



**WELLINGTON**  
SHIRE COUNCIL

*The Heart of Gippsland*

**COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA  
UNSCHEDULED MEETING TO CONSIDER  
2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET SUBMISSIONS**

**Meeting to be held at**

**Wellington Centre – Wellington Room**

**Foster Street, Sale and via MS Teams**

**Thursday 18 May 2023, commencing at 3:00 PM**

**or join Wellington on the Web:  
[www.wellington.vic.gov.au](http://www.wellington.vic.gov.au)**

**UNSCHEDULED MEETING OF COUNCIL TO CONSIDER  
2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET SUBMISSIONS  
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## **COUNCIL MEETING INFORMATION**

*Members of the Public Gallery should note that the Council records and publishes Council meetings via YouTube to enhance the accessibility of Council meetings to the broader Wellington community. These recordings are also archived and may be published on Council's Website for viewing by the public or used for publicity or information purposes. At the appropriate times during the meeting, members of the gallery may address the Council at which time their image, comments or submissions will be recorded.*

*Members of the public who are not in attendance at the Council meeting but who wish to communicate with the Council via the online webform should lodge their questions or comments early in the meeting to ensure that their submissions can be dealt with at the end of the meeting.*

*Please could gallery visitors, Councillors and invited online attendees ensure that mobile phones and other electronic devices are turned off or in silent mode for the duration of the meeting.*

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Working together to make a difference. We listen and lead to provide quality services that improve life for all.*

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

*“Wellington Shire Council acknowledges our offices are located on the traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai nation. We pay our deep respects to their Elders past, present and future and acknowledge their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to their land and waters.”*

## 1. APOLOGIES

## 2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT/S OF INTEREST

## 3. GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

### 3.1. RECEIPT AND CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS RELATING TO THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET

#### ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER CORPORATE FINANCE

#### PURPOSE

To receive and consider any verbal and written submissions (as attached) relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget.

#### PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE GALLERY

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council receive and consider any verbal and written submissions (as attached) relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget.*

#### BACKGROUND

Council resolved at its meeting held on 18 April 2023 to:

- advertise its proposed 2023/24 Draft Budget and proposed differential rates under section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*; and
- consider submissions on the 2023/24 Draft Budget on Thursday 18 May 2023 at 3:00pm.

In accordance with section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council invited interested persons to make written submissions in relation to the 2023/24 Draft Budget by 5:00pm on 8 May 2023 and to also make verbal submissions at the Council meeting on 18 May 2023.

Council received five written submissions (as attached) in response to the 2023/24 Draft Budget and will consider these submissions in conjunction with any verbal submissions prior to the 6 June 2023 Council Meeting, where it will be recommended that the Budget, including any revisions, be adopted.

#### ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment to council paper re budget submissions 23 24 [3.1.1 - 8 pages]

## **OPTIONS**

Council has the following options available:

1. To receive and consider any verbal and written submissions (as attached) relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget; or
2. To seek further information and receive and consider any verbal and written submissions (as attached) relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget at a later Council meeting.

## **PROPOSAL**

That Council receive and consider any verbal and written submissions (as attached) relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No staff and/or contractors involved in the compilation of this report have declared a conflict of interest.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Consideration of submissions may result in changes to the proposed 2023/24 Draft Budget.

## **COMMUNICATION IMPACT**

This impact has been assessed and there is no effect to consider at this time.

## **LEGISLATIVE IMPACT**

Under s96(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Council must develop a budget in accordance with its Community Engagement policy.

## **COUNCIL POLICY IMPACT**

This impact has been assessed and there is no effect to consider at this time.

## **COUNCIL PLAN IMPACT**

The Council Plan 2021-25 Theme 4 “Services and Infrastructure” states the following strategic outcome:

**Strategic Outcome 4.1:** *“A financially sustainable, high performing organisation.”*

This report supports the above Council Plan strategic outcome.

