasons for non-participation, and
- Working closely with the various departments within the Council to identify important sport and recreation issues

Assessment of guidelines and policies by preparing a 'key issues report', to assess:

- Current and projected sport and recreation facilities usage
- Dual/joint community use of sport and recreation facilities
- Current environmental management and sustainable design features
- Current asset condition reports, many of which are available from Council (some investigation may be required)
- Cost of provision of sport and recreation
- Reserve maintenance issues
- Role of Council and sporting clubs
- Safety and risk management issues, and
- Identification of rationalization of users and/or land at the Reserve

Establish capital works priorities for the Recreation Reserve for the next 12 years through:

- The development of a prioritised capital works program, including timelines and cost estimates for developments, and
- Developing high-level conceptual plans for proposed works

Ensure effective implementation of the Recreation Reserve Master Plan through:

- Establishing realistic goals and objectives for sport and recreation provision and facility planning
- Identifying priorities over a five-year period for the implementation of the Recreation Reserve Master Plan, including cost estimates
- Developing high-level concept plans for facility development priorities
- Preparing specific Action Plans for implementation, which are inclusive of a proposed capital works schedule identifying costs and priorities for maintenance and construction, and

Developing a strategic business plan for the Birchip Recreation Reserve in line with priorities and costings of recommended capital works.

1.4. What is a master plan?

A master plan is a blueprint for the future development.

A master plan is an agreed direction by the landowner/manager and users about the best way to develop a site or a facility, based on the current demand and condition of facilities and context. It is not intended to be a commitment to fund development projects in the short term.

The intent is to be able to direct a complete package of improvements over time and develop components of that plan as and when funds become available, therefore a master plan shows the broad concept and areas for development, rather than specific design details. These packages of improvements are often expressed as recommendations or potential future projects that are expected to improve the community access and use of a venue or facility over a period of 10 years+.

As recommended actions they may not necessarily be delivered in the immediate or long term due to budget and other priorities or factors.



Figure 1. Birchip Tennis Clubhouse.
Image: @leisure Planners

1.5. Context

The town of Birchip

Birchip is located in the Mallee region on the Sunraysia Highway north of Donald and 230 kilometres south of Mildura.

Birchip was named after the Wirrumbirchip pastoral run which was taken up in 1842. The name is thought to be derived from an Aboriginal expression describing the track followed around the dense Mallee country when travelling towards Swan Hill.¹

Before the arrival of Europeans, the area was inhabited by Warkawarka tribe, possibly a subgroup of the Wergaia².

Birchip Recreation Reserve is crown land, managed on behalf of Buloke Shire Council by the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee. The eastern portion of the site is reserved for and is also known as Birchip Showyard Reserve.

The George Cartwright oval is currently classified as a 'local' level facility under the AFL Central Victoria standards and the Cricket Victoria Facility Hierarchy.

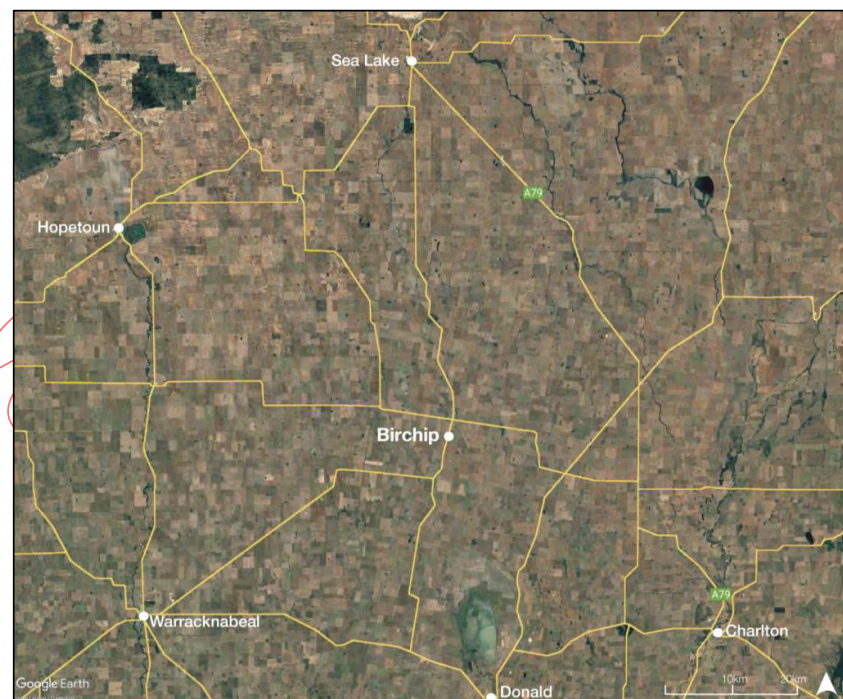


Figure 2. Map of Birchip and surrounding townships. Image source: Google Earth, 2024.

¹ Victorianplaces.com.au

² Beveridge, Peter (1865) "A few notes on the dialects, habits, customs and mythology of the Lower Murray aborigines". Transactions of the Royal Society of Victoria.

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Relationship of the Reserve to other land uses

Birchip Recreation Reserve is very central to the immediate township, (see map following) as well as regional sports competitions, the North Central Football League (football, netball and hockey) and the Wimmera Mallee Cricket Association.



Figure 3. Location of the Recreation Reserve in the Birchip township.
Image Source: Google Earth, 2024.

The Reserve is 1km from the Birchip P-12 School and about 200m from the main street (Refer following Map).

The Reserve has a good relationship with adjoining land uses having a road on the south, east and north of the perimeter and relatively good sightlines into the park.



Figure 4. Birchip sporting facilities. Image source: Google Earth, 2024.

1.6. The site

The following aerial image shows the extent of the Reserve.



Figure 5. Aerial view of Birchip Recreation Reserve.
Source image: Google Earth, 2024.

The Reserve is made up of multiple parcels of land. Some of these parcels are Crown land. See following image. Ownership, purposes of a reservation and management of each may differ and necessitate different approval processes.

The following image shows the different parcel of land that make up the Reserve and adjacent reserves.



Figure 6. Individual parcels of property in and around the Birchip Recreation Reserve.
Image source: VicPlan, 2024

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Planning Scheme Zones and Overlays

The Reserve is zoned Public Park and Recreation in the Birchip Planning Scheme. See following image from VicPlan.

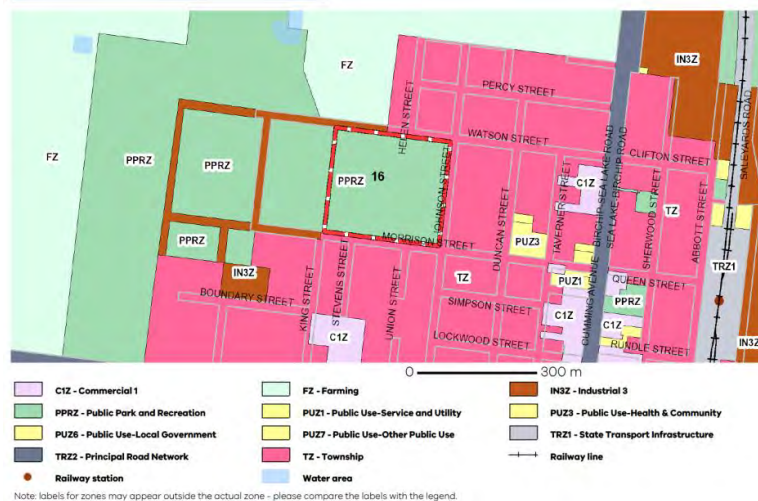


Figure 7. Planning scheme zones over the site and adjacent properties. Image VicPlan.

There are no planning overlays over the Recreation Reserve land however there are heritage overlays in adjacent land. See following image from VicPlan.

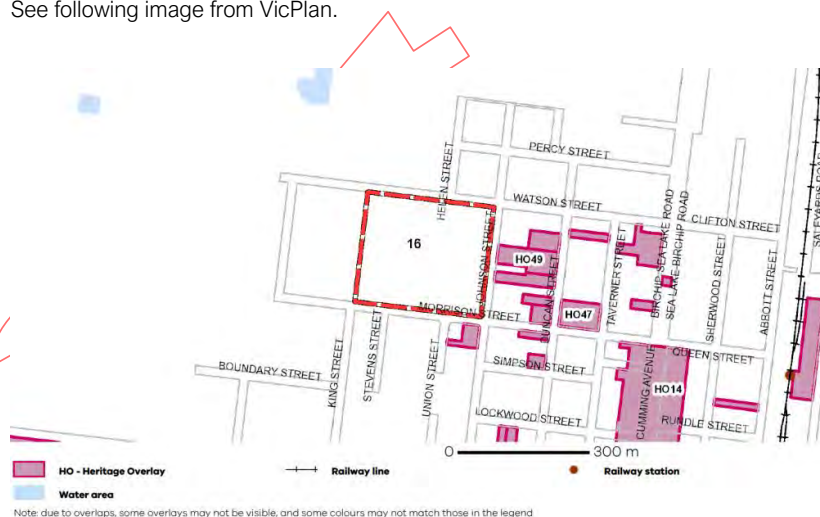


Figure 8. Planning overlays adjacent to the site. Image VicPlan.

Part of the site is in a bush fire prone area. See following image from VicPlan.



Figure 9. Designated Bushfire Fire Prone areas. Image VicPlan



Figure 10. Home game George Cartwright Oval. April 2022.
Image. Facebook page - Birchip Community Leisure Centre

1.7. Existing facilities and features

The site is relatively flat and has no major encumbrances, except the bushfire prone nature of the golf course.

The Reserve has boundary planting around the eastern area and the golf course has good canopy cover.

Buildings are centralised and are serviced by an internal road network and parking. Parking space inside the Reserve around the oval is ample, although parking for hockey to the west is limited.

Figure 10 shows the Reserve in use and where users park.

The Reserve has a range of sporting facilities including the following:

- AFL/Cricket oval – including:
 - Turf wicket, inground sprinkler system
 - Four oval lights
 - Electronic scoreboard
 - Coach's boxes
 - Cricket practice Nets (2) and storage shed
- Netball courts – (2 – one of which has significant surface cracking)
- Tennis courts – grass (10), hard courts (2) synthetic – (2)
- Tennis club house
- Hockey pitch - grass
- Golf – 18-hole sand scrapes
- Leisure Centre /pavilion/player change rooms/ squash courts x 2, function space
- Public toilet blocks (2)
- Water tanks – (numerous)
- Storage sheds including show pavilion.

Existing services

The existing services on the site include the following:

Electricity

- Citipower/Powercor advise of low voltage cables underground from the toilet block south of the oval near Morrison St. to the oval on the southwest. (See Appendix 3 – Electricity).

Water

- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water – water mains and sewerage pipes and pits are located on the perimeter of the Reserve along Watson St., Morrison St., and the Sunraysia Highway are shown Water and Sewerage. (see Appendix 3)
- There are multiple water tanks located around the Reserve. Some are in use and others may be surplus to current needs. A review of existing tanks is recommended with a view to consolidating
- Buloke Shire Council. Drainage and drainage pits at the north end of the Reserve along Watson St. may have some impact on future works for future buildings or future fields/extensions at the north end of the Reserve. (See Appendix 3) There is also a drainage pit on Morrison St. some 8-10 metres west of King St. that is unlikely to have any influence on future works.

Gas

- There is no gas transmission pipelines in Birchip

Dump point

- The Reserve has Dump Point for RV vans near the south entrance.

A site analysis that assessed the issues with each facility was prepared and submitted.

1.8. Key issues from the site analysis

Following is a summary of the key issues and opportunities:

Leisure Centre

- Limited capacity from the veranda/viewing area to the oval to provide shade and shelter to spectators
- Viewing area and seating on hill in front of building requires upgrading.
- Views to oval are blocked by people standing outside
- The kitchen and social facilities require equipment and furnishing upgrades
- The ramp to the Leisure Centre is not compliant with current building accessibility standards
- The external squash court walls have some structural issues that are currently under review.

Tennis courts

- There is no external shade provided by the club house
- Additional tree shade could be provided
- Court lighting is required – preferred for 4 courts including hard courts to allow tennis to be played year round
- The 2 hard courts require an upgrade

- Court fencing around the grass courts will require replacing in the long term
- Play equipment under shade is required.
- General landscaping and re-paving is required.

Hockey

- The hockey pitch is some distance from the central facilities. Relocating the pitch closer to the Leisure Centre will provide better access to existing infrastructure (Inc. toilets, change rooms, parking) and reduce need for duplication of facilities
- Pitch lighting requires upgrade
- Parking and vehicle access is poor to existing location.

Golf

- Watering system is over 50 years old and not built for current need. Very narrow pipes – poor water pressure.
- Re-configuration of fairways and holes would need to be considered in future to accommodate the master plan concept.

Netball courts

- There is significant surface cracking that has developed along the west side of court 2 which is currently under investigation by Council to remediate the surface condition.
- Court 2 surface condition is not safe to play on.
- Increased seating for spectators is required around both Courts 1 and Court 2 when fixed.
- Netting is required at the north and south ends of Courts 1 and 2, to prevent balls going over the fence
- Lighting is required on west side of Court 2; currently Court 2 doesn't meet training lux standards.

Oval and support facilities

- There is a ongoing issue with rabbits damaging the oval surface. A rabbit proof fence is required to prevent surface damage. Community have identified that well designed picket fencing would be preferable.
- There is no netting behind goals to retain balls on the oval and protect cars/spectators.

Cricket facilities

- Consider extending nets. Include sight screen on back fence at rear of nets.

Spectator facilities

- Improve spectator areas in front of Leisure Centre
- Provide seating at north end of netball courts
- Spectator seating is required along with shade and shelter at hockey
- Separate kids and cars with bollards and walking paths
- More oval seating around boundary line is preferred
- Shade and shelter for viewing netball courts and the oval, north of the Leisure Centre is required along with and upgrade of seating in front of the Leisure Centre.

Toilets

- Upgrade the toilet block at the south end of the oval. Include a changing places toilet
- Upgraded toilet facilities to be family friendly.

Entries, traffic and parking

- There is no clear delineation between vehicles and pedestrians around the oval, the south or west of the Leisure Centre
- There is an area of unmarked parking between the Leisure Centre and the grass courts. This area also carries through traffic to hockey and golf and is a key crossing point from tennis to the Leisure Centre. There is no clear delineation between vehicles and pedestrians
- Vehicles entering from corner of Morrison St. and Johnson St. on match days, can restrict vehicle movement on those streets. Ticket box should be relocated further inside the Reserve
- Speed humps on internal road around oval do not reduce vehicle speed.

Trees and green space

- A tree planting plan for wind breaks, shade and presentation would improve the Reserve for all users.

Play space

- There are no designated play spaces or play equipment within the Reserve
- Install a play area at the north end of the Leisure Centre to serve football, netball, cricket and Leisure Centre users. Consider a shaded play space near tennis courts.

Other presentation and improvement options

- Remove the loading ramp at the Watson St entry if no longer in use
- Remove the dirt mound along Johnston St or use it for further landscaping along the east side of the Reserve
- Update, relocate or remove the picnic tables and BBQ at the west side of the Leisure Centre
- Include walking links through Reserve - short loop, medium loop and longer loops. Wide enough for two to three people walking
- Consider a fishing platform off golf dam.

Most recent works

Recently, Buloke Shire Council were successful in obtaining \$1.9 million in grants to fund several projects at the Reserve.

Two new acrylic netball courts and lighting were funded by the Federal Government's Drought Resilience and Response Program, Buloke Shire Council, the State Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund – Female Friendly Facilities 2020-21 and the Birchip-Watchem Netball Club. One of the netball courts surface condition has deteriorated and is currently not able to be used for Netball.

The Birchip Leisure Centre Changeroom Redevelopment Project (\$234,667) delivered female friendly changerooms for both teams and umpires as well as new accessible family friendly amenities upstairs and was funded by the Victorian Government's Female Friendly Facilities Fund 2018-19, Buloke Shire Council, Federal Government's Drought Resilience and Response Program, AFL Victoria's Female Friendly Facility Program and Birchip Leisure Centre.

Whilst the Main Oval Redevelopment (\$221,000) included drainage and resurfacing works that were funded by the Victorian Government's Country Football and Netball Program 2019-20, Federal Government's Drought Resilience and Response Program, Buloke Shire Council and Birchip Watchem Football Club.³



Figure 9. Netball courts and shelters following 2021 upgrade
Image: @leisure Planners



Figure 10. Golf entry to Leisure Centre. Image: @leisure Planners

³ Website: Buloke.vic.gov.au

2. Demand for sport and recreation in Birchip

2.1. Population and demographic profile

The key demographic factors that influence the demand for sport and recreation activities are population size, age, gender, income, education, cultural background, disability and location of residence and availability of facilities. There are an estimated 694 residents in Birchip, comprising about 11% of Buloke Shire's total population of 6,178 in 2021⁴.

The table following shows the projected population for Birchip from 2021 until 2036 based Victoria In Future forecasts.

Table 1. Projected population growth of Buloke Shire, 2026 and 2036

	2021	2026	2036
Population ⁵	694	661	577
Change in population (5 yrs.)		-38	-84

By 2026 Birchip is forecast to have 661 residents and 577 by 2036. However forecast population decline has been less than anticipated in Victorian In Future 2019 calculations from 2016 to 2021.

In 2021 the largest age group of Birchip residents was 70 to 74 years (71 people). There were 122 children between the age of 0 and 14 years. It is anticipated that the Birchip will continue to trend towards an aging population. The average age in Birchip in 2021 was 49 years. The average age for rural and regional Victoria is 42 years and older than the median for Greater Melbourne, 36 years. The following graph shows the number of people per 5-year age cohort and that projected for 2036.

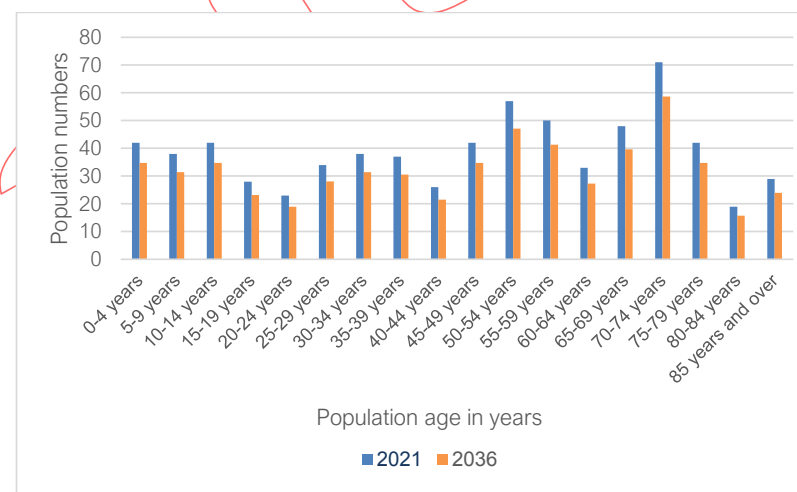


Figure 11. Age structure Birchip 2021 compared to 2036 forecast.

Source: Victoria in Future

⁴ Quickstats 2021

⁵ www.delwp.vic.gov.au/victoria-in-future

Demographic snapshot of Birchip

- A large proportion of Birchip residents had both parents born in Australia 89% compared to 58.7% Victoria.
- Some 49.7% of the population in Birchip was male in 2021.⁶
- Some 21.8% of the population completed secondary education compared to the rest of Victoria (21%) but much less attend university - 10.1% Birchip to 24.5% Victoria.
- English is spoken in 88.4% of homes in Buloke.⁷
- Birchip's index of social disadvantage is 970. This is slightly higher than Buloke Shire, 967 and below the regional Victorian average of 986.
- Some 35% of Birchip residents did voluntary work through an organisation or group in the last 12 months compared to 13% for Victoria.⁸

The demographic profile of Birchip suggests that there is a relatively high propensity for residents to play sport, due to:

- The small proportion of residents who speak another language or were born overseas from a non-English speaking background.
- A relatively small (7.4%) of residents need assistance with core activities due to age or disability

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Buloke Shire Council Inclusiveness Plan

2.2. Existing and projected use of Birchip Recreation Reserve

Club usage

Data collected from the clubs and our engagement indicates that the Birchip Recreation Reserve is a popular and well used venue for both clubs and individuals.

In addition to the usage as per the club data below, the Reserve is a popular site for individuals to walk, run, ride bikes and socialise. It is difficult to estimate the casual usage of the Reserve, but it is expected that usage will continue to grow if facilities continue to improve, and Birchip follows the trend in growth of non-organised activity that is occurring Australia.

Data from AusPlay shown in the graph below shows how non-sport physical activities have grown significantly from 2001 to 2020.⁹

Although the Birchip Recreation Reserve is predominately a sports reserve, it has an important secondary open space function as a social/family recreation area. It can accommodate a significant amount of unorganised physical and social activity. This is due to its relatively large size, central and prominent location, flat topography and the existing facilities that attract people to the Reserve. It does not cater well for people with a disability.

For this reason, additional attractions and improvements should be made to the Reserve to benefit a broader range of the community.

⁸ ibid

⁹ Participation Trends In Australia. app.powerbi.com

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The higher and increasing proportion of women and older persons are participating in non-organised physical activities and sports.

The following graph shows the growth in sport related activities and non-sport related activities from 2001 to 2020 from data gathered by Exercise Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) and AusPlay surveys.



Figure 12. The growth in sport and non-sport related activities, 2001 to 2020 from ERASS and AusPlay surveys. Source; AusPlay report. Participation trends in Australian Sport since 2001.

Some 23 teams and 3 sport development groups consider Birchip Recreation Reserve as 'home' along with regular use from Birchip P-12 School, social competitions and casual use. Almost all user groups have suggested that the demand for team participation is continuing following the COVID 19 pandemic.

The football, netball, hockey, golf and cricket clubs use the Reserve as their main social and training base.

Table 2 below shows the number of sport teams based at the Birchip Reserve and the estimated current participation.

Table 2. The number of sport teams based at Birchip Reserve and the estimated participation

Club	Current no. teams/members	Estimated participants	Participation Trend
Birchip Cricket Club	2 senior teams (35), 3 junior teams (35)	70	Seniors - stable
Birchip-Watchem Football Club	2 senior teams (50), 4 junior including under 14 girls (80) and AusKick (19)	149	Steady
Birchip-Watchem Netball Club	3 Senior teams (30), 4 junior teams (32) plus Net Set Go – 25	87	Steady. Same as 2019
Birchip-Watchem Hockey Club	1 senior team (11), 2 junior teams (27), In-to-hockey (10-12), Social members (15)	65	Steady
Birchip Tennis Club	2 senior teams (24), Junior coaching (35), Junior tennis (20), Women's Mon comp (24), social comp (16)	119	Increase over last 5 years
Birchip Golf Club	36-40 members	40	Steady
Squash	No active club	7	Decline
Birchip Bowls Club*	3 teams (Div 1 and 2) and 1 x midweek	36-40	Steady
School gym use	28 community members and 12 students	40	Was 50 pre COVID-19

*Potential to be based at Reserve in future

The table below shows the number of current participants per sport at Birchip compared to that projected from State organised participation rates. 'Organised participation' is activity formally organised or conducted by or at a club, association, school or other type of organisation.

Table 3. The number of participants per sport in Birchip shown against potential participants based on the State organised participation

Sport	Participants 2021/22	Projected VIC* 2021	Projected VIC 2026	Project Vic 2036
AFL	149	37	35	31
Cricket (outdoor)	70	24	23	20
Hockey (outdoor)	65	7	7	6
Netball (outdoor)	87	11	10	9
Tennis	119	36	34	29
Golf	40	29	27	24
Squash	7	4	4	3
Bowls	36	8	7	6
Gym-fitness	40	188	178	156

*Projected participation is based on state organised participation rates, applied to the Birchip projected and existing population.

Club affiliations

Clubs based at the Birchip Recreation Reserve are affiliated with several regional competitions including the following.

North Central Football League

The North Central Football League coordinates the winter competitions of football, netball and hockey across 8 towns in the region. Finals are played at an independent venue from the senior football finalists. Birchip Recreation Reserve regularly hosts finals for the League.

Wimmera Mallee Cricket Association

The Wimmera Mallee Cricket Association is made up of teams from 11 clubs across the Wimmera Mallee who enter teams in A Grade and B Grade competitions. In recent seasons Birchip have enter a team in both grades. Grand finals are played on neutral venues with turf wickets; therefore, Birchip is potential venue for final competitions.

North Central Tennis Association

The North Central Tennis Association coordinates tennis for a summer competition including the towns of Birchip, Nullawil, Wycheproof, St. Arnaud, Donald and Charlton. The association is a grass court competition only.

Tyrrell Junior Tennis Association

The Tyrrell Tennis Association coordinates tennis for the junior age group for a summer competition

2.3. Birchip Recreation Reserve seasonal bookings

The table below shows the bookings for summer and winter by tenant clubs. The Leisure Centre function space is booked by a wide range of community groups across the year.

Table 4. The table below shows the Summer (October 1st – March 31st) bookings for the Birchip Recreation Reserve

Asset	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Leisure Centre – Social space						Birchip CC, 1.00-8pm	
Leisure Centre – Change rooms						Birchip CC, 1.00-8pm	
Leisure Centre – Squash courts	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only
Oval		Birchip CC, 4:30pm - 7:30pm		Birchip CC 4:30pm - 7:30pm		Birchip CC, 1.00pm - 6:30pm, Juniors play at school 8.30 – 12.00	
Cricket nets		Birchip CC, Juniors and Seniors 3.30 - 8:00pm		Birchip CC Juniors and Seniors 3.30pm - 8:00pm			
Cricket shed (rear of nets)				Birchip CC 4:00pm - 8:00pm			
Netball - Break Dec-Jan		Birchip Watchem Netball, 3.45 - 7.30pm		Birchip Watchem Netball, 3.45 - 7.30pm			
Tennis courts	Women's Comp 5.00-8.00	Juniors coaching 4.00	Junior tennis Social comp			Seniors Comp 1.00-6.00	
Hockey pitch	Off season						
Golf course	Off season						

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The table below shows the Winter (season (April 1st – September 30th) bookings for the Birchip Recreation Reserve.

Table 5. The table below shows the Winter (April 1st – September 30th) bookings for the Birchip Recreation Reserve

Asset	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Leisure Centre – Social Space				BWFC		Birchip Watchem Football	
Leisure Centre – change rooms		Birchip Watchem Football		Birchip Watchem Football		Birchip Watchem Football	
Leisure Centre – Squash courts	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only	Casual use only
Oval		Birchip Watchem Football		Birchip Watchem Football			
Cricket nets	Off season						
Netball /		Birchip Watchem Netball 3.45 - 7.30pm		Birchip Watchem Netball, 3.45 - 7.30pm			
Tennis courts	Off season						
Oval		Birchip Watchem Football		Birchip Watchem Football		Birchip Watchem Football	
Hockey Pitch		Birchip Watchem Hockey			Birchip Watchem Hockey	Birchip Watchem Hockey	
Golf Course					Juniors		Competition Tournament June

Potential play space users

The number of children aged 0 to 9 years in Birchip in 2021 was 80 and forecast to decrease by 2031 with approximately 60 children residing in the town based on population decline as forecast by Victoria In Future for the Buloke Shire¹⁰. Therefore, the demand for play space is unlikely to increase, unless there are new families that move to the area. However, the central location of Birchip Recreation Reserve and the large number of sporting groups currently utilising the facilities suggest that a play space would be an attractive feature for the Reserve.

It should be noted however that play equipment is required to be maintained in accordance with the Australian standards and this may require considerable work that is beyond the capacity of the community.

Casual reserve use

The park has a range of casual users including dog owners, walkers and joggers that will benefit from establishing walking trails, lighting, seating and improving toilet facilities.

The Reserve has Dump Point for RV vans near the south entrance that attracts people to the Reserve. RV owners are likely to use the toilet facilities at the Reserve, walking tracks, outdoor and fitness facilities, if available.

2.4. Users' views

Methods of engagement

Feedback from the stakeholders and the community was sought in several ways including telephone interviews, document reviews of previous consultation and on-site review.

- Telephone interviews of Clubs and user groups were conducted to ascertain the nature of their facilities and services
- A site tour with the Recreation and Facilities Project Officer from the Shire of Buloke was held
- Individual submissions were also accepted
- Several virtual meetings were held with key users and staff.

¹⁰ www.delwp.vic.gov.au/victoria-in-future

The table following illustrates the number of respondents by consultation method.

Table 6. The table below shows the range of engagement and number of people contacted as part of the study.

Engagement Method	Contacts	Completed/ Submitted
Inception meeting	1	1
Telephone calls	28	20
Submissions received	0	0
On site visits/meetings	NA	1
PCG Meetings and presentations		3

Twenty individuals representing a range of clubs, peak bodies and organisations were interviewed about the Birchip Recreation Reserve. (For a full list of groups interviewed see Appendix 1)

The consultation was designed to gain insight into how the clubs and user groups use the Reserve, what they like about the venue, what they would like improved and to understand their future needs and aspirations for the site.

Stakeholder interview summary

Interviews were conducted by telephone with representatives of user groups of the Reserve.

From the interviews, it appears that the Birchip Reserve meets the needs of the major user groups however a number of improvements are required to meet future needs.

Priorities raised by more than one user group included the following:

- Improve spectator viewing from Leisure Centre over the oval and provide shade and shelter in front of Leisure Centre and north to the canteen
- Improve spectator facilities for tennis and hockey by providing more shade and seating
- Improve the access/ entry arrangements of the main Reserve entry on game day, by moving the ticket box so cars don't queue across the intersection
- Improving internal parking and car/pedestrian movement, particularly on south side of Leisure Centre
- Provide a play space for children close to spectators/players
- Utilise the tennis courts not in use to provide for children wheel and ball activities
- Provide a rabbit proof fence around oval to protect surface and retain balls
- Upgrade the function room in Leisure Centre
- Upgrade the south toilet block
- Remove Bulls Bar.

Other items raised by individual clubs included:

- Relocate the hockey pitch closer to Leisure Centre – allows players to utilise change rooms and toilets
- Provide tennis court lighting
- Upgrade the two tennis hard courts
- Upgrade irrigation to the golf course
- Provide lighting to netball court 2
- Upgrade oval lighting for night games.

New facilities requested include:

- Walking/ running track around the Reserve and connecting town and sports facilities.

More tree planting for natural shade and shelter.



Figure 13. Birchip Golf Club.
Image: @leisure Planners

2.5. Key trends

Figure 14. The following diagram illustrates key relevant trends relating to parks and sports.



2.6. Implications of demand

The data gathered from user groups, peak bodies and the community engagement show there is strong demand for local sports facilities as well as other activities.

Even though Birchip's population is small and aging, there is significant participation in sports across all age groups, and this trend is expected to continue.

The Loddon Mallee North region (includes Buloke Shire) has one of the highest membership rates (% of total population) for netball in regional Victoria. The membership rate is 3.8% compared to the Victorian Rural and Regional average of 3.2%.¹¹

AFL penetration rates for junior, youth and senior player categories sit well above Victorian country average penetration rates in the Buloke, Loddon and Gannawarra LGAs more than doubling those averages.¹²

A Birchip under 14 AFL girls' team was successfully established in 2022 in the Central Victorian Football League.

Data from Cricket Victoria is older but suggests similar high participation levels with a player to population penetration rate in the Western Country region (includes Buloke Shire) almost double that of Cricket Victoria's Country Region average (3.19% compared with 1.88%) and the second highest female participant base across the State, including

Metro Regions (333 total, 109 additional players between 2014/15 and 2016/17).¹³

The Birchip clubs conduct introductory programs including Net Set Go, AusKick, HookIn2Hockey, and junior tennis coaching to introduce juniors to sports and help establish a base for the existing clubs.

Existing facilities will require ongoing improvements and upgrades to cater for regular and growing usage. While demand for new nonsporting activities at the Reserve will also grow.

Development of off-road trails will allow others to do things at the Reserve that they may not usually do and attract more individuals. Expanded picnic facilities, walking trails and play equipment is likely to be well utilised.

¹¹ Netball Victoria Statewide Facilities Strategy

¹² AFL Central Victoria Regional Strategy. 2017

¹³ Cricket Victoria Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2028

3. Role and relationship with other sports facilities

With five sports clubs based at the Reserve, the site is the home of sport in the Birchip region. The Leisure Centre is the central facility, offering change facilities, toilets and social space for all clubs.

Other sports facilities in Birchip include:

Birchip P-12 School

The School draws students from the neighbouring districts of Berriwillock, Culgoa, Nullawil, Beulah and Watchem. In 2021 some 170 students were enrolled at the school. Sports facilities at the school include an indoor stadium, marked for netball, basketball, volleyball and badminton, a cricket oval and a community gymnasium.

The Birchip Cricket Club use the school oval for junior cricket as the hard wicket which reduces wear on the turf wicket at the Recreation Reserve. The Netball club used the indoor stadium at the school while the Recreation Reserve outdoor courts were rebuilt in 2020/21.

The stadium has also hosted social competitions for basketball, mixed netball, indoor hockey, recreational mixed football, night bowls, table tennis and volleyball.

There is an outdoor exercise circuit on the perimeter of the school oval that is open to the community.

There are also rectangular grass fields at the school that could potentially host soccer, hockey or other small group outdoor sports, if surfaces were improved and there was demand for such sports.

Birchip Swimming Pool

Birchip Swimming Pool is located in Cumming Avenue. The pool is open seasonally from November to March each year. It is one of seven outdoor, seasonal pools in the Buloke Shire.

Swimming lessons are scheduled in January and during Terms 1 and 4 swimming squad, swimming lessons and water exercise classes are facilitated by the Birchip Neighbourhood House. Birchip P-12 School hold their annual carnival at the venue.

Tchum Lake

The Lake is 8km east of Birchip on the Birchip Wycheproof Rd and hosts a range of water sports and has a 3km walking track around the perimeter that links through native vegetation back into town. It is also connected by a walking/bike path. The lake caters for camping and boating activities, has a playground, BBQ and public toilet facilities.

Birchip Bowls Club

The bowls club is located 700m from the Reserve in Sherwood St. It has its own social facilities and has no direct relationship with the Reserve. Birchip bowlers compete in the Tyrell competition with a team in Division 1 and 2.

There has been some suggestion that the bowls club could move to the Reserve in the longer term.

Birchip Lifestyle and Fitness

Birchip Lifestyle and Fitness centre is based in the former Catholic Primary School and offers a range of exercise classes and is privately operated.

Birchip Neighbourhood House

Birchip Neighbourhood House also offers a range of programs and fitness activities.

Colocation, relocation, rationalisation?

The development of the Leisure Centre in the 1980s, the Management Committee and membership structure that was implemented at the time, has ensured that Birchip sports clubs have been able to benefit from pooling resources and maintaining good quality sporting infrastructure.

Hockey is the only sport at the Reserve that is not well served by support facilities or car parking, given its location west of the tennis courts. Relocating the hockey field nearer to the Leisure Centre would provide several benefits including:

- Easier access to change rooms/toilets
- Close proximity to social facilities
- Parking with direct street access close to field
- Greater spectator support with the field not as remote from other activities

If hockey was to relocate closer to the Leisure Centre, the final location is dependent on the long-term plans of the Birchip Bowling Club.

An area immediately west of the current Leisure Centre may accommodate the space required for bowls if they chose to relocate in the long term.



Figure 13. Image of George Cartwright Oval
Image from @leisure Planners

4. Birchip Recreation Reserve – The next 10 years

4.1. Vision

To provide a sustainable community space that promotes recreation, social and business opportunities.

4.2. Objectives for change

1. To function as a central hub for community sport and recreation in Birchip.
2. To maintain in balance: facilities that serve people from a broad range of age groups and abilities, for unorganised and club competition sport, recreation, and natural elements that provide shelter and shade, restorative values and habitat and high-quality landscape amenity.
3. To embrace environmental sustainability in relation to building and ground management, playing and traffic surfaces and asset development.
4. To support the growth and development of clubs and user groups.

4.3. Sustainability initiatives

Future developments at the Reserve will be expected to incorporate a range of environmental initiatives, as follows.

Water usage

- Consider irrigation technology that monitors soil moisture and adjusts irrigation system accordingly
- Monitor and record water meters and usage to ensure leakage and waste is minimised
- Upgrade old irrigation systems to reduce water loss and improve efficiency
- Primarily plant indigenous and trees and vegetation suited to the climate and soils to increase survival rates and benefit local fauna
- Upgrade irrigation
- Limit the use of sports turf to only fields and play areas to reduce the need for watering
- Use other hardy grass species for any other lawn areas.
- Reduce paved surfaces, especially dark surfaces to allow rainwater to permeate the surface and help reduce the heat island affect
- Improve the soil condition of garden beds and the root zones of trees with mulch and compost.

Provide additional trees

Plant appropriate trees in different areas to increase comfort and attract use, especially in the hot weather, for:

- Shade
- Amenity value
- Wind protection, and
- Play value

Solar energy

- Install solar roof panels and a battery to Leisure Centre to reduce the centre's operational costs
- Install solar security and path lighting

Recycling

- Use sustainable building materials such as park benches that are made from recyclable materials and recycled rubber in playgrounds
- Install recycling bins to encourage visitors to recycle plastic paper and glass.

Other

- Ensure all lighting is converted to LED lighting.

4.4. Master Plan – Preferred option

There were four draft concepts presented to the Project Steering Committee (See Chapter 5). The preferred concept, Concept 3 below shows the hockey pitch relocated next to netball in a north south direction close to the Leisure Centre and a bowls green immediately west of the Leisure Centre. Hockey and bowls can fit in this configuration and meet minimum competition size standards and allow access to golf course. Note the bowling green shown below is approximately 4 metres narrower than the existing green in Sherwood St. (See Appendix 4 for enlarged concept Master Plan with actions and Pavilion Design)



Figure 16. Concept 3 of the 4 layouts presented to the Steering Committee
Image 106 Architects

5. Reserve facility layout options and benefits

There were four options presented to the Steering Committee for the long-term development of the Reserve. These were largely based on future location of hockey and bowls, should they choose to relocate to the Reserve in the long term.

Option 3 was chosen by the Steering Committee for further investigation. See Appendix 4.

Following are the draft layouts of each option as presented and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Option 1: Potential hockey location with no bowls at Reserve



Figure 17. Option 1 draft showing potential location of hockey pitch at Birchip Recreation Reserve, without future bowls green

Advantages

- Allows hockey players and spectators easier access to Leisure Centre facilities such as toilets, canteen and social space
- North-south orientation aligns with preferred sports field layout that improves playing conditions
- Allows spectators to move more easily between all winter sports (netball, football and hockey)
- Closer to key Reserve entry point and existing hardstand car parking

Disadvantages

- Requires redesign of golf course and relocation of tees and holes
- Takes most suitable space for lawn bowls if relocated to Reserve
- Cuts off golf connection to Leisure Centre amenities and admin. (Mitigated by moving pitch to north)

Option 2: Potential hockey location allowing for bowls at Reserve



Figure 18. Option 2 draft showing potential location of hockey pitch at Birchip Recreation Reserve, with a future bowls green

Advantages

- Allows hockey players and spectators easier access to Leisure Centre facilities such as toilets, canteen and social space
- Allows spectators to move more easily between all winter sports (netball, football and hockey)
- Hockey closer to key Reserve entry point
- Allows bowls close access to LC, with parking south of Leisure Centre

Disadvantages

- Doesn't correct east-west alignment for hockey.
- No direct relationship between hockey and Leisure Centre Further walking distance from school and those walking from south/southwest of town
- Cuts off golf direct connection to Leisure Centre amenities and admin

Option 3: Potential hockey location allowing for bowls at Reserve



Figure 19. Option 3 draft showing potential location of hockey pitch at Birchip Recreation Reserve, with a future bowls green

Advantages

- Allows hockey players and spectators easier access to Leisure Centre facilities such as toilets, canteen and social space
- North-south orientation aligns with preferred sports field layout that improves playing conditions
- Allows spectators to move more easily between all winter sports (netball, football and hockey)
- Hockey closer to key Reserve entry point

Disadvantages

- Requires redesign of golf course and relocation of tees and holes
- Cuts off golf connection to Leisure Centre amenities and admin. Limited space between components
- Bowls is not prominent from the street

Option 4: Potential hockey location allowing for bowls at Reserve



Figure 20. Option 4 draft showing potential location of hockey pitch at Birchip Recreation Reserve, with a future bowls green and additional parking

Advantages

- Allows hockey players and spectators easier access to Leisure Centre facilities such as toilets, canteen and social space. Could provide direct parking off the street without having to enter the Reserve
- Allows spectators to move more easily between all winter sports (netball, football and hockey)
Closer to key Reserve entry point.
- North-south orientation aligns with preferred sports field layout that improves playing

Disadvantages

- No direct relationship between hockey and Leisure Centre
- Requires redesign of golf course and relocation of tees and holes
- Bowls some distance from Leisure Centre amenities - would mostly likely require toilet / and possible shelter overlooking the green

6. Recommendations including priority and lead organisation

The following table shows the priority for each recommendation in the plan, as considered by the Steering Committee based on requirements to meet current standards, best practice and club preferences.

