



COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

Wednesday 14 February 2024

Commencing at 7:00pm

**Wycheproof Supper Room
367 Broadway, Wycheproof**

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

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 14 February 2024 commencing at 7:00pm in the Wycheproof Supper Room, 367 Broadway, Wycheproof**PRESENT****CHAIRPERSON:**

Cr Alan Getley Mallee Ward

COUNCILLORS:

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

OFFICERS:

Wayne O'Toole Chief Executive Officer
Dan McLoughlan Acting Director Infrastructure and Delivery
Jenna Allan Acting Director Community Development
Travis Fitzgibbon Acting Director Corporate and Organisational Performance

AGENDA**1. COUNCIL WELCOME**

WELCOME

The Mayor Cr Alan Getley welcomed all in attendance.

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

2. RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES

Cr Carolyn Stewart Lower Avoca Ward

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

That Council adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday, 13 December 2023 and Council adopt the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday, 21 December 2023.

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

**CARRIED.
(R001/24)**

4. REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Getley Item 8.2.2 Community Grants as Treasurer for Charlton Chamber of Commerce

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

NIL

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NIL

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

NEXT MEETING

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD IN WYCHEPROOF SUPPER ROOM, 367 BROADWAY, WYCHEPROOF ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH 2024 AT 7:00PM.

Wayne O’Toole
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Nil

7. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

7.1 CORRESPONDENCE INITIATED BY COUNCIL

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/06/06

PURPOSE

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

MOTION:

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

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.
(R002/24)**

Attachments: Nil

TABLE OF CORRESPONDENCE

Council Initiative	Sent to	Sent	Response	Purpose of Letter/Response
Notice of Motion from September 2023 CM to forward letter.	Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP Victorian Minister for Planning	3 Oct 2023	12 Dec 2023 Tim Pallas MP Treasurer	To outline Council's concerns with the impacts on small communities with the introduction of the Windfall Gains Tax (WGT). RESPONSE: The Minister acknowledged concerns regarding WGT tax. Outlining WGT applies to value uplift associated with rezoning decisions made on or after 1 July 2023. Noting the tax is designed to capture a portion of windfall gains of over \$100,000 in land value that landowners receive directly due to a Govt decision to rezone their land. This includes rezonings of land held by both state & local govts. Highlighting WGT will be applied to the value uplift associated with Govt decisions to rezone land and will not be calculated based on the extent of any future improvements to the land. Under WGT rates schedule, the tax rate effectively phases up to a maximum of 50 per cent of the total value uplift, with landowners retaining the remainder. Stating revenue generated by WGT will help support vital services & infrastructure such as hospitals, schools & public transport, including in rural communities. WGT also includes a number of exemptions,

Council Initiative	Sent to	Sent	Response	Purpose of Letter/Response
				including some that may be relevant to landowners of Buloke Shire. 1. An exemption for up to two hectares of residential land, which includes primary production land with a dwelling affixed to it that is fit for occupancy at the time of a rezoning. This exemption will apply even where the dwelling is not the landowner's principal place of residence. 2. An exemption for rezoning to a Rural Zone other than the Rural Living Zone
Notice of Motion from October 2023 CM to forward letter.	<i>The Hon. Anthony Carbines MP Minister of Victorian Police</i>	19 Oct 2023	18 Dec 2023 <i>The Hon. Anthony Carbines MP</i>	Calling on the State Government to guarantee that one-person police stations will not close RESPONSE: The Minister outlined the critical importance of single person stations across Victoria and advised VicPol have committed not to remove Police from single person stations. The Minister noted that as a result of 22-23 Government Budget funding an additional 502 police officers and 50 PSO's will be recruited, of which their deployment positions are decided by the Chief Commissioner.
Notice of Motion from Nov 2023 CM to forward letter.	<i>Hon Melissa Horne MP Minister for Roads and Road Safety Copy sent to: Anthony Judd Exec Director Loddon, Mallee and Hume Dept of Transport & Planning</i>	17 Nov 2023	4 Jan 2024 The Hon Melissa Horne MP – Min for Roads and Safety	Council write regarding the poor condition of regional and rural roads and request that these ongoing poor conditions be addressed as a matter of urgency. RESPONSE: 2023 – 2024 Road Maintenance is well underway, and DTP will be delivering repairs to many roads in Shire including: Sunraysia Hwy, Calder Hwy, Borung Hwy, Donald – Murtoa Rd, Birchip-Wycheproof Rd, Birchip–Sea Lake Rd. DTP manages arterial road network in accordance with its Road Management Plan. Government is investing an additional \$2.8 billion over 10 years into road maintenance and renewal works, including flood recovery. This will see a total of at least \$6.6 billion invested in maintaining our road network over the next decade. This new multi-year funding approach means DTP can plan a long-term road maintenance program and deliver works in a strategic manner across the State, also allow DTP to take a more efficient and sustainable approach to road maintenance over the next decade. \$770 million is being spent in this financial year alone to maintain our roads. Our maintenance season is well underway with a focus on repairing roads that were damaged as a result of last year's unexpected weather events. This includes patching and pothole filling that will keep our roads drivable and safe for passenger and freight transport. DTP crews have also achieved significant milestones in the past year: patching thousands of potholes, clearing hundreds of thousands of tonnes of snow from alpine roads,

Council Initiative	Sent to	Sent	Response	Purpose of Letter/Response
				<p>repairing or replacing more than 20,000 signs and preparing for the upcoming summer with tens of thousands of kilometres of roadside grass being mowed, slashed and sprayed.</p> <p>Thank you again for sharing your concerns. Your feedback is important to the Allan Labor Government as it continues to work hard to improve regional roads in Victoria.</p>

7.2 REPORT OF COUNCILLOR ASSEMBLIES

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/05/04

MOTION:

That the Council note the report of Councillor Assembly Meeting held 6 December 2023.

Moved: CR DARYL WARREN

Seconded: CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

CARRIED.
(R003/24)

Attachments: 1 Councillor Briefing Record - 6 December 2023

KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Transparency is a fundamental principle of democratic governance.

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

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

As per the Council Meeting Schedules adopted 9 November 2022 and 8 November 2023, Councillor Briefings are held for Councillors to meet to consider matters that are likely to be the subject of a Council decision or for the exercise of delegation.

A record of the Councillor Briefing held on 6 December 2023 is attached for public information.