Table 7. Recommendations and priority order

No.	Recommendations	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Lead	Partners
Leisure Centre				
1	Provide new flooring in kitchen.	Medium	BLC	BSC
2	Upgrade the kitchen facilities to improve catering capacity.	High	BLC	BSC
3	Instal new window coverings (Roller blinds 18mx 2m)	High	BLC	BSC
4	Improve ventilation for downstairs change rooms.	Medium	BSC	BLC
5	Upgrade the golf and netball support facilities (changerooms) to accommodate bowls in long term	Low	BSC	BLC
6	Refurbish toilets and showers for netball and golf participants.	Medium	BSC	BLC
7	Provide a lift into level one of the building - allow for lift shaft, structural alterations	Medium	BSC	BLC
Spectator areas				
8	Upgrade concourse to include accessible ramps at each end to address non-compliant access	High	BSC	BLC
	Provide outside tiered seating to the oval edge for spectators [on grade]	High	BSC	BLC
	Provide outside tiered seating for spectators [suspended / balcony]	High	BSC	BLC
	New shade structures [assumes can have columns / not cantilevered]	High	BSC	BLC
	Improve entry/ exit from lower-level change rooms to the oval [player tunnel]	High	BSC	BLC
9	Future Stage 2. Multi-use area - redevelopment squash /golf to include gym and exercise including small pool and change facilities (Viewing Area): Elevated viewing area to complement existing netball viewing room	Low	BSC	BLC
Squash courts				

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No.	Recommendations	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Lead	Partners
10	Consider engineers report to rebuild or repair. Price includes demolition	High	BSC	BLC
11	Consider multi use - install moveable glass walls to allow for squash and flexible gym space.	High	BSC	BLC
Public toilets				
12	Remove existing toilet block located along fence line at Watson St entry once new public toilets are made available at Leisure Centre.	Low	BSC	BLC
13	Upgrade existing toilet block located on the southern side of the site.	High	BSC	BLC
Perimeter exercise trail				
14	Construct a 2m wide granitic sand walking/running track around Reserve, with connecting paths to existing facilities, following removal of obsolete tanks and other infrastructure.	High	BSC	BLC
15	Consider a fishing platform off golf dam.	Medium	BLC	BSC
16	Install lighting along walking track	Low	BSC	BLC
Golf course				
17	Upgrade watering system to the tees on the golf course.	Medium	BGC	BSC
Netball				
18	Additional lighting on court 2. Include underground infrastructure, pole, lights etc	High	BSC	BWNC
19	Increase fence height to 2200 at ends of courts (extra 1200H)	Medium	BWNC	BSC
20	Replace court 2 - assume synthetic rubber surface. (includes removal of existing, install new)	High	BSC	BWNC
21	Provide shade between netball courts and oval for those viewing both activities	High	BSC	BLC
22	Introduce lawn/grass area to soften landscape.	High	BSC	BLC
Hockey				
23	Relocate closer to Leisure Centre. New hockey pitch - 94m x 55m grass field with additional 3m & 5m runoff with irrigation and drainage	High	BSC	BWHC
24	New training lights	High	BSC	BWHC
25	Incorporate player facilities into Leisure Centre.	High	BSC	BWHC
Oval				

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No.	Recommendations	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Lead	Partners
26	Rabbit proof fencing for the oval.	High	BWFC	BSC
27	Install goal netting at each end of oval.	Medium	BWFC	BSC
28	Extend seating around oval.	High	BWFC	BSC
Cricket				
29	Add sight screen at rear of cricket nets.	Medium	BCC	BSC
Tennis				
30	Upgrade the existing hard courts x 2.	High	BSC	BTC
31	Install light x 2 courts.	Medium	BSC	BTC
32	Install lights on existing lawn courts. Stage 1. Front 5 courts.	Medium	BSC	BTC
33	Install lights on existing lawn courts. Stage 2. Back 5 courts.	Medium		
34	Upgrade the fence in long term.	Medium	BTC	BSC
35	Install shade on west side of clubhouse and between courts 2 and 3.	High	BTC	BSC
36	Plant 3-4 shade trees between courts and the clubhouse.	High	BTC	BSC
37	Continues to maintain 10 grass courts.	High	BTC	BSC
38	Consider providing a temporary dividing net between the four courts and retaining a good base for future additional hard courts /synthetic grass courts or use of the space for children's ball and bike activities.	Low	BTC	BSC
Playground				
39	Develop a traditional fixed equipment playground at the southern end of the oval for year-round use by community and casual users of the Reserve	High	BSC	BLC
40	Soft fall mulch	High	BSC	BLC
41	Provide protected, shaded play space with portable equipment which can be transferred between netball and tennis in alternating seasons.	High	BSC	BLC
42	Provide protected, shaded space for a children's play area, where loose materials can be used.	High	BSC	BLC
Entries, traffic and parking				

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

No.	Recommendations	Priority (Low/Medium/High)	Lead	Partners
43	Seek to provide designated car parks for each facility with access off the street and minimise large areas for vehicle use.	Low	BSC	BLC
44	Formalise car parking bays between Leisure Centre and tennis courts and north of netball courts.	Medium	BSC	BLC
45	Redesign the entry on corner of Morrison and Johnson St, including new signage and move ticket box further into Reserve and use bollards to separate cars and pedestrians.	High	BSC	BLC
46	New bollards to separate pedestrians and vehicles in high traffic zones.	High	BSC	BLC
47	Install new speed humps as required.	High	BSC	BLC
Trees				
48	Develop a native garden at south end of oval, building on the current established plantings.	Medium	BLC	BSC
49	Develop a tree planting plan for the whole Reserve using a consistent pallet of appropriate species for a) shade, b) shelter and wind breaks, c) play and d) landscape and visual amenity.	High	BLC	BSC
Other				
50	Plan for relocation of bowls club to the Reserve in the long term. 31m x 31m	Low	BSC	BBC
51	Install outdoor gym equipment	Low	BLC	BSC

7. Funding options

How could it be funded?

Buloke Shire Council have indicated that they have limited means to contribute additional funding for projects at the Reserve given their long-term financial commitments. However, they can provide letters of support for grant applications, lobbying and continue their club support.

There are several sources of funds for recreation and sports facilities. Major facility upgrades commonly have multiple funding sources, including government, user groups and not-for-profit funds. Some grants may only be accessible to local government and others, not-for-profit groups, and sports and recreation clubs.

Typical sources of funds for facilities include:

- Federal and State Government grants and election commitments
- Council capital works budgeted funds
- Philanthropic trusts/Foundation grants etc.
- Sponsorship and naming rights
- Fundraising programs

Other sources include leases to telecommunication towers and advanced rental payments.

As funding opportunities change on a regular basis, examples only are listed below.

Government grant programs

State

- Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund
- Change Our Game Community Activation Grants
- Regional Community Sport Development Fund
- All Abilities Sport Fund
- Telstra Footy Country Grants

National

- Australian Sports Commission - AIS Research Grant Program
- Play Well Participation Grant Program
- Building Better Regions Fund
- National Stronger Regions Fund.

Election commitments

- Victoria - November 2026
- Federal - No later than September 2025

Philanthropic

- Australian Sports Foundation – Fundraising
- Scanlon Foundation Community Grant Scheme

Funding for the indicative costs outlined below are subject to successful application for various funding grants. See Appendix 6 - Funding Options

Costs are supplied by Turner and Townsend Quantity Surveyors.

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

8. Appendices

Appendix 1. Stakeholders consulted as part of this plan

Name of Club/Organisation	Position	Status of Interview
Birchip Cricket Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Watchem Football Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Watchem Netball Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Watchem Hockey Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Tennis Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Golf Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Bowls Club	Club representative	Completed
Ex Squash Club	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Leisure Centre	Club representative	Completed
Birchip Forum	Group representative	Completed
Birchip Lifestyle and Fitness	Instructor	Completed
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning	Officer	Completed
Sport and Recreation Victoria	Manager Loddon Mallee	Completed
Netball Victoria	Northern Region Manager	Completed
Tennis Victoria	Club Development Officer - Country Central West	Completed
AFL Victoria	Region Manager	Completed
Cricket Victoria	Cricket Manager Western Country and Central Highlands	Completed
Bowls Victoria	Regional Manager	Completed

Appendix 2. Alignment with Council and other plans

Long- term Community Vision and Council Plan

The Buloke Shire Council long term community Vision and Council Plan outlines the priorities and goals of the Buloke region between 2021-2025. The Plan includes four priorities each with a vision and number of actions and directions. These are outlined in the figure below.



Figure 21. Buloke Council Priorities 2021-2025

Source: Long Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025

Inclusiveness Plan – Buloke Shire Council

The Buloke Shire Inclusiveness Plan is about seeing and hearing residents whose voices are often unheard and contributions to their community often unseen. The Plan takes in the past Disability Action Plan and Positive Ageing Strategy to move these documents towards a genuine community approach.

- Actions from the plan to be considered as part of this Master Plan include:
- Address footpath access, accessible building and accessible entry for public buildings, use of microphones where possible
- Understand and promote that being physically and socially active can promote good mental health
- Specifically target programs and services within, leisure centres at socially isolated and lonely older people
- Investigate the opportunity of accessible playgrounds within the Shire and work towards a dedicated focus of footpath accessibility, working alongside those with mobility barriers
- Increase walkability and access of neighbourhoods for older people and people with disability and from a gender equity perspective with safer footpaths, street lighting, seating, public toilets

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Birchip Community Plan

The Birchip Community Plan is a has been developed to describe the Birchip's community long term visions and aspirations. The Community Plan has been informed by the Long- term Community Vision and Council Plan and has identified strategies related to the four strategies identified above.

Objectives in the Birchip Community Plan that relate to Birchip Recreation Reserve, include:

- Review built community assets and explore opportunities for shared facilities and resources
- Maintain, enhance and plan for the future use of key community assets (e.g., BELC, Tchum Lake, Leisure Park, Park)
- Create a shade plan and actively seek funding for the installation and built and natural shade
- Maintain trees and control weeds on Council, Crown and private land
- Support young people to plan and deliver a broader range of recreation activities for children and young people that are not 'sport specific' (e.g., movie nights, BYO blow up to the pool, music events, drama)
- Seek opportunities to promote Birchip as a visitor destination
- Explore opportunities to strengthen strategic planning, partnering, communication and meeting skills amongst volunteers and community leaders
- Encourage the involvement of new volunteers and support and recognise existing volunteers.

Birchip Community Leisure Centre Master Plan 2010-2019

A 10 year Master Plan for the Reserve was completed in 2010 by the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Committee of Management in partnership with the Buloke Shire.

The following table summarises the progress of works recommended in the previous plan.

Table 8. Action Plan from the Birchip Community Leisure Centre Master Plan 2010 to 2019

Facility	Works	Completed Yes/No
Netball Courts	Construct a fence alongside the courts to prevent the balls from entering the car park area	Yes – prefer higher at north end
Children's play area	Develop a play space for young people near the netball courts.	No
Birchip Bowls Club	Set aside a space for a possible future location of the bowls facility from its location in town to the leisure centre, either behind the leisure centre or over the existing car park, next to the netball courts (Option). If a relocation is agreed to in the future, sell the land on which the Birchip Bowls Club is located and use this to help fund redevelopment of the Bowls Club at the Leisure Centre site	No
Leisure Centre	Upgrade plumbing throughout the Leisure Centre to improve water pressure	Hot water remains issue

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Facility	Works	Completed Yes/No
	Upgrade audio visual capacity of the Centre for functions and events	Yes
	Upgrade the kitchen and all appliances to allow it to continue to cater for community events and functions	No
	Upgrade the leisure Centre to increase the size of change facilities and to extend upstairs function room - Stage one (netball court end if redevelopment)	Yes
	Install a ramp at the appropriate gradient as described in AS1428.1 Disabled Access Code, to allow access to upstairs function room for the people with mobility issues	No
	Upgrade air conditioning in function area	No
	Upgrade the Leisure Centre to improve balcony viewing - Stage Two (front of centre redevelopment)	No
	Upgrade downstairs disabled toilet. To be compliant with AS1428.1 Disabled Access Code and instal baby change facilities	No
	Develop a disabled toilet upstairs to be compliant with a AS1428.1 Disabled Access Code and install baby change facilities	Yes

Facility	Works	Completed Yes/No
Scoreboard/ kiosk	Upgrade stairs on the scoreboard building to ensure that they are not so steep	No
Spectator shelter	Extend shelter for spectators from Leisure Centre to kiosk/scoreboard area	No
Sportsground	Plant with drought tolerant grass is an installed subsurface irrigation system	Yes
Tennis	Retain the Tennis Club pavilion until the facility reaches the end of its lifespan and review its use at that point in time	Yes - new
	Renovate two synthetic grass courts.	No
Hockey/ tennis	Renovate the tennis pavilion so that it can be used as a change social facility for hockey players over winter	No
Entrance	Council traffic engineers to redesign entrance to site to improve safety and construct a new ticket box if required	No
Landscape	Improve landscaping throughout the whole site	No
Old kiosk	Remove old kiosk and relocate power supply	Yes
Outdoor toilet block near tennis courts	Install a new public toilet block near tennis courts	No
BBQ/Picnic area	Develop shade over the BBQ/picnic area through planting of five mature trays	No

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Facility	Works	Completed Yes/No
Carparking	Mark parking days for people with disabilities, kitchen deliveries and emergency access	Yes
	Formalise car parking in both car parks and around the sports grounds	No
Mallee Bull Bar	Demolish Mallee Bull Bar	Yes
Sheep pavilion	Retain sheep pavilion as a storage shed	Yes
Horse stable	Offer horse stables to Birchip Racing Club for removal at their cost	Yes
Management/ Administration	Review management structure to provide better benefits for members and to increase revenue for members	TBC
	Committee of Management to continue to develop policies and strategies (e.g., risk management strategy) to ensure effective operations of the facility	TBC
	Committee of Management to undertake succession planning and governance training to ensure continued effective operations of the Committee	TBC
Operations	Subject to a positive feasibility, trial the employment of a chief to provide meals on weekends or on training nights	TBC

Facility	Works	Completed Yes/No
Maintenance	Continue to maintain and repair kitchen equipment	TBC
Marketing	Install signage at both entrances to the site	No
	Produce a quarterly newsletter (in both hardcopy and electronic format) outlining events at the Centre, bar opening hours, membership benefits, etc.	TBC

AFL Central Victoria Facilities Strategy – September 2017

The AFL Central Victoria Regional Strategy provides the principles and strategic framework to support the future development, governance and growth of football and netball throughout the Central Victoria Region. It also provides key regional strategic directions and recommendations, as well as identifying critical priorities and actions for AFL Central Victoria, AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria, AFL Central Victoria Leagues, Clubs and Netball Associations and project partner LGAs.

26% of the Central Victoria Regions' population aged over 18 participate in football (well above the Victorian country average penetration rate of 10%). Similarly junior and youth participation averages sit well above the State country penetration averages for these two age cohorts.

The penetration rates for football and netball in the Central Victorian Region showed that the Buloke Shire were well above the average in all five age categories compared to the other 8 LGAs in the Central Region.

Audits completed in February - May 2016 identified that there were gaps in facility amenities at the George Cartwright Oval in relation to changerooms, umpire rooms, football lighting and netball lighting. Facility condition ratings were marked low in relation to female suitability and shower facility design in umpires, home and away change rooms. These aspects have since been addressed.

The netball court surface and lighting were also rated poorly. These aspects have also been addressed.

Night competition football capable lighting is generally well catered for across the Region with all project partner LGAs, except Buloke, Gannawarra and Northern Grampians Shires having at least one venue with lighting to this level (150 lux).

Appendix 3. Site Services

Drainage – Watson St

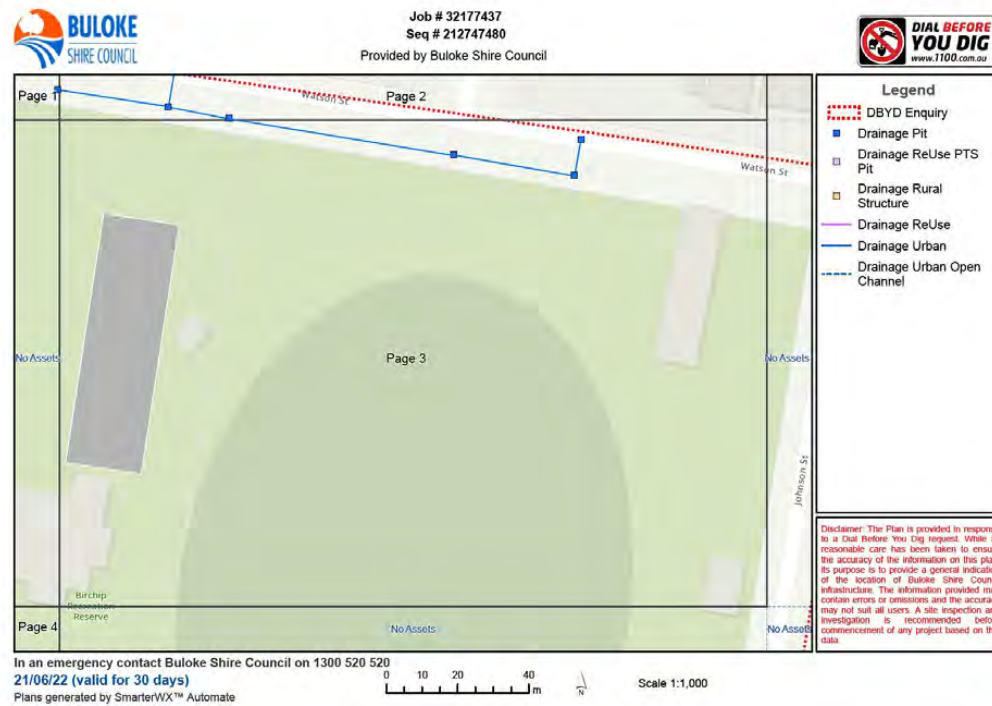


Figure 22. Drainage and pit location, Watson St Birchip, north of Reserve
Source: Buloke Shire Council

Electricity

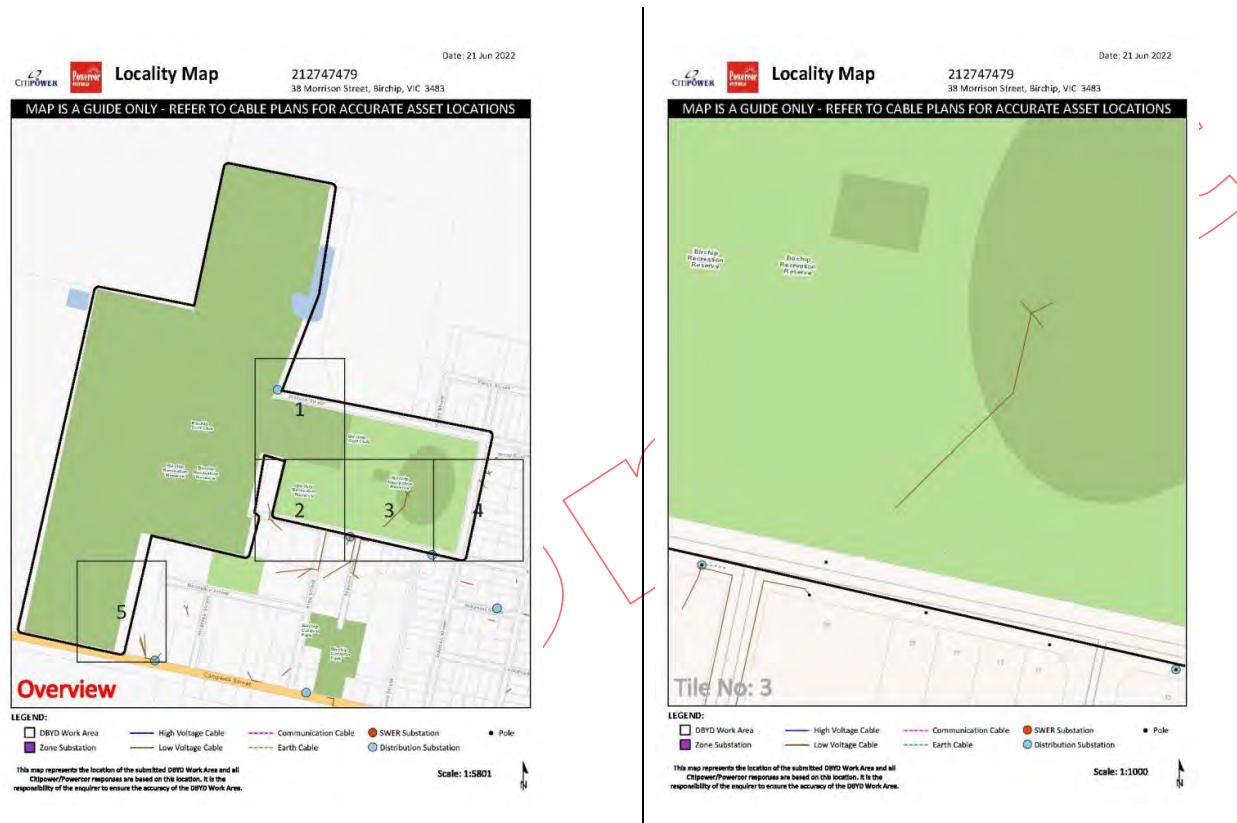


Figure 23. Site Locality Map for electrical cables at Birchip Recreation Reserve and location of low voltage cable at Oval
Source: Dial Before You Dig

BIRCHIP RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN

Water and sewerage

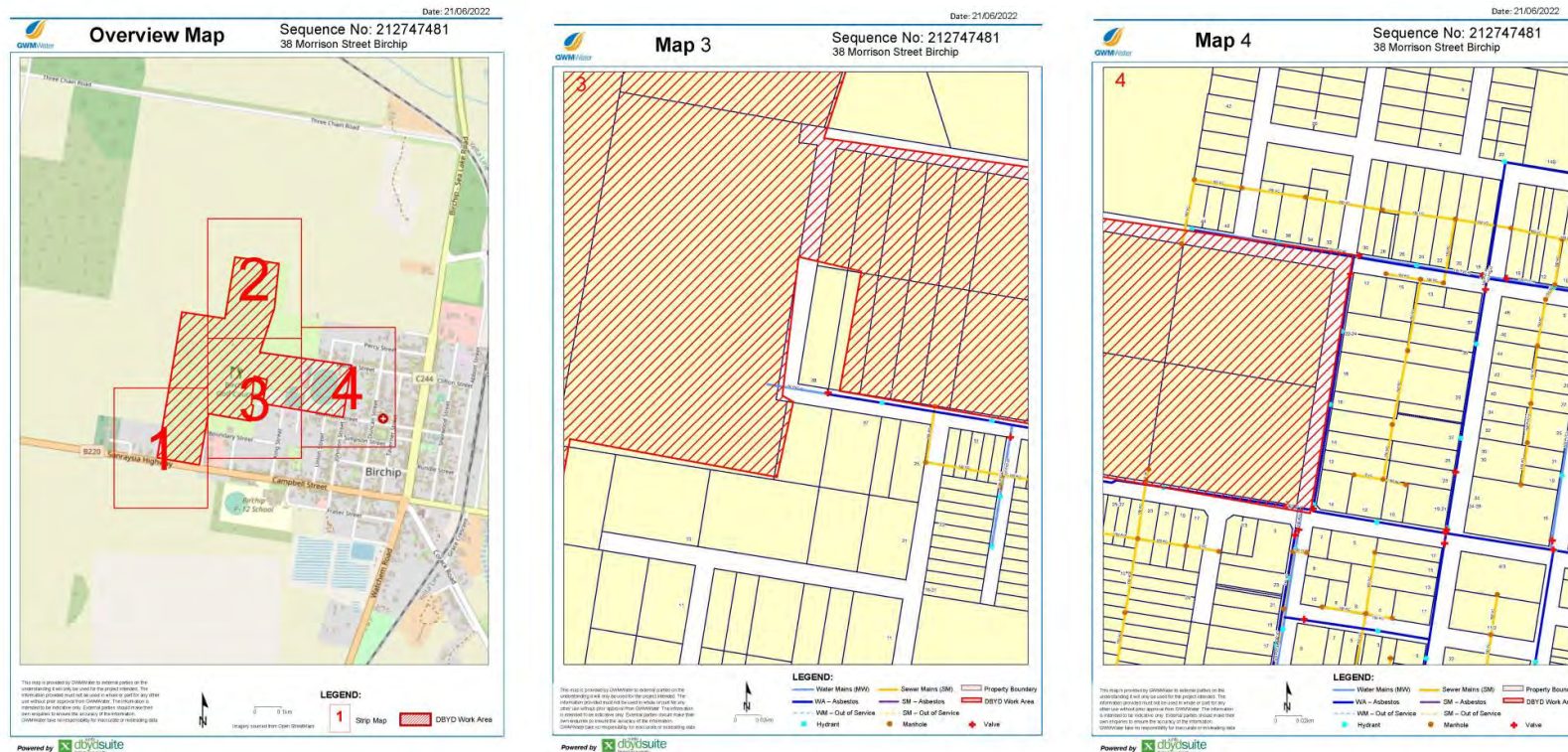


Figure 24. Overview Map of Birchip Recreation Reserve showing water and sewer mains
Source: Dial Before You Dig

Appendix 4. Pavilion Frontage Refurbishment and Master Plan

Birchip Recreation Reserve.

Birchip Community Leisure Centre.
Frontage Refurbishment.



Morrison Street
Birchip, Vic. 3483

Preliminary Concept – PC02 - FINAL

December 2023

106
Architects

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PLANNERS

Contents

EXISTING CONDITIONS
EXISTING SITE
PROJECT OVERVIEW
BRIEF
PRELIMINARY MASTERPLAN
CONCEPT FLOOR PLANS
REFERENCE IMAGES
3D IMAGES

Prepared for
Buloke Shire Council

Birchip Community Leisure Centre Pavilion Frontage Refurbishment

Draft Concept

Revision 01
06.04.2023

Reference: A22135

Prepared by
Dion Gosling

Reviewed by
Dion Gosling
On behalf of Studio106 Architecture Pty Ltd
T/A 106 Architects

Cover Image

Birchip Community Leisure Centre



Existing Conditions



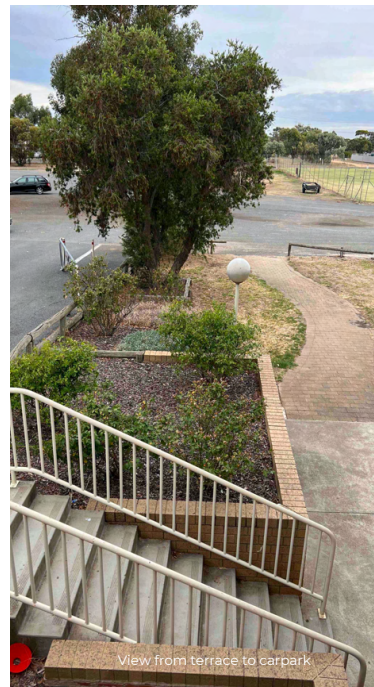
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A22135 / BIRCHIP COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE
PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23

Existing Site



View from terrace to carpark



Hardcourt Change Room Access



Oval Change Room Access

Existing Site



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A22135 / BIRCHIP COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE
PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23



Project Overview.

Project Scope

- Leisure Centre frontage upgrade
- Rationalise existing accessible ramps & balustrades
- Better use of spectator mound, bench seating
- Site accessibility upgrades
- Landscape overlay
- New covered structures
- Back of house / servicing upgrade
- Enhance connections & integration of existing amenities



Brief.

Facilities:

- Viewing platforms & terrace
- Public viewing areas & seating
- Events concourse

Key Considerations:

- Drop-off for deliveries
- Safe pedestrian movement between clubrooms, hardcourts & oval
- Covered spectator shelter – for sun & wind
- Standing room
- Unimpeded views from inside social spaces to the oval
- Enable fully accessible entry points – ramps & stairs
- Adaptive reuse of space – events & day-to-day activities
- Event & spectator zone
- Larger terrace/deck area required

Design Challenges + Constraints:

- Excavation / cut-to-fill
- Integration with existing leisure centre
- Levels across embankment
- Access priorities

Design Opportunities:

- Soften area w/ landscape treatment
- Create shelter structures
- Potential canteen servicing the terrace
- External connections with landscape & oval
- Lightweight structures to compliment solidity of existing Centre materials

Preliminary Masterplan.



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A22135 / BIRCHIP COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE
PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23

Concept Floor Plans.



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A22135 / BIRCHIP COMMUNITY LEISURE CENTRE
PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23

Reference Images.



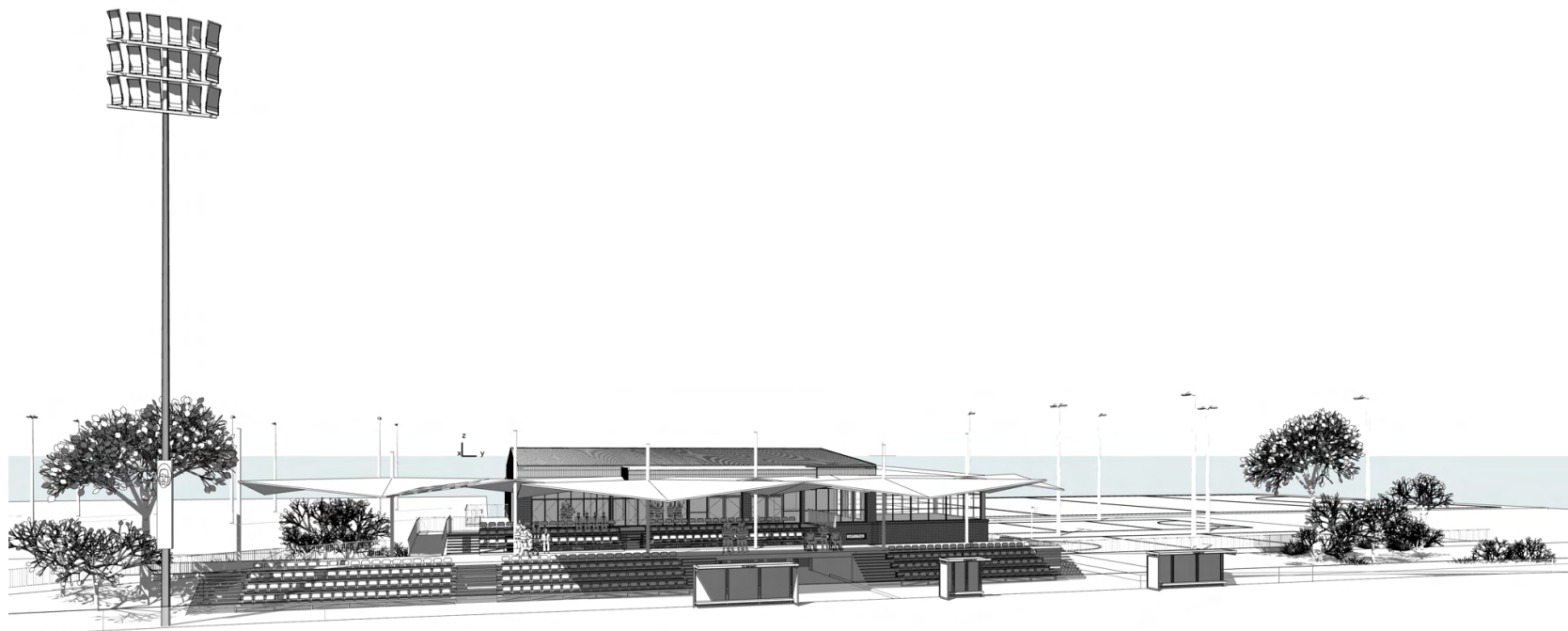
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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

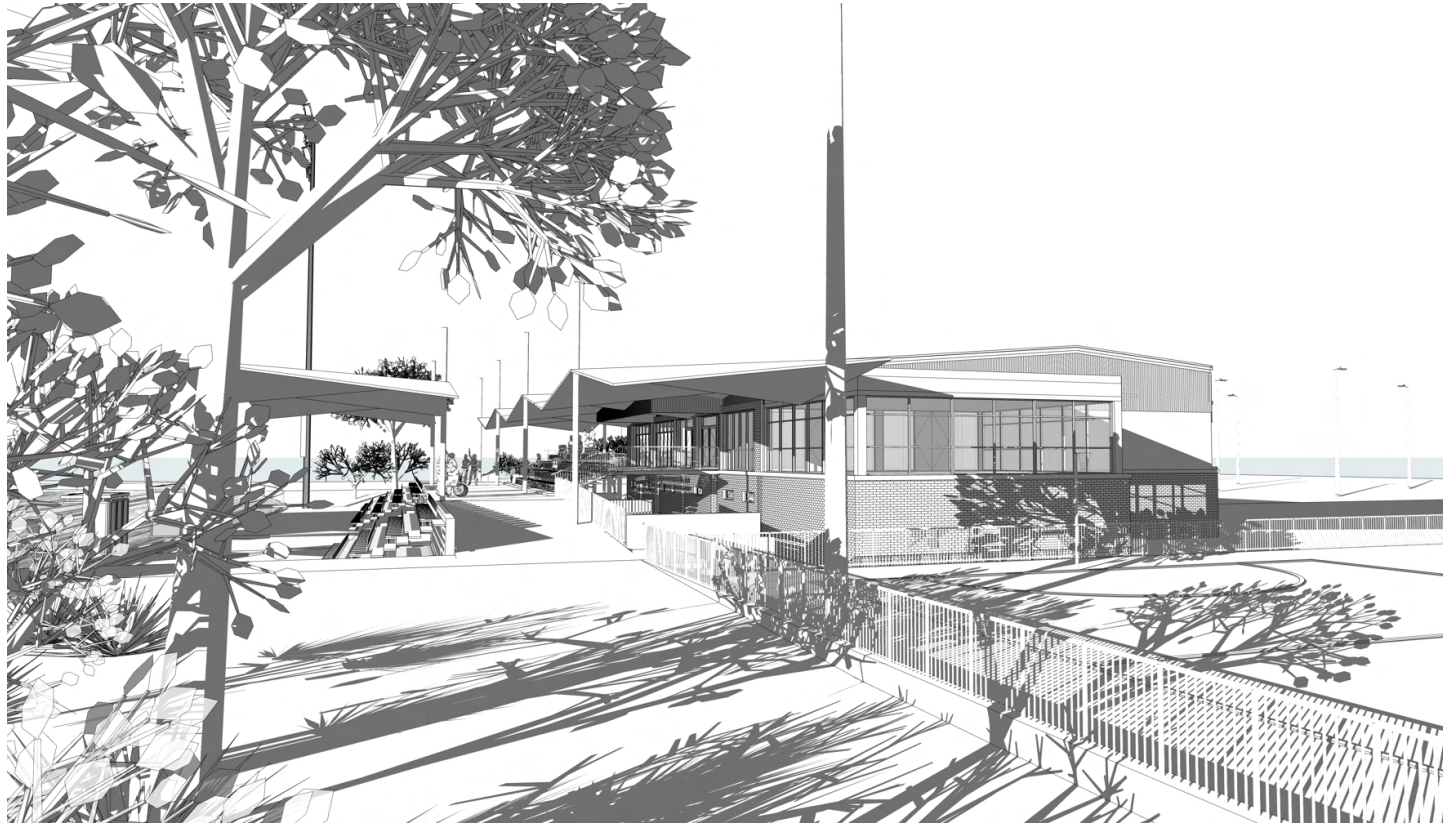
Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23

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3D.



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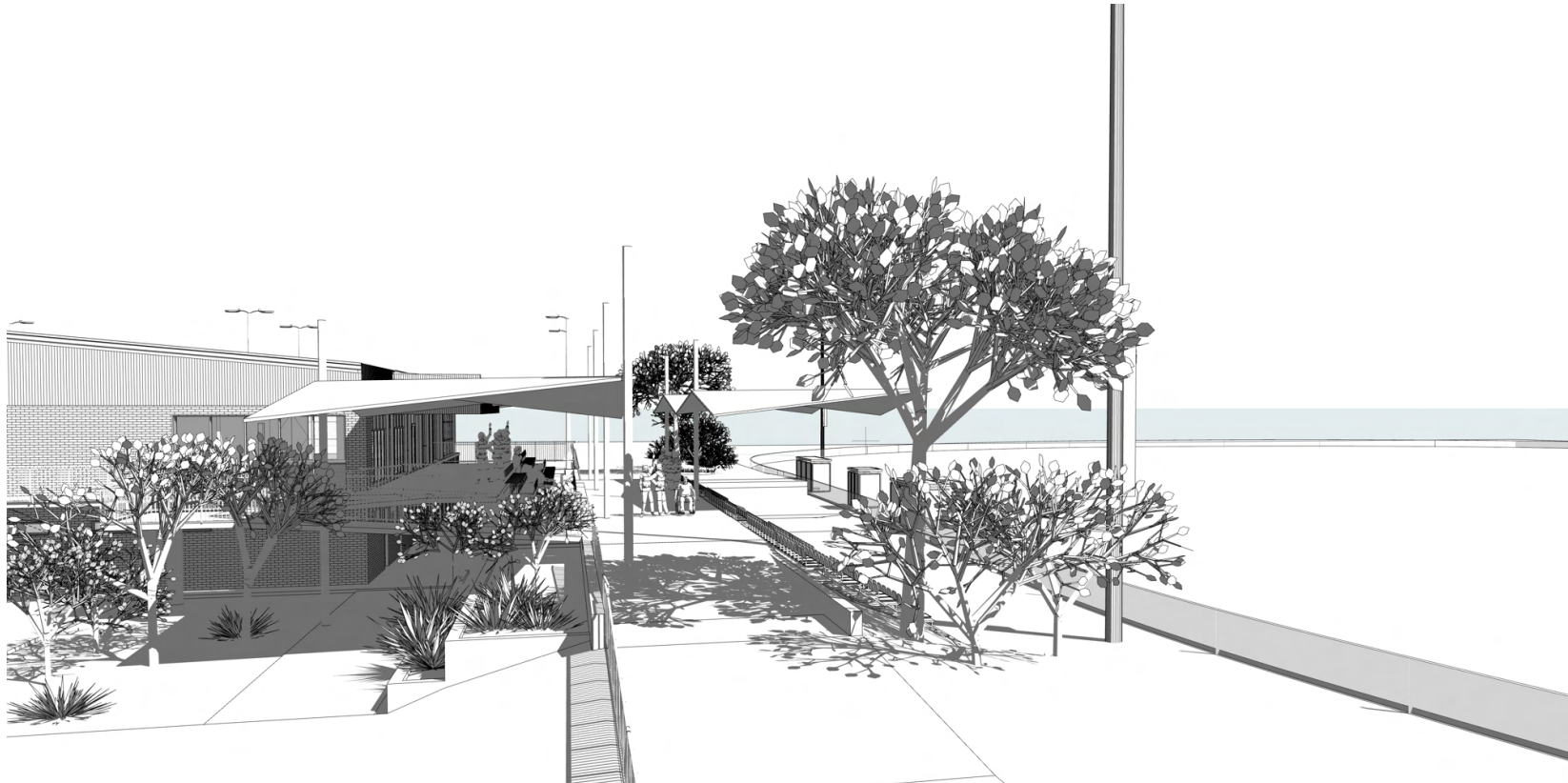
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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

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3D.