7.3 LETTERS OF CONGRATULATIONS AND RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT/AWARDS

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: CR/13/01

PURPOSE

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

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

MOTION:

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

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

**CARRIED.
(R004/24)**

Attachments: Nil

RECOGNITION OF ACHIEVEMENT ITEMS

Provider	Recipient	Date	Purpose for Recognition
ABC Heywire Storytelling Competition	Elliott Bidstrup Birchip	December 2023	For being a winner of the ABC 2023 Heywire competition for his life story on "how he realised he was supposed to be born a boy' – The day he realised he was transgender".
Birchip Forum	Maureen Donnellon Birchip	26 January 2024	Citizen of the Year Birchip and District
Charlton Forum	Emily Olive Charlton	26 January 2024	Young Citizen of the Year Charlton and District
Charlton Forum	Anne Kenny Charlton	26 January 2024	Citizen of the Year Charlton and District
Charlton Forum	Charlton Camp-draft Club Inaugural Camp-draft Event Charlton	26 January 2024	Event of the Year Charlton and District

Provider	Recipient	Date	Purpose for Recognition
Charlton Forum	Charlton Youth Group Emily Olive, Dayne Bartlett, Ezzie Gray, Fletcher Holmes- Brown, Annie Olive, Emmy Nelson, Elise Fitzpatrick, Poppy Fitzpatrick, Amali Fitzpatrick, Sheena Fitzpatrick, Maggie Riley, Isabel Soulsby, Elliott Fitzpatrick, Isaac Bourke, Angus Johnstone, Bailey Hooper-Dixon, Jye Roberts, Michael Olive, Hugh Sait, Nick Thompson.	26 January 2024	Youth Volunteers Recognition Recipients
Donald 2000	Jacob Donnellon Donald	26 January 2024	Junior Citizen of the Year Donald and District
Donald 2000	Graham and Jenni Shilton Donald	26 January 2024	Joint winners for Citizen of the Year Donald and District
Donald 2000	Donald's Platform 3480 Donald 2000 Railway Station	26 January 2024	"Place of the Year" now restored was able to host many fun and vibrant community events at this venue
Advance Sea Lake Inc	Julie Pringle Sea Lake	26 January 2024	Citizen of the Year Sea Lake and District
Advance Sea Lake Inc	Family Festival of Fun Event Tyrrell College Leadership Group Angus Renney, Callum Mott, Charlie Mitchell, Georgia McClelland, Judd Durie, Jada Symes	26 January 2024	Community Event of the Year Sea Lake and District
Wyche Alive Inc	Sharna Bartram Nullawil	26 January 2024	Junior Citizen of the Year Wycheproof
Wyche Alive Inc	Max Dillon Wycheproof	26 January 2024	Citizen of the Year Wycheproof
Wyche Alive Inc	Wycheproof-Narraport Football Club's King of the Mount Event	26 January 2024	Event of the Year Wycheproof
	Joy Freeman		Inaugural recipient – of "Keys to Charlton" for ongoing service to community of Charlton since receiving Citizenship.

Provider	Recipient	Date	Purpose for Recognition
	Garry Larmour		Inaugural recipient – of “Keys to Charlton” for ongoing service to community of Charlton since receiving Citizenship.

7.4 STATUS OF ACTION OF PAST COUNCIL MEETING RESOLUTIONS

Author's Title: Executive Assistant

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: GO/05/04

PURPOSE

To provide Council with a list of the Status of Action (SOA) of Council Resolutions outstanding for completion of action, and the SOA for the 13 December 2023 Council Meeting Resolutions.

MOTION:

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

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

CARRIED.
(R005/24)

Attachments: 1 Status of Action on Council Meeting Resolutions

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 13 December 2023 Council Meeting Resolutions.

7.5 PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED - MONTHLY UPDATE

Author's Title: Planning Officer

Department: Community Development

File No: LP/09/01

PURPOSE

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

MOTION:

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

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

CARRIED.
(R006/24)

Attachments: Nil

LIST OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application No	Address	Date Rec	Summary of Proposal	Status
PA23020	Church Street, Culgoa	10/05/2023	Use and development of land for a transfer station (install an RV dump point and septic holding tank)	Permit Issued
PA23026	Horace Street, Sea Lake	06/09/2023	Construct and display internally illuminated business identification sign (LED priceboard)	Review
PA23034	Enterprise Drive, Donald	25/09/2023	Three-lot subdivision of land	Permit Issued
PA23036	Birchip – Sea Lake Road, Marlbed	11/10/2023	Two-lot subdivision of land	Permit Issued
PA23037	Connellan Road, Watchem	24/10/2023	Two lot subdivision of land (boundary re-alignment)	Permit Issued
PA23038	Industry Drive, Donald	25/10/2023	Telecommunications Facility (Installation of a 60-metre-high lattice tower and ancillary equipment)	Permit Issued

Application No	Address	Date Rec	Summary of Proposal	Status
PA23041	Morrison Street, Birchip	03/10/2023	Construct a fence greater than 1 metre high in Public Park & Recreation Zone	Request for Further Information
PA24001	Yeungroon Road, Yeungroon East	13/12/2023	Use and development of land for rural worker accommodation (two two-bedroom units and carport)	Request for Further Information
PA24002	Borong Highway, Wooroonook	10/01/2024	Use and development of land for a single dwelling on an allotment in the Farming Zone, create or alter access to a Transport Zone and build within a setback to a Transport Zone	Request for Further Information
PA24003	Clifton Street, Charlton	22/01/2024	Construction of a dwelling and demolition of an outbuilding within a Heritage Overlay	New
PA24004	Borong Highway, Gil Gil	28/01/2024	Use and development of land for a place of assembly to hold the Donald B & S on one occasion in 2024 and one occasion in 2025, patron camping for the event, building and works for the construction of a sound shell/stage.	Request for Further Information
PA24005	Slocombe Road, Warmur	24/01/2024	Subdivision of land (boundary realignment)	New
VS23010	Mildura Way, Charlton	1/11/2023	Building and works to construct a garage associated with existing dwelling in a Heritage Overlay	Request for Further Information
VS23011	High Street, Wycheproof	31/11/2023	Construct a 2 metre fence in a Heritage Overlay	Request for Further Information
VS24001	Woods Street, Donald	11/01/2024	Carry out external works to a building in a Heritage Overlay (awning)	Request for Further Information
VS24002	Austerberry Road, Sea Lake	25/01/2024	Construct a building (fertiliser shed 26m x 24m x9mH) within a minimum setback from a road	Review

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

Cr Warren asked a question on notice – Does the red back Rally in Donald require a Planning Permit given it is an event which alters the use of land? If so have they applied for and received such a permit.

7.6 BUILDING PERMITS - MONTHLY UPDATE

Author's Title: Statutory Administration Support

Department: Community Development

File No: DB/14/01

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on Building Permits approved by staff from 1 December 2023 to 31 January 2024.

MOTION:

That the Council note information contained in the report on Building Permits approved by staff from 1 December 2023 to 31 January 2024.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

CARRIED.