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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

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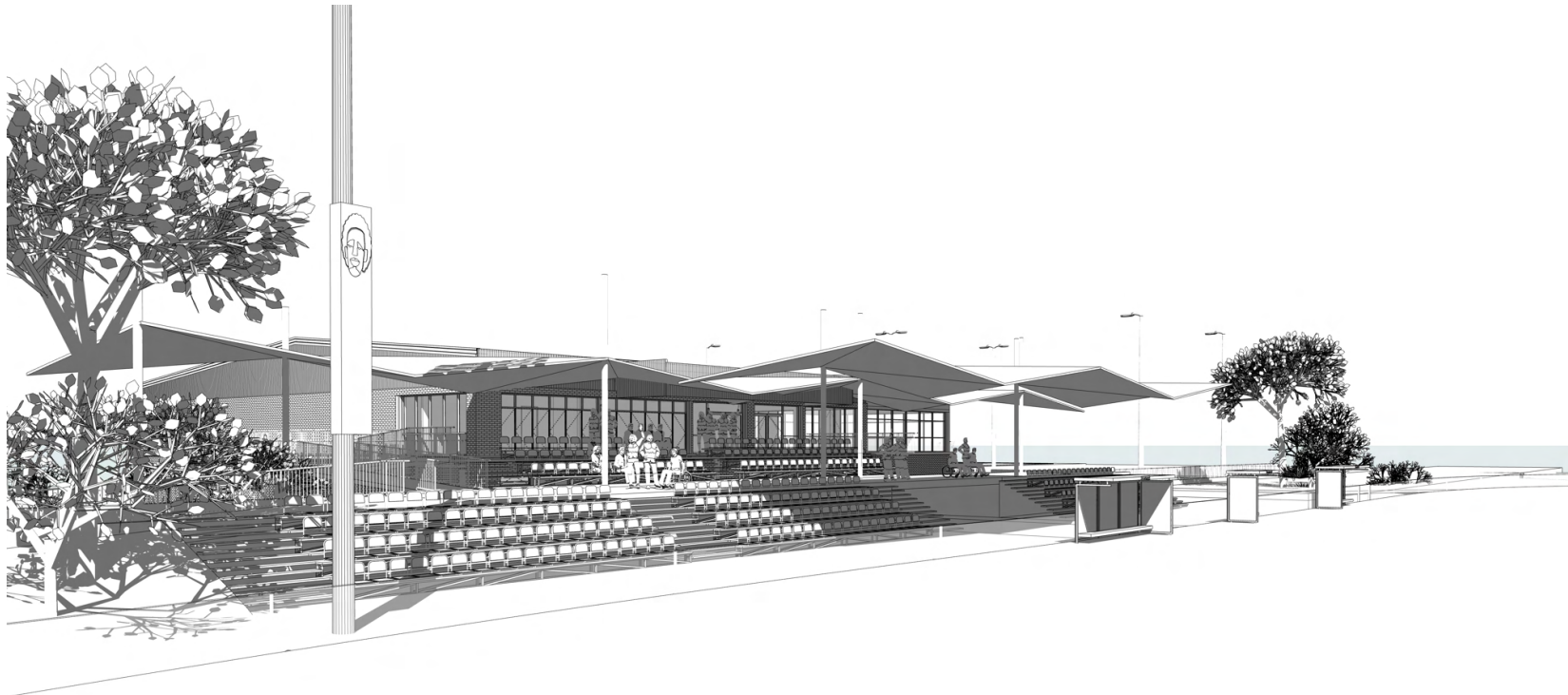
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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

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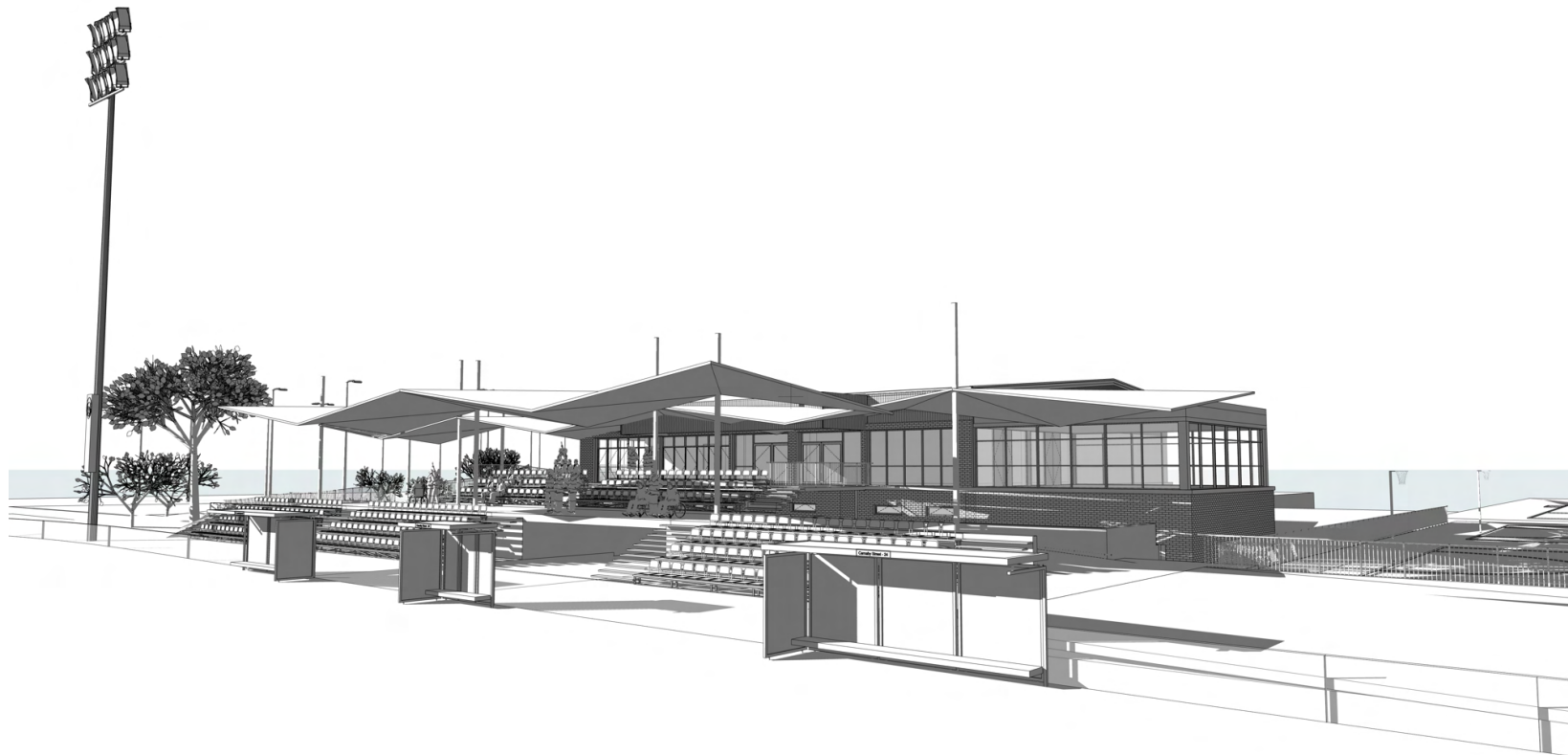
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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

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PAVILION FRONTAGE REFURBISHMENT

Preliminary Concept – PC02

18-Dec-23





Summary

Indicative Cost Plan - R1

@Leisure

Birchip Recreational Reserve R1

making the **difference**

Summary



@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1				Indicative Cost Plan - R1	
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
1	Birchip Recreational Reserve				
2	Indicative Cost Plan				
3	30/08/2024				
4					
5	Notes/Exclusions				0
6					
7	Leisure Centre				3,982,036
8	External Sports				4,026,385
9	Playground				175,000
10	Site Works				977,902
11	Site Services				280,000
12	Subtotal				9,441,323
13					
14	ESD Initiatives	3	%		283,240
15	Preliminaries	12	%		1,166,948
16	Locality Allowance	5	%		544,576
17	Subtotal				11,436,086
18					
19	Design Contingency	15	%		1,715,413
20	Cost Escalation to Tender	5	% pa	12 mths	657,575
21	Construction Total				13,809,074
22					
23	Construction Contingency	10	%		1,380,907
24	Professional Fees	10	%		138,091
25	Authority Fees & Charges	1.5	%		207,928
26	Loose Furniture, Fittings & Equipment (FF&E)	Allow			50,000
27	AV / IT equipment	Allow			100,000
28	Internal Council Costs				Excluded
29	Decanting, relocation, temporary facilities				Excluded
30	Project Total				15,686,000



Detail

Indicative Cost Plan - R1

@Leisure

Birchip Recreational Reserve R1

making the **difference**

Detail



@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	Notes/Exclusions - Elemental Summary				
5.1	COST PLAN NOTES				
5.2	Cost plan assumes a competitively bid tender process to 4 or more suitably sized contractors		note		
5.3	DOCUMENTATION				
5.4	Preliminary concept designs prepared by 106 Architects received 13 August 2024		note		
5.5	Birchip recommendations, details and info dated 310724 from @Leisure		note		
5.6	EXCLUSIONS				
5.7	GST		note		
5.8	Land, legal, marketing and finance costs		note		
5.9	Removal and disposal off-site of contaminated soil		note		
5.10	Adverse soil conditions including rock excavation and replacement of soft spots		note		
5.11	Latent conditions		note		
5.12	Asbestos and hazardous materials removal		note		
5.13	Staging costs		note		
5.14	Works outside site boundary		note		
5.15	Scope included is strictly in accordance with concept and recommendations - no allowance for scope not referred in these documents.		note		
5.16	Upgrade to Authority Mains		note		
5.17	Assume electrical power source from existing connection and no upgrade is required.		note		
5.18	Graphic art / public art		note		
5.19	Works to the park not specifically noted as part of the scope		note		
5.20	Items noted as Excluded in the cost plan detail		note		
	Total - Notes/Exclusions				0

Detail



Turner & Townsend

@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	Leisure Centre - Elemental Summary				
7.1	<u>Level 1</u>				
7.2	New flooring to kitchen incl remove existing	35	m2	300.00	10,500
7.3	Upgrade kitchen facilities to improve capacity	PROV SUM			75,000
7.4	Revise cool room configuration and install new beer lines	8	m2	4,800.00	36,000
7.5	New roller blinds [extent as nominated - 18m x 2m]	36	m2	180.00	6,480
7.6	<u>Ground floor</u>				
7.7	Improve ventilation for downstairs change rooms - replace motor of existing A/C	224	m2	150.00	33,600
7.8	Upgrade the golf support facilities (changerooms) to accomodate bowls in long term	118	m2	2,000.00	236,000
7.9	Refurbish toilets and showers for netball and golf	30	m2	4,000.00	120,000
7.10	Provide a lift into level one of the building	1	no		
7.11	- allow for lift	1	no	100,000.00	100,000
7.12	- allow for lift shaft, structural alterations	PROV SUM			120,000
7.13	<u>Future Area</u>				
7.14	Future Multi-use area - redevelopment squash / golf to include gym and exercise incl small pool and change facilities				Excluded
7.15	Future Stage 2 viewing area - elevated viewing area				Excluded
7.16	<u>Squash Courts</u>				
7.17	Rebuild squash court incl demo existing	1	crt	200,000.00	200,000
7.18	Install movable glass walls	Allow			75,000
7.19	No works to court 2		note		Excluded
7.20	<u>Spectator area</u>				
7.21	Upgrade concourse to include accessible ramps at each end to address non- compliant access	290	m2	1,000.00	290,000
7.22	Provide outside tiered seating to the oval edge for spectators [on grade]	137	m2	2,000.00	274,000
7.23	- Extra for steps	5	no	10,000.00	50,000
7.24	Provide outside tiered seating for spectators [suspended / balcony]	152	m2	3,000.00	456,810
7.25	- Extra for steps	3	no	15,000.00	45,000
7.26	New shade structures [assumes can have columns / not cantilevered]	743	m2	1,500.00	1,114,500
7.27	Improve entry/ exit from lower level change rooms to the oval [player tunnel]	PROV SUM			100,000
7.28	Allow for paved area surrounding seating	382	m2	300.00	114,546
7.29	- Allow for tiered planters to side of ramps	PROV SUM			50,000

Detail



@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
7.30	New shade between netball and oval (6m x 10m no seating)	Allow			100,000
7.31	- assume paved area with seats is existing		note		Excluded
7.32	New lawn / grass area (40m x 8m)	320	m2	30.00	9,600
7.33	<u>Public Toilet</u>				
7.34	Remove existing toilet block at Watson St entry	Allow			15,000
7.35	Refurbish existing toilet block to south side of site incl new roof	PROV SUM			350,000
	Total - Leisure Centre				3,982,036

Detail



Turner & Townsend

@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	External Sports - Elemental Summary				
8.1	<u>Perimeter exercise trail</u>				
8.2	New 2m wide granitic sand walking / running track	4,629	m	75.00	347,175
8.3	Allow for fishing platform off golf dam	Allow			30,000
8.4	<u>Golf course</u>				
8.5	Upgrade watering system to tees on golf course	1,500	m	65.00	97,500
8.6	<u>Netball</u>				
8.7	Additional lights to court 2 incl lights, poles and cabling	2	no	50,000.00	100,000
8.8	Increase fence height to 2200 at ends of courts (extg 1200H)	100	m	360.00	36,000
8.9	- assumes remove existing and provide new		note		
8.10	Replace / resurface court 2 - assume synthetic rubber surface	Allow			400,000
8.11	- includes removal of existing, install new		note		
8.12	<u>Hockey</u>				
8.13	New hockey pitch - 94m x 55m grass field with additional 3m & 5m runoff with irrigation and drainage	Allow			677,710
8.14	New training lights to field	Allow			300,000
8.15	<u>Oval</u>				
8.16	Rabbit proof fencing to the oval	536	m	400.00	214,400
8.17	Install goal netting at each end	Allow			160,000
8.18	Extend seating around oval [assume 50% existing retained]	Allow			174,200
8.19	<u>Cricket</u>				
8.20	Add sight screen to rear of cricket nets	Allow			30,000
8.21	<u>Tennis</u>				
8.22	Upgrade existing hard courts	2	no	180,000.00	360,000
8.23	- new lighting	Allow			100,000
8.24	Install new lights to existing grass courts				
8.25	stage 1 - front x 5 courts	Allow			200,000
8.26	stage 2 - back x 5 courts	Allow			200,000
8.27	Upgrade perimeter tennis court fence	340	m	360.00	122,400
8.28	- assumes remove existing and provide new		note		
8.29	New shade sail on west side of clubhouse	Allow			25,000

Detail



@Leisure		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
Birchip Recreational Reserve R1					
8.30	- assume over existing paved/seating area		note		
8.31	New shade trees between courts and clubhouse (assume 45L pots)	4	no	500.00	2,000
8.32	Maintain grass courts	8	no		Excluded
8.33	Temporary dividing net between front and back courts	Allow			50,000
8.34	<u>Bowling Green</u>				
8.35	New bowling green - 31m x 31m	1	no	400,000.00	400,000
	Total - External Sports				4,026,385

Detail



@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1				Indicative Cost Plan - R1	
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	Playground - Elemental Summary				
9.1	New traditional fixed equipment playground at the south end of the oval	Allow			100,000
9.2	- extra for soft fall mulch	Allow			15,000
9.3	New protected play space with portable equipment	Allow			30,000
9.4	- Extra for temporary shade structures / market umbrellas etc	Allow			30,000
9.5	- no allowance for soft fall for portable play space		note		Excluded
	Total - Playground				175,000

Detail



@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1		Indicative Cost Plan - R1			
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	Site Works - Elemental Summary				
10.1	Site clearance	18,650	m2	8.00	149,200
10.2	Earthworks to outdoor seating / concourse areas	870	m2	90.00	78,300
10.3	- extra for batters	Allow			45,000
10.4	<u>Entries, traffic and parking</u>				
10.5	Dedicated carparks for each facility				Included
10.6	Formalise carparking bays between Leisure Centre and tennis courts and north of netball courts	Allow			536,402
10.7	Redesign entry on cnr of Morrison and Johnson St incl new bollards	Allow			100,000
10.8	- allow to relocate ticket box	PROV SUM			10,000
10.9	New bollards to separate pedestrian and vehicles in high traffic zone	12	m	1,000.00	12,000
10.10	New speed humps	60	m	450.00	27,000
10.11	<u>Trees</u>				
10.12	New native garden at south end of oval	100	m2	150.00	15,000
10.13	Develop tree planting plan for the whole reserve	Allow			5,000
10.14	- no allowance for actual trees		note		
	Total - Site Works				977,902

Detail



Turner & Townsend

@Leisure Birchip Recreational Reserve R1				Indicative Cost Plan - R1	
Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate	Total (AUD)
	Site Services - Elemental Summary				
11.1	Allow for stormwater	1	item	250,000.10	250,000
11.2	Allow for sewer - assume existing - no works				N/A
11.3	Allow for water	Allow			30,000
11.4	Allow for fire - assume existing - no works				N/A
11.5	Allow for electrical / comms - assume existing - no allowance for upgrade				Excluded
	Total - Site Services				280,000

8.2.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS

Author's Title: Manager Community Partnerships

Directorate: Community Development

File No: GS/09/42

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Increased Community Wellbeing

PURPOSE

To present to Council the applications recommended for funding under the Community Grants Program.

SUMMARY

Each year, Council allocates funds in the Annual Budget to support community initiatives that align with Council priorities and the Community vision as outlined in the Council Plan.

The purpose of these grant programs is:

- **Community Grants** – to support the strengthening of the capacity and capability of local organisations, assist with the organisation and management of events, or help with the purchase of small capital items.
- **Sustainability Grants** – to assist projects that contribute to reducing the community's carbon footprint, improving the environment, or effectively conserving resource usage.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approves the following allocation of funds under the Community Grants Program:
\$1,000 – Donald Show Photo Board Project (Donald Pastoral & Agricultural Society Inc)
\$1,000 – Pickleball for all: Serving Community Connection Across the Court (Charlton Neighbourhood House)

DISCUSSION

Five Community Grant applications have been received since the Ordinary Meeting of Council in June 2025.

Two of the five applications received have been assessed. Additional information is currently being sought for the remaining three applications.

In accordance with the Community Grant Guidelines, each application was reviewed by an Assessment Panel. The Panel consisted of three Council officers from across the Community Development Directorate.

Based on their assessment against the selection criteria, the Panel recommends the following two applications for Council's consideration and approval.

Name of Organisation	Donald Pastoral & Agricultural Society Inc
Project Title	Donald Show Photo Board Project
Grant Type	Small Capital Equipment Grant - Up to \$1,000
Total Amount Requested	\$1,000.00
Funding Amount Recommended	\$1,000.00
Full project cost	\$9,580.00
Project Description	The Photography competition at the Donald Show continues to grow every year. Additional photography boards are required to allow for the expansion of the photography competition.
Project Benefit	A photography boards display project can achieve several meaningful outcomes that align with the Council's vision for community wellbeing, inclusion, and vibrancy.
Assessment Panel Scoring:	15 + 16 + 20 = 51
Average Score:	Average score = 17 out of 20

Name of Organisation	Charlton Pickleball
Project Title	Pickleball For All: Serving Community Connection Across the Court
Grant Type	Small Capital Equipment Grant - Up to \$1,000
Total Amount Requested	\$1,000.00
Funding Amount Recommended	\$1,000.00
Full project cost	\$3,080.00
Project Description	<p>To purchase portable nets, paddles and balls to introduce a 'Pickleball For All' six-month initiative that introduces the energetic, laughter-filled sport of pickleball to Charlton and surrounding communities.</p> <p>Equipment will be used to run regular come-and-try sessions over six months, supported by Charlton Neighbourhood House and Mallee Sports Assembly. Launching in July 2025, this six-month pilot will offer weekly come-and-try sessions that are welcoming to all ages, all genders, and all abilities, starting at the Charlton Indoor Stadium and transitioning to the outdoor tennis courts over summer.</p>
Project Benefit	<p>'Pickleball For All' aims to create a fun, low-cost and inclusive social sport opportunity that encourages physical activity, connection, and community wellbeing across Charlton and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Our goals are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce and promote pickleball as an enjoyable, low-impact sport for everyone

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce social isolation by creating regular, informal social gatherings - Test community interest to determine the viability of a permanent, locally run pickleball group - Make better use of existing facilities and activate public spaces year-round - Build a small team of local volunteers or champions who can help drive the project forward <p>If successful, this project could become a long-term feature of Charlton's recreational calendar—fuelling ongoing participation, health outcomes, and fun!</p>
Assessment Panel Scoring:	14 + 17 + 19 = 50
Average Score:	Average score = 16 out of 20

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable to this report.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable to this report.

OPTIONS

Council has the option to not allocate the funds as recommended by the Assessment Panel, however, such amendments to the proposed funding recommendations may undermine the integrity and fairness of the assessment process.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable to this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Applicants were contacted by a Council officer if their application required additional information or clarification.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Community Grants Program is consistently assessed to identify any opportunities for continuous improvement and to ensure it reflects the needs of the community.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable to this report.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The allocation of funds for the applications recommended for funding will come from the Community Grants Program budget (\$20,000) in Council's Annual Budget 2025-26.

There is currently \$20,000 of funds available in the adopted Community Grants Program budget for the 2025-26 financial year.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable to this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Buloke Shire Council Plan 2025-2029

Community Grant Guidelines

Community Engagement Policy

Community Support Policy

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable to this report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments: Nil

8.3 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

8.3.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS 2025

Author's Title: Director Community Development

Directorate: Community Development

File No: GS/02/01

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Council leadership and engagement
Responsible leadership and decision making

PURPOSE

To note the results of the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

SUMMARY

The Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is held annually and coordinated by the Department of Government Services on behalf of Victorian councils.

The survey provides an insight into the community's views on:

- Councils' overall performance, with benchmarking against State-wide and council group results
- Value for money in services and infrastructure
- Community consultation and engagement
- Decisions made in the interest of the community
- Customer service, local infrastructure, facilities, services and
- Overall Council direction

The Report is coordinated on behalf of all Victorian councils by the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the results of the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey; and
2. Publishes the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report to the community

DISCUSSION

The 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report presents an overall performance index score of 41 for Buloke Shire Council representing a 10 year low.

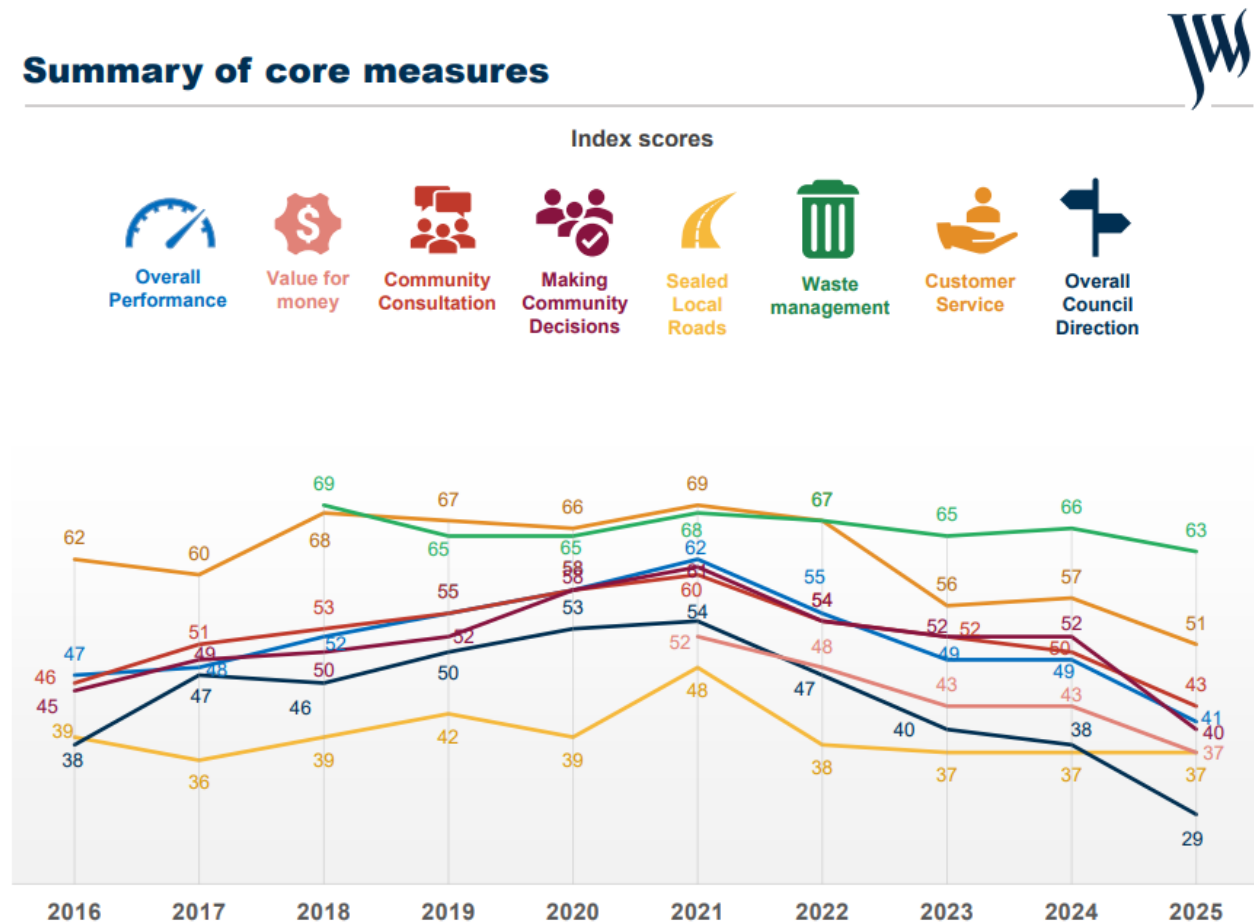
While performance on unsealed roads maintenance has improved significantly this year, seven other service areas – including recreational facilities, enforcement of local laws, business and community development and tourism, consultation and engagement, community decisions, lobbying, and planning and building permits – saw significant declines since 2024.

Compared to state and area grouping, Council performs in line with both the Small Rural group and State-wide averages on recreational facilities and the State-wide average for councils on waste management. However, Council performance is rated significantly lower than both the Small Rural group and State-wide averages on other core measures and individual service areas evaluated.

Council's best performing area continues to be in the area of recreational facilities, with recreational and sporting facilities cited by survey participants as the best thing about Council. Waste management and the appearance of public areas are Council's next highest rated service areas, followed by emergency and disaster management.

Council continues to rate lowest on maintaining its unsealed roads but has significantly improved its rating by four points on the 2024 survey results.

A graphic representation of the summary of core measures, included in the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey, shown below:



RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The results of the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report may be used to inform decisions around sustainability.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey was conducted by JWS Research via a telephone survey with Buloke Shire residents, that were 18 years or above, contacted at random on behalf of Council.

Council advertised the approaching survey in local newspaper advertisements, on radio spots and on social media in the weeks leading up to the survey which was conducted in February of this year.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

In noting the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey Report, Council may consider future opportunities for innovation in response to the results as well as develop initiatives for continuous improvement.

COLLABORATION

Council's Executive Management Team collaborated with the Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions and JWS Research in preparation of the survey.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The cost of conducting the survey was as per the budget allocation made in Council's Annual Budget 2024/25.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Local Government Act 2020

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Participation in the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is optional.

Participating Councils have various choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial, and other considerations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

Attachments:

1. Attachment 8.3.1.1 - JWS Research - CS S 2025 Buloke Shire Council Report

2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey

Buloke Shire Council

Coordinated by the Department of
Government Services on behalf of
Victorian councils





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Background and objectives

The Victorian Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) creates a vital interface between the council and their community.

Held annually, the CSS asks the opinions of local people about the place they live, work and play and provides confidence for councils in their efforts and abilities.

Now in its twenty-sixth year, this survey provides insight into the community's views on:

- councils' overall performance, with benchmarking against State-wide and council group results
- value for money in services and infrastructure
- community consultation and engagement
- decisions made in the interest of the community
- customer service, local infrastructure, facilities, services and
- overall council direction.

When coupled with previous data, the survey provides a reliable historical source of the community's views since 1998. A selection of results from the last ten years shows that councils in Victoria continue to provide services that meet the public's expectations.

Serving Victoria for 26 years

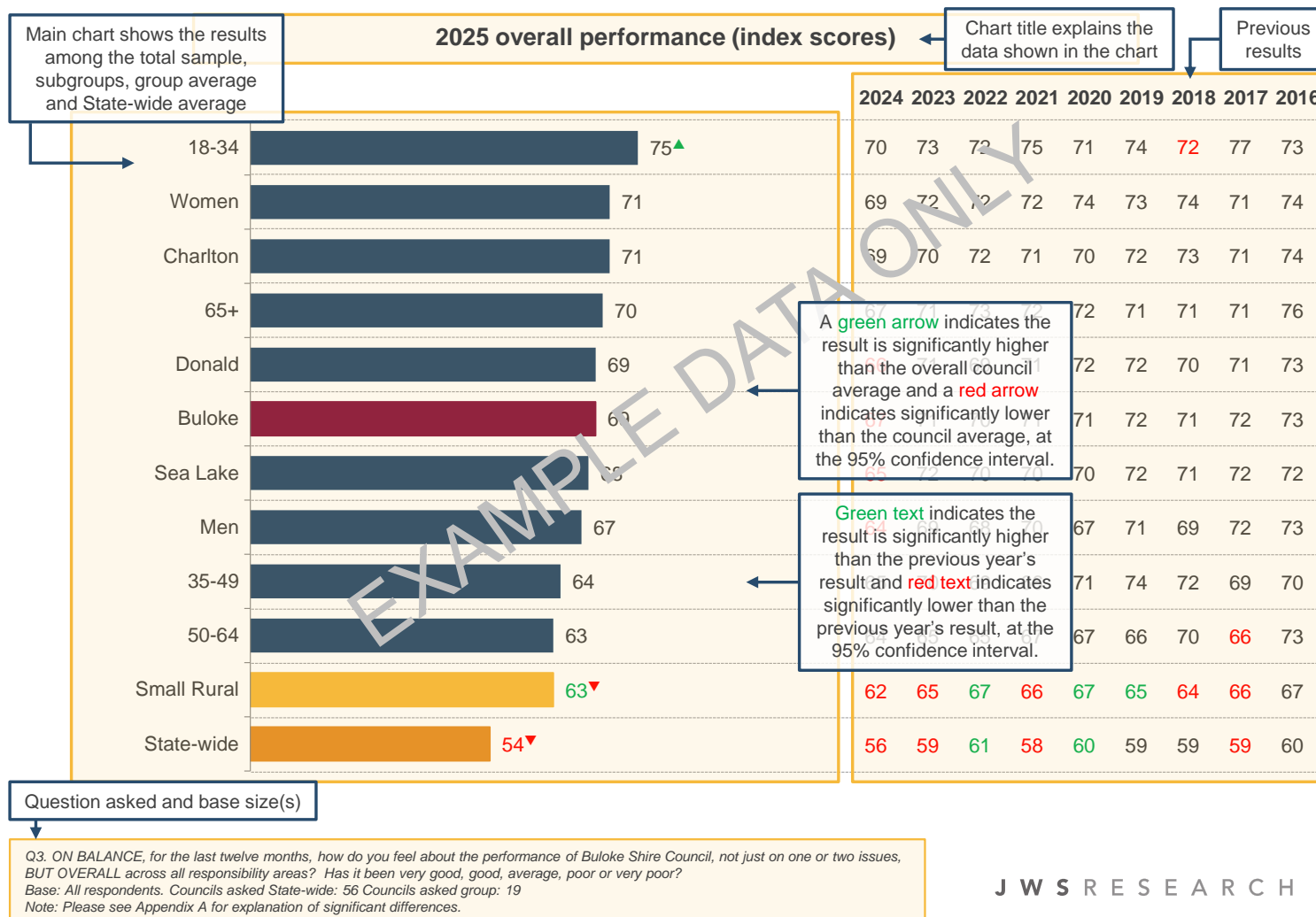
Each year the CSS data is used to develop this State-wide report which contains all of the aggregated results, analysis and data. Moreover, with 26 years of results, the CSS offers councils a long-term measure of how they are performing – essential for councils that work over the long term to provide valuable services and infrastructure to their communities.

Participation in the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey is optional.

Participating councils have various choices as to the content of the questionnaire and the sample size to be surveyed, depending on their individual strategic, financial and other considerations.

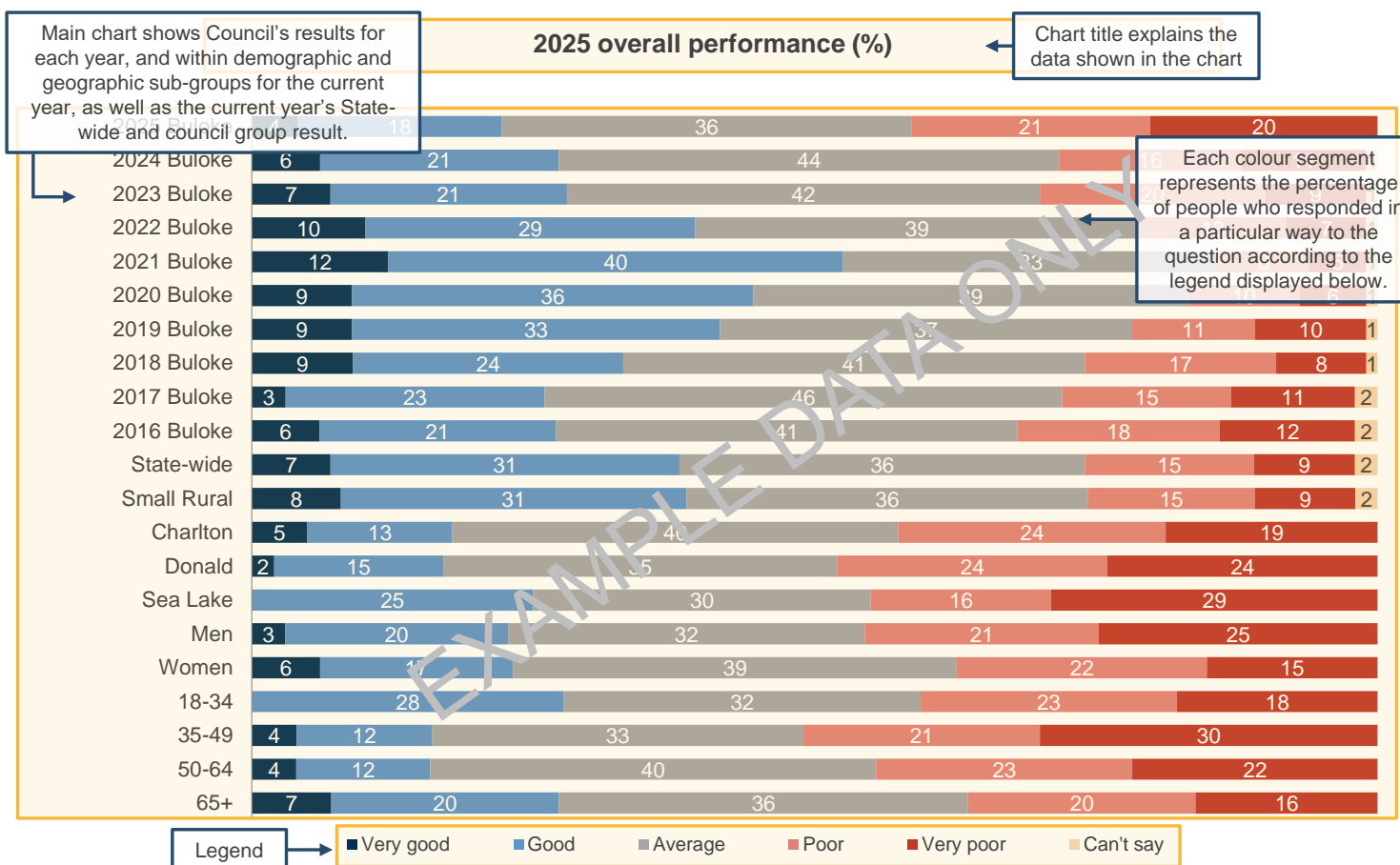


How to read index score charts in this report





How to read stacked bar charts in this report



Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Buloke Shire Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Key findings and recommendations



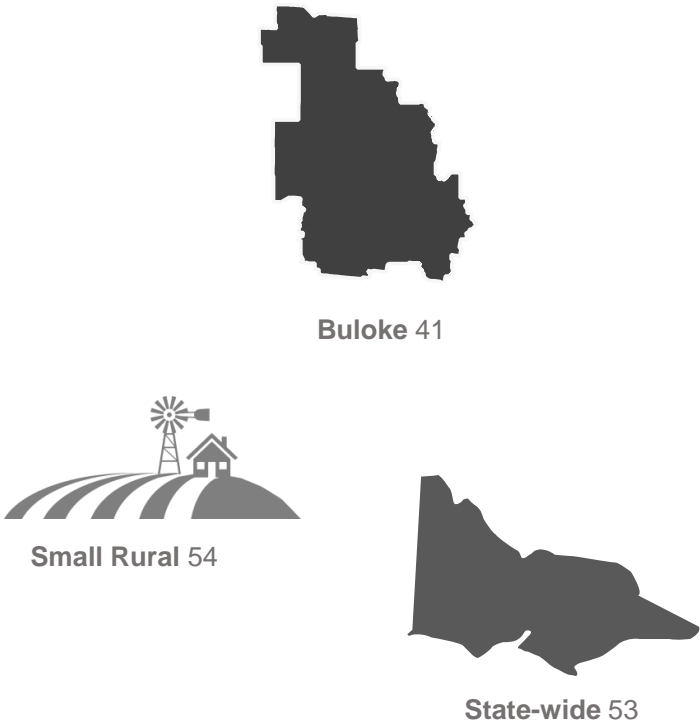
J W S R E S E A R C H 6



Buloke Shire Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.

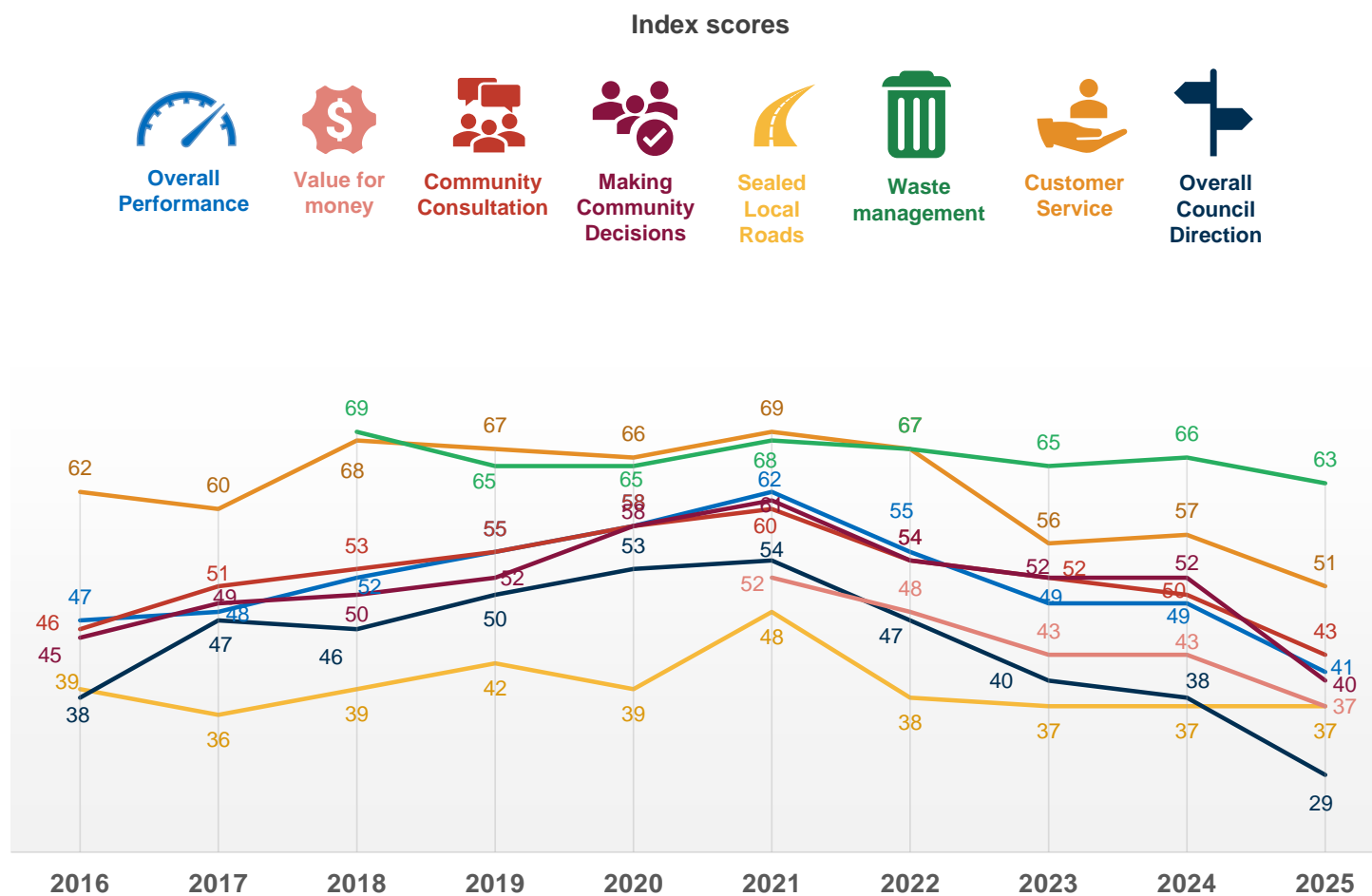


Council performance compared to group average

Top 3 performing areas		
	Recreational facilities	⚖ on par
	Waste management	▼ lower
	Appearance of public areas	▼ lower
Bottom 3 performing areas		
	Unsealed roads	▼ lower
	Planning & building permits	▼ lower
	Sealed local roads	▼ lower
	Customer service	▼ lower



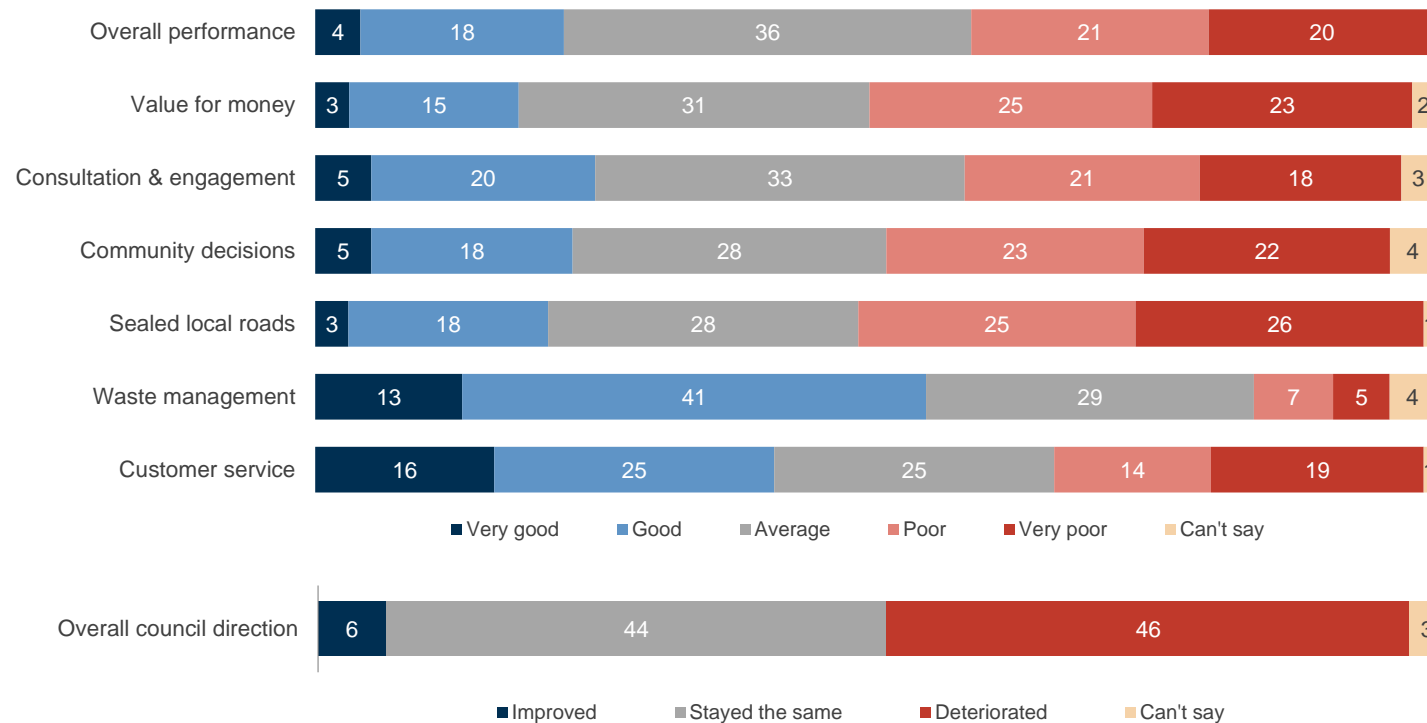
Summary of core measures















Summary of core measures

Core measures summary results (%)














Summary of Buloke Shire Council performance

Services		Buloke 2025	Buloke 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025	Highest score	Lowest score
	Overall performance	41	49	54	53	65+ years	35-49 years
	Value for money	37	43	47	47	65+ years	35-49 years
	Overall council direction	29	38	46	46	Sea Lake residents	Donald residents
	Customer service	51	57	65	66	18-34 years	35-49 years
	Recreational facilities	65	72	66	67	65+ years	Sea Lake residents
	Waste management	63	66	66	65	65+ years	50-64 years
	Appearance of public areas	63	65	70	68	Donald residents	Sea Lake residents
	Emergency & disaster mngt	62	65	66	65	Women	Sea Lake residents
	Art centres & libraries	59	59	72	73	18-34 years	35-49 years
	Enforcement of local laws	54	63	58	59	Women	Sea Lake residents

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than Buloke Shire Council 2025 result at the 95% confidence interval.
Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Summary of Buloke Shire Council performance

Services		Buloke 2025	Buloke 2024	Small Rural 2025	State-wide 2025	Highest score	Lowest score
	Environmental sustainability	53	56	58	59	18-34 years	Sea Lake residents
	Bus/community dev./tourism	47	57	57	56	18-34 years	Donald residents
	Local streets & footpaths	45	48	53	52	Donald residents	Sea Lake residents
	Consultation & engagement	43	50	51	50	18-34 years	35-49 years
	Community decisions	40	52	50	49	18-34 years	35-49 years
	Lobbying	40	47	51	49	65+ years	35-49 years, Donald residents
	Sealed local roads	37	37	44	45	Charlton residents	50-64 years
	Planning & building permits	34	48	43	43	Sea Lake residents	Donald residents
	Unsealed roads	31	27	40	38	Charlton residents, 65+ years	Sea Lake residents, 50-64 years

Significantly **higher** / **lower** than Buloke Shire Council 2025 result at the 95% confidence interval.
Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Focus areas for the next 12 months

Overview

Ratings of Buloke Shire Council's overall performance and overall direction have declined significantly in the past 12 months to record lows. While performance on unsealed roads maintenance has improved significantly this year, seven other service areas – including recreational facilities, enforcement of local laws, business and community development and tourism, consultation and engagement, community decisions, lobbying, and planning and building permits – saw significant declines since 2024.

Key influences on perceptions of overall performance

Council should look to improve perceptions of its decision-making and consultation, which have significantly declined this year and have a stronger influence on Council's overall performance rating. Council should also prioritise attending to the maintenance of its sealed roads, another strong influence on overall perceptions where Council rates poorly. Efforts in the influential and more positively rated area of emergency and disaster management should also be maintained to help improve overall perceptions of Council.

Comparison to state and area grouping

Council performs in line with both the Small Rural group and State-wide averages on recreational facilities and the State-wide average for councils on waste management. However, Council performance is rated significantly lower than both the Small Rural group and State-wide averages on other core measures and individual service areas evaluated.

Build upon improvements and address key service declines

Council should look to maintain efforts and build upon improvements to its unsealed road maintenance. It should also work to improve perceptions of performance on planning and building permits, and on business and community development and tourism which has a significant influence on Council's overall performance rating. Both these service areas recorded double-digit declines this year and particular attention should be given to Donald, whose residents provided Council's lowest ratings for these areas.

DETAILED FINDINGS



Overall performance



J W S R E S E A R C H 14



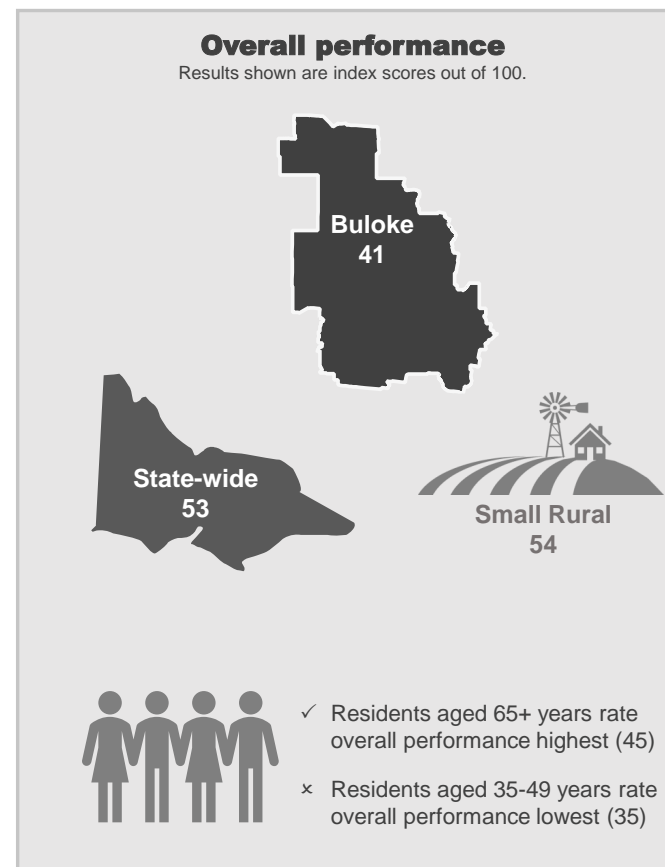
Overall performance

Perceptions of Buloke Shire Council's overall performance have declined significantly over the past 12 months, with the overall performance index score of 41 representing a 10 year low.

Council's overall performance continues to be rated significantly lower (at the 95% confidence interval) than the Small Rural group and State-wide averages for councils (index scores of 54 and 53 respectively).

- Overall performance ratings have declined significantly this year among residents aged 65 years and over (index score of 45, down six points from 2024), men (index score of 39, down nine points) and residents aged 35 to 49 years (index score of 35, down 18 points).
- Council's overall performance rating is slightly higher in Charlton (index score of 41) than in Sea Lake or Donald (index scores of 38 and 36 respectively), which have each seen significant declines from last year (down 15 and 12 points respectively).

Less than one in five residents (18%) rate the value for money they receive from Council in infrastructure and services as 'very good' or 'good'. Close to half (48%) rate this as 'very poor' or 'poor', and a further 31% rate Council as 'average' at providing value for money.





Overall performance

2025 overall performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	54▲	53	55	58	60	56	58	56	58	57
State-wide	53▲	54	56	59	61	58	60	59	59	59
65+	45	51	53	60	66	63	62	55	51	51
Women	44	49	51	57	64	61	56	55	53	48
18-34	42	47	45	57	69	58	57	55	49	47
Buloke	41	49	49	55	62	58	55	52	48	47
Charlton	41	48	50	58	67	60	57	51	46	n/a
Men	39	48	48	54	60	54	54	49	44	47
50-64	38	43	45	51	55	51	50	42	44	41
Sea Lake	38	53	47	50	59	53	55	52	51	n/a
Donald	36	48	47	53	58	57	54	48	48	n/a
35-49	35	53	49	50	52	55	46	59	50	50

Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Buloke Shire Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?

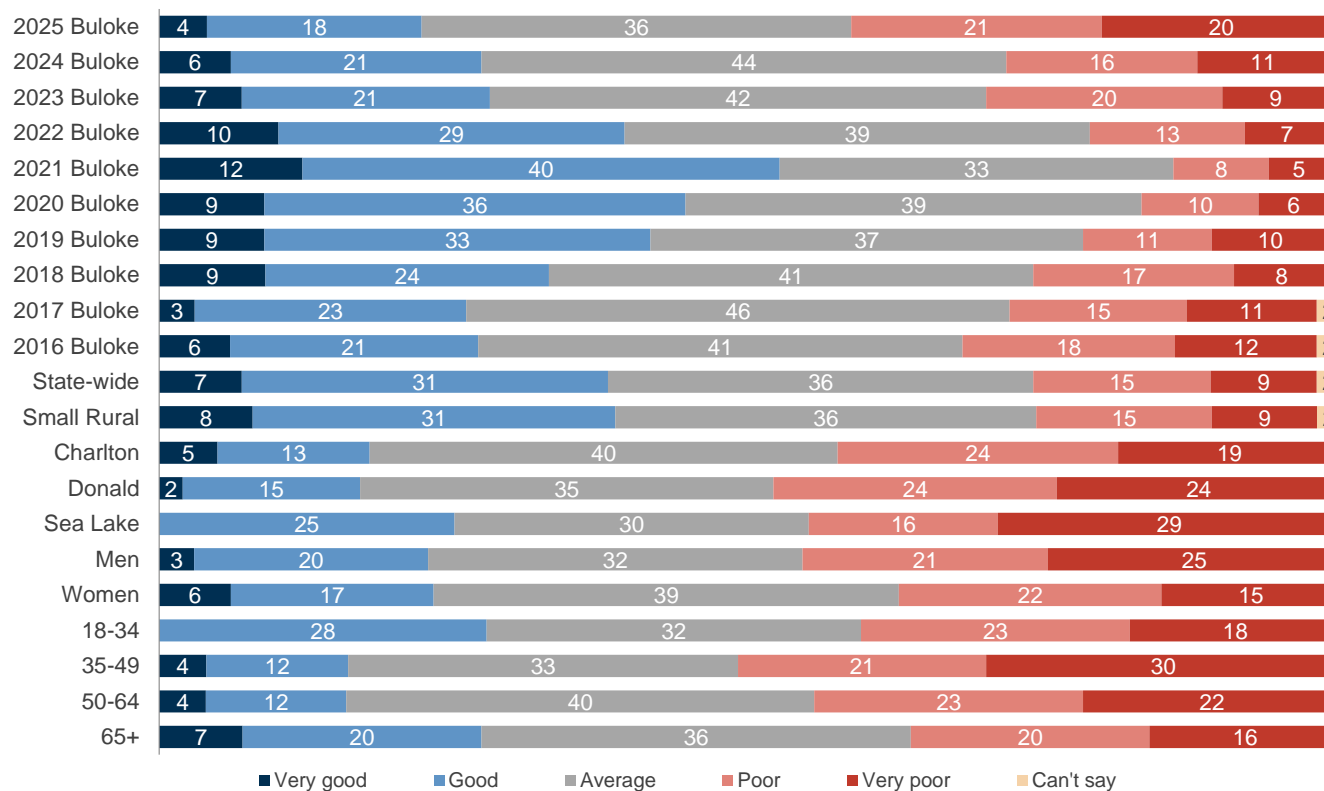
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Overall performance

2025 overall performance (%)



Q3. ON BALANCE, for the last twelve months, how do you feel about the performance of Buloke Shire Council, not just on one or two issues, BUT OVERALL across all responsibility areas? Has it been very good, good, average, poor or very poor?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19



Value for money in services and infrastructure

2025 value for money (index scores)

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	47▲	49	51	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	47▲	49	53	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	44▲	50	54	60	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	41	42	53	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	39	45	52	55	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	37	43	48	52	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	36	42	37	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	36	42	43	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	36	40	52	54	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	33	41	44	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	32	37	41	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	30▼	39	41	41	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q3b. How would you rate Buloke Shire Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?

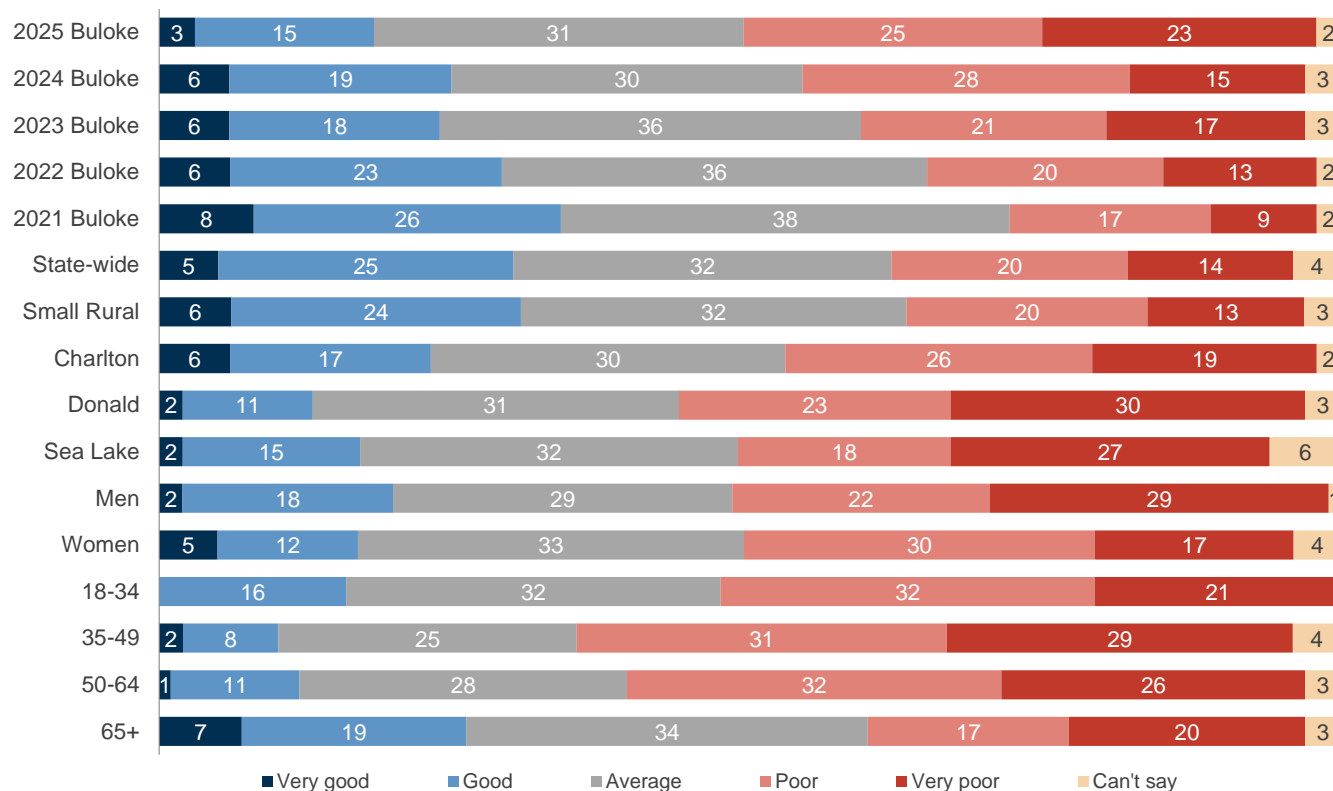
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 55 Councils asked group: 19

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Value for money in services and infrastructure

2025 value for money (%)



Q3b. How would you rate Buloke Shire Council at providing good value for money in infrastructure and services provided to your community?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 55 Councils asked group: 19



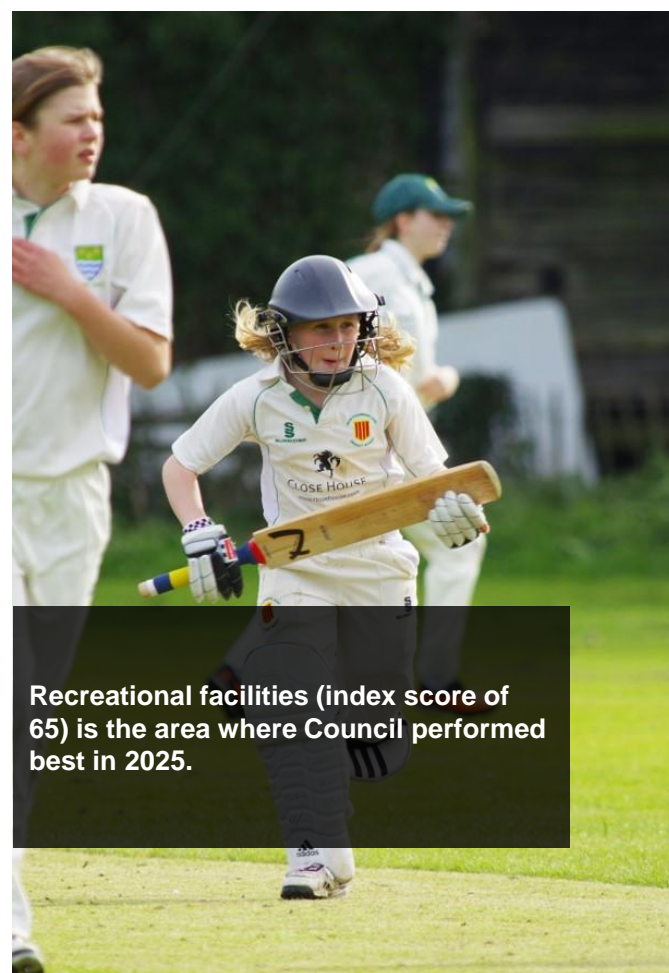
Top performing service areas

Council continues to perform best in the area of recreational facilities (index score of 65), with recreational and sporting facilities (14%) also most frequently cited by residents as the best thing about Council.

- Council is rated in line with both the State-wide and Small Rural group averages for this service area (index scores of 67 and 66 respectively).
- However, performance has declined significantly by seven points from 2024, with the largest declines among residents aged 18 to 34 years and 35 to 49 years (down 12 and nine points respectively).

Waste management and the appearance of public areas are Council's next highest rated service areas (index scores of 63 for each), followed by emergency and disaster management (index score of 62).

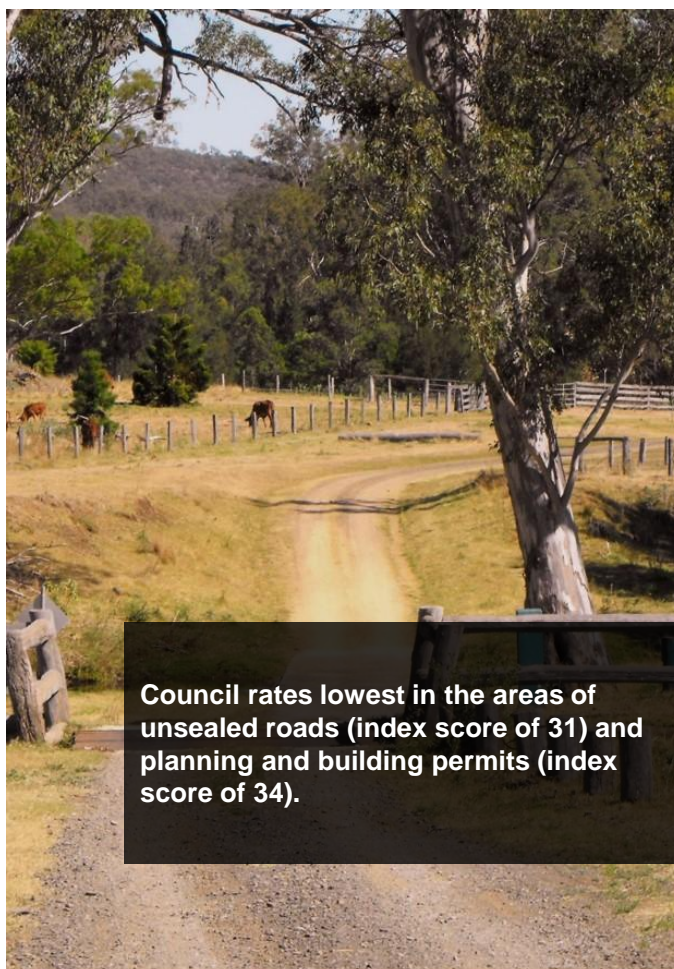
- Council performs in line with the State-wide average for waste management but significantly below the Small Rural group average, and below both the State-wide and Small Rural group averages on the appearance of public areas and emergency and disaster management.
- Council has largely maintained its positive ratings in these service areas across demographic groups but has seen significant declines among men on waste management, and 35 to 49 year olds and Donald and Sea Lake residents on emergency management.



Recreational facilities (index score of 65) is the area where Council performed best in 2025.



Low performing service areas



Council continues to rate lowest on maintaining its unsealed roads (index score of 31) but has significantly improved its rating by four points on 2024, largely driven by a significant 11-point increase among residents aged 18 to 34 years.

- Residents aged 50 to 64 years (index score of 25) rate performance significantly below the Council average for this service area and equal to Sea Lake residents.

Council's next lowest performing area is planning and building permits (index score of 34) where perceptions have significantly declined by 14 points this year, driven by double-digit decreases across all demographic cohorts.

- Residents of Donald (index score of 26, down 21 points) rate performance significantly below the Council average for this service area.
















This is followed by the condition of sealed local roads (index score of 37, unchanged for three years), with almost one in four residents (24%) citing sealed road maintenance as the area Council most needs to improve.

Council performs significantly below the Small Rural group and State-wide averages for councils in these three service areas.



Individual service area performance

2025 individual service area performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Recreational facilities	 65	72	68	71	74	74	69	67	n/a	n/a
Waste management	 63	66	65	67	68	65	65	69	n/a	n/a
Appearance of public areas	 63	65	64	71	75	71	68	67	n/a	n/a
Emergency & disaster mngt	 62	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Art centres & libraries	 59	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Enforcement of local laws	 54	63	64	62	65	62	61	58	n/a	n/a
Environmental sustainability	 53	56	58	58	63	59	57	58	n/a	n/a
Bus/community dev./tourism	 47	57	61	62	64	62	56	54	n/a	n/a
Local streets & footpaths	 45	48	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Consultation & engagement	 43	50	52	54	60	58	55	53	51	46
Community decisions	 40	52	52	54	61	58	52	50	49	45
Lobbying	 40	47	49	53	58	54	52	52	49	48
Sealed local roads	 37	37	37	38	48	39	42	39	36	39
Planning & building permits	 34	48	46	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unsealed roads	 31	27	30	31	38	35	37	35	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?

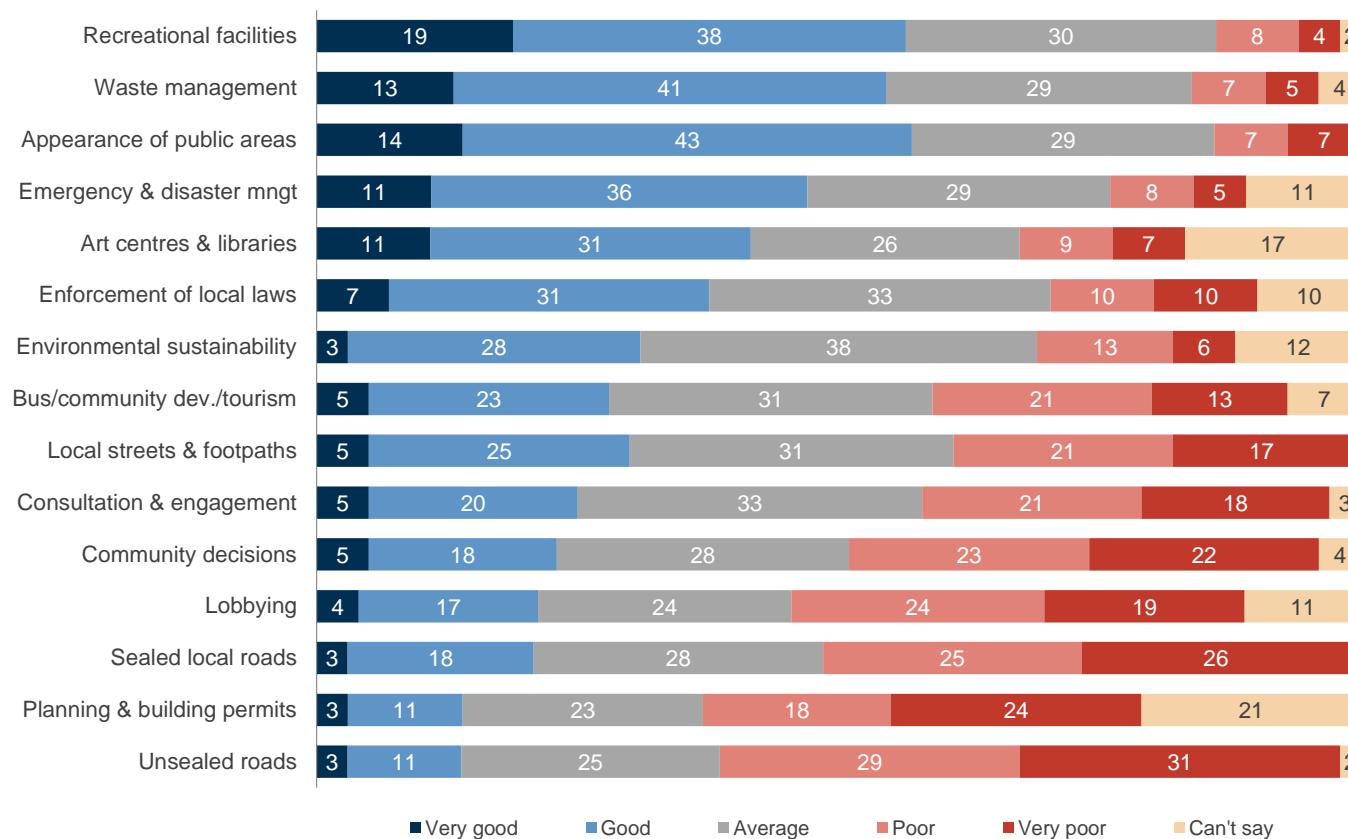
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Individual service area performance

2025 individual service area performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19



Individual service area importance

2025 individual service area importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Sealed local roads	86	88	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unsealed roads	86	86	85	86	86	84	82	85	n/a	n/a
Local streets & footpaths	81	82	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Consultation & engagement	79	76	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Waste management	77	77	78	79	80	80	77	78	n/a	n/a
Appearance of public areas	76	76	77	75	76	76	75	74	n/a	n/a
Emergency & disaster mngt	76	80	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Recreational facilities	76	76	76	76	76	76	74	77	n/a	n/a
Bus/community dev./tourism	72	70	73	73	76	73	72	76	n/a	n/a
Planning & building permits	67	66	67	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Enforcement of local laws	64	64	65	64	66	66	66	64	n/a	n/a
Environmental sustainability	61	61	63	66	67	67	65	65	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] be as a responsibility for Council?

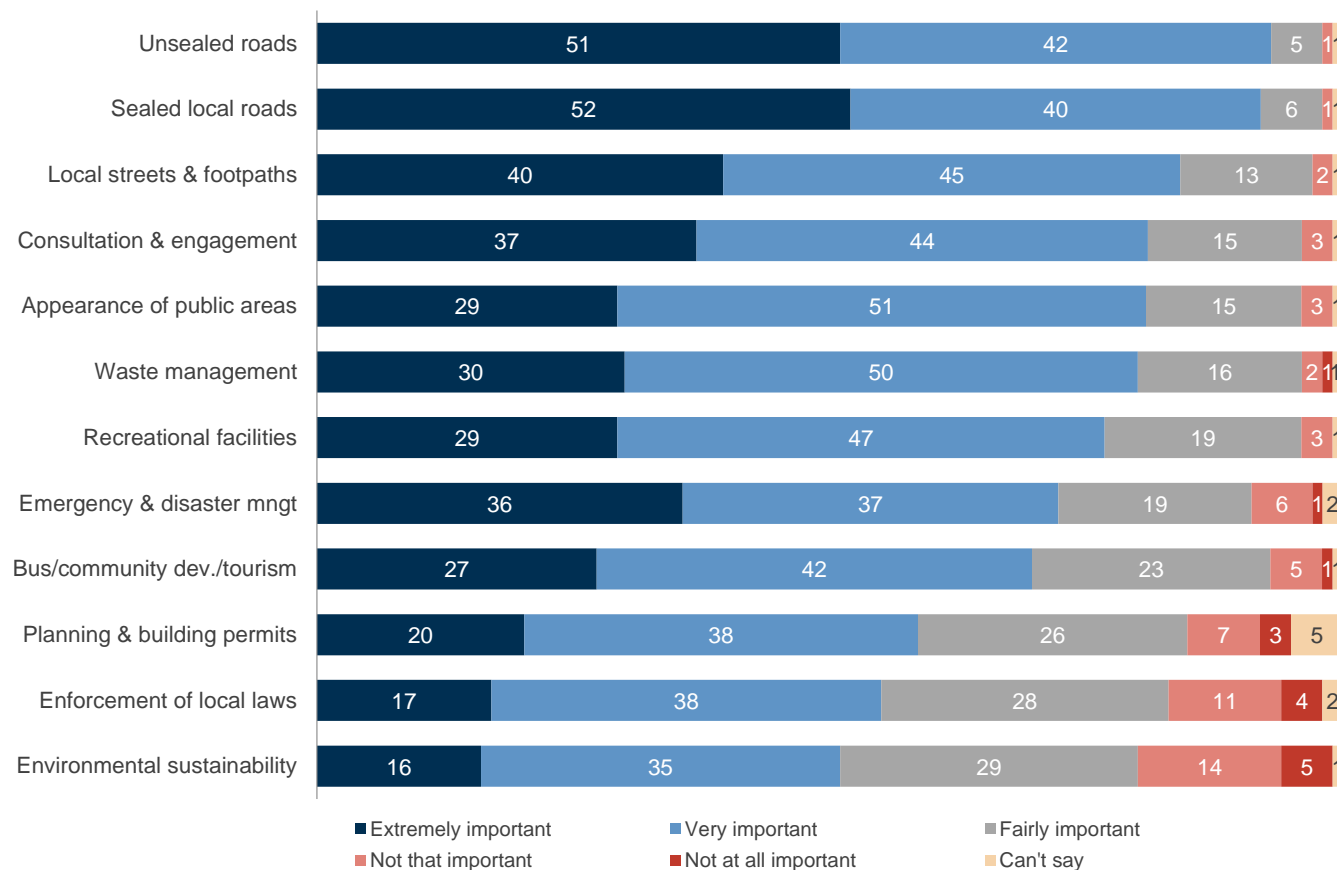
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Individual service area importance

2025 individual service area importance (%)

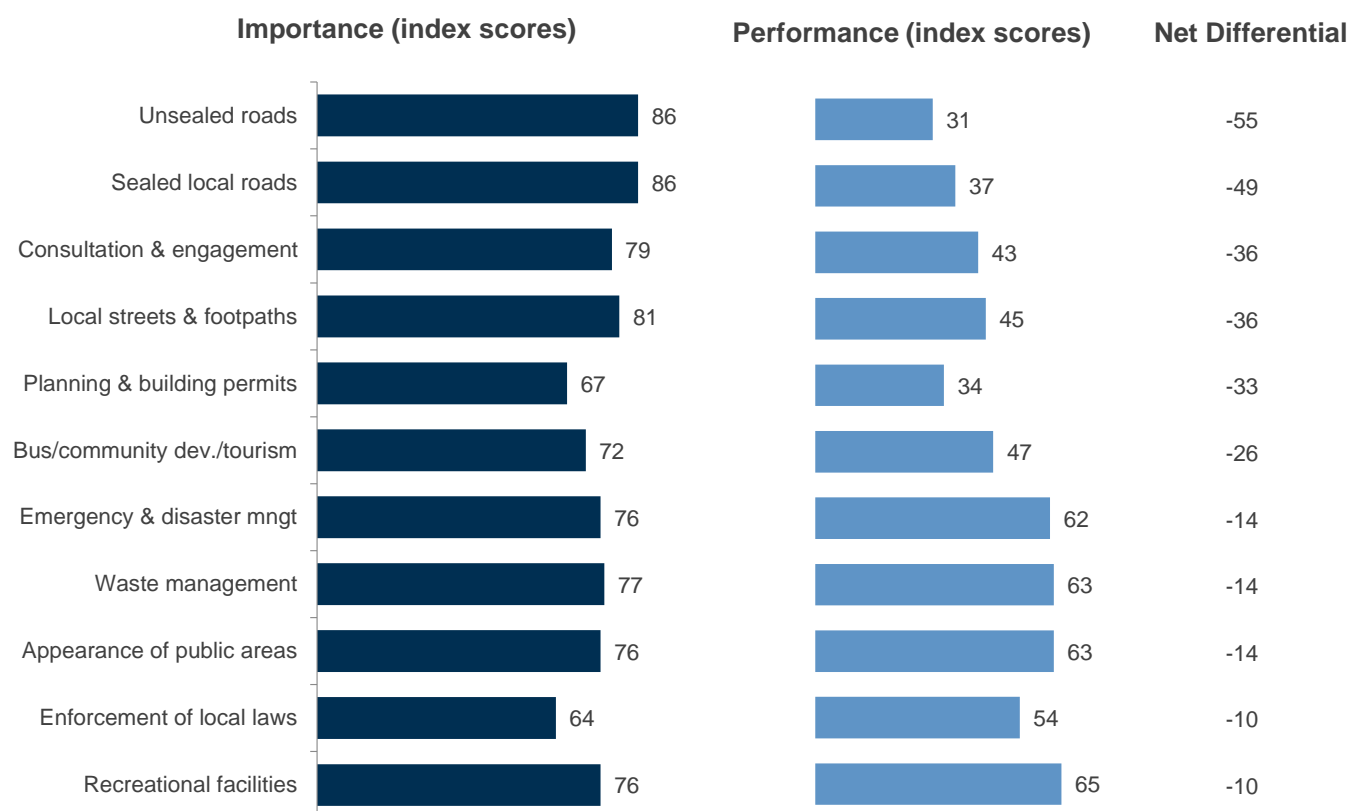


Q1. Firstly, how important should [RESPONSIBILITY AREA] be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7



Individual service areas importance vs performance

Service areas where importance exceeds performance by 10 points or more, suggesting further investigation is necessary.



Note: Net differentials are calculated based on the un-rounded importance and performance scores, then rounded to the nearest whole number, which may result in differences of +/-1% in the importance and performance scores and the net differential scores.



Influences on perceptions of overall performance

The individual service area that has the strongest influence on the overall performance rating (based on regression analysis) is:

- Decisions made in the interest of the community.

Good communication and transparency with residents about decisions Council has made in the community's interest provides the greatest opportunity to drive up overall opinion of Council performance. Currently, Council performance is rated as poor in this area (index score of 40).

Following on from that, other service areas with a more moderate influence on the overall performance rating are:

- Emergency management
- The condition of sealed roads
- Community consultation and engagement
- Business and community development and tourism
- Lobbying on behalf of the community
- The appearance of public areas
- Art centres and libraries
- Waste management.

Looking at these key service areas only, Council performs best on the more moderate influences of the appearance of public areas and waste management (index scores of 63 for each) and stronger influence of emergency management (index score of 62).

Maintaining these positive results should remain a focus – but there is greater work to be done elsewhere.

Most in need of attention is Council's performance on maintaining its sealed local roads, which is rated as 'poor' (index score of 37). Council is also seen to perform poorly on lobbying, community consultation, and business and community development and tourism (index scores of 40, 43 and 47 respectively). Improvement in these areas will have a moderate-to-strong influence on the overall performance rating.

It will be important for Council to attend to the condition of its sealed roads, to consult residents on key local issues and demonstrate efforts to advocate on their behalf, particularly around community and business development, to help improve overall ratings of Council performance.