(R007/24)

Attachments: Nil

LIST OF BUILDING PERMITS APPROVED BY COUNCIL SURVEYOR

Permit No.	Address	Project Description	Date Approved
1265661872318	Stannard Road Watchupga Victoria 3485	Construction of To build a shed to house farrowing pigs	5/12/2023
6228472111726	High Street Charlton VIC 3525	Demolition of Building	11/12/2023
2839256446257	High Street Charlton VIC 3525	Demolition of Building	14/12/2023
7332137479508	McCulloch Street Donald VIC 3480	Removal of existing Ford signage & facia cladding. Install of new Ford signage & cladding	25/1/2024
4069522510852	Park Street Culgoa vic 3530	To remove existing garage and replace with a new shed with bigger dimensions	25/1/2024

LIST OF PRIVATE BUILDING PERMITS APPROVED BY COUNCIL SURVEYOR

Permit No.	Address	Project Description	Date Approved
7058371728606	Hannon Street Sea Lake VIC 3533	Construction of x5 Townhouses	13/12/2023
7744170801905	Dumosa-Birchip Road Dumosa VIC 3527	Extension to Existing Shed	13/12/2023
5890204694899	Morrison Street Birchip VIC 3483	Construction of Storage Shed	22/12/2023
3713441002257	Hammill Street Donald VIC 3480	Sub Floor Rectification Works to Existing Dwelling welling	9/1/2024
6889928123564	Drury Road Berriwillock Vic 3531	Construction of Farm Shed	15/1/2024
7820827446953	Mildura Way Charlton VIC 3525	Construction of Shelter	17/1/2024
9722060826158	Sunraysia Highway Birchip West VIC 3483	New construction of a detached dwelling & garage	23/1/2024
2424229017901	Railway Avenue Sea Lake VIC 3533	Construction of a Service Station	23/1/2024

Cr Milne asked a question for clarification in respect to the Permit issued for the demolition of the Charlton Post Office. Was consideration given to retaining/restoring the façade of the building given its historic nature?

The CEO responded and advised that the Building Surveyor had inspected the building and formed the view that the façade was not able to be restored given the significance of the damage suffered during the fire.

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 POLICY REPORTS

Nil

8.2 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8.2.1 DRAFT AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 6 DECEMBER 2023

Author's Title: Director Community Development

Department: Community Development

File No: FM/02/09

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

To provide Council with the confirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 6 December 2023.

SUMMARY

The 6 December 2023 Audit and Risk Committee minutes are attached for the information of Council.

MOTION:

That Council notes the confirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 6 December 2023.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

**CARRIED.
(R008/24)**

Attachments: 1 Draft Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Minutes 6 December 2023

DISCUSSION

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

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

- Outstanding Action Items
- Audit and Risk Committee Work Plan
- Asset Management quarterly update
- Legislative Compliance Register
- Internal Audit Status Report and update
- Internal Audit – ICT General Security Controls Audit Report
- Internal Audit – Procurement Audit Report
- External Audit - VAGO - Final Management Letter

- Victorian Auditor-General's Office Status Report – November 2023
- Councillor and CEO reimbursements
- Finance Report as at 30 September 2023
- Audit and Risk Annual Self-Assessment Survey
- Audit and Risk Committee 2024 Meeting Schedule
- Audit and Risk Committee 2024 Work Plan
- 2024/25 Annual Budget Timetable

RELEVANT LAW

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

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

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

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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

COLLABORATION

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

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

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

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

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

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

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

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

8.2.2 COMMUNITY GRANTS

Author's Title: Manager Community Development

Department: Community Development

File No: GS/09/42

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Community Wellbeing

PURPOSE

To present to Council the Community Grant 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's priorities and vision as outlined in the Council Plan.

In the 2023-24 Annual Budget, Council allocated \$20,000 to the **Community Grants Program** and \$50,000 to the **Community Sustainability Grants Program**. The purpose of these programs are:

- **Community Grants** 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** assist projects that contribute to reducing the community's carbon footprint, improve the environment or effectively conserve resource usage.

Cr Getley declared a conflict of Interest due to being the Treasurer for Charlton Chamber of Commerce and left the meeting.

Cr Simpson took the chair

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Considers the following allocation of funds under the Community Grants Program:

\$2,000 Explore Buloke Bus Trips (Charlton Neighbourhood House Inc)

\$2,000 Mali Heart Street Art Festival (Birchip Community Forum Inc)

\$2,000 Performance by synchronized swimming groups, The Clams (Charlton Forum Inc - Auspice for the Charlton Chamber of Commerce)

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR GRAEME MILNE

CARRIED.

(R009/24)

Attachments: Nil

Cr Getley returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.

DISCUSSION

Three applications have been received since the Community Grants Program opened in August 2023.

As per the current Community Grant Guidelines, each application was assessed by an Assessment Panel. The Panel of three assessors consisted of one Council officer and two external consultants.

Based on their assessment against the selection criteria, the Panel recommends the following grants for Council's consideration and final decision on the budget allocations.

Project: Explore Buloke Bus Trips	
Organisation:	Charlton Neighbourhood House Incorporated
Grant Type	Community Grant (<i>Project Support</i>)
Amount Applied:	\$2,000
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$2,000
Full project cost:	\$2,000
Project Description:	The Charlton Neighbourhood House Incorporated would like to run two day bus trips around the shire for socially isolated members of the community.
Project Benefit:	The bus trips will tour around Buloke Shire with the aim to provide social connection and an enjoyable day out for those that may not normally have the opportunity to engage with others or travel.
Assessment Panel Scoring	Average Score = 13.6 out of 20. All members of the Assessment Panel recommended the ' <i>Explore Buloke Bus Trips</i> ' project be funded for the full amount requested (\$2,000).

Project: Mali Heart Street Art Festival	
Organisation:	Birchip Community Forum Inc
Grant Type	Community Grant (<i>Project Support</i>)
Amount Applied:	\$2,000
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$2,000
Full project cost:	\$30,000
Project Description:	The Birchip Community Forum Inc would like to add a new mural to the Mali Street Art Trail.
Project Benefit:	The proposed project will add a new feature to an existing community event and has the potential to attract new visitors as well as local residents as it becomes another exciting public art feature of Birchip.
Assessment Panel Scoring	Average Score = 15.6 out of 20. All members of the Assessment Panel recommended the ' <i>Mali Heart Street Art Festival</i> ' project be funded for the full amount requested (\$2,000).

Project: Performance by synchronized swimming groups, The Clams	
Organisation:	Charlton Forum Inc

Grant Type	Community Grant (<i>Project Support</i>)
Amount Applied:	\$2,000
Funding Amount Recommended:	\$2,000
Full project cost:	\$7,500
Project Description:	The Charlton Chamber of Commerce (auspiced by the Charlton Forum Inc) would like to introduce a new act 'The Clams' to the upcoming OK Motels event in February.
Project Benefit:	The proposed project will add a unique act to the already successful event to provide the opportunity for locals and visitors to experience an award winning performance not previously seen in Regional Victoria. The Clams will also showcase a local community asset by being performed in the Charlton Pool.
Assessment Panel Scoring	Average Score = 15.6 out of 20. All members of the Assessment Panel recommended the ' <i>Performance by synchronized swimming groups, The Clams</i> ' project be funded for the full amount requested (\$2,000).

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable to this report.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable to this report.

OPTIONS

Council has the option to not to 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 either a Council officer and/or an external consultant if their application required additional information or clarification.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable to this report.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable to this report.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The allocation of funds for successful applications under the Community Grants Program will come from the Community Grants budget (\$20,000) in Council's Annual Budget 2023-24.

There is currently \$20,000 remaining in the adopted Community Grants budget for the 2023-24 financial year.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable to this report.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Buloke Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 and Long-Term Community Vision.
Community Grant Guidelines.
Community Engagement Policy.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable to this report.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

I, Jenna Allan, have no conflicts of interest to disclose in relation to this report.

All members of the Assessment Panel have no conflict of interest to disclose in relation to their recommendations or this report.

Cr Milne asked are there any other applications in the pipeline to be processed.

Acting Director Community Development repostoned that all application with Council had been processed and approved and that there were none outstanding.

8.2.3 VISITOR ECONOMY PARTNERSHIP

Author's Title: Chief Executive Officer

Department: Office of the CEO

File No: CS/18/14

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Economy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider authorising the Chief Executive Officer to join the Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership which will be the recognised Visitor Economy Partnership for the Region.

SUMMARY

Victoria's regional visitor economy is entering a new era, and from 2023, Regional Tourism boards have commenced the transition to form a network of Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEPs). These partnerships will be independent destination management organisations and represent their region as official voices to government.

At present, Buloke Shire Council (BSC) is affiliated with Wimmera Mallee Tourism Incorporated (WMT), which lacks official recognition as a tourism board, thereby limiting its access to sustained funding opportunities. To ensure the prosperity and expansion of our Shire and region within the tourism sector, BSC must join a VEP. This document delineates the advantages of such a collaboration and elucidates how, through the VEP, our region can adeptly address industry challenges, capitalise on emerging prospects, and effectively cater to the evolving needs of visitors, local communities, and businesses in the foreseeable future.

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to join the Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership which will be the recognised Visitor Economy Partnership for the Region.
2. Subject to Council's annual budgetary process allocate a financial contribution of \$15,000 for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 years to the Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership.
3. Note that the funding allocation for the 2023/24 Financial Year was reallocated from Wimmera Mallee Tourism to the new Visitor Economy Partnership and increased to anticipate the change.
4. Note that the Wimmera Mallee Destination Management Plan, once developed, will be the key strategic document for the future entity to deliver, which will be informed by the Wimmera Mallee Tourism Strategy 2022-2027.

MOVED: CR GRAEME MILNE

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

CARRIED.
(R010/24)

- Attachments:**
- 1 Visitor Economy Partnership Framework Overview
 - 2 Visitor Economy Partnership FAQs

DISCUSSION

Buloke Council's Relationship with Wimmera Mallee Tourism

BSC is currently a member of Wimmera Mallee Tourism (WMT), which is a volunteer-based organisation, with membership consisting of passionate Councillors, Community Members and Council Officers from across Buloke, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack Shires.

WMT was formed with an aim of assisting our communities to understand, and embrace tourism, with a focus on diversifying the economy, which is predominately driven by agriculture. Whilst the community is still in the early stages of understanding and realising the benefits of tourism, WMT has worked hard to leverage funding opportunities to develop this market segment. In 2021 auspiced via YSC, and later Wimmera Southern Mallee Development (WSMD), WMT was successful in securing the Flagship Tourism Infrastructure Funding to deliver marketing, signage and virtual reality projects and to engage a WMT Officer to the iconic silo art trail promotion.

Unfortunately, as WMT was not a recognised tourism board, and did not have a governance structure that was endorsed by the State Government, all funding opportunities had to be auspiced by either a Council or another approved body.

In 2022 further funding opportunities became available for the WMT Council's to commence transitioning towards joining a Visitor Economy Partnership. WSMD auspiced the funding to engage a WMT Executive Officer and Support Officer to deliver not only the Flagship Funding Projects, but to also assist with exploring the transition to the State Government-initiated Visitor Economy Partnership model.

Background - Visitor Economy Partnership

In 2019 the Victorian State Government conducted the Regional Tourism Review. It was an extensive review to understand how to improve the management of regional tourism in Victoria. Unfortunately, the findings of the review were not fully realised due to the 2019- 2020 bushfires and then the Covid-19 pandemic. In the interim, the Victorian Government did, however, commit to supporting the enhancement of the sector with the Experience Victoria 2033 Plan and changes to the Regional Tourism Network.

In 2023 the Victorian Government released the Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP) Framework, which changed how regional tourism is supported in the State of Victoria. The ambition of the VEP Framework is to transition Regional Tourism Boards to new entities called Visitor Economy Partnerships and to ensure that all regions have equitable access to these entities. VEP's will be the official peak tourism bodies for regions. They will deliver supply and demand activities, such as advocacy, policy development and marketing to support growth of the visitor economy whilst also managing growth. VEP's will have improved governance and create clarity of roles and responsibilities within the visitor economy.

In conjunction with the VEP Framework, the State Government announced funding opportunities and benefits for regional tourism boards (RTB's), and outlying Council's not associated with RTB's to join forces under a VEP. The State Government is offering \$590,000 per year for six or more Council's to join under a VEP which will resource the expert tourism organisation.

To be eligible for the funding all Local Government areas aligned with the new entity must financially contribute to the partnership. Council contributions are not prescribed due to the different nature of structures with each Visitor Economy Partnership.

VEP's are also required to be an independent entity to satisfy the Victorian Government funding requirements.

Benefits to Joining a Visitor Economy Partnership for Buloke Shire

There are numerous benefits for outlying Council's not associated with an RTB to join a VEP. Below is an outline of the broader benefits for Buloke Shire;

1. **Destination Marketing:** Increased Visibility and Brand Awareness: Being part of an annual regional marketing campaign to raise brand awareness of the Wimmera Mallee and leverage industry to support and contribute to destination marketing. The VEP will deliver effective evidenced based Destination Marketing Strategies to extend length of stay, improve dispersal, increase yield, and support the Wimmera Mallee regional brand.
2. **Educational and Skill Development:** Learning Opportunities: Involvement in the VEP will provide opportunities for industry partners to learn about tourism management, marketing, and community development. It will be a platform for skill development and gaining valuable experience in various aspects of the tourism industry.
3. **Infrastructure Improvement:** Investment Attraction: VEP will work with and advocate on behalf of Wimmera Mallee Local Government partners to attract new investors and investment opportunities for the Wimmera Mallee region.
4. **Community Engagement:** Fostering Community Pride: The VEP will provide a platform for community involvement and engagement. Partners and stakeholders will be encouraged to actively participate in initiatives that build local pride, unity, and a sense of identity.
5. **Networking Opportunities:** Business Connections: Involvement in the VEP will provide networking opportunities with local businesses, Government departments i.e. Regional Development Victoria and Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, and other stakeholders. This can be beneficial for personal and professional growth, as well as for the overall development of the region.
6. **Crisis Management:** Coordination in Emergencies: VEP will play a role in crisis and media management and response planning.
7. **Data and Research Access:** Informed Decision-Making: VEP will have access to valuable data and research related to tourism trends. Being part of the VEP will ensure informed decisions, contributing to the strategic development of the region.