Regression analysis explained

We use regression analysis to investigate which individual service areas such as community consultation and the condition of sealed local roads (the independent variables) are influencing respondent perceptions of overall council performance (the dependent variable).

In the charts that follow:

- The horizontal axis represents Council's performance index score for each individual service. Service areas appearing on the right side of the chart have a higher index score than those on the left.
- The vertical axis represents the Standardised Beta Coefficient from the multiple regression performed. This measures the contribution of each service area to the model. Service areas near the top of the chart have a greater positive effect on overall performance ratings than those located closer to the axis.

The regressions are shown on the following two charts.

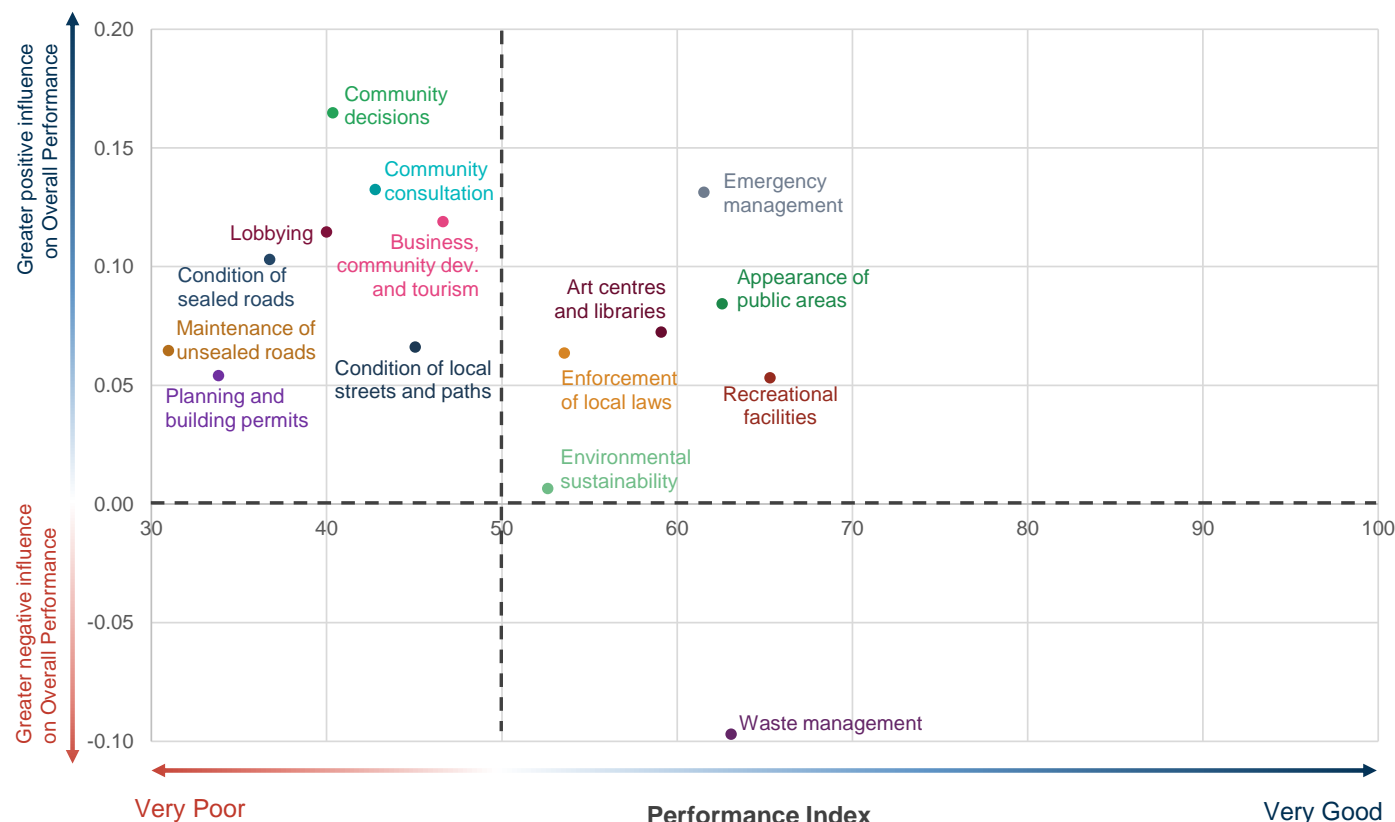
1. **The first chart** shows the results of a regression analysis of *all* individual service areas selected by Council.
2. **The second chart** shows the results of a regression performed on a smaller set of service areas, being those with a moderate-to-strong influence on overall performance. Service areas with a weaker influence on overall performance (i.e. a low Standardised Beta Coefficient) have been excluded from the analysis.

Key insights from this analysis are derived from the second chart.



Influence on overall performance: all services

2025 regression analysis (all services)

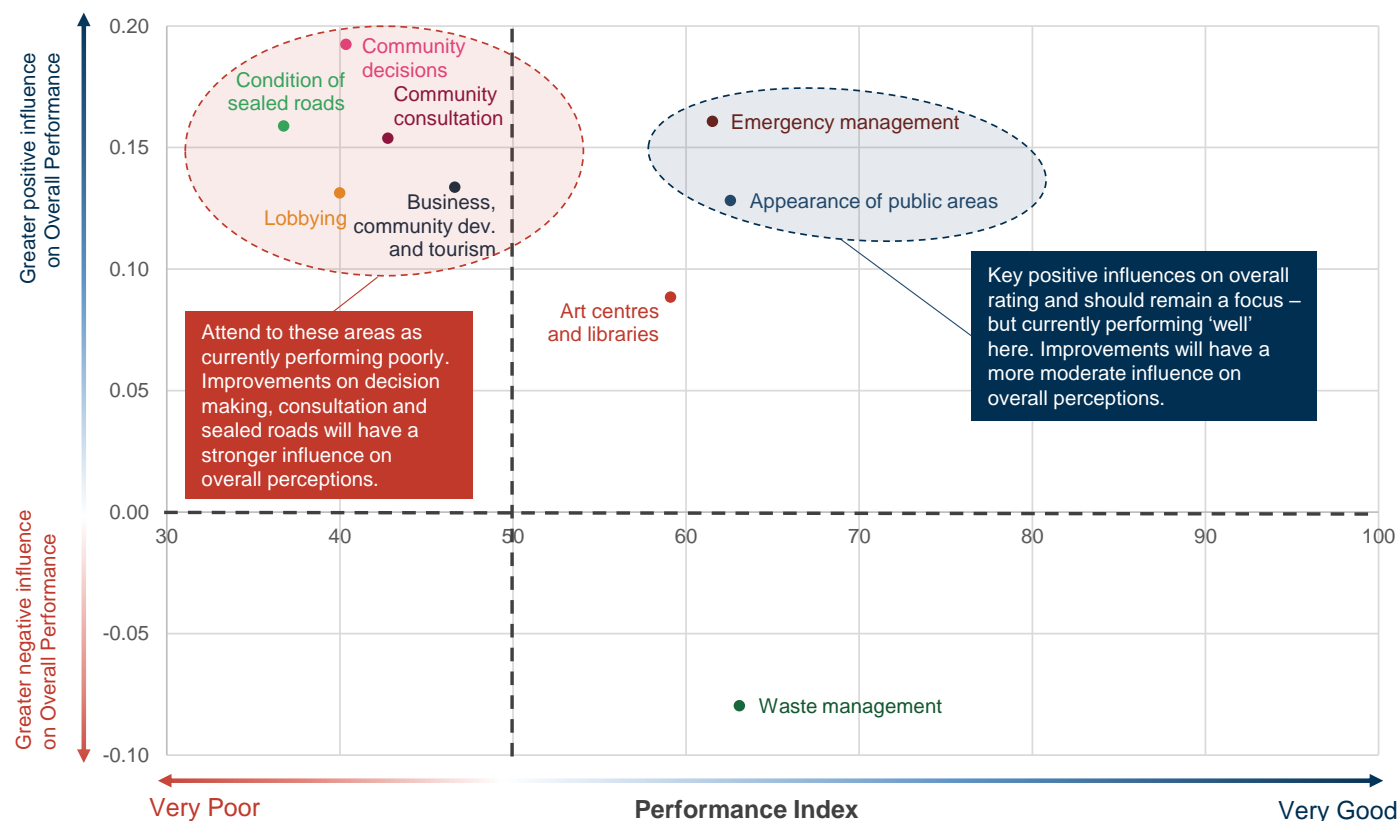


The multiple regression analysis model above (all service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.626 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.612, which means that 61% of the variance in community perceptions of overall performance can be predicted from these variables. The overall model effect was statistically significant at $p = 0.0001$, $F = 42.91$. This model should be interpreted with some caution as some data is not normally distributed and not all service areas have linear correlations.



Influence on overall performance: key services

2025 regression analysis (key services)

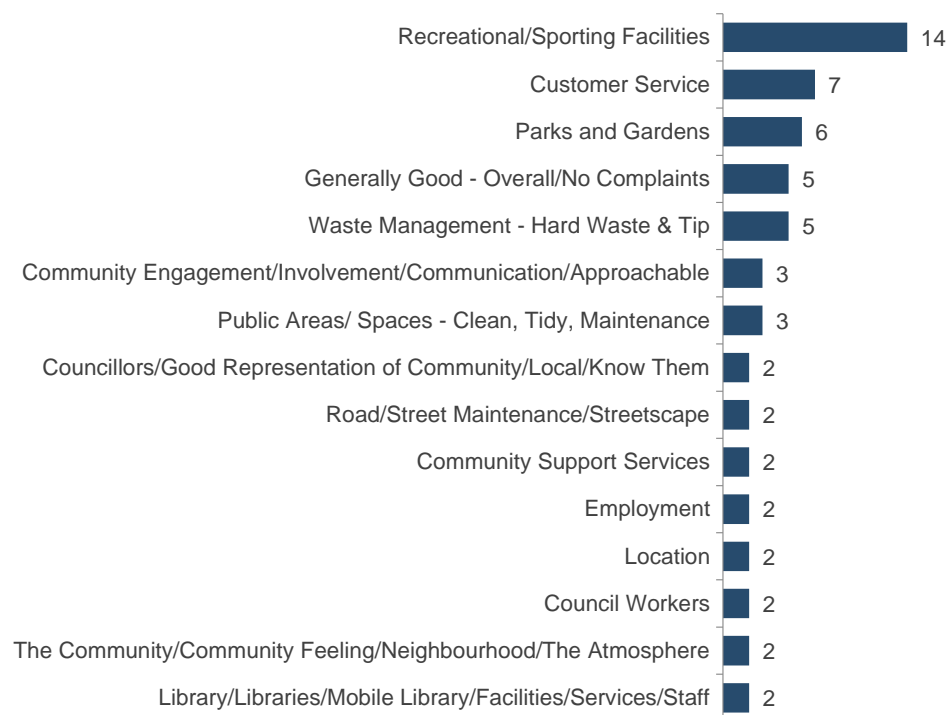


The multiple regression analysis model above (reduced set of service areas) has an R^2 value of 0.613 and adjusted R^2 value of 0.605, which means that 61% of the variance in community perceptions of overall performance can be predicted from these variables. The overall model effect was statistically significant at $p = 0.0001$, $F = 68.78$

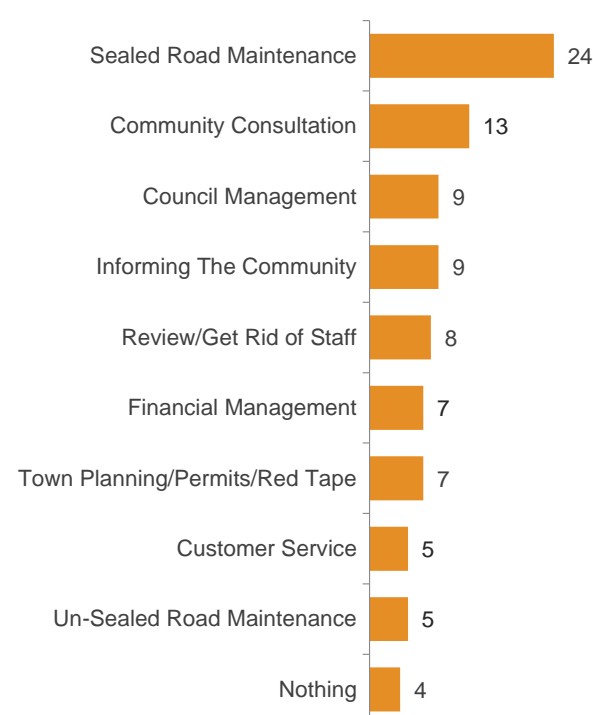


Best things about Council and areas for improvement

2025 best things about Council (%)
- Top mentions only -



2025 areas for improvement (%)
- Top mentions only -



Q16. Please tell me what is the ONE BEST thing about Buloke 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?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 29 Councils asked group: 10

Q17. What does Buloke Shire Council MOST need to do to improve its performance?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 44 Councils asked group: 14

A verbatim listing of responses to these questions can be found in the accompanying dashboard.

Customer service



J W S R E S E A R C H 32



Contact with council and customer service

Contact with council

Six in 10 residents (61%) had contact with Council in the previous 12 months, significantly down on 2024 (68%).

- Rate of contact is significantly higher among residents aged 50 to 64 years (74%).
- Contact has declined this year among people aged 18 to 34 years (54%, down 21 points) and men (55%, down 10 points).



Customer service

Council's customer service index score has decreased significantly in the past 12 months (51, down six points on 2024). Council rates significantly lower than the State-wide and Small Rural group averages (index scores of 66 and 65 respectively).

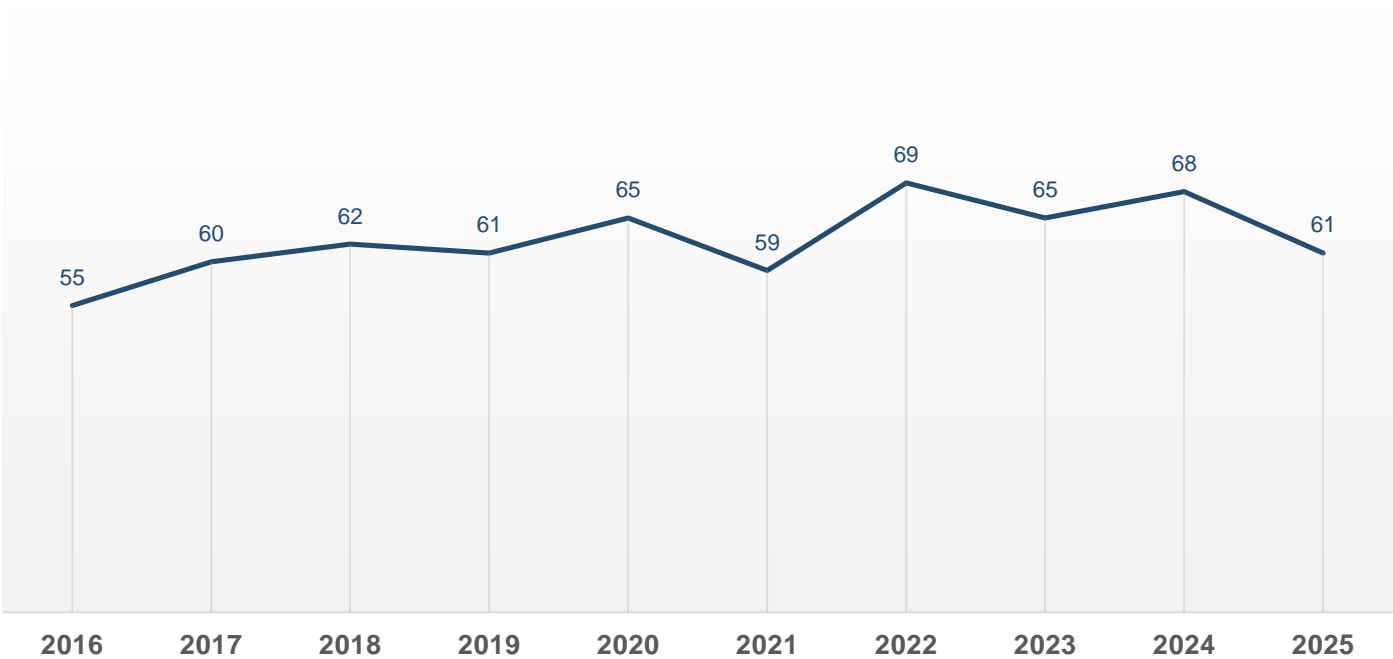
Four in 10 residents (41%) who had contact with Council provide a positive customer service rating of 'very good' or 'good'. One third of residents (33%) provide a negative rating of 'very poor' or 'poor' and a further one in four (25%) rate customer service as 'average'.

- There are no significant differences in perceptions of customer service among demographic groups compared to the Council average, and perceptions among each cohort remain consistent with 2024.
- People aged 18 to 34 years rate customer service highest overall (index score of 62) but have the lowest rate of contact with Council.
- By contrast, people aged 35 to 49 years have the second highest rate of contact with Council and rate customer service lowest overall (index score of 46).



Contact with council

2025 contact with council (%)
Have had contact

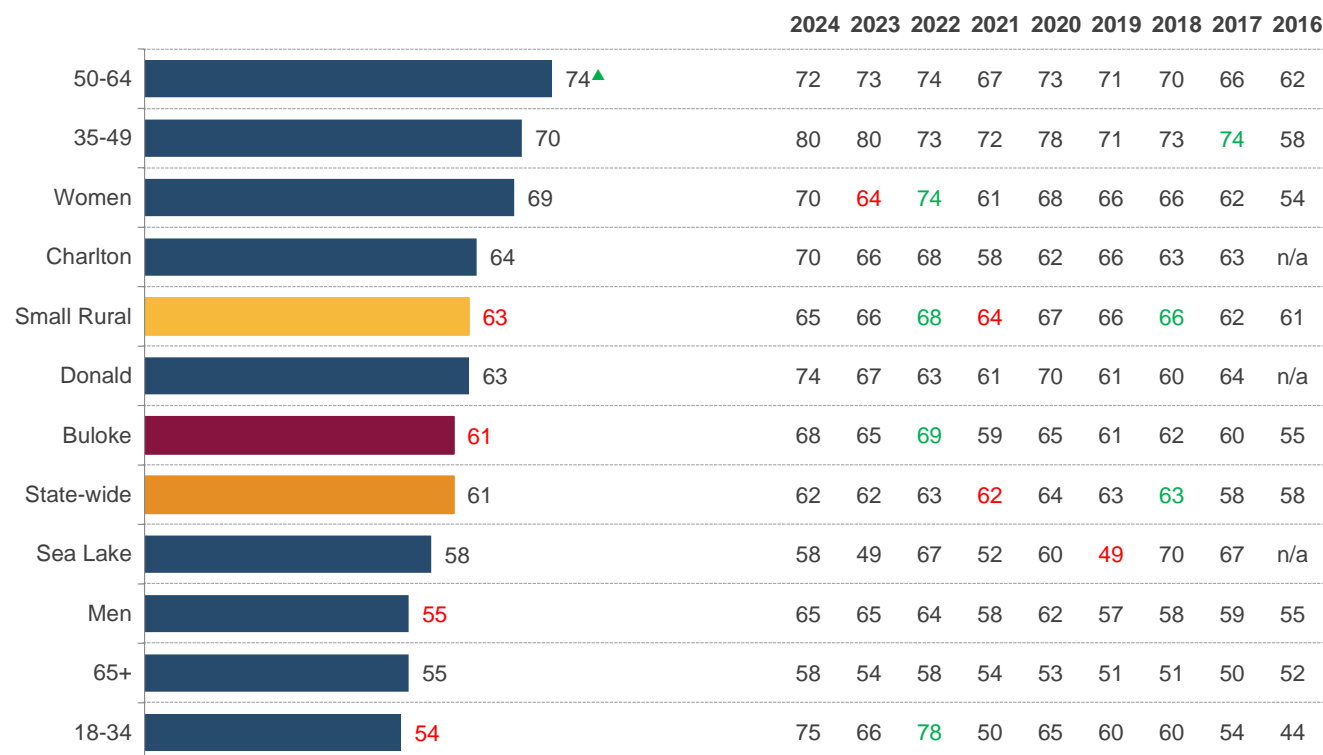


Q5. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Buloke Shire Council?
This may have been in person, in writing, by telephone conversation, by text message, by email or via their website or
social media such as Facebook or Twitter?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 32 Councils asked group: 14



Contact with council

2025 contact with council (%)



Q5. Over the last 12 months, have you or any member of your household had any contact with Buloke Shire Council? This may have been in person, in writing, by telephone conversation, by text message, by email or via their website or social media such as Facebook or Twitter?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 32 Councils asked group: 14

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Customer service rating

2025 customer service rating (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	66▲	67	67	68	70	70	71	70	69	69
Small Rural	65▲	66	65	67	69	70	70	69	69	69
18-34	62	57	54	70	81	77	73	72	63	60
Women	54	60	57	65	73	69	72	72	65	62
Charlton	51	62	55	62	77	71	72	73	62	n/a
Buloke	51	57	56	67	69	66	67	68	60	62
65+	50	58	55	68	72	66	78	70	58	67
50-64	48	52	57	65	63	60	62	57	61	60
Donald	48	51	49	67	66	63	60	63	61	n/a
Sea Lake	48*	56	60	70	64	76	68	73	60	n/a
Men	47	54	55	69	65	62	63	64	53	61
35-49	46	59	60	65	63	65	57	77	59	58

Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Buloke Shire Council for customer service? Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

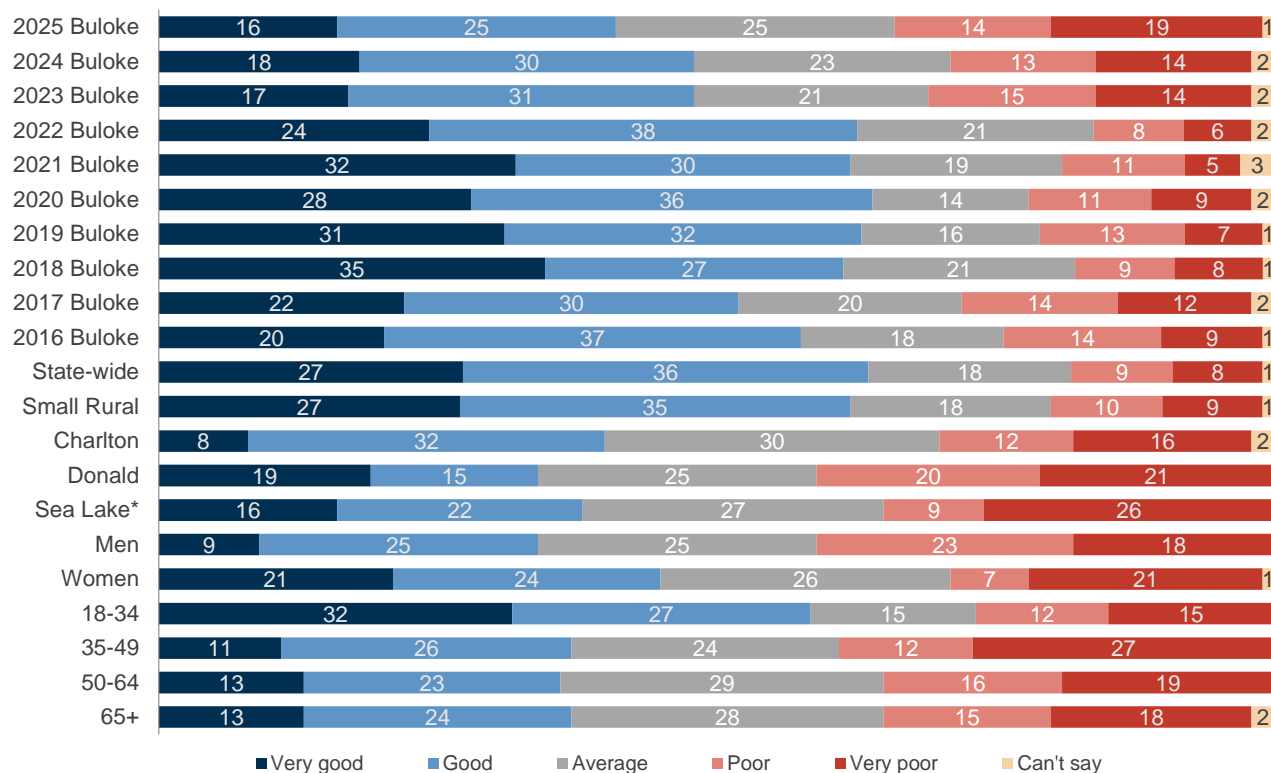
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

*Caution: small sample size < n=30



Customer service rating

2025 customer service rating (%)



Q5c. Thinking of the most recent contact, how would you rate Buloke Shire Council for customer service?
Please keep in mind we do not mean the actual outcome but rather the actual service that was received.

Base: All respondents who have had contact with Council in the last 12 months.

Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

*Caution: small sample size < n=30



Communication



Communication

Advertising in a local newspaper and Council newsletters sent via email are the most preferred sources of information about Council news and information and upcoming events, each preferred by 20% of residents. These sources have now overtaken Council newsletters via mail, preferred by 16% of residents, which has sharply declined since last year (down 11 percentage points).

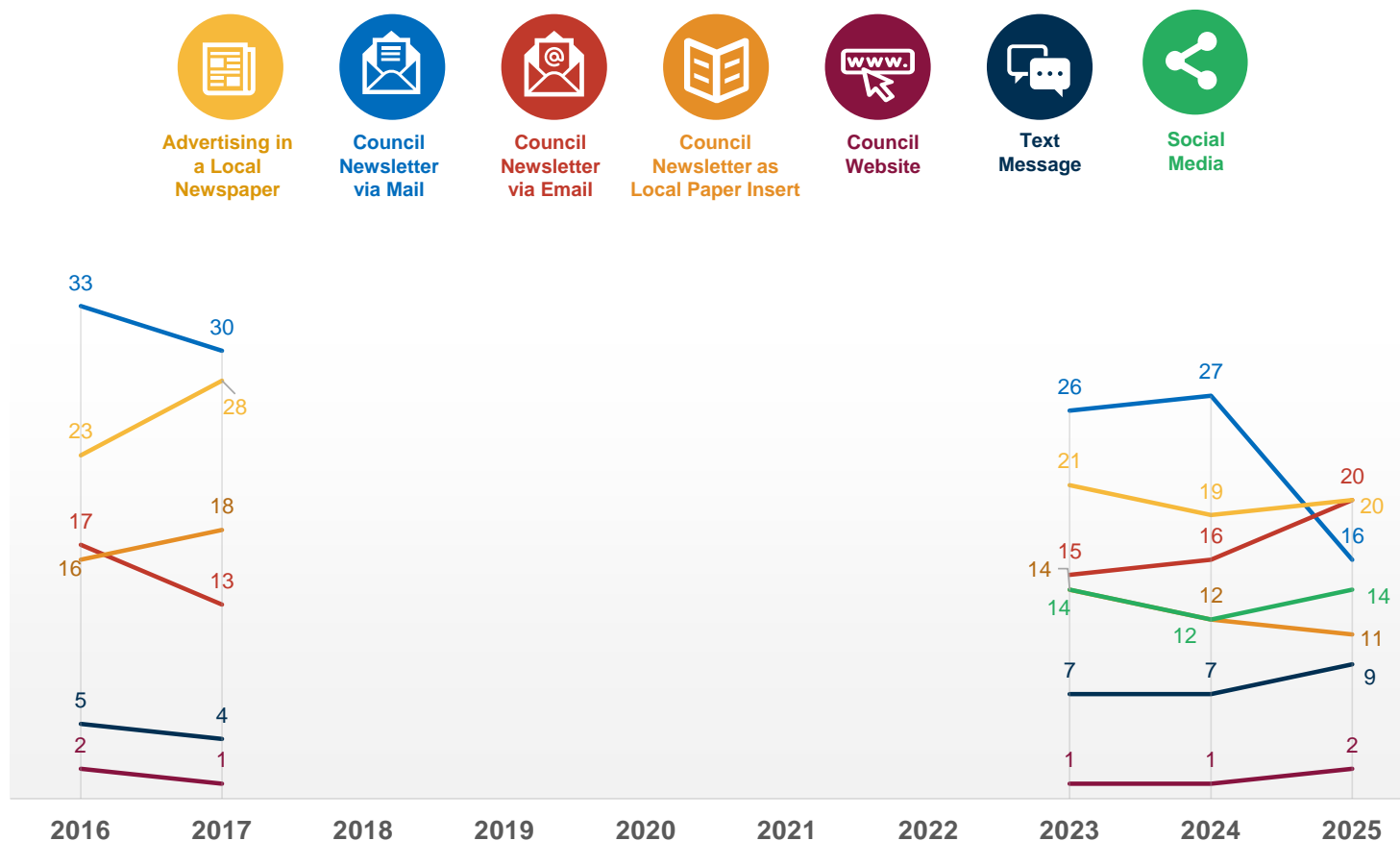
- Among residents aged under 50 years, social media updates and Council newsletters via email are now the preferred forms of communication (25% for each), followed by text messaging (14%). Preference for Council newsletters via mail, which was the most preferred form of communication in 2024, has now declined to 10% among this age group.
- Among residents aged 50 years and over, advertising in a local newspaper (25%) has overtaken Council newsletters via mail (20%, down eight percentage points) and is once again the preferred form of communication.





Best form of communication

2025 best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Buloke Shire Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12

Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Best form of communication: under 50s

2025 under 50s best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Buloke Shire Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?

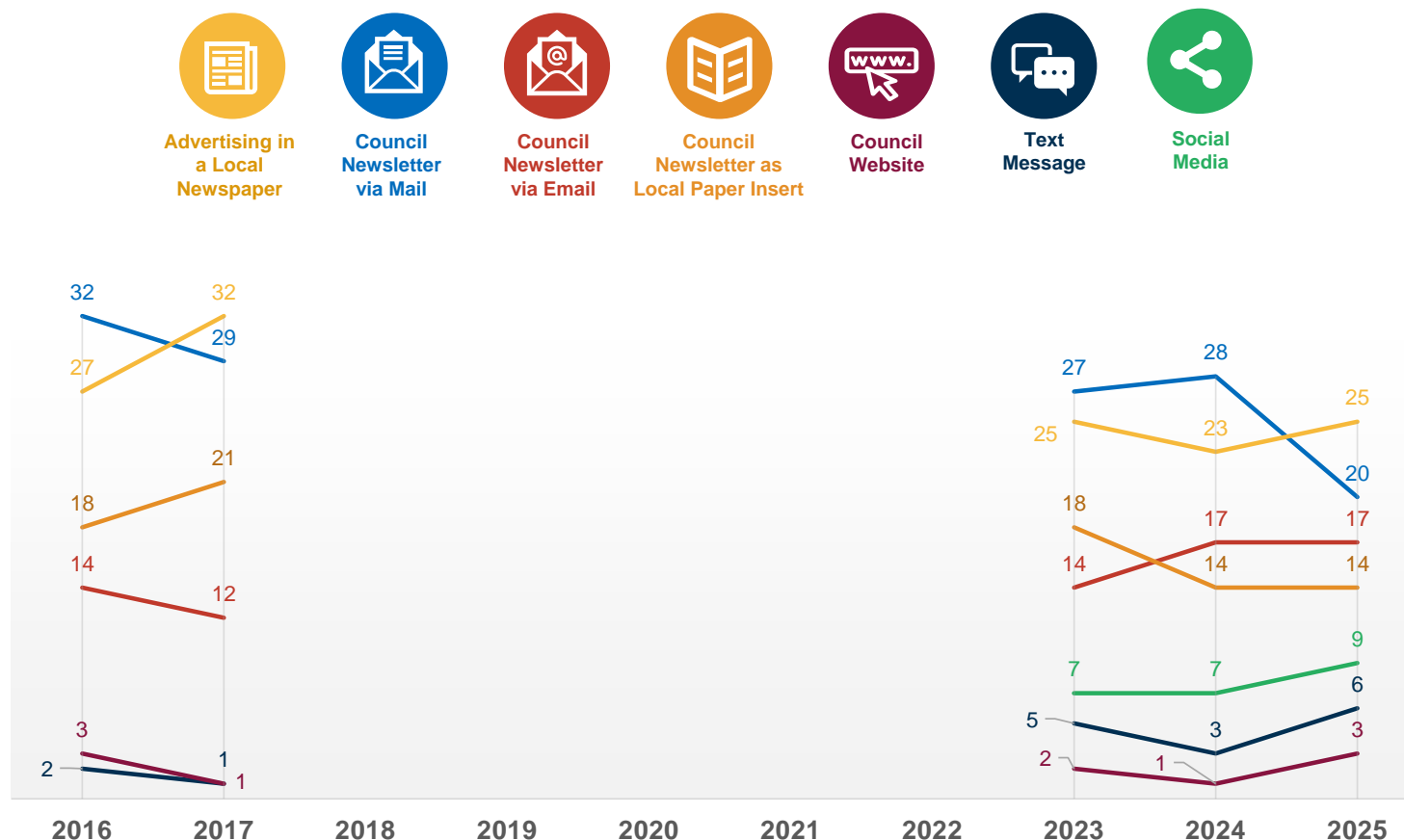
Base: All respondents aged under 50. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12

Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Best form of communication: 50+ years

2025 50+ years best form of communication (%)



Q13. If Buloke Shire Council was going to get in touch with you to inform you about Council news and information and upcoming events, which ONE of the following is the BEST way to communicate with you?

Base: All respondents aged 50+ years. Councils asked State-wide: 33 Councils asked group: 12

Note: 'Social Media' was included in 2019.



Council direction

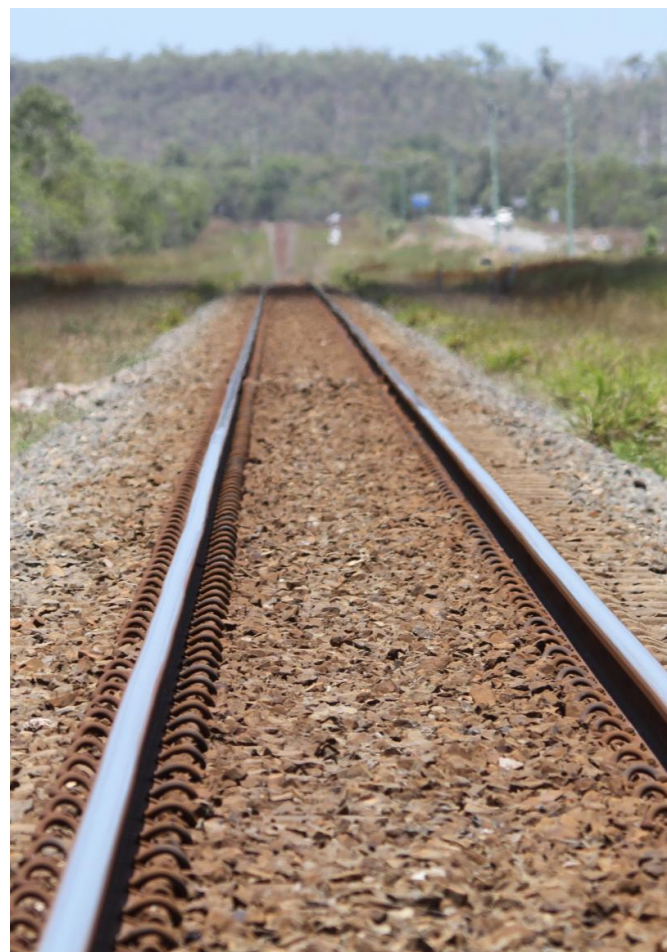


Council direction

Over the last 12 months, 46% believe the direction of Council's overall performance has deteriorated, continuing the steady increase from just 13% in 2021. A similar proportion (44%) believe this has stayed the same and just 6% believe the direction of Council's overall performance has improved.

Ratings of Council's overall direction have declined significantly in the past year (index score of 29, down nine points on 2024), hitting a 10 year low.













- Council rates significantly lower than the State-wide and Small Rural group averages (index scores of 46 for each).
- Residents of Donald (index score of 18, down 19 points on 2024) rate the direction of Council's overall performance significantly lower than the Council average. Ratings have also significantly declined among people aged 35 to 49 years and 50 to 64 years (down 14 points and 10 points respectively).
- By contrast, residents of Sea Lake (index score of 37) rate council direction highest overall, ahead of Charlton residents (index score of 33).





Overall council direction last 12 months

2025 overall council direction (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	 46▲	44	47	51	53	50	53	50	52	50
State-wide	 46▲	45	46	50	53	51	53	52	53	51
Sea Lake	 37	43	40	36	51	54	42	42	43	n/a
65+	 34	39	39	50	55	56	55	50	48	46
Charlton	 33	30	40	51	65	62	54	46	47	n/a
Women	 32	41	40	46	55	56	51	49	52	38
Buloke	 29	38	40	47	54	53	50	46	47	38
18-34	 29	37	44	57	59	61	47	46	52	35
Men	 26	35	39	48	53	49	48	42	42	38
35-49	 26	40	37	36	52	50	42	48	51	37
50-64	 24	34	38	43	48	45	50	37	40	30
Donald	 18▼	37	37	47	47	46	52	42	44	n/a

Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Buloke Shire Council's overall performance?