The Joining of Grampians Tourism and Wimmera Mallee Tourism to form a Visitor Economy Partnership – Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Tourism

It is recommended that Buloke Shire Council, join with Wimmera Mallee Tourism and Grampians Tourism Local Government areas to form a Visitor Economy Partnership.

Transitioning to the VEP would enable the four WMT Council's to enact the strategic priorities and projects identified by the WMT Committee, in their recently adopted strategy.

The new VEP will be recognised by the Victorian Government as the peak official voice for the visitor economy in the Grampians and Wimmera Mallee region.

In negotiating the model, the following was noted as part of the consideration and final recommendation;

1. Additional funding is required on top of the \$590,000, as the WMT catchment requires investment for industry uplift, development and marketing. The State Government has endorsed the additional funding for a two-year period. In addition to the \$590,000 being offered for a VEP of six or more Councils, we have negotiated a further \$200,000 per annum to support Wimmera Mallee in the new trial VEP. The funding is to be directed towards additional staffing and program funds (industry development and marketing) to directly support the Wimmera Mallee.
2. A new Marketing Manager is to be employed and is to oversee Visit Wimmera Mallee Brand and tactical marketing initiatives.
3. A New Partnership/Project Manager in support of Wimmera Mallee to foster positive partnerships and manage the delivery of industry development and destination (DMP) planning.

As the funding is only guaranteed for a two-year period, and the State Government has agreed to make the funding available from 01 February 2024, the following has been agreed to in principle by the eight CEO's, pending endorsement from respective Council's:

1. That the VEP would be established with eight Council's participating (Northern Grampians, Ararat, Horsham, Southern Grampians, West Wimmera, Buloke, Hindmarsh, Yarriambiack).
2. The two brands would remain, Visit Grampians and Visit Wimmera Mallee. Both brands would have their own separate Partnership and Project Manager.
3. Both brands would be managed under the VEP referred to as Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership.
4. To establish a new constitution and business entity would be time consuming and could prevent the eight Council's from immediately benefiting from the funding opportunity, therefore as the funding is only temporary, it was agreed that the VEP would operate under the Grampians Tourism business entity, trading as Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership.
5. It was noted that the current Grampians Tourism Council's contribute \$75,000 each per year, with their contribution to increase in future years. The WMT Council's will only be contributing \$15,000 per year and collectively it will be \$60,000, which is \$15,000 less than one GT Council contribution. Whilst it is argued that WMT has secured additional funding of \$200,000, that funding is being directed to engaging staff specifically for the Wimmera Mallee, and not to overall operations. It was agreed in principle that initially, during the two-year period, one Wimmera Mallee CEO would be appointed as an additional director on the GT board. This would be reviewed at the end of a two-year pilot period. With the aim of every Wimmera Mallee Council being provided with the opportunity to become board members.
6. To ensure information sharing, and collaborative decision making, the four Wimmera Mallee CEO's will meet prior to the board meeting, and after the board meeting to discuss decisions and outcomes.
7. Decisions and outcomes will then be reported back via the individual CEOs to each Council, via their forum / briefings process, providing regular updates.

The Role of Wimmera Mallee Tourism

Wimmera Mallee Tourism deserves commendation for its exemplary leadership in the tourism sector throughout the region. As previously mentioned, the organisation has offered invaluable insights into understanding the dynamics of the region. Funding of \$120,000 was allocated to WMT for the development of a Destination Management Plan (DMP). However, the progress on the DMP has been temporarily halted pending the outcome of the VEP negotiations.

The DMP holds significance in formulating key strategic objectives and an action plan for managing the Wimmera Mallee as a destination over a specific timeframe. It outlines the roles of various stakeholders, identifies clear actions they will undertake, and designates resources to ensure the plan's successful implementation.

The following proposals are suggested:

1. Wimmera Mallee Tourism Committee members (excluding Officers), in collaboration with the WM Partnership/Projects Manager, should meet with consultants to provide insights for the development of the DMP.
2. Once the DMP is completed, it is recommended that WMT, as an incorporated association, go into recess until the conclusion of the two-year pilot period.
3. WMT Councillors and Community representatives form a reference group to the VEP, Visit Wimmera Mallee brand. They should meet quarterly with the CEO's, Partnership/Project Manager, and VEP CEO to review the progress of the DMP's actions.

4. The Councillors and Community Members of the WMT reference group should be empowered to report progress back to their respective Councils, communities, and Shire Tourism Advisory Committees.
5. Financial contributions towards WMT should cease from the 2023-2024 financial year, with Council's budgeted funds redirected to co-contribute to the VEP.

Benefits for Buloke Shire Council

Although the Council boasts numerous tourism enterprises throughout our Shire, there is an untapped potential in comprehending and leveraging destination marketing. Joining a larger specialised entity that possesses the capacity to highlight and endorse our region, **articulate the advantages of the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse**, and engage in hosting and participating in industry forums across the region is crucial. Additionally, through the VEP, we can access opportunities to apply for substantial project funding from the \$150 million Regional Tourism and Events Fund. This funding supports the development of new events, attractions, and increased accommodation options, which would otherwise not be available to stand alone Council's.

RELEVANT LAW

Local Government Act 2020

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council adopted its Buloke Shire Council Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025 on 16 June 2021 and the Interim Economic Development and Tourism Strategy was adopted on 8 April 2022.

OPTIONS

- a) The Council could choose not to join a Visitor Economy Partnership, however, limited funding opportunities for single LGA's will be available for Tourism into the future.
- b) The Council could choose to join the VEP without the support of all WMT LGA's. The VEP requires only six Council's to form the new entity. However, without the support of all four LGA's the additional \$200,000 for the next two years from the State Government would not be secured. The ownership / management of the Visit Wimmera Mallee Brand would also need to be explored.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: Joining the VEP would provide an overarching economic benefit to Tourism entities across our Shire, enabling them to capitalise on the tourism market segment to enhance and mature their businesses / operations.

Social: The VEP will create a larger voice and advocacy group for the region. This will assist to promote the benefits of recreation and tourism investment within our region.

Environmental: The VEP as an advocacy group will provide a platform for highlighting the importance of waterways, lakes and weir pools across our Region, including recreational water.

Financial: A financial contribution of \$15,000 per annum to enhance and develop destination marketing, education and skills development, infrastructure improvement funding and delivery, networking opportunities and to have access to data and research to inform decision making and investment is considered value for money, when considering the time and resources that currently goes into the WMT Committee.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council has an adopted Interim Economic Development and Tourism Strategy that clearly articulates partnerships to deliver economic development and tourism outcomes.

Community engagement was undertaken during the development process of the Council's Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021 – 2025, and its Interim Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2022 – 2023.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The WSMD Ltd objective is to lead, support and encourage the sustainable development of the Region in partnership with government, business and the community; and to determine the natural and built resources of the region, which might act as focal points for economic development and opportunity.

COLLABORATION

To collaborate with the other member Councils as a whole, would undoubtedly provide significant strength and power, for a more productive and effective approach to attract and promote any proposed business, agricultural, industry and tourism projects for the Wimmera Southern Mallee area.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Subject to Council's annual budgetary process allocate a financial contribution of \$15,000 for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 years to the Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership.

Note that the funding allocation for the 2023/24 Financial Year was reallocated from Wimmera Mallee Tourism to the new Visitor Economy Partnership and increased to anticipate the change.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

- Wimmera Mallee Tourism Strategy 2022-2027
- [Experience Victoria 2033](#)
- [Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan](#)
- Constitution of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Development Limited

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025

Interim Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2022-2023

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report outlines what Buloke Shire Council will need to allocate as its financial contribution to the Grampians, Wimmera Mallee Visitor Economy Partnership.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All officers involved in the preparation of this report have declared that they do not have a conflict of interest in the subject matter of this report.

8.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

8.3.1 FINANCE REPORT AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

Author's Title: Acting Manager Finance

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

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

To present to the Council the financial reports for the period ending 31 December 2023.

SUMMARY

The year-end surplus in the 2023/24 adopted budget was \$6.2M. The current forecasted year-end surplus for the financial year is \$3.4M, anticipating no significant capital project delays impacting capital grant income recognition.

The Actuals vs. Approved (Budget) reporting year-to-date includes timing variances which relate to the months in which the income or expenditure is incurred. Timing differences are anticipated to be resolved throughout the financial year and are not expected to impact the Full Year Forecast result. As at 31 December 2023, Council has achieved an actual surplus of \$857K which is less than the year-to-date budget for this period.

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

MOTION:

That Council:

1. receives and notes the Financial Performance Report for the period ending 31 December 2023.
2. receives and notes the Capital Works Statement for the period ending 31 December 2023, consisting of the carry forward projects and current financial year capital projects.
3. notes the statement by the Chief Executive Officer that a revised budget will not be required for the 2023-24 financial year.

MOVED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

SECONDED: CR DAVID POLLARD

CARRIED.
(R011/24)

Attachments:

- 1 December 2023 Capital Works Carried Forward
- 2 December 2023 Capital Works 2023/24
- 3 December 2023 Quarterly Finance Report

DISCUSSION

Report:	Report explanation:	Year to date (YTD) performance to budget and forecast commentary
Income Statement	<p><i>The Income Statement provides a summary of the total income and total expenditure relating to Council's annual operations for the reporting period. Capital grant income is included in this statement, but any related expenditure is not reflected as this is reported as increased assets on the Balance Sheet. To exclude potential distortion of underlying operations in the Income Statement, capital income is reported separately to identify the Operating Net Surplus/(Deficit).</i></p>	<p>Rates & charges Favourable variance of \$10K YTD, mainly due to supplementary rates notices. Full year forecast has been varied upward slightly to \$15.03M.</p> <p>Statutory fees and fines Unfavourable variance of \$46K YTD, mainly due to lower than anticipated permit applications. Full year forecast has been varied downward slightly to \$211K.</p> <p>Grants – operating Unfavourable variance of \$1.7M YTD, mainly due to the timing of Financial Assistance Grant payments. 100% of the 2023/24 grant allocation was paid in the 2022/23 financial year. As we near the end of financial year we will await the decision on the early payment of 2024/25 grants. Full year forecast has been varied downward slightly to \$8.9M.</p> <p>Contributions Unfavourable variance of \$30K YTD, mainly due to timing of capital project completion and the associated community contribution invoicing. Full year forecast has remained unchanged at this stage.</p> <p>Other income Favourable variance of \$159K YTD, mainly due to the unbudgeted receipt of funds relating to native vegetation works which Council will conduct on behalf of the Department of Transport. Full year forecast has been varied upward to \$904K to reflect this and other reimbursements relating to WorkCover insurance.</p> <p>Employee costs Unfavourable variance of \$48K YTD, mainly due to the EBA negotiations and processing of the Back Pay. Full year forecast has been varied upward to \$11.69M to reflect the processing of the Back Pay.</p> <p>Materials and services Favourable variance of \$486K YTD, mainly due to the procurement timing of several budgeted operational projects. Full year forecast has been varied upward to \$13.1M, which is a \$1.7M forecast overspend. This is mainly related to flood recovery expenditure, and the recognition of operating expenditure that was originally treated as capital expenditure.</p> <p>Depreciation & amortisation Unfavourable variance of \$167K YTD, mainly relating to variances in budget estimates. Full year forecast has been</p>

<p>Income Statement (Continued)</p>	<p><i>Prescribed expenditure of Capital Income is not included in the Income Statement, and this can distort the analysis of the financial performance which is better reflected by the Operating Net Surplus/(Deficit). Capital expenditure against capital grant income is provided in the Capital Work Program report and as additional assets on the balance sheet.</i></p>	<p>varied upward and will continue to be reviewed particularly in relation to asset purchases which are below the \$5,000 asset capitalisation threshold for plant and equipment.</p> <p>Bad and doubtful debts/Borrowing costs Traditionally these expense accounts will see actuals in the second half of the financial year.</p> <p>Other expenses Favourable variance of \$115K YTD, mainly due to the timing of membership payments and community contributions. Full year forecast has been varied upward slightly to \$849K, mainly due to unbudgeted association membership costs.</p> <p>Capital income Capital grants are currently forecasting to the approved budget amount. As capital projects progress, this should result in the associated revenue being released to Council soon after.</p> <p>Full year forecast for Other Capital Income has been varied upward by \$41K due to the Nullawil Streetscape contribution.</p> <p>Full year forecast for Profit/(Loss) Disposal of Assets has been varied upward by \$43K due to the sale of multiple Council owned vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life.</p>
<p>Balance Sheet</p>	<p><i>The Balance Sheet summarises the value of Assets (what Council owns) and our Liabilities (what Council owes), and the difference between assets and liabilities (Net Assets or Equity) reflects Council's net worth as at the end of the month reported.</i></p>	<p>Cash and cash equivalents Cash balances (incl. investments) are at \$32M, which is a \$8.3M decrease since 30 June 2023. This is mainly due to the payment of 30 June 2023 creditor balances, resulting in a decrease in Trade and other payables liability.</p> <p>Trade and other receivables Rates debtors are the main contributor to the \$11M increase in Trade and other receivables, resulting from annual rates notices being generated and sent.</p> <p>Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment There has been a \$1.4M decrease in this area since 30 June 2023, mainly relating to depreciation of assets which partially offsets capital expenditure year-to-date.</p> <p>Trade and other payables There has been a \$1.6M decrease since 30 June 2023, mainly due to the volume of creditor payments which occurs prior to end of financial year.</p> <p>Trust funds and deposits</p>