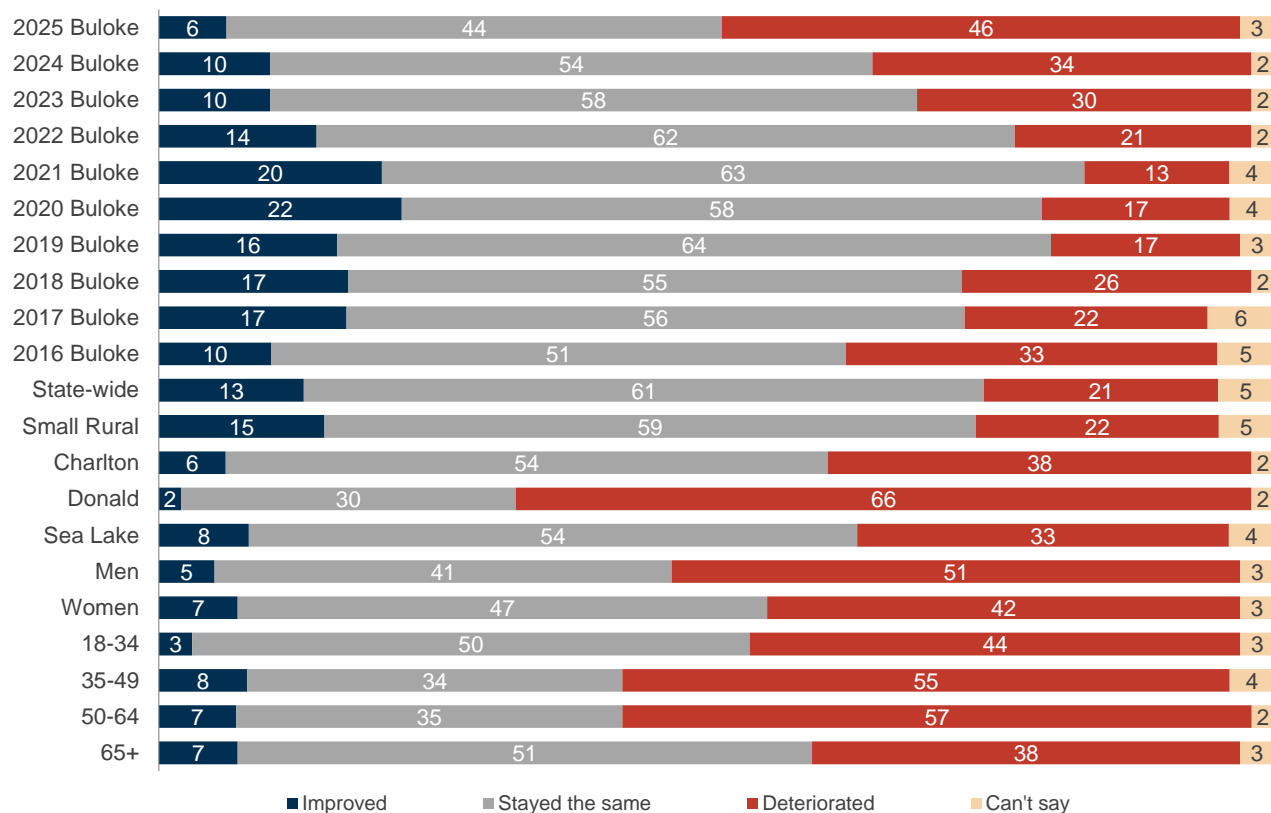
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Overall council direction last 12 months

2025 overall council direction (%)



Q6. Over the last 12 months, what is your view of the direction of Buloke Shire Council's overall performance?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Individual service areas



J W S R E S E A R C H 47



Community consultation and engagement importance



2025 consultation and engagement importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	82	80	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	80	79	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	80	75	74	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	80	80	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	79	74	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	79	76	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	78	77	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	78	77	77	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	77	70	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	77	77	77	78	77	76	76	74	75	77
Men	76	71	73	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	76▼	76	76	76	75	74	74	74	74	75

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community consultation and engagement' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 6

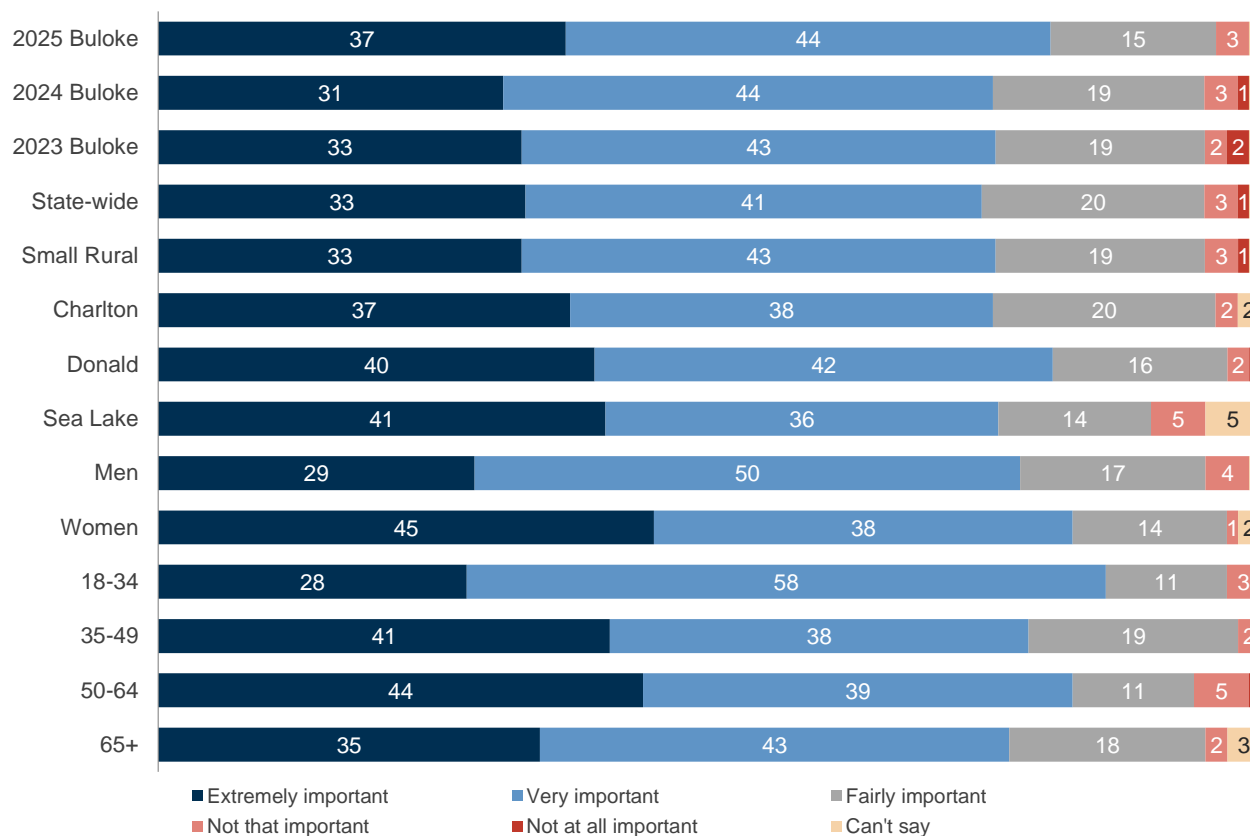
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Community consultation and engagement importance



2025 consultation and engagement importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Community consultation and engagement' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 6



Community consultation and engagement performance



2025 consultation and engagement performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	51▲	51	53	54	56	54	56	54	55	55
State-wide	50▲	51	52	54	56	55	56	55	55	54
18-34	49	54	50	67	66	68	62	59	49	44
Charlton	47	49	53	55	64	60	50	51	46	n/a
65+	46	51	55	57	63	59	60	57	52	49
Men	44	48	51	53	58	55	53	51	47	44
Buloke	43	50	52	54	60	58	55	53	51	46
Sea Lake	42	51	54	43	58	64	53	48	58	n/a
Women	42	52	54	56	62	60	56	55	54	48
50-64	39	44	48	49	51	49	48	43	45	41
Donald	36▼	48	53	54	54	58	57	54	51	n/a
35-49	35▼	48	54	46	56	57	50	55	55	50

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

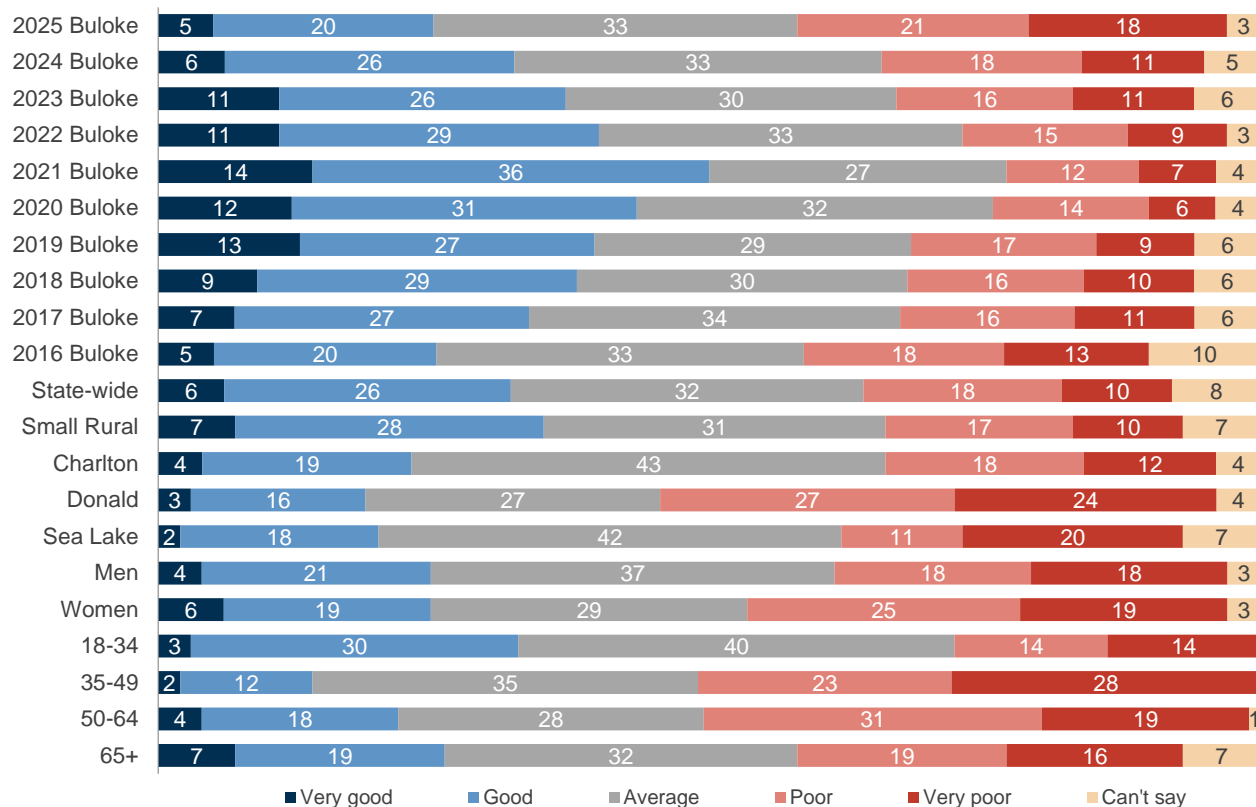
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Community consultation and engagement performance



2025 consultation and engagement performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Community consultation and engagement' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19



Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



2025 lobbying performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	51▲	50	52	54	55	52	55	53	55	54
State-wide	49▲	50	51	53	55	53	54	54	54	53
65+	45	51	51	58	63	55	60	56	53	53
Sea Lake	42	48	51	41	48	47	52	56	48	n/a
18-34	41	46	51	53	59	59	55	56	48	46
Men	41	46	50	53	55	53	49	50	46	46
Buloke	40	47	49	53	58	54	52	52	49	48
Women	39	49	49	54	61	55	55	54	52	49
Charlton	39	47	47	55	64	61	52	51	46	n/a
50-64	35	43	47	50	52	49	46	42	44	41
Donald	34▼	46	50	51	56	53	52	49	49	n/a
35-49	34	45	48	48	52	53	44	58	50	48

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 41 Councils asked group: 14

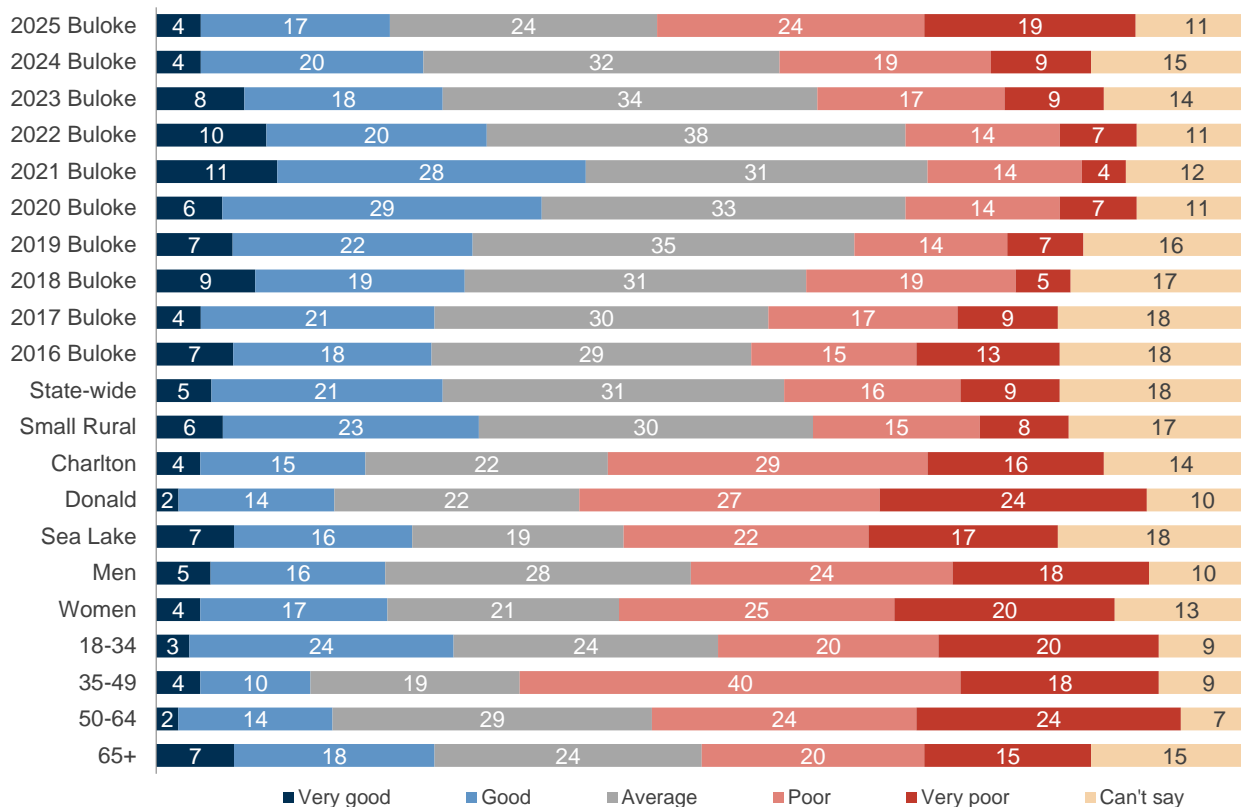
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Lobbying on behalf of the community performance



2025 lobbying performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Lobbying on behalf of the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 41 Councils asked group: 14

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2025 community decisions made performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	50▲	50	52	54	56	53	55	52	55	53
State-wide	49▲	50	51	54	56	53	55	54	54	54
18-34	47▲	53	51	58	64	61	58	47	48	43
65+	45	53	54	61	68	62	59	54	51	49
Sea Lake	42	47	49	44	58	56	52	45	50	n/a
Charlton	41	50	51	60	65	61	52	47	43	n/a
Men	40	53	50	53	59	56	49	48	47	44
Buloke	40	52	52	54	61	58	52	50	49	45
Women	40	51	53	56	64	59	56	52	52	46
Donald	35	51	53	53	60	58	54	47	51	n/a
50-64	34	49	48	50	52	48	46	41	46	39
35-49	31▼	55	52	44	53	59	43	56	52	48

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

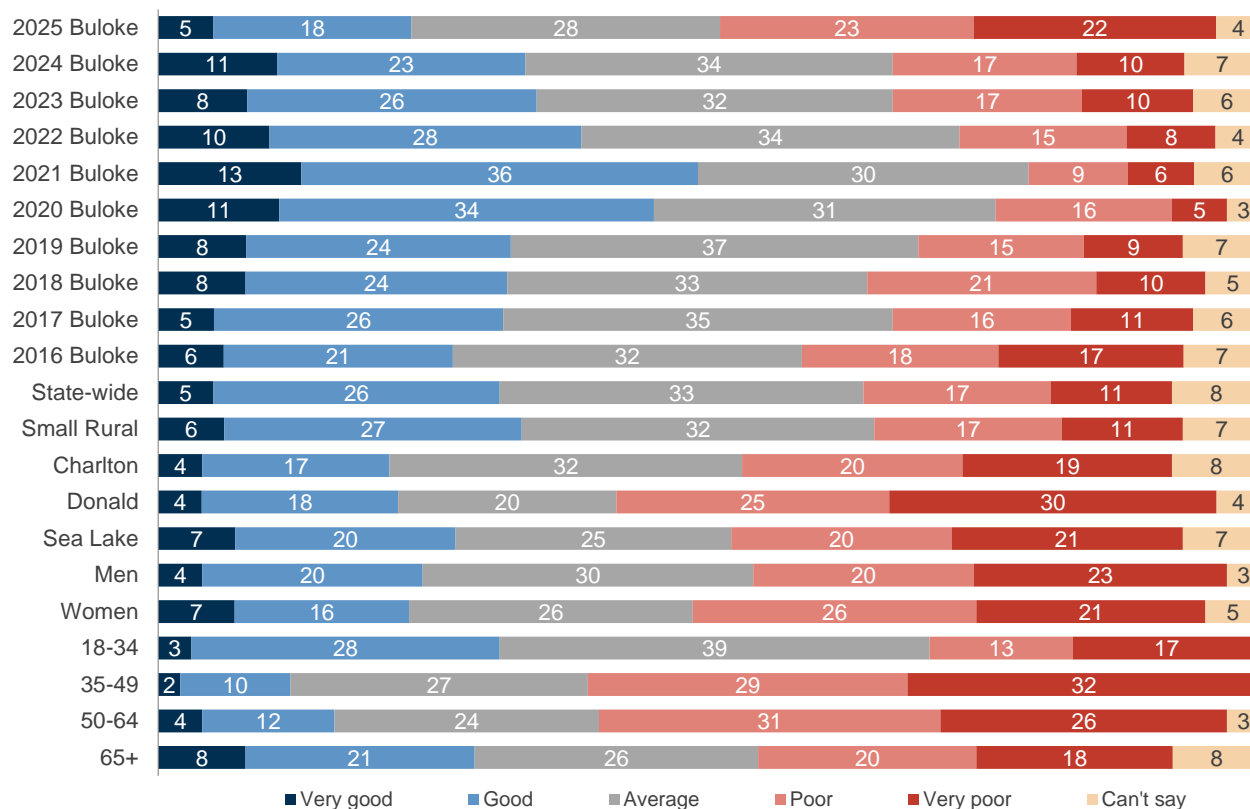
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

J01430 Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 – Buloke Shire Council

Decisions made in the interest of the community performance



2025 community decisions made performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Decisions made in the interest of the community' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

J W S R E S E A R C H 55

The condition of sealed local roads in your area importance



2025 sealed local roads importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
18-34	91▲	87	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	89	90	90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	87	89	86	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	86	89	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	86	88	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	86	86	86	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	85	88	84	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	85	87	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	85	85	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	84▼	85	84	82	81	83	82	84	81	n/a
State-wide	83▼	83	82	81	79	79	79	80	78	78
65+	83	86	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?

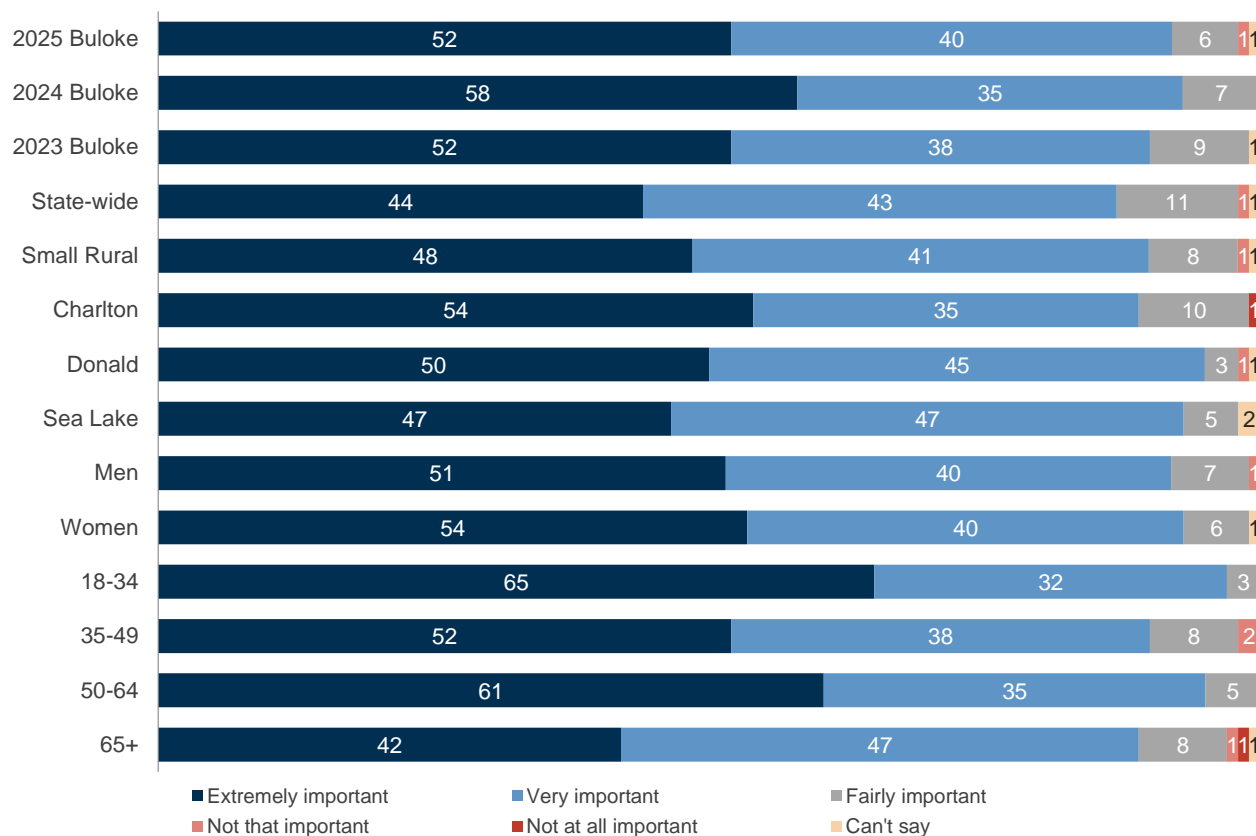
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

The condition of sealed local roads in your area importance



2025 sealed local roads importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2025 sealed local roads performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	45▲	45	48	53	57	54	56	53	53	54
Small Rural	44▲	41	44	50	53	51	53	49	50	52
Charlton	43	45	45	45	57	51	51	45	38	n/a
18-34	41	30	29	41	59	35	40	32	39	32
Men	38	36	36	35	46	40	45	38	34	41
65+	38	39	43	46	51	48	51	47	41	46
Buloke	37	37	37	38	48	39	42	39	36	39
35-49	36	41	36	28	36	31	32	36	32	38
Women	36	38	37	41	50	39	38	40	39	38
Donald	34	36	37	38	46	34	36	35	35	n/a
Sea Lake	33	41	32	33	37	34	40	38	38	n/a
50-64	32	34	31	33	44	35	36	35	33	36

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' over the last 12 months?

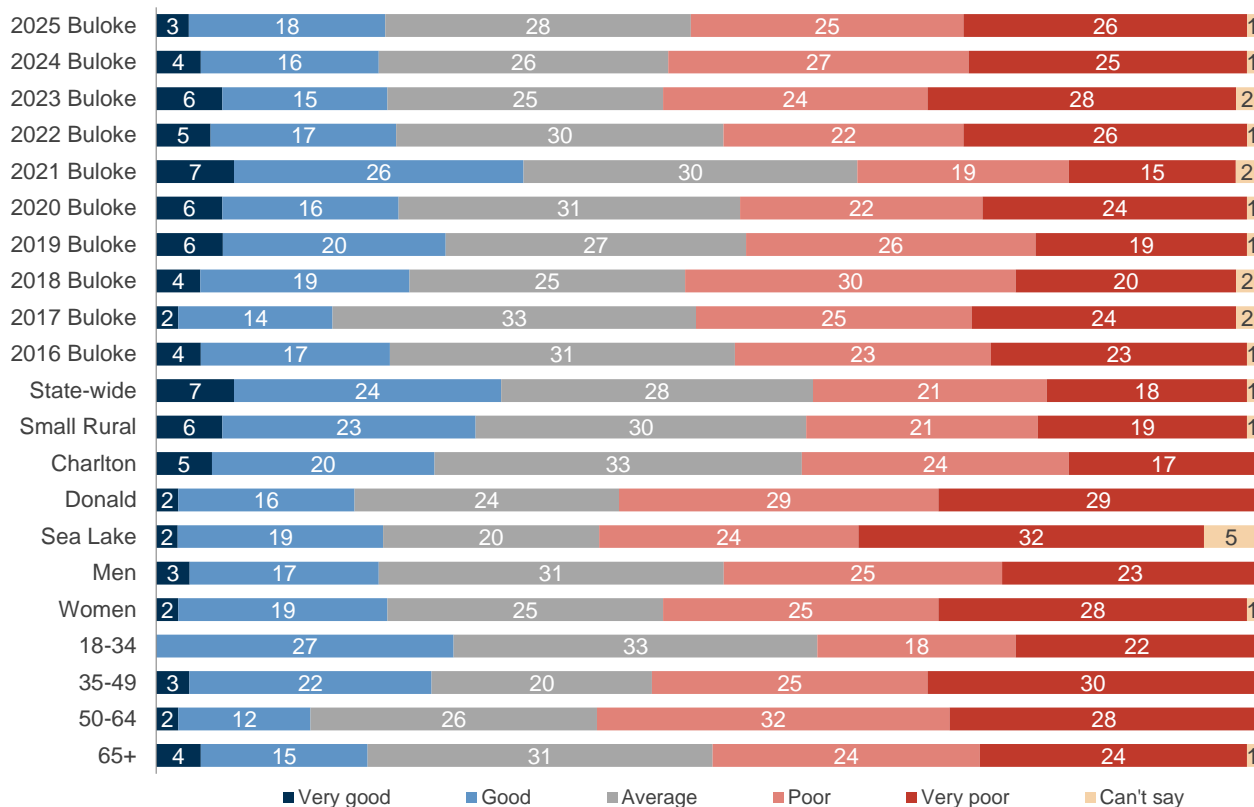
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

The condition of sealed local roads in your area performance



2025 sealed local roads performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of sealed local roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area importance



2025 streets and footpaths importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Sea Lake	84	81	83	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	83	77	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	83	84	84	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	82	84	81	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	82	86	84	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	81	82	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	81	81	84	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	80	81	80	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	80	80	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	79▼	80	81	81	79	78	77	78	77	77
65+	79	81	82	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	79	80	80	80	77	77	77	76	76	75

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?

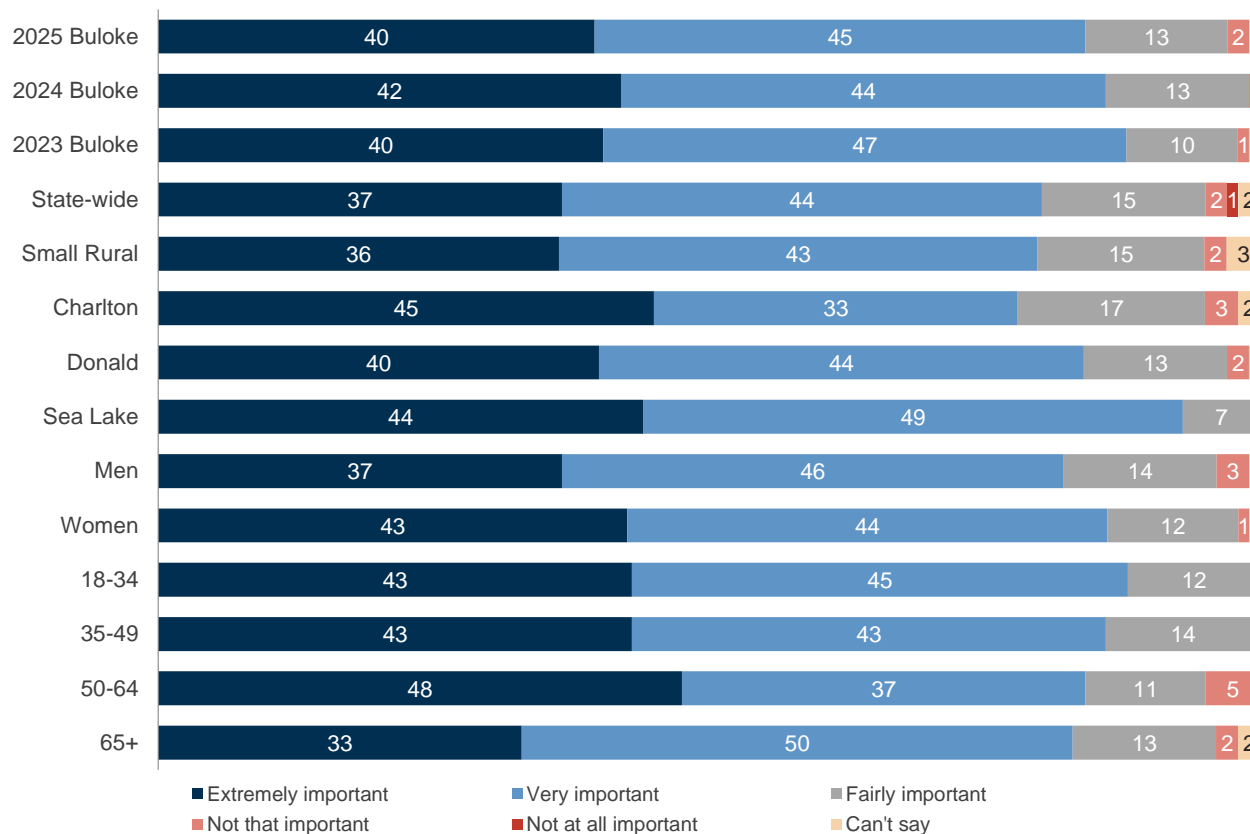
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area importance



2025 streets and footpaths importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 17 Councils asked group: 5

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area performance



2025 streets and footpaths performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	53▲	51	52	55	58	57	57	57	57	58
State-wide	52▲	52	52	57	59	58	59	58	57	57
Donald	48	49	45	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	47	50	36	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	46	44	39	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	46	47	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	45	53	42	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	45	48	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	45	44	45	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	44	47	46	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	40	55	43	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	35	46	42	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' over the last 12 months?

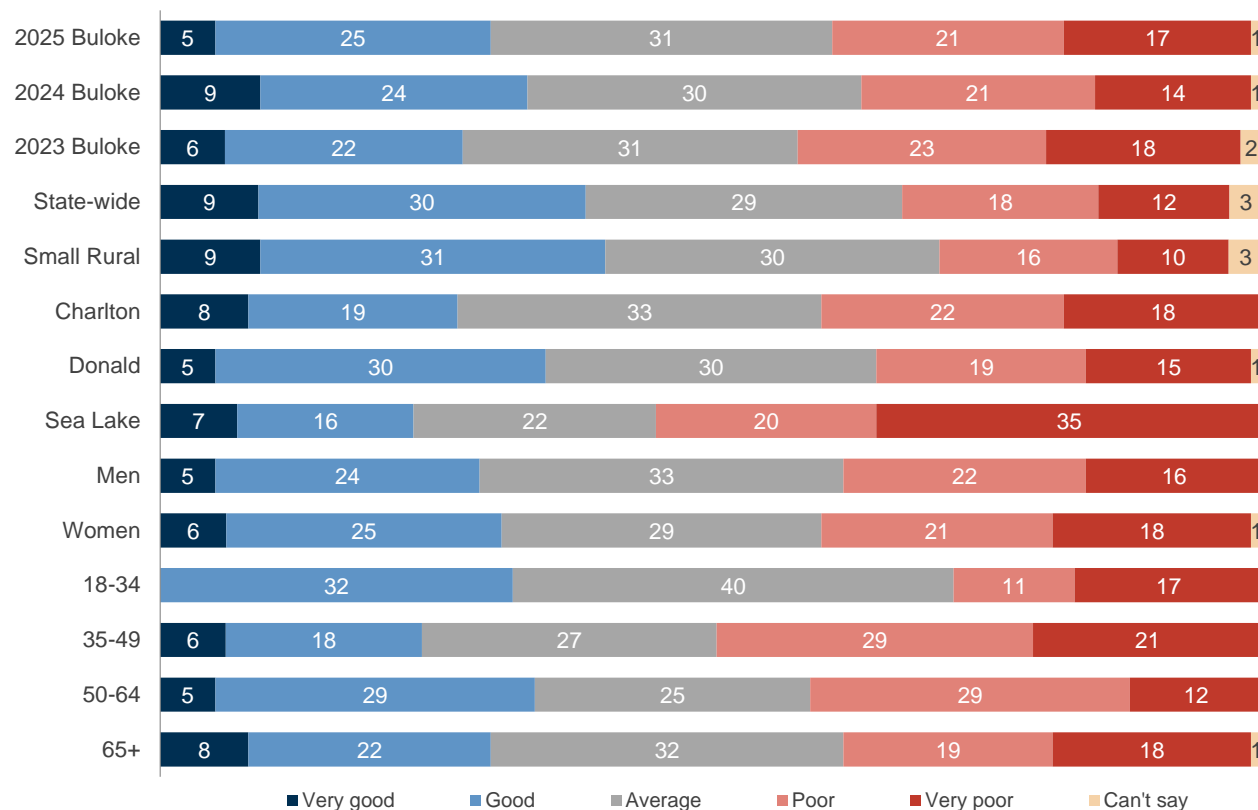
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 27 Councils asked group: 8

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area performance



2025 streets and footpaths performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'The condition of local streets and footpaths in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 27 Councils asked group: 8



Enforcement of local laws importance



2025 law enforcement importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Sea Lake	72	65	71	65	71	70	61	63	n/a	n/a
Women	70▲	70	71	68	71	71	75	71	n/a	n/a
65+	67	68	68	71	72	68	70	67	n/a	n/a
State-wide	67▲	67	68	68	70	70	71	71	71	70
Small Rural	66	65	65	65	67	66	68	66	67	69
Buloke	64	64	65	64	66	66	66	64	n/a	n/a
Donald	64	64	61	62	62	65	69	62	n/a	n/a
35-49	63	56	61	54	61	63	65	65	n/a	n/a
18-34	61	59	59	59	59	66	69	56	n/a	n/a
Charlton	61	65	68	65	69	64	69	65	n/a	n/a
50-64	61	65	65	65	63	66	62	65	n/a	n/a
Men	59▼	58	59	60	62	61	59	57	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Enforcement of local laws' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6

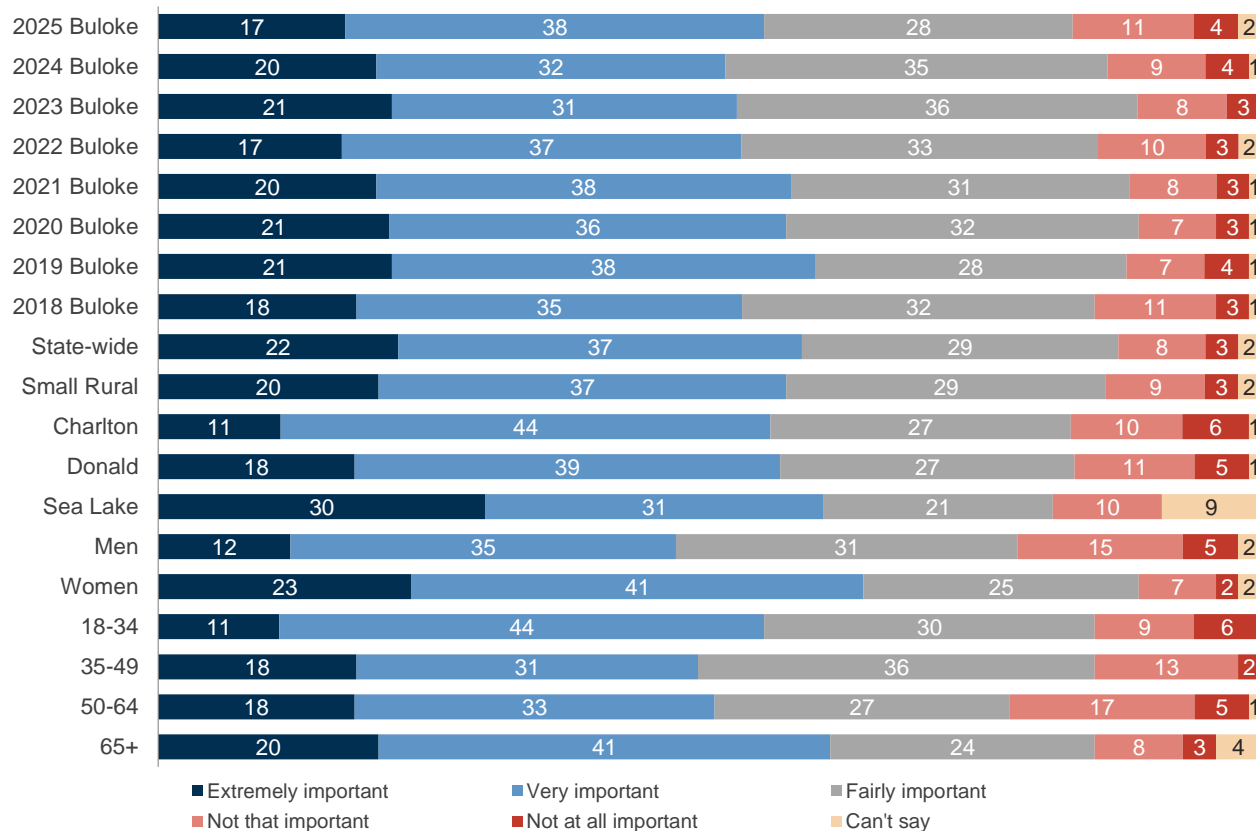
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Enforcement of local laws importance



2025 law enforcement importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Enforcement of local laws' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6



Enforcement of local laws performance



2025 law enforcement performance (index scores)

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	61	61	63	64	63	64	64	64	63
Small Rural	60	61	62	63	62	63	63	65	64
Women	63	64	66	67	62	63	61	n/a	n/a
65+	63	66	64	66	63	65	61	n/a	n/a
18-34	67	63	65	70	72	63	54	n/a	n/a
Charlton	60	68	65	61	63	60	50	n/a	n/a
Buloke	63	64	62	65	62	61	58	n/a	n/a
Donald	63	64	61	68	61	60	61	n/a	n/a
50-64	60	60	58	60	57	56	52	n/a	n/a
Men	63	63	58	64	63	58	56	n/a	n/a
35-49	64	64	59	63	60	57	65	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	60	64	53	65	62	59	58	n/a	n/a

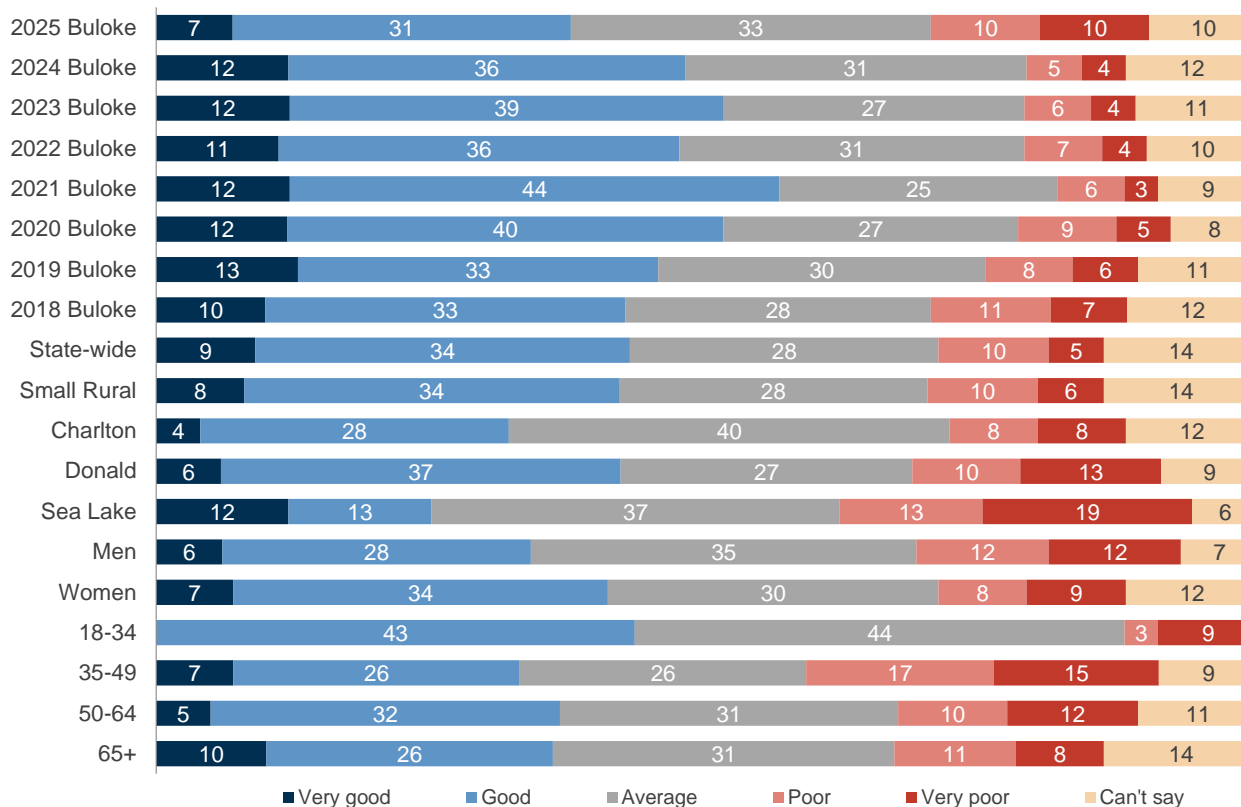
Q2. How has Council performed on 'Enforcement of local laws' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 10
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Enforcement of local laws performance