		There has been a \$1.1M increase since 30 June 2023, mainly due to the fire services levy amounts which are held on behalf of the State Revenue Office (SRO) when rates notices are initially generated. This is then paid to the SRO on a quarterly basis.
Cashflow Statement	<i>The Cashflow Statement reflects actual results for the reporting period in line with statutory financial reporting.</i>	There has been \$3.4M used to support the capital works program as at 30 September 2023. Overall, there has been a reduction in cash of \$8.2M since 30 June 2023.
Cashflow Forecast	<i>The Cashflow Chart visually depicts the cashflow forecast and the updated format is illustrated in a dual design, based on best practice reporting.</i> <i>The P & L Forecast is a projection of cashflow for the remainder of the year based on the month-end cash balance, the monthly budgets, specified timing parameters (such when BAS/super are due and quarterly rate receipts) and capital expenditure.</i>	Timing assumptions have been made regarding capital project income and expenditure for 2023/24. While this is still being confirmed in accordance with capital project delivery, all income and expenditure is reported in June 2024 by default unless otherwise specified. The cashflow forecast across the 12 months results in an increase of approximately \$3.4M. This is however highly dependent on decisions that will be made around the timing of the Financial Assistance Grants, expected in May/June 2024.
Capital Works Program	<i>The Capital Works Statement lists the expenditure for each project incurred to date.</i>	The total capital works program for 2023/24 is \$24.3M, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022/23 carry forward project budget \$10.7M • 2022/23 night art activation project, originally listed as a carry forward \$0.4M • 2023/24 budgeted capital projects \$13.2M <p>The total delivery as at 31 December 2023 was \$3.52M, representing 14.5% of the total capital works program including carry forwards.</p> <p>A number of large value capital projects are currently in early procurement stages and it is expected that much progress will occur in the March 2024 quarter.</p>
Statement by the Chief Executive Officer	CEO Statement <i>Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2020</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the analysis and review of the budget, actual year to date result and other known financial factors as at 31 December 2023, it is considered that a revised budget for the purposes of s95 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> is not required.

RELEVANT LAW

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

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Council adopted its Annual Budget 2023/24 on 27th June 2023.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

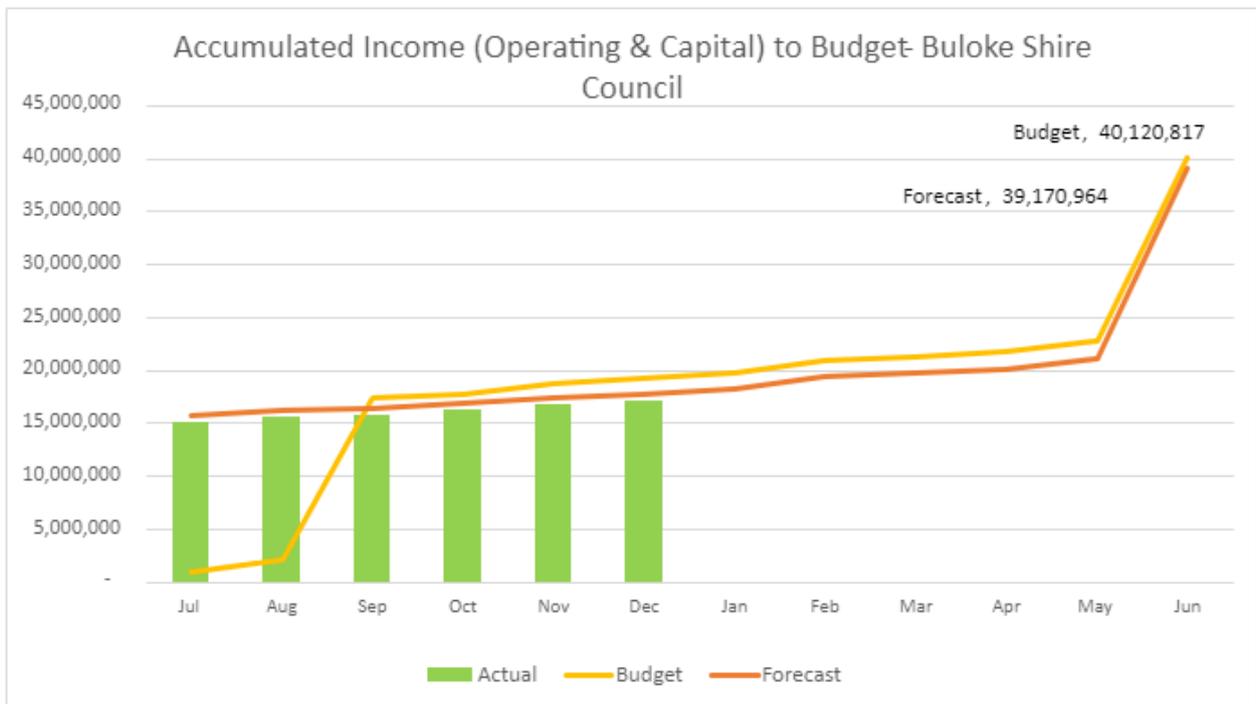
Not applicable.

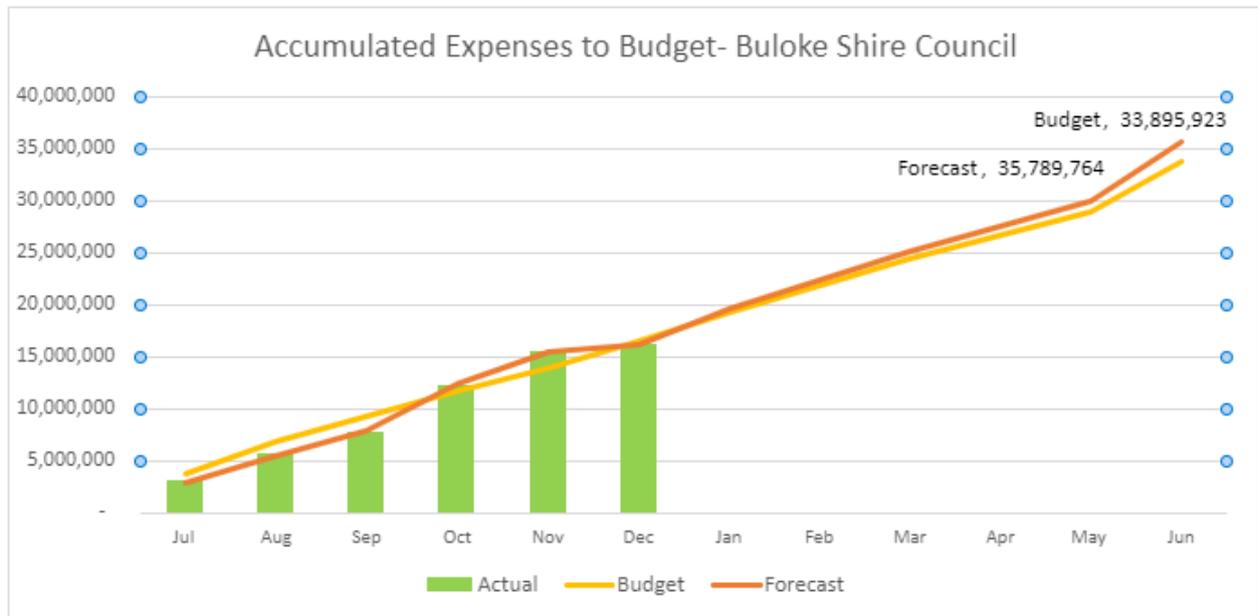
COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

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





REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Council adopted its Annual Budget 2023/24 on 27th June 2023. The Buloke Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 outlines Council’s commitment to developing responsible cash flow budgets to achieve long term financial sustainability and reporting quarterly against their delivery.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

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

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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

8.4 ORGANISATIONAL REPORTS

8.4.1 COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 - YEAR 3 ANNUAL PLAN REVIEW

Author's Title: Director Community Development

Department: Community Development

File No: CM/13/06

Relevance to Council Plan 2021 - 2025

Strategic Objective: Our Council and Community Leadership

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council an update on the actions taken against the Council Plan 2021-2025 - Year 3 Annual Plan.