2025 law enforcement performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Enforcement of local laws' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 10



Recreational facilities importance



2025 recreational facilities importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
50-64	78	80	76	74	76	76	72	74	n/a	n/a
Donald	78	74	76	76	76	73	77	78	n/a	n/a
Women	77	76	77	78	76	78	77	75	n/a	n/a
18-34	77	73	76	81	72	75	76	82	n/a	n/a
Buloke	76	76	76	76	76	76	74	77	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	75	80	73	74	77	78	76	76	n/a	n/a
35-49	75	78	81	78	77	80	80	82	n/a	n/a
Men	74	76	75	74	75	74	72	78	n/a	n/a
65+	74	74	73	75	76	74	72	73	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	73▼	73	73	74	73	73	72	72	71	72
Charlton	73	73	73	73	72	73	73	74	n/a	n/a
State-wide	73▼	73	73	74	74	72	72	73	72	73

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Recreational facilities' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7

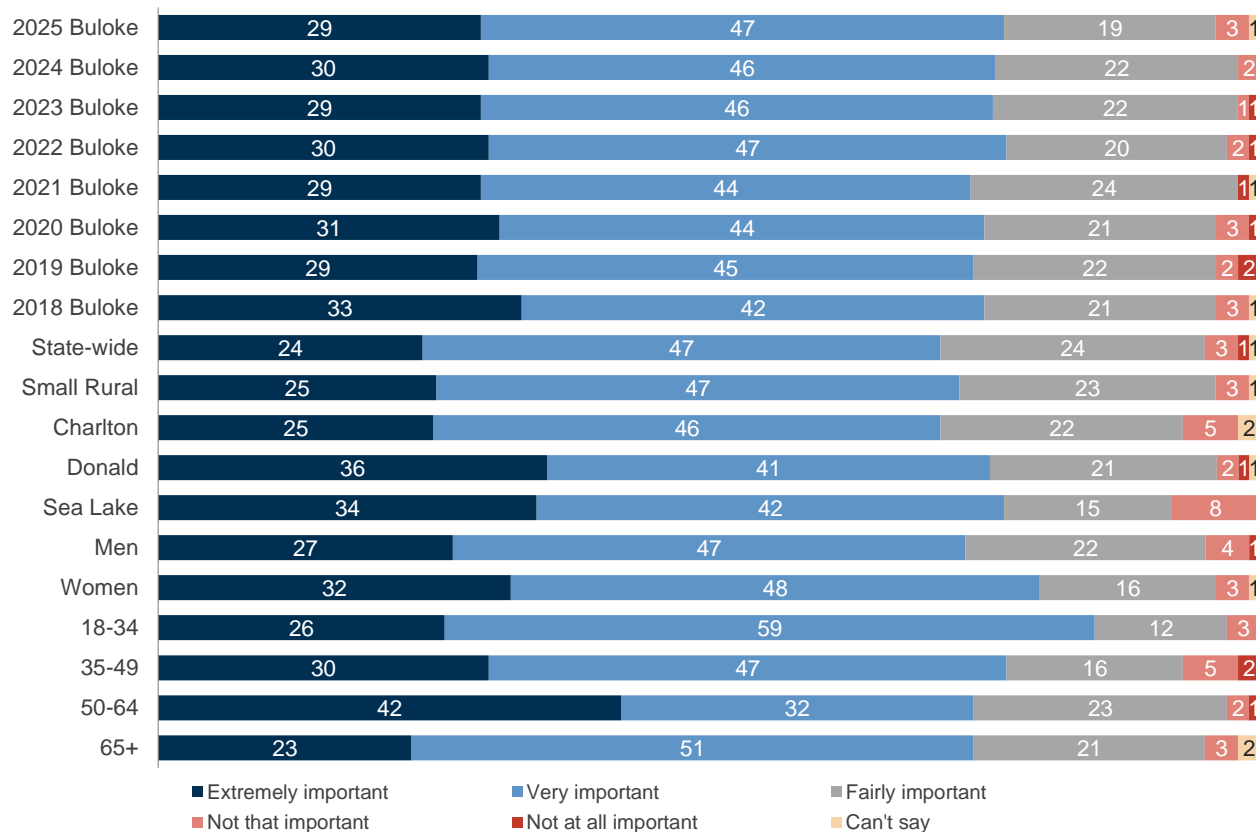
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Recreational facilities importance



2025 recreational facilities importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Recreational facilities' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7



Recreational facilities performance



2025 recreational facilities performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
65+	69	73	74	77	79	80	75	72	n/a	n/a
State-wide	67	68	68	69	71	70	70	69	70	69
Donald	67	71	70	71	73	72	68	60	n/a	n/a
Men	66	73	68	72	73	72	68	65	n/a	n/a
Charlton	66	70	70	74	79	83	71	63	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	66	67	67	69	69	68	68	69	69	68
Buloke	65	72	68	71	74	74	69	67	n/a	n/a
Women	64	70	68	71	75	77	70	68	n/a	n/a
35-49	64	73	59	65	71	72	58	72	n/a	n/a
50-64	62	67	66	68	70	66	67	59	n/a	n/a
18-34	61	73	66	72	72	78	70	61	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	57	64	58	67	66	69	67	62	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Recreational facilities' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 36 Councils asked group: 13

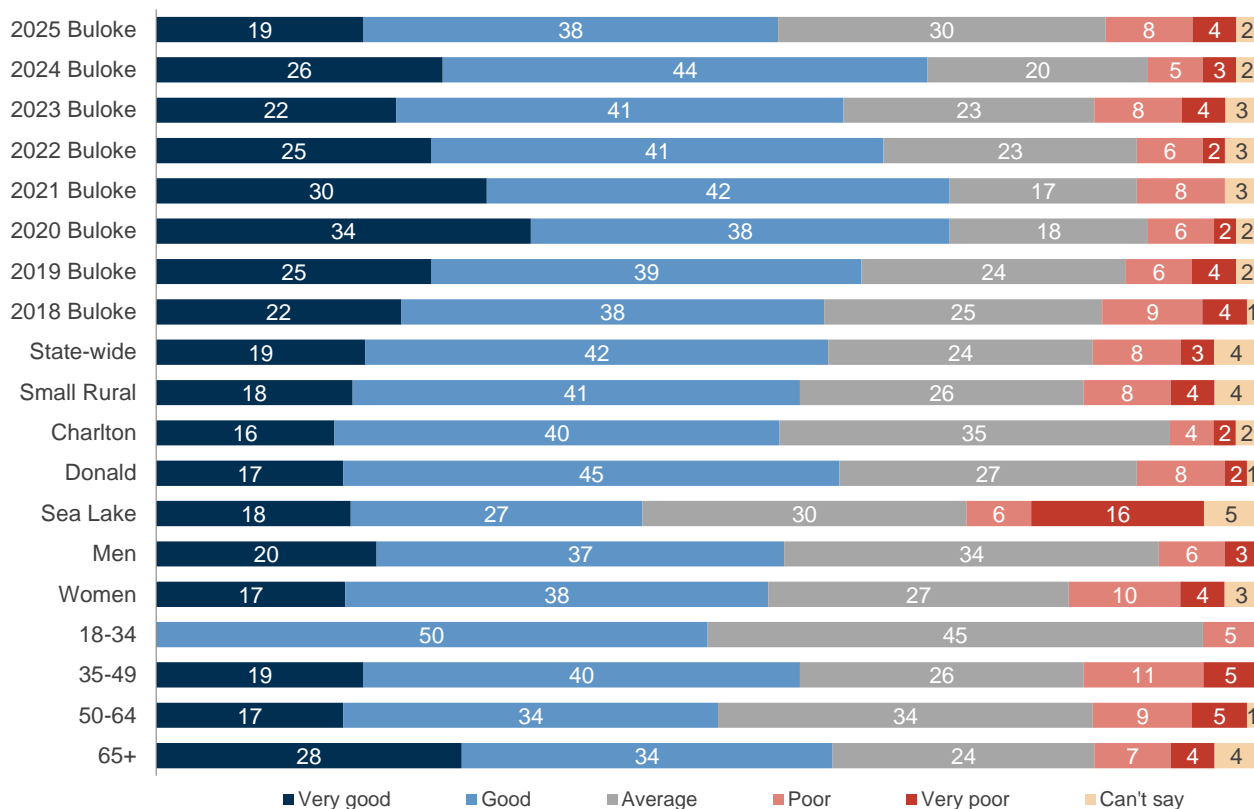
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Recreational facilities performance



2025 recreational facilities performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Recreational facilities' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 36 Councils asked group: 13



The appearance of public areas importance



2025 public areas importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	79	79	80	78	78	81	77	76	n/a	n/a
35-49	78	82	75	73	79	81	73	79	n/a	n/a
50-64	78	77	78	75	77	75	71	74	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	78	76	80	75	75	80	75	73	n/a	n/a
Buloke	76	76	77	75	76	76	75	74	n/a	n/a
65+	76	75	76	75	75	75	76	73	n/a	n/a
Charlton	75	77	78	75	75	77	74	76	n/a	n/a
Donald	75	74	75	74	77	74	73	75	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	75	74	74	74	74	74	74	74	74	74
State-wide	74	74	74	75	75	74	73	74	74	74
Men	73	74	74	72	74	72	73	73	n/a	n/a
18-34	73	74	78	75	73	74	79	73	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The appearance of public areas' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7

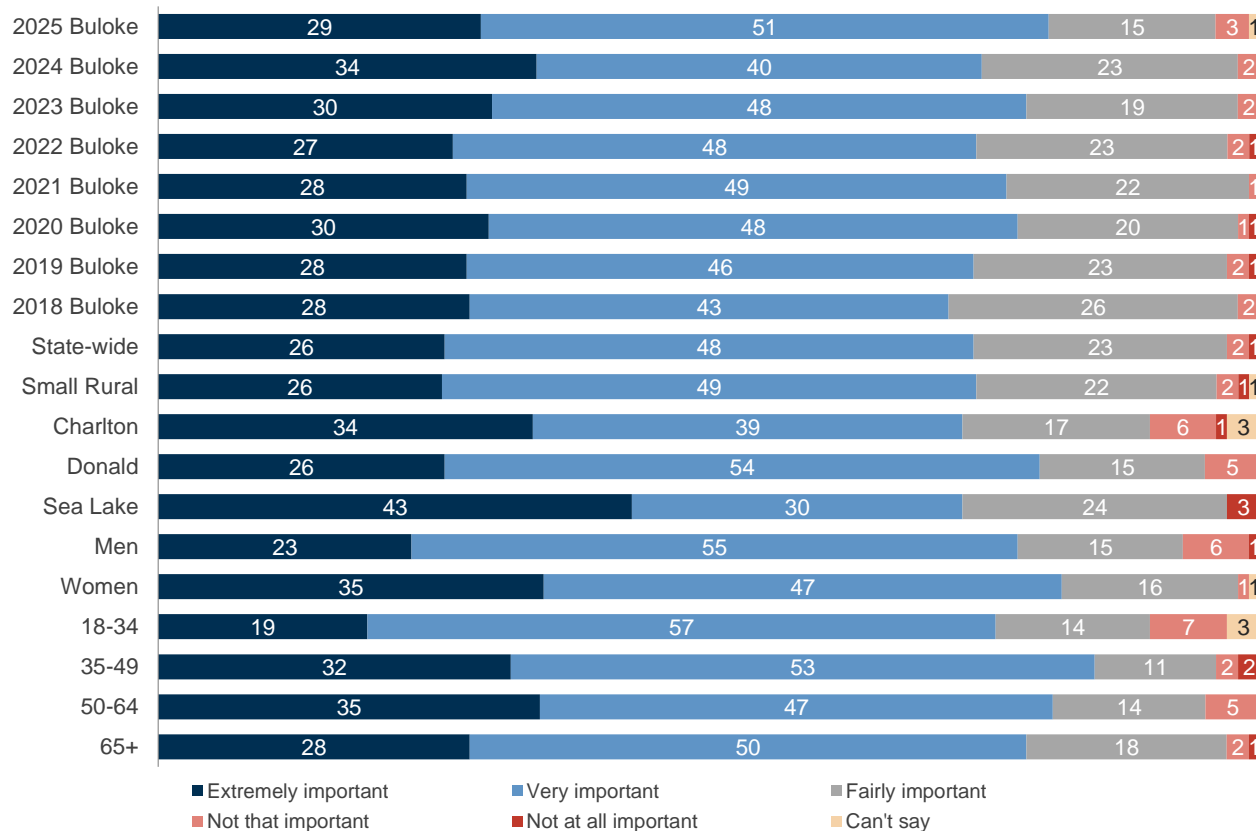
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



The appearance of public areas importance



2025 public areas importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'The appearance of public areas' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 22 Councils asked group: 7



The appearance of public areas performance



2025 public areas performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	70▲	71	71	73	75	72	73	72	74	73
State-wide	68▲	68	67	71	73	72	72	71	71	71
Donald	66	70	64	72	76	71	70	62	n/a	n/a
65+	64	65	65	75	76	74	72	69	n/a	n/a
Women	63	64	63	70	76	71	69	69	n/a	n/a
18-34	63	66	61	73	80	72	72	62	n/a	n/a
Buloke	63	65	64	71	75	71	68	67	n/a	n/a
50-64	62	63	62	64	71	67	69	65	n/a	n/a
Men	62	66	64	71	75	71	67	65	n/a	n/a
Charlton	61	58	65	72	78	75	70	67	n/a	n/a
35-49	60	68	65	68	75	68	55	70	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	56	64	52	67	68	64	58	60	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'The appearance of public areas' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 37 Councils asked group: 14

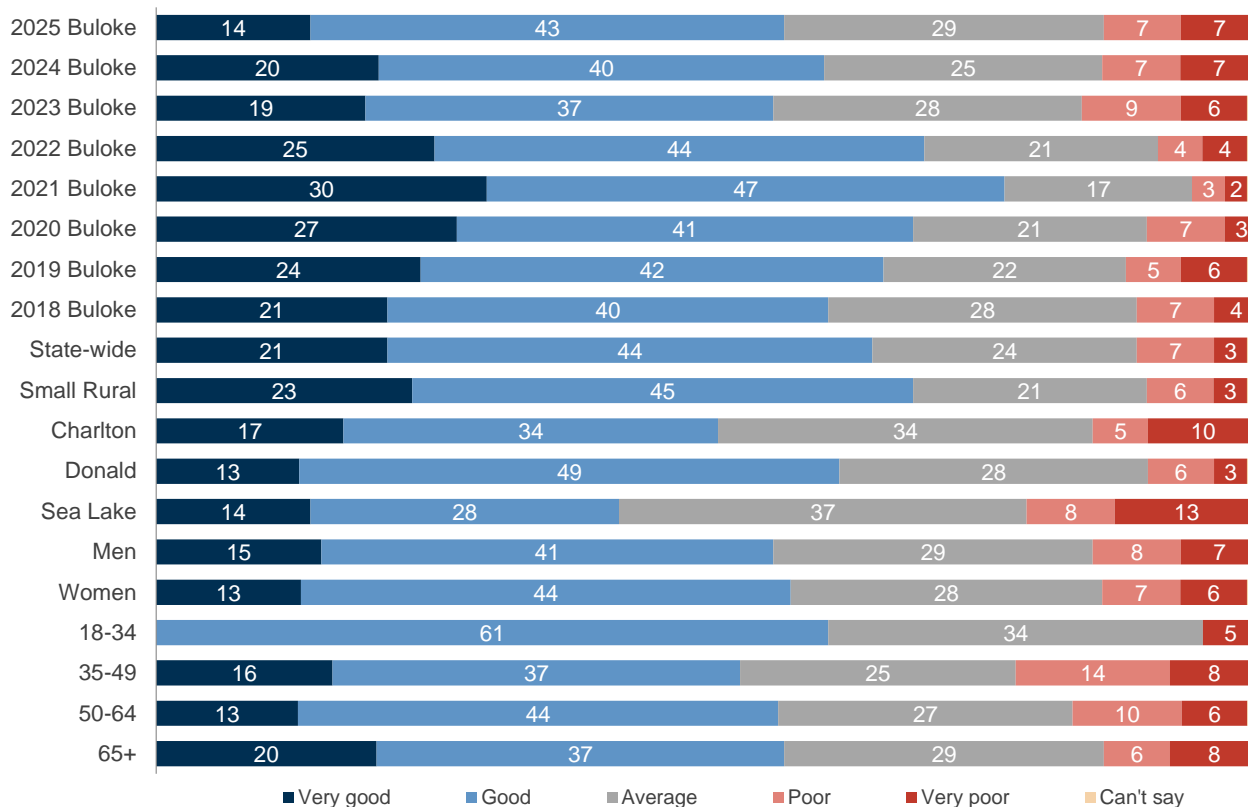
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



The appearance of public areas performance



2025 public areas performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'The appearance of public areas' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 37 Councils asked group: 14



Art centres and libraries performance



2025 art centres and libraries performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	73▲	73	73	73	73	74	74	74	73	72
Small Rural	72▲	73	73	71	72	74	74	73	72	71
18-34	63	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	59	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	59	59	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	58	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	56	58	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	55	56	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	54▼	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	53	51	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Art centres and libraries' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7

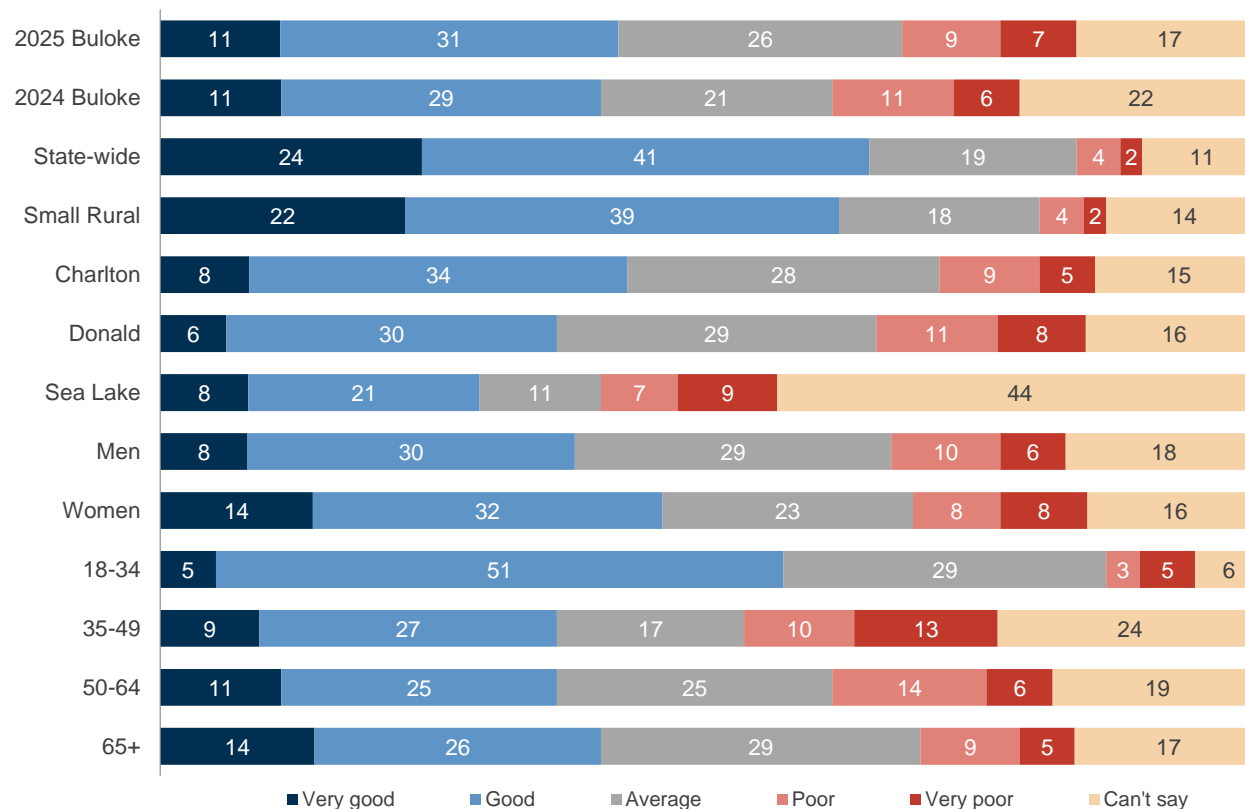
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Art centres and libraries performance



2025 art centres and libraries performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Art centres and libraries' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 24 Councils asked group: 7



Waste management importance



2025 waste management importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
18-34	80	75	80	83	74	81	77	78	n/a	n/a
Women	79	80	80	84	83	84	79	82	n/a	n/a
State-wide	79▲	81	81	82	82	82	81	81	79	80
Charlton	79	78	80	79	81	78	81	80	n/a	n/a
50-64	78	80	79	79	80	77	72	78	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	78	79	78	80	80	79	79	78	76	79
Buloke	77	77	78	79	80	80	77	78	n/a	n/a
Donald	77	78	78	79	82	80	77	78	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	76	75	76	81	78	82	70	79	n/a	n/a
35-49	76	76	74	76	82	84	80	79	n/a	n/a
65+	76	77	78	80	80	79	78	79	n/a	n/a
Men	75	74	76	75	76	75	74	75	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Waste management' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6

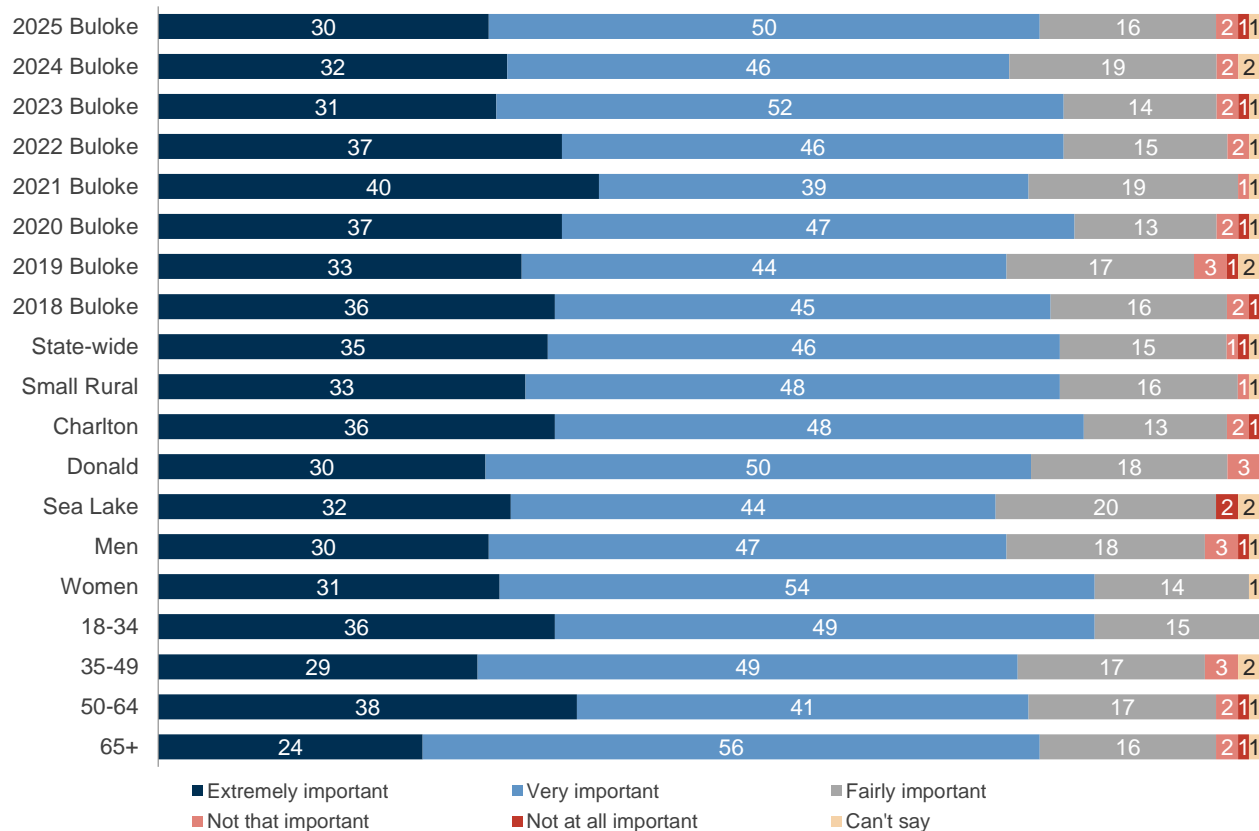
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Waste management importance



2025 waste management importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Waste management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6



Waste management performance



2025 waste management performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	66▲	67	66	68	68	64	66	69	70	69
65+	66	69	70	73	75	72	73	70	n/a	n/a
State-wide	65	67	66	68	69	65	68	70	71	70
Sea Lake	65	66	72	72	70	64	69	73	n/a	n/a
18-34	64	66	63	69	67	63	67	74	n/a	n/a
Donald	63	67	63	67	69	66	67	65	n/a	n/a
Buloke	63	66	65	67	68	65	65	69	n/a	n/a
Women	63	65	64	67	65	67	65	69	n/a	n/a
Men	63	68	65	67	70	64	66	68	n/a	n/a
Charlton	62	61	62	62	66	63	61	71	n/a	n/a
35-49	60	68	61	66	60	62	58	74	n/a	n/a
50-64	59	60	59	57	59	59	60	59	n/a	n/a

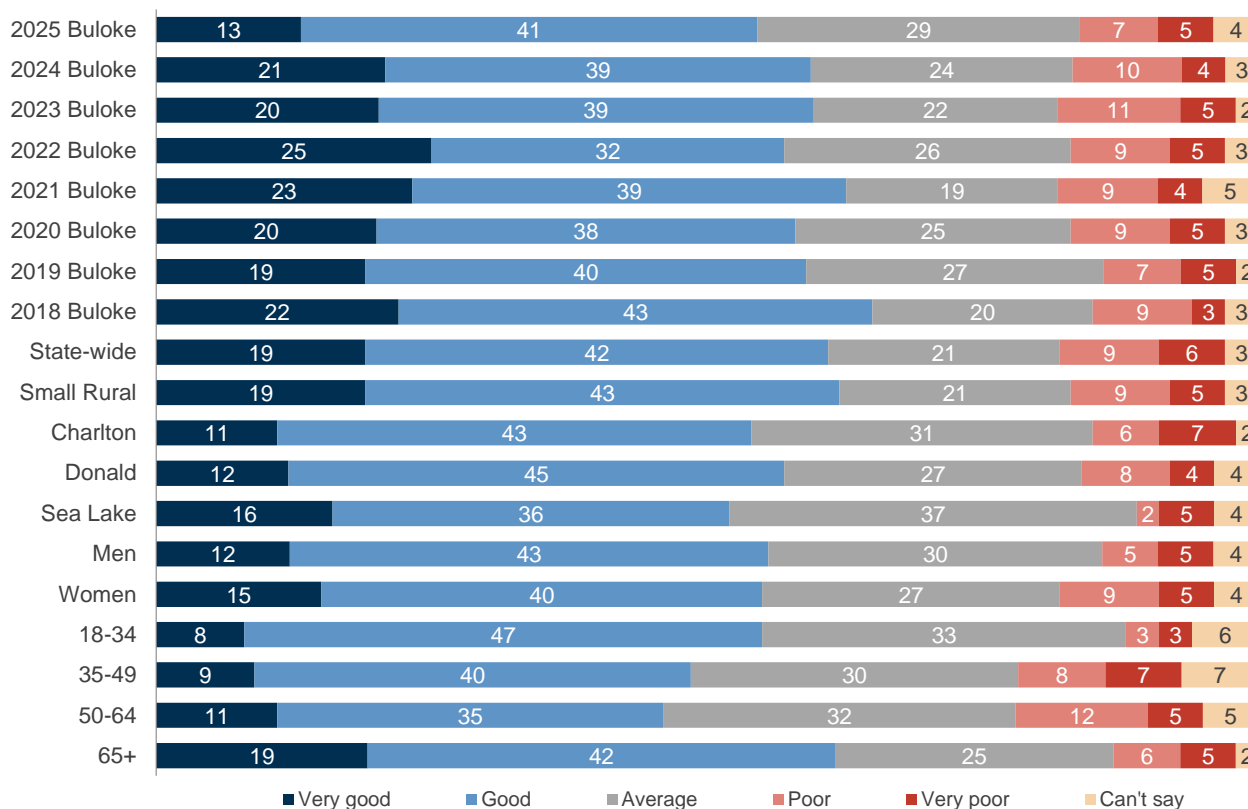
Q2. How has Council performed on 'Waste management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Waste management performance



2025 waste management performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Waste management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

Business and community development and tourism importance



2025 business/development/tourism importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Donald	75	69	74	73	78	71	75	77	n/a	n/a
Women	75	76	74	77	78	76	74	78	n/a	n/a
Charlton	74	72	72	69	78	76	75	78	n/a	n/a
50-64	74	73	74	73	75	73	72	75	n/a	n/a
35-49	74	75	79	72	81	78	77	78	n/a	n/a
Buloke	72	70	73	73	76	73	72	76	n/a	n/a
65+	72	71	73	70	75	70	71	74	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	71	70	71	72	74	74	71	71	72	71
Men	70	66	73	69	75	69	70	74	n/a	n/a
18-34	70	62	69	82	77	70	71	78	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	69	69	73	67	75	75	68	79	n/a	n/a
State-wide	69▼	67	67	69	70	67	65	66	67	67

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Business and community development and tourism' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5

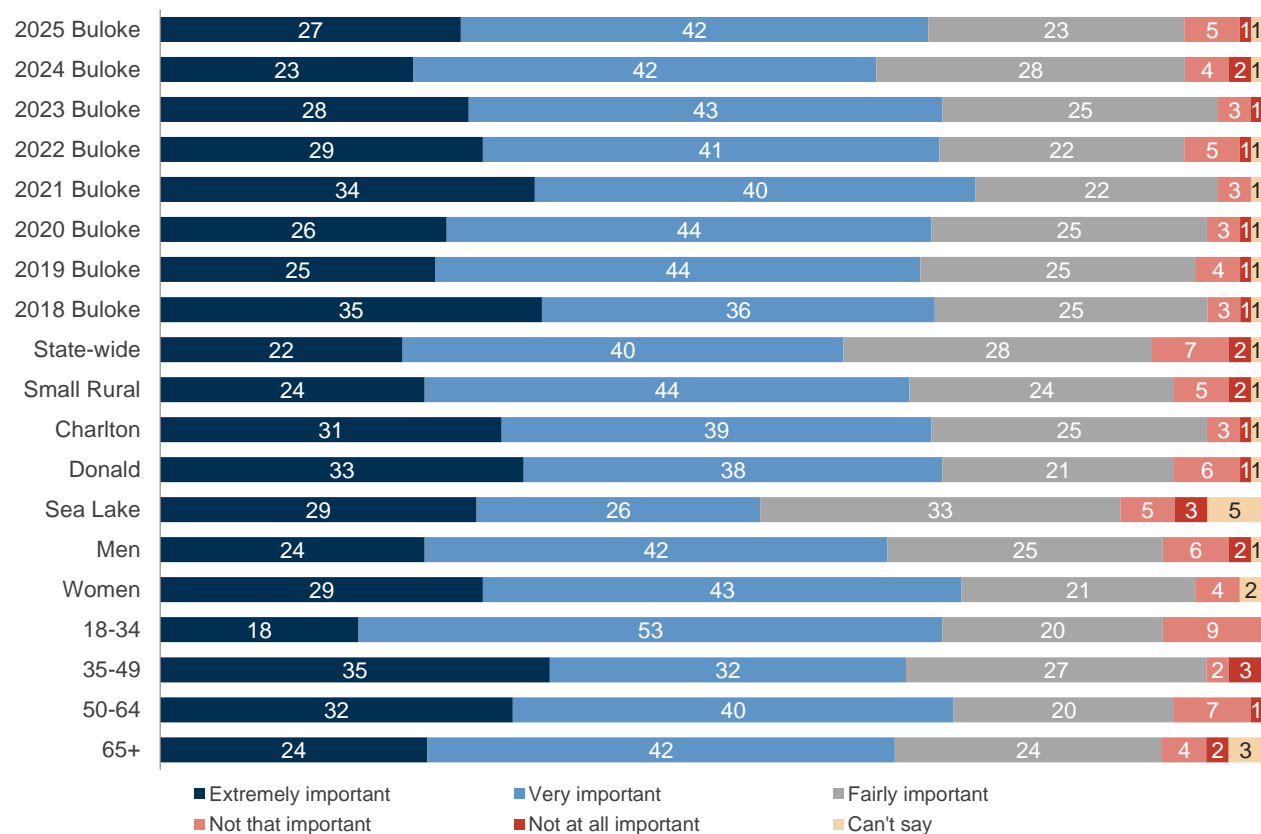
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

J01430 Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 – Buloke Shire Council

Business and community development and tourism importance



2025 business/development/tourism importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Business and community development and tourism' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 16 Councils asked group: 5

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Business and community development and tourism performance



2025 business/development/tourism performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	57▲	59	61	63	62	58	59	59	64	61
State-wide	56▲	57	59	60	61	59	61	60	61	60
18-34	52	58	61	67	67	69	53	54	n/a	n/a
Women	48	58	63	62	69	65	57	56	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	48	62	64	60	68	73	61	60	n/a	n/a
65+	47	57	62	65	69	66	60	56	n/a	n/a
Buloke	47	57	61	62	64	62	56	54	n/a	n/a
50-64	46	54	53	56	56	52	56	47	n/a	n/a
Men	45	57	58	62	60	59	55	52	n/a	n/a
Charlton	43	51	59	57	65	61	54	46	n/a	n/a
35-49	43	61	66	60	59	63	52	60	n/a	n/a
Donald	42	57	58	60	62	61	56	53	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Business and community development and tourism' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 23 Councils asked group: 8

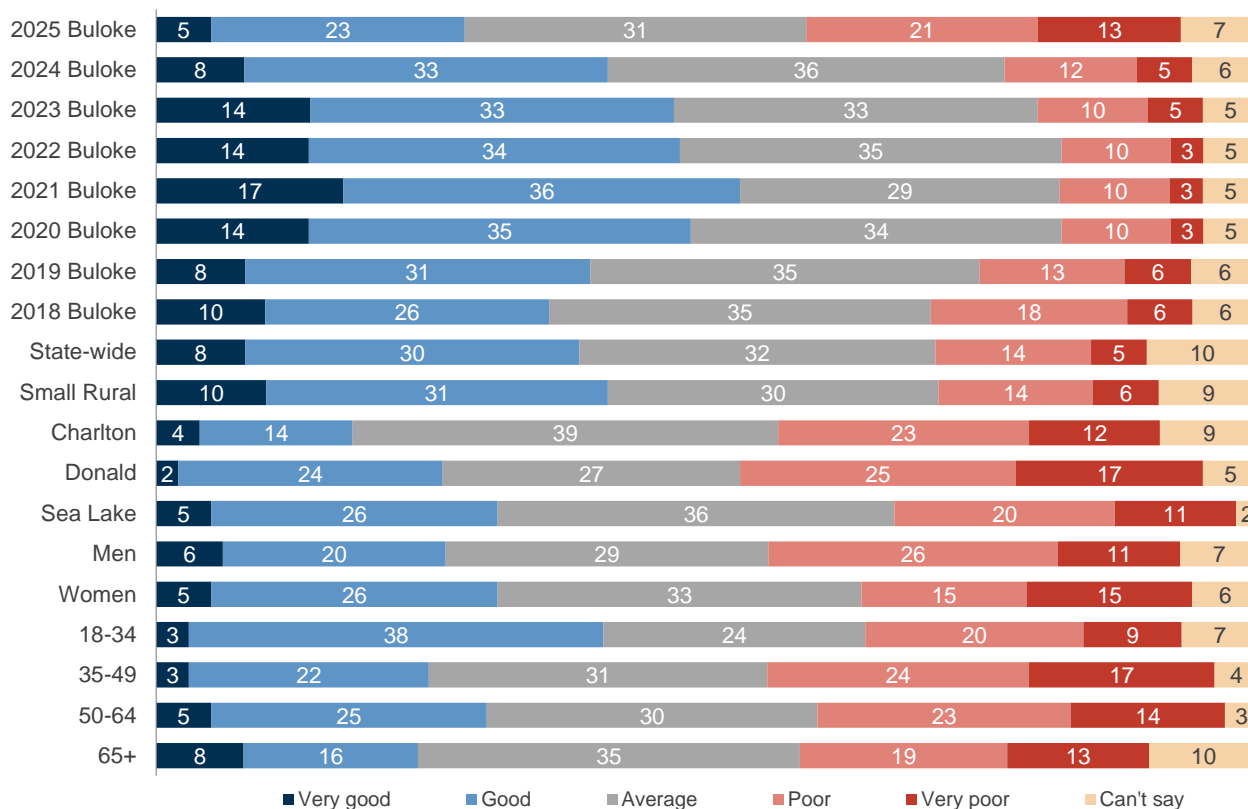
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

J01430 Community Satisfaction Survey 2025 – Buloke Shire Council

Business and community development and tourism performance



2025 business/development/tourism performance (%)



Q2. How has Council performed on 'Business and community development and tourism' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 23 Councils asked group: 8

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Planning and building permits importance



2025 planning and building permits importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	71▲	72	72	73	73	71	71	71	72	71
Sea Lake	71	67	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	70▲	70	71	73	71	68	70	68	68	71
65+	69	67	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	68	64	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	68	70	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	68	70	71	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	67	62	70	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	67	66	67	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	67	62	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	66	64	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	62▼	61	63	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Planning and building permits' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 18 Councils asked group: 6

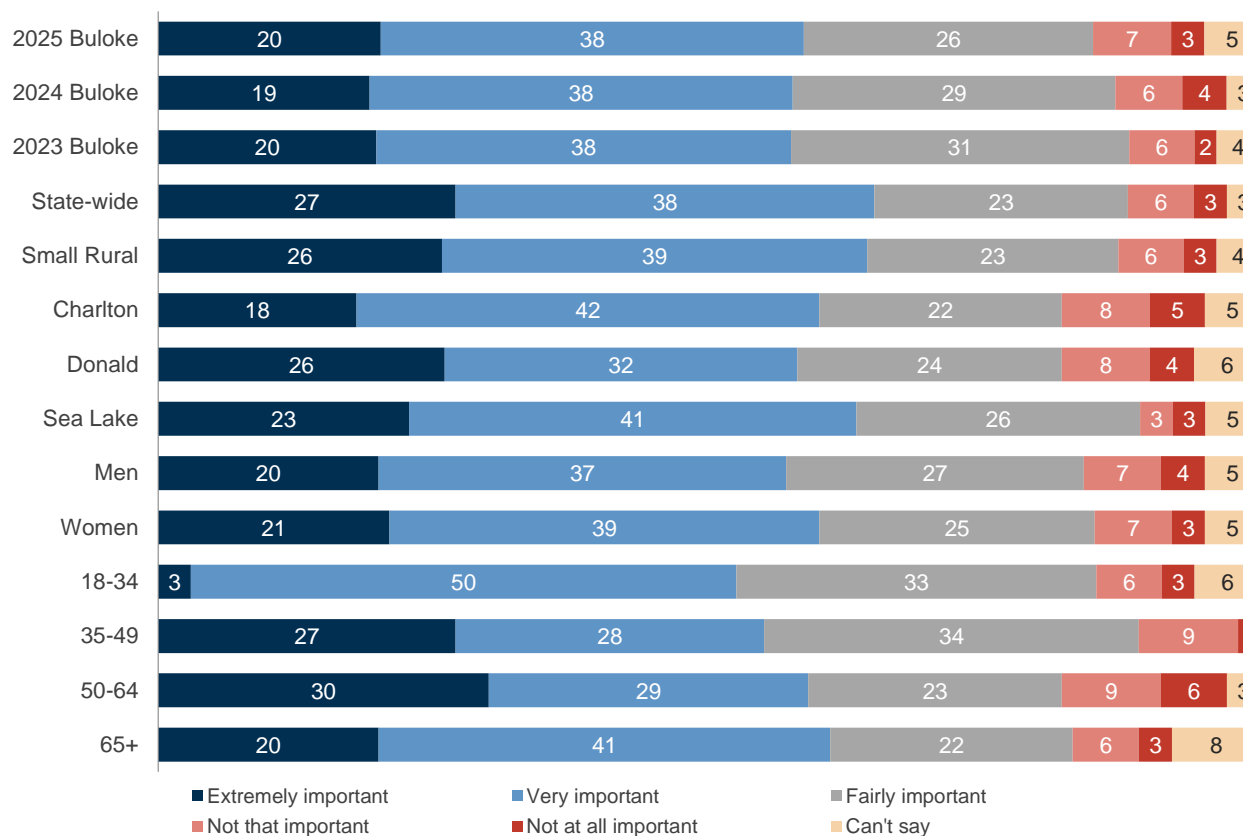
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Planning and building permits importance



2025 planning and building permits importance (%)















Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Planning and building permits' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 18 Councils asked group: 6



Planning and building permits performance



2025 planning and building permits performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	 43▲	45	47	50	51	51	52	52	51	50
Small Rural	 43▲	43	45	48	49	46	48	51	51	50
Sea Lake	 38	50	47	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	 37	47	48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	 37	50	46	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	 36	48	44	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	 35	48	49	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	 34	48	46	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	 33	48	43	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	 30	43	40	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	 28	56	46	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	 26▼	47	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Planning and building permits' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 8

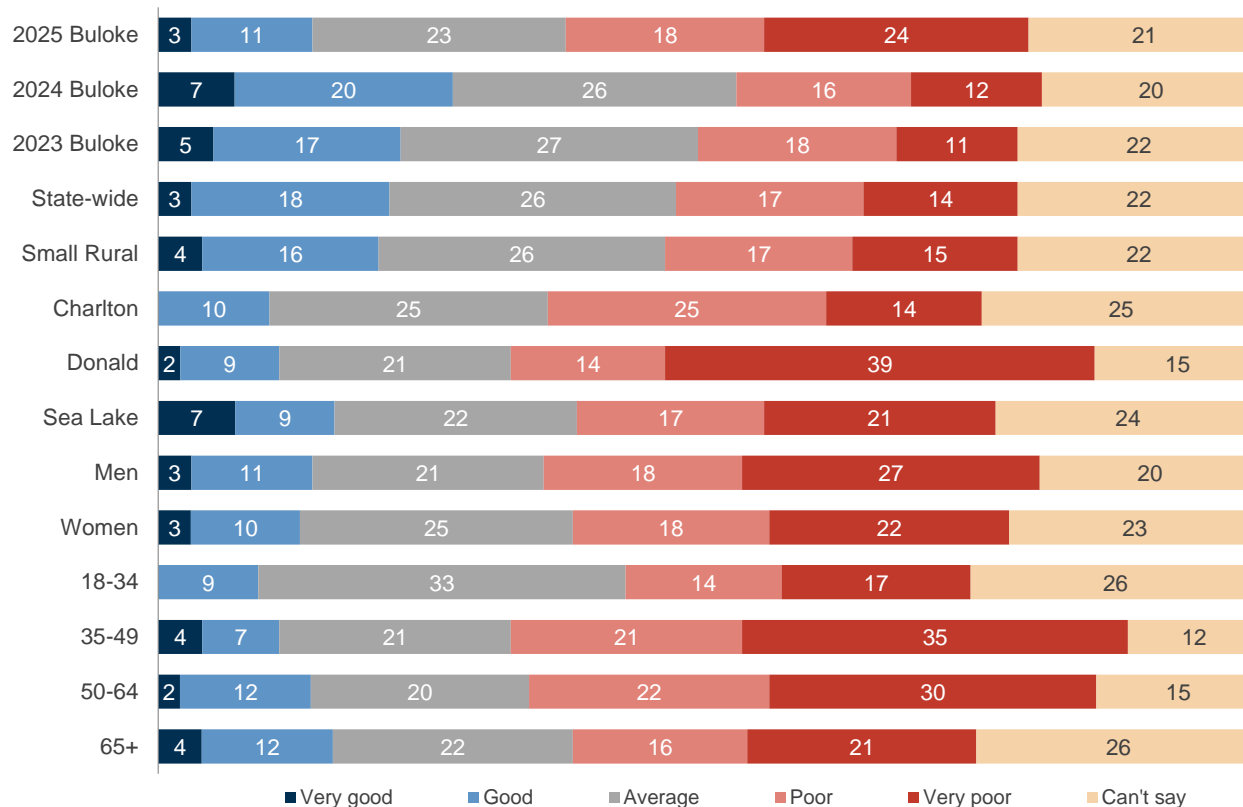
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Planning and building permits performance



2025 planning and building permits performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Planning and building permits' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 26 Councils asked group: 8



Environmental sustainability importance



2025 environmental sustainability importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Women	69▲	69	70	70	73	72	71	71	n/a	n/a
State-wide	65▲	68	70	73	74	74	74	73	72	73
Sea Lake	65	62	68	68	64	66	62	68	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	63	66	67	70	71	70	72	70	70	74
50-64	62	62	60	62	63	64	60	62	n/a	n/a
65+	62	59	63	67	68	66	66	63	n/a	n/a
Buloke	61	61	63	66	67	67	65	65	n/a	n/a
35-49	61	63	63	68	71	69	65	72	n/a	n/a
Donald	60	62	62	64	65	69	63	66	n/a	n/a
18-34	59	60	63	70	65	71	71	69	n/a	n/a
Charlton	57	61	63	67	69	62	67	66	n/a	n/a
Men	54▼	53	56	63	62	61	60	60	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Environmental sustainability' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4

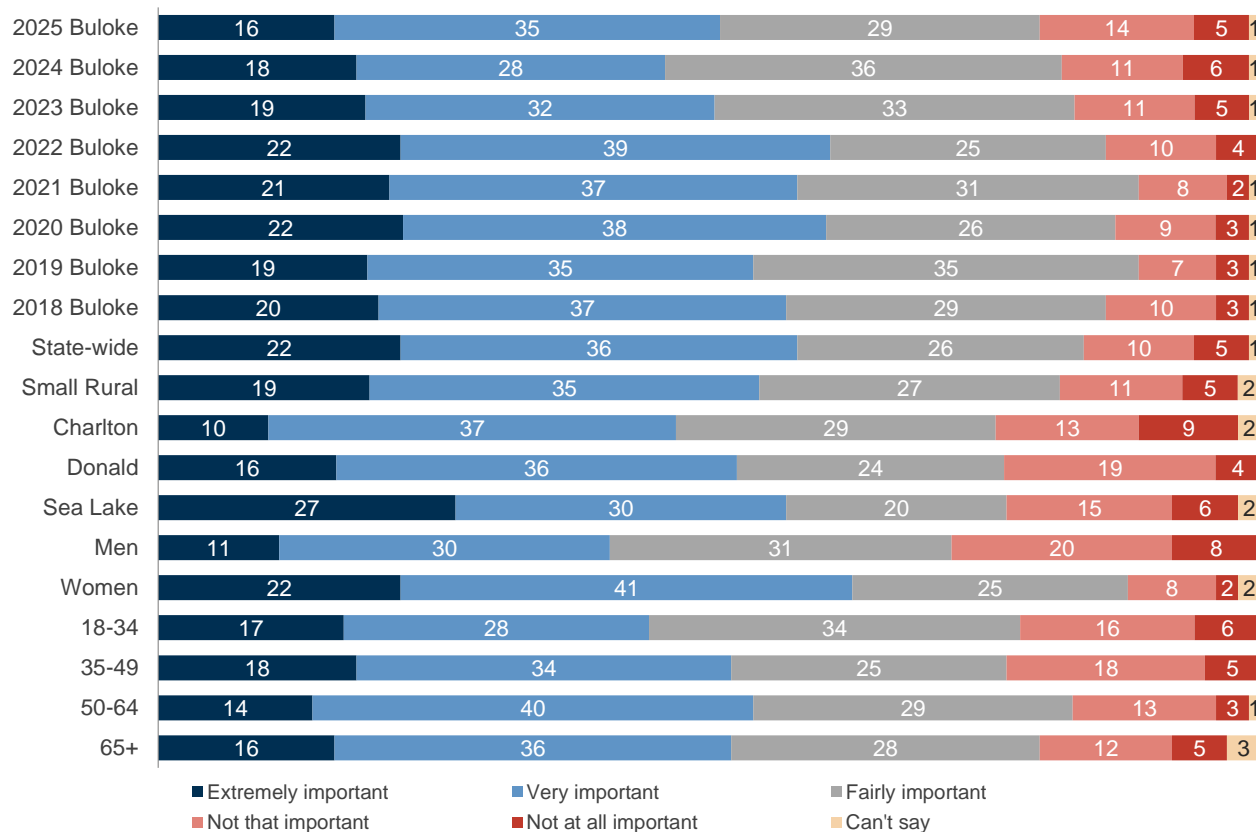
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Environmental sustainability importance



2025 environmental sustainability importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Environmental sustainability' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 19 Councils asked group: 4



Environmental sustainability performance



2025 environmental sustainability performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
State-wide	59▲	60	60	61	62	60	62	63	64	63
Small Rural	58▲	59	59	59	61	57	59	62	63	61
18-34	54	54	56	58	58	64	56	57	n/a	n/a
Donald	53	56	58	51	61	57	57	57	n/a	n/a
Men	53	57	60	56	61	56	56	58	n/a	n/a
35-49	53	62	58	56	62	57	53	58	n/a	n/a
Buloke	53	56	58	58	63	59	57	58	n/a	n/a
Charlton	52	57	55	60	61	61	58	55	n/a	n/a
50-64	52	53	57	52	60	51	55	54	n/a	n/a
Women	52	56	56	60	65	63	57	58	n/a	n/a
65+	52	56	61	62	66	64	60	61	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	49	57	61	57	61	59	57	55	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Environmental sustainability' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 30 Councils asked group: 8

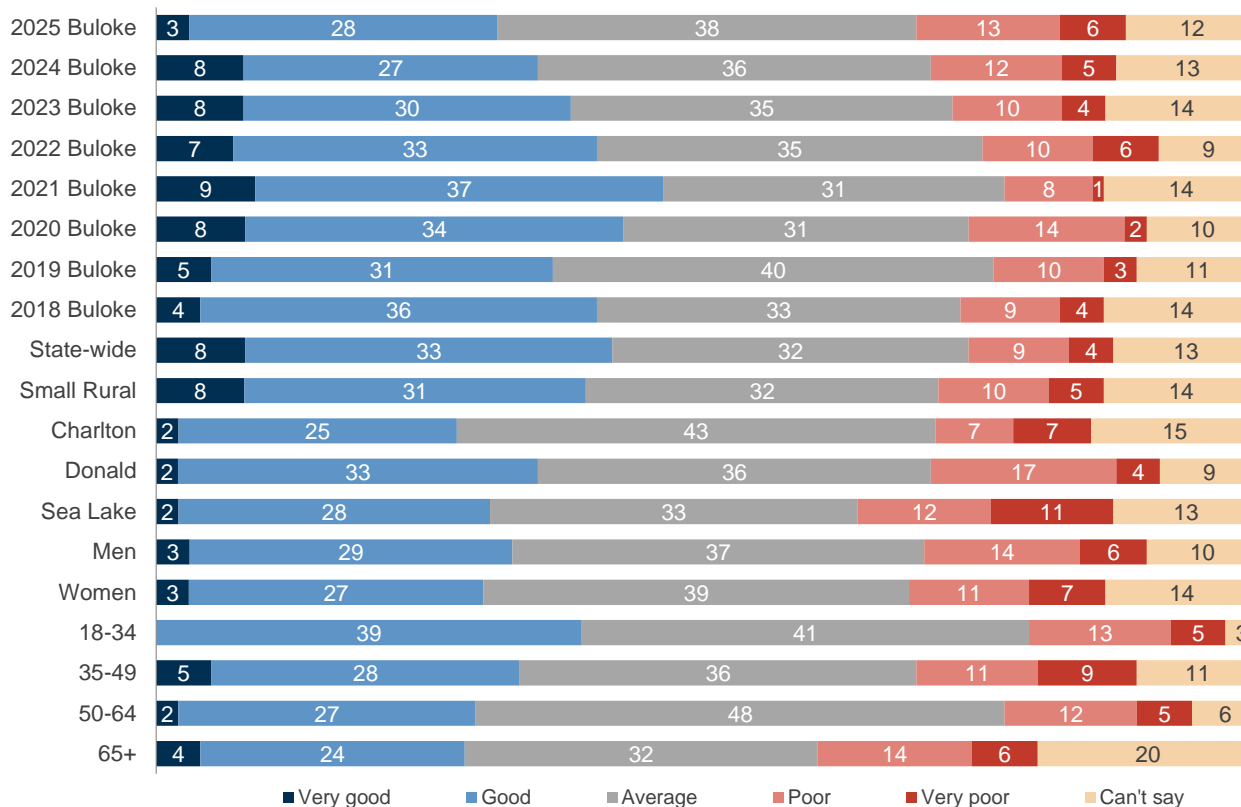
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Environmental sustainability performance



2025 environmental sustainability performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Environmental sustainability' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 30 Councils asked group: 8



Emergency and disaster management importance



2025 emergency and disaster management importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Charlton	80	79	83	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	80	78	81	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	80▲	82	80	81	82	82	81	80	81	82
State-wide	79▲	80	80	81	81	80	81	81	80	80
18-34	78	79	76	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Women	78	84	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	76	80	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
65+	76	79	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	76	79	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	75	79	74	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	74	83	81	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	74	75	72	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Emergency and disaster management' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 12 Councils asked group: 3

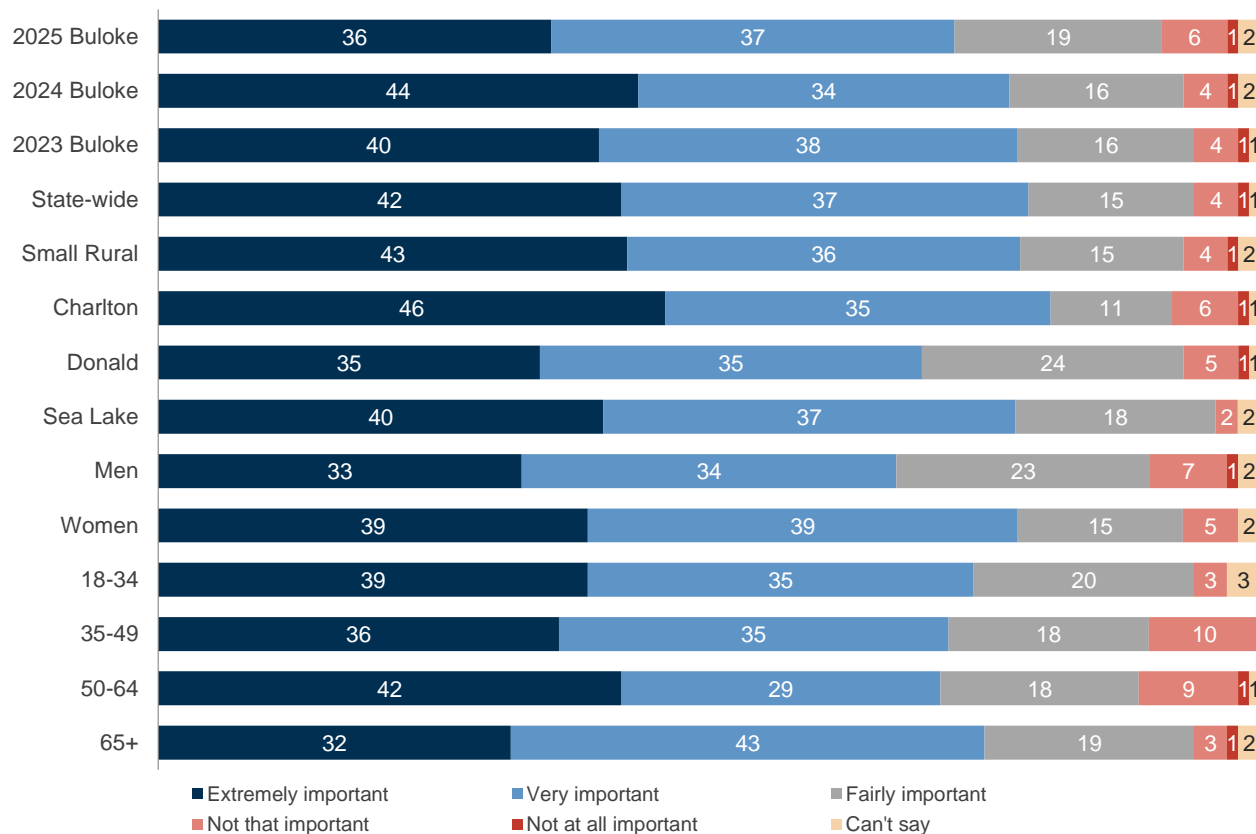
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Emergency and disaster management importance



2025 emergency and disaster management importance (%)



Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Emergency and disaster management' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 12 Councils asked group: 3



Emergency and disaster management performance



2025 emergency and disaster management performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	66▲	66	66	68	72	70	72	72	72	71
Women	65	69	67	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
State-wide	65▲	65	65	66	71	68	72	71	70	69
65+	63	66	66	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Donald	63	69	68	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
50-64	62	61	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Buloke	62	65	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18-34	61	63	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Charlton	61	61	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Men	58	61	62	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
35-49	57	68	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	52▼	66	65	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Emergency and disaster management' over the last 12 months?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6

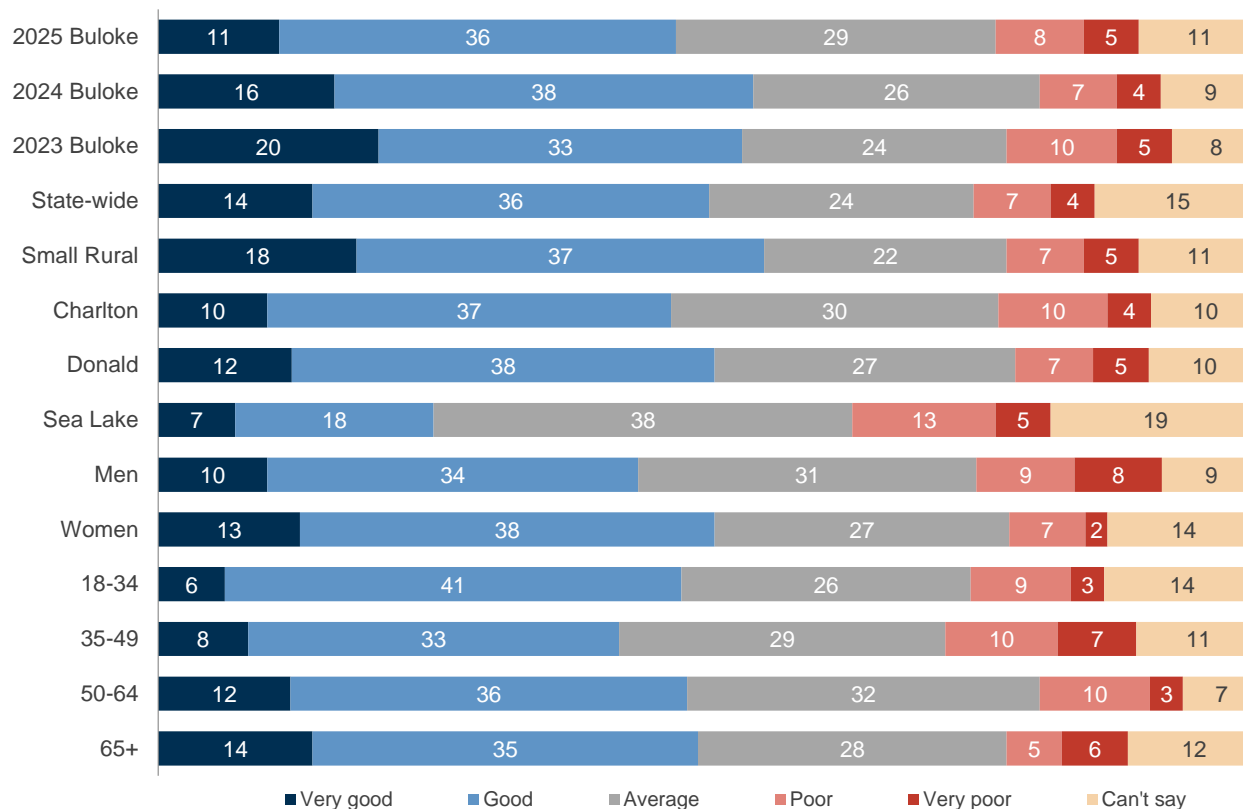
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Emergency and disaster management performance



2025 emergency and disaster management performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Emergency and disaster management' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 21 Councils asked group: 6



Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area importance



2025 unsealed roads importance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
50-64	89	88	88	85	88	85	81	86	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	87	83	79	83	88	89	81	82	n/a	n/a
18-34	87	89	83	91	87	75	88	86	n/a	n/a
Charlton	87	83	86	86	83	79	80	81	n/a	n/a
Women	86	87	85	90	89	87	85	85	n/a	n/a
Buloke	86	86	85	86	86	84	82	85	n/a	n/a
Men	85	86	84	83	83	81	78	84	n/a	n/a
Small Rural	85	85	85	85	84	83	82	84	81	81
Donald	85	87	84	84	86	83	82	88	n/a	n/a
65+	84	84	84	83	82	84	80	82	n/a	n/a
State-wide	83▼	84	83	83	81	80	80	80	79	79
35-49	83	89	86	89	91	90	80	87	n/a	n/a

Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6

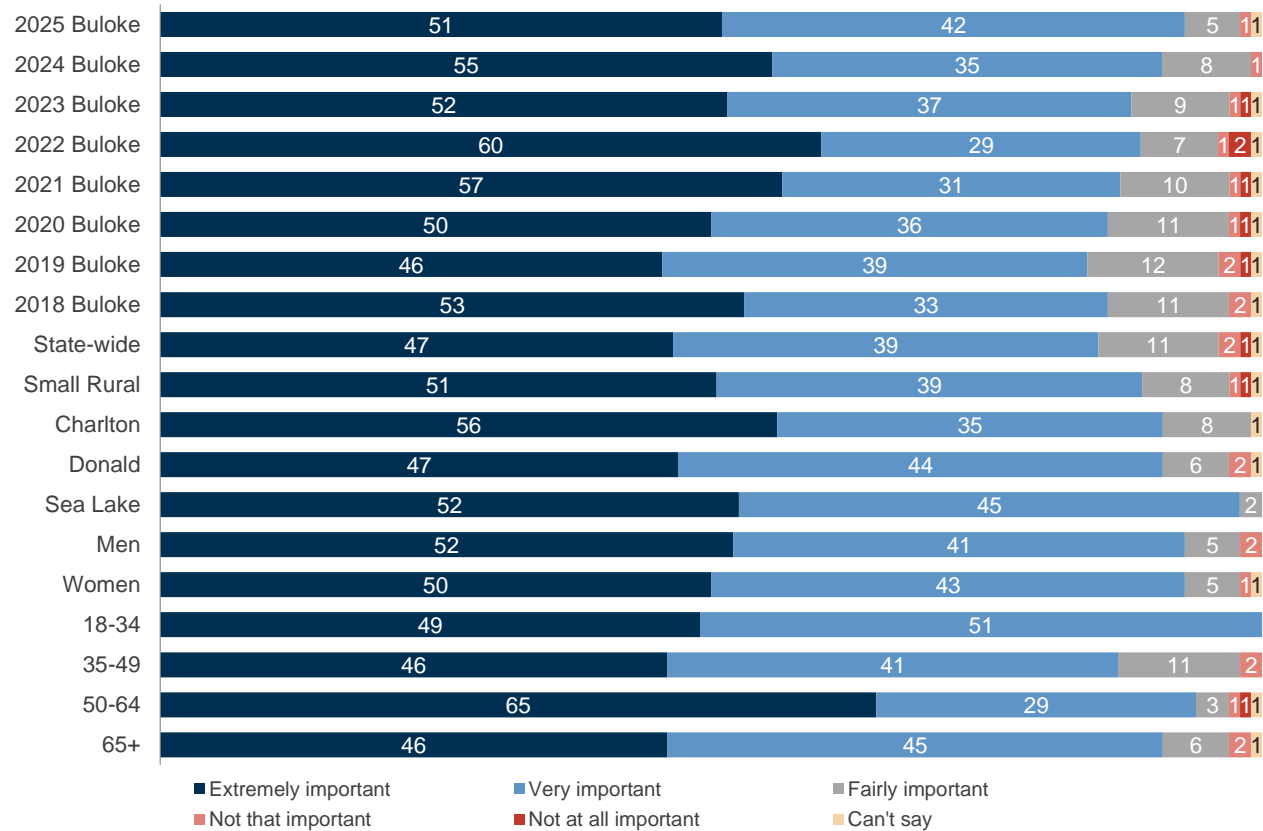
Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.



Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area importance



2025 unsealed roads importance (%)















Q1. Firstly, how important should 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' be as a responsibility for Council?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 15 Councils asked group: 6

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area performance



2025 unsealed roads performance (index scores)

		2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Small Rural	 40▲	35	38	42	44	43	43	40	43	44
State-wide	 38▲	36	37	41	45	44	44	43	44	43
Charlton	 34	30	36	37	47	41	40	38	n/a	n/a
65+	 34	30	34	36	43	39	44	38	n/a	n/a
18-34	 32	21	21	30	41	37	34	36	n/a	n/a
Men	 32	28	29	31	40	35	38	35	n/a	n/a
Buloke	 31	27	30	31	38	35	37	35	n/a	n/a
35-49	 31	28	28	26	26	31	33	35	n/a	n/a
Women	 30	27	31	32	36	36	35	35	n/a	n/a
Donald	 30	25	28	29	37	34	32	30	n/a	n/a
50-64	 25▼	27	29	29	36	33	32	31	n/a	n/a
Sea Lake	 25	35	28	40	35	29	36	37	n/a	n/a

Q2. How has Council performed on 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' over the last 12 months?

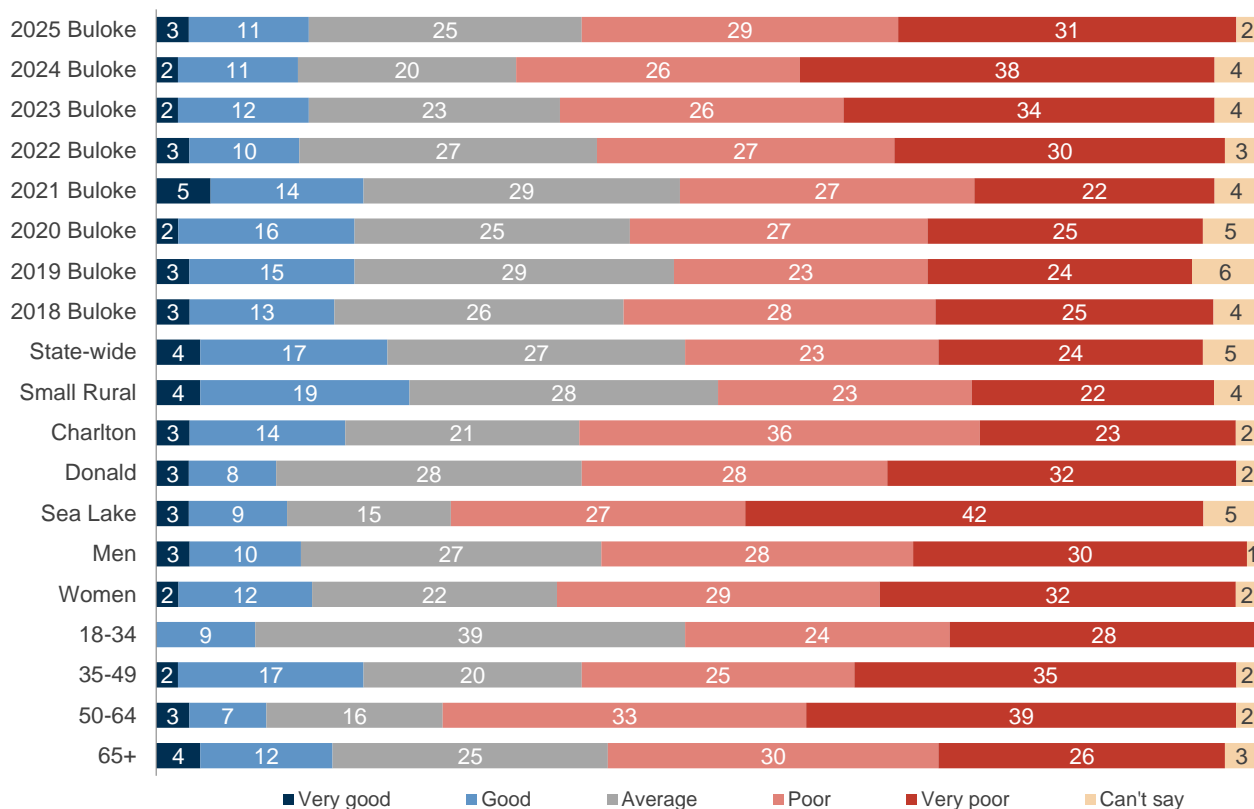
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 28 Councils asked group: 10

Note: Please see Appendix A for explanation of significant differences.

Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area performance



2025 unsealed roads performance (%)



Q2: How has Council performed on 'Maintenance of unsealed roads in your area' over the last 12 months?
Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 28 Councils asked group: 10

Detailed demographics

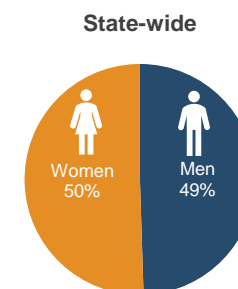
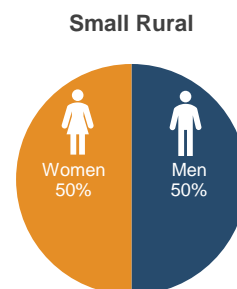
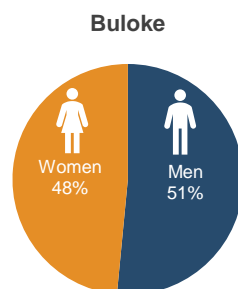


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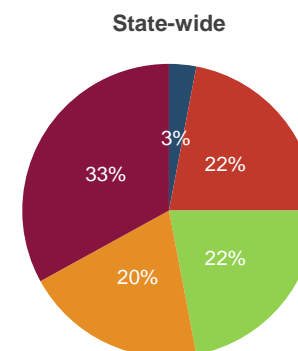
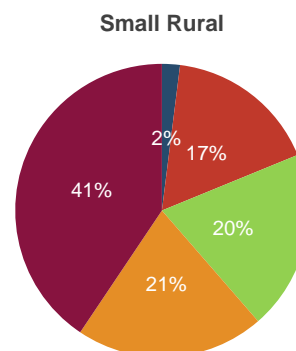
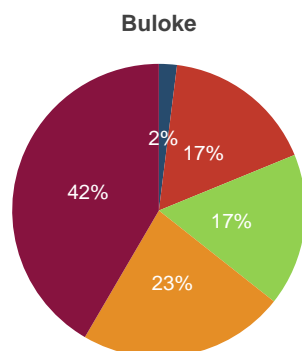


Gender and age profile

2025 gender



2025 age



■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-49 ■ 50-64 ■ 65+

S3. How would you describe your gender? / S4. To which of the following age groups do you belong?

Base: All respondents. Councils asked State-wide: 56 Councils asked group: 19

An "Other" option has been included for gender, hence the results may not add to 100%.

Please note that for the reason of simplifying reporting, interlocking age and gender reporting has not been included in this report. Interlocking age and gender analysis is still available in the dashboard and data tables provided alongside this report.

Appendix A: Index scores, margins of error and significant differences



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Appendix A: Index Scores



Index Scores

Many questions ask respondents to rate council performance on a five-point scale, for example, from 'very good' to 'very poor', with 'can't say' also a possible response category. To facilitate ease of reporting and comparison of results over time, starting from the 2012 survey and measured against the state-wide result and the council group, an 'Index Score' has been calculated for such measures.

The Index Score is calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale), with 'can't say' responses excluded from the analysis. The '% RESULT' for each scale category is multiplied by the 'INDEX FACTOR'. This produces an 'INDEX VALUE' for each category, which are then summed to produce the 'INDEX SCORE', equating to '60' in the following example.

Similarly, an Index Score has been calculated for the Core question 'Performance direction in the last 12 months', based on the following scale for each performance measure category, with 'Can't say' responses excluded from the calculation.

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Very good	9%	100	9
Good	40%	75	30
Average	37%	50	19
Poor	9%	25	2
Very poor	4%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 60

SCALE CATEGORIES	% RESULT	INDEX FACTOR	INDEX VALUE
Improved	36%	100	36
Stayed the same	40%	50	20
Deteriorated	23%	0	0
Can't say	1%	--	INDEX SCORE 56

Please note that the horizontal (x) axis of the index score bar charts in this report is displayed on a scale from 20 to 100.

Appendix A: Margins of error



The sample size for the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey for Buloke Shire Council was n=400. Unless otherwise noted, this is the total sample base for all reported charts and tables.

The maximum margin of error on a sample of approximately n=400 interviews is +/-4.7% at the 95% confidence level for results around 50%. Margins of error will be larger for any sub-samples. As an example, a result of 50% can be read confidently as falling midway in the range 45.3% - 54.7%.

Maximum margins of error are listed in the table below, based on a population of 5,000 people aged 18 years or over for Buloke Shire Council, according to ABS estimates.

Demographic	Actual survey sample size	Weighted base	Maximum margin of error at 95% confidence interval
Buloke Shire Council	400	400	+/-4.7
Men	191	206	+/-7.0
Women	208	194	+/-6.7
Charlton	81	75	+/-10.9
Donald	144	149	+/-8.1
Sea Lake	40	37	+/-15.6
18-34 years	34	75	+/-17.0
35-49 years	56	66	+/-13.1
50-64 years	110	91	+/-9.3
65+ years	200	167	+/-6.8

Appendix A: Index score significant difference calculation



The test applied to the Indexes was an Independent Mean Test, as follows:

$$Z \text{ Score} = (\$1 - \$2) / \text{Sqrt} ((\$5^2 / \$3) + (\$6^2 / \$4))$$

Where:

- \$1 = Index Score 1
- \$2 = Index Score 2
- \$3 = unweighted sample count 1
- \$4 = unweighted sample count 2
- \$5 = standard deviation 1
- \$6 = standard deviation 2

All figures can be sourced from the detailed cross tabulations.

The test was applied at the 95% confidence interval, so if the Z Score was greater than +/- 1.954 the scores are significantly different.

Appendix B: Further project information



Appendix B: Further information



Further information about the report and explanations about the State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey can be found in this section including:

- Background and objectives
- Analysis and reporting
- Glossary of terms

Detailed survey tabulations

Detailed survey tabulations are available in supplied Excel file.

Contacts

For further queries about the conduct and reporting of the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey, please contact JWS Research on

(03) 8685 8555 or via email:
admin@jwsresearch.com

Appendix B: Survey methodology and sampling



The 2025 results are compared with previous years, as detailed below:

- 2024, n=401 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 29th January – 18th March.
- 2023, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 27th January – 19th March.
- 2022, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 27th January – 24th March.
- 2021, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 28th January – 18th March.
- 2020, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 30th January – 22nd March.
- 2019, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2018, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2017, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.
- 2016, n=400 completed interviews, conducted in the period of 1st February – 30th March.

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 Buloke Shire Council area.

Any variation of +/-1% between individual results and net scores in this report or the detailed survey tabulations is due to rounding. In reporting, '—' denotes not mentioned and '0%' denotes mentioned by less than 1% of respondents. 'Net' scores refer to two or more response categories being combined into one category for simplicity of reporting.

This survey was conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18+ years in Buloke Shire Council.

Survey sample matched to the demographic profile of Buloke Shire Council as determined by the most recent ABS population estimates was purchased from an accredited supplier of publicly available phone records, including up to 52% mobile phone numbers to cater to the diversity of residents within Buloke Shire Council, particularly younger people.

A total of n=400 completed interviews were achieved in Buloke Shire Council. Survey fieldwork was conducted in the period of 28th January – 16th March, 2025.

Appendix B: Analysis and reporting



All participating councils are listed in the State-wide report published on the DGS website. In 2025, 56 of the 79 Councils throughout Victoria participated in this survey. For consistency of analysis and reporting across all projects, Local Government Victoria has aligned its presentation of data to use standard council groupings. Accordingly, the council reports for the community satisfaction survey provide analysis using these standard council groupings. Please note that councils participating across 2012-2025 vary slightly.

Council Groups

Buloke Shire Council is classified as a Small Rural council according to the following classification list:

- Metropolitan, Interface, Regional Centres, Large Rural & Small Rural.

Councils participating in the Small Rural group are:

- Alpine, Ararat, Benalla, Buloke, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Hepburn, Hindmarsh, Indigo, Loddon, Mansfield, Murrindindi, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Queenscliffe, Strathbogie, Towong, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Wherever appropriate, results for Buloke Shire Council for this 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey have been compared against other participating councils in the Small Rural group and on a state-wide basis. Please note that council groupings changed for 2015, and as such comparisons to council group results before that time can not be made within the reported charts.

Appendix B: Core, optional and tailored questions



Core, optional and tailored questions

Over and above necessary geographic and demographic questions required to ensure sample representativeness, a base set of questions for the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey was designated as 'Core' and therefore compulsory inclusions for all participating Councils.

These core questions comprised:

- Overall performance last 12 months (Overall performance)
- Value for money in services and infrastructure (Value for money)
- Contact in last 12 months (Contact)
- Rating of contact (Customer service)
- Overall council direction last 12 months (Council direction)
- Community consultation and engagement (Consultation)
- Decisions made in the interest of the community (Making community decisions)
- Condition of sealed local roads (Sealed local roads)
- Waste management

Reporting of results for these core questions can always be compared against other participating councils in the council group and against all participating councils state-wide. Alternatively, some questions in the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey were optional. Councils also had the ability to ask tailored questions specific only to their council.

Appendix B: Analysis and reporting



Reporting

Every council that participated in the 2025 State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey receives a customised report. In addition, the State government is supplied with this State-wide summary report of the aggregate results of 'Core' and 'Optional' questions asked across all council areas surveyed, which is available at:

<https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/council-community-satisfaction-survey>

Tailored questions commissioned by individual councils are reported only to the commissioning council and not otherwise shared unless by express written approval of the commissioning council.

Appendix B: Glossary of terms



Core questions: Compulsory inclusion questions for all councils participating in the CSS.

CSS: 2025 Victorian Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

Council group: One of five classified groups, comprising: metropolitan, interface, regional centres, large rural and small rural.

Council group average: The average result for all participating councils in the council group.

Highest / lowest: The result described is the highest or lowest result across a particular demographic sub-group e.g. men, for the specific question being reported. Reference to the result for a demographic sub-group being the highest or lowest does not imply that it is significantly higher or lower, unless this is specifically mentioned.

Index score: A score calculated and represented as a score out of 100 (on a 0 to 100 scale). This score is sometimes reported as a figure in brackets next to the category being described, e.g. men 50+ (60).

Optional questions: Questions which councils had an option to include or not.

Percentages: Also referred to as 'detailed results', meaning the proportion of responses, expressed as a percentage.

Sample: The number of completed interviews, e.g. for a council or within a demographic sub-group.

Significantly higher / lower: The result described is significantly higher or lower than the comparison result based on a statistical significance test at the 95% confidence limit. If the result referenced is statistically higher or lower then this will be specifically mentioned, however not all significantly higher or lower results are referenced in summary reporting.

State-wide average: The average result for all participating councils in the State.

Tailored questions: Individual questions tailored by and only reported to the commissioning council.

Weighting: Weighting factors are applied to the sample for each council based on available age and gender proportions from ABS census information to ensure reported results are proportionate to the actual population of the council, rather than the achieved survey sample.

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8.4 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Nil.

9 OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil.

9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

9.3 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nil

10 MEETING CLOSE