SUMMARY

Council at its 16 June 2021 Meeting adopted its Long-Term Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025 and subsequently developed an Annual Plan for the implementation of the strategic objectives in each subsequent financial year.

MOTION:

That Council note the progress made to deliver the strategic objectives noted in the Year 3 Annual Plan for the Buloke Council Plan 2021-2025.

Moved: CR BRONWYN SIMPSON

Seconded: CR GRAEME MILNE

CARRIED.

(R012/24)

Attachments: 1 Year 3 Annual Plan Quarterly Report February 2024

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the Annual Plans is for Council to develop a series of actions, projects, programs and initiatives, to achieve the Council Plan 2021-2025.

Council receives progress reports against the Year 3 Annual Plan throughout the financial year.

The report outlines delivery against the Annual Plan, and the overarching Council Plan 2021-2025. Some of the key actions are:

- Development and adoption of a Buloke Aquatic Strategy
- Completion of construction of Playspaces for Berriwillock, Donald, and Wycheproof
- Preparation of Buloke Drainage Plans
- Preparation of Community Plans
- Recreation Reserve Planning projects for Birchip, Donald, and Sea Lake
- Development and adoption of an Integrated Community Planning Framework
- Development and adoption of the Children, Youth and Families Strategy
- Delivery of Silo Art Night Activation
- Delivery of the Safer Together Program

RELEVANT LAW

The Annual Plan forms part of the review of the Council Plan, required under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

This item responds directly to the adoption of the Year 3 Annual Plan on 9 August 2023 and noting of progress against the plan on 8 November 2023.

OPTIONS

Not applicable.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There was significant consultation undertaken in the development of the Council Plan 2021-2025, which is the basis of this document. Further actions have been developed through consultation with the community over the past two years. Many of the actions have a high level of community engagement.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Reporting on the delivery of strategic objectives ensures continuous improvement and accountability to the community.

COLLABORATION

Many actions achieved in the Annual Plan rely upon the collaboration of other Councils and key peak bodies, local stakeholder groups and the community.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The items listed in the Annual Plan have been factored into the Annual Budget, which is reported on regularly.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

This report responds directly to the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the adopted Annual Plan.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The adoption of regular reporting on the Annual Plan provides strong transparency to the community regarding the key focus areas of Council over the 2023/24 year and how Council is tracking against those actions.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No staff member involved in the compilation of this report has a conflict of interest to declare.

Cr Warren asked after noting the Silo Art Activation project is listed as on track, if the Donald Caravan Park is part of the Silo Art Activation program? If not taking two as a whole then requested an update on Donald cabins.

Acting Director Infrastructure and Delivery responded that both are funded under the Silo Art and the Cabin update be taken on notice.

8.5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Mayor Cr Alan Getley

Weekly meetings with CEO Wayne O'Toole
Monthly Briefings
ABC interview Horsham Shire Issues
Audit & Risk committee
Whole Staff Christmas party
Wimmera Mallee Mayors & CEO Meeting
VNI West project update
Special council meeting – via zoom
Business wellbeing support meeting
Australia day eve event - Sea Lake
Australia day breakfast - Sea Lake
Australia day breakfast – Culgoa
Australia day breakfast – Nullawil
Flow FM – Radio interview shire issues
Swan Hill Guardian
Interview re Culgoa dump point

Cr Bernadette Hogan

6/12/2023 - Audit Committee Meeting - Wycheproof
15/12/2023 - Council end of year celebration - Charlton
21/12/2023 - Special Council Meeting re Housing - Zoom
22/12/2023 - Birchip Community Christmas Party
25/1/2024 - Council Australia Day Eve Event – Sea Lake
26/1/2024 - Australia Day Breakfast and guest speaker - Berriwillock
07/02/2024 - Audit Committee Meeting – Wycheproof
Council Briefing – Sea Lake
12/2/2024 - Tyrell College School Leaders Induction – Sea Lake
14/2/2024 - Council Meeting - Wycheproof

9. OTHER BUSINESS**9.1 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil

9.2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**9.2.1 ROAD NAMING - CR MILNE**

Cr Milne asked about a request from the Donohue family in respect to the naming of a road to honour the forbears which is a little closer to where they settled compared to the road that has been suggested. Taken on Notice.

9.2.2 TREE UPDATE REQUEST - CR WARREN

Cr Warren requested an update on Watchem Trees. Three Park Trees and a Jubilee Tree. Taken on Notice.

9.2.3 COUNCILS ROLE IN ESCALATING DANEROUS DOG SITUATION - CR HOGAN

Cr Hogan asked about the role council could play in respect to the escalating dangerous dog situation.

CEO confirmed that council staff had been actively involved to date. Due to the recent escalation councils further involvement will be reviewed.

9.2.4 PROGRESS OF TREE REMOVAL – CR HOGAN

Cr Hogan asked in respect to progress of removing the tree which is interfering with the RSL monument in Birchip.

Taken on notice.

9.3 URGENT BUSINESS**9.3.1 FREE GREEN WASTE TO ASSIST IN STORM CLEAN UP**

Summary: A large storm hit parts of Buloke Shire yesterday, 13 February 2024, leaving a significant amount of damage and fallen trees right across the Shire as well as disrupting essential services.

To assist the community in the clean-up from the storm it is proposed Council opens its landfills and transfer stations to accept green waste free of charge

MATTER OF URGENCY**MOTION:**

That Council:

1. Provides free access to the Council's landfill and transfer stations until Sunday 31 March 2024 for the purpose of disposing green waste to assist in the clean-up from the 13 February 2024 storm and for ongoing fire preparedness; and
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to extend this period if required.

MOVED: CR DARYL WARREN

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

**CARRIED.
(R013/24)**

9.4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.5 MATTERS WHICH MAY EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

MOTION:

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

9.5.1 RFQ 287 2023-24 SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF TWO NEW TRACTORS

(g(ii)) private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage

(h) confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a)

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR BERNADETTE HOGAN

CARRIED.
(R014/24)

MOTION:

That Council reopens the meeting to the public pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

MOVED: CR DAVID POLLARD

SECONDED: CR DARYL WARREN

CARRIED.
(R016/24)

10. MEETING CLOSE

7:50PM