## **RESOURCES AND STAFF IMPACT**

The consideration of submissions relating to the 2023/24 Draft Budget may have an impact on the level of resources available in the 2023/24 financial year and the staffing levels of Council.

## **COMMUNITY IMPACT**

This impact has been assessed and there is no effect to consider at this time.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

This impact has been assessed and there is no effect to consider at this time.

## **ENGAGEMENT IMPACT**

Section 96(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council develop the budget in line with its Community Engagement policy. To ensure that Council provided ample and varied opportunity for community engagement, Council placed the draft 2023/24 Budget on Council's website and advertised that it had done so. Advertisements were placed in local newspapers, on Facebook and Council's website (including the *Your Wellington Your Say* page) seeking community submissions on the draft 2023/24 Budget and inviting the public to speak to, and in support of, submissions at this special Council meeting.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPACT**

This impact has been assessed and there is no effect to consider at this time.

**DRAFT 2023/24 BUDGET SUBMISSIONS**

	<b>CORRESPONDENT</b>	<b>SUBMISSION</b>
1.	Dr Carol Glover	Request to decrease rates.
2.	Lew Armstrong	Request to seal unsealed roads at Manns Beach
3.	Chris Hansen	Concern at the lack of money spent in Loch Sport
4.	Debrah Clow	Request to provide public toilets at the Port of Sale boat ramp
5.	Stratford Courthouse Inc. Committee	Request for funding of \$35,000 per year for 3 years.

<b>No.</b>	1
<b>Submission</b>	Request to decrease rates
<b>Correspondent</b>	Dr Carol Glover

I don't really care too much about what your budget says in terms of what works you have planned, so long as you are NOT INCREASING OUR RATES

The rates have been far too high for too many years.

I suggest you can make cuts by reviewing salaries made to Wellington Shire staff, who, the last time I looked, are paid way too much.

I would like to see a decrease in our rates.

Cheers  
Dr Carol Glover



<b>No.</b>	2
<b>Submission</b>	Request to seal unsealed roads at Manns Beach
<b>Correspondent</b>	Lew Armstrong

## **Submission to Wellington Shire re 2023/2024 Budget**

I have just read the Draft Budget and was not able to find any reference to the Sealing of the unsealed roads in the township of Manns Beach. Thus I make a submission / request that consideration be made to include the sealing of these roads

Wellington Shire Vision includes “Happy People, Healthy Environment and Thriving Communities”. The sealing of these roads would certainly make the land owners at Manns Beach together with the many visitors to the township very happy. Further the traffic and strong winds at Manns Beach creates a lot of dust from the unsealed roads which certainly causes a health hazard thus not providing a Healthy Environment. The dust not only affects the welfare of those living and visiting there but also gets onto the houses and in particular the roof of the houses and other structures. Thus when it rains washes into the water tanks being the only water supply for the whole town. The water quality is therefore less than ideal thus having an impact on a healthy living environment.

I request that Wellington Shire give serious consideration to include the sealing of the unsealed roads at Manns Beach in this Budget. If this is not possible then it to be included into the following year’s Budget

Lew Armstrong

28 April 2023

<b>No.</b>	3
<b>Submission</b>	Concern at the lack of money spent in Loch Sport
<b>Correspondent</b>	Chris Hansen

There seems to be very little money spent in Loch Sport. Not only is there minimal capital expenditure (maybe footpaths) but maintenance is appalling. It is only on very rare occasions that you see council employees or contractors here...and the only way to get someone is to call it a health and safety issue. At the moment the main walking track along the lake is unusable (and unsafe) in places and one of the boat ramps is unusable due to a build up of sand and has been for most of this year. It would be a simple matter to clear this and build a groyne to stop the problem occurring in future. Wellington Shire is more than Sale.

<b>No.</b>	4
<b>Submission</b>	Request to provide public toilets at the Port of Sale boat ramp
<b>Correspondent</b>	Debrah Clow

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: 2023-24 Budget Draft.

It is great to read about the improvements planned for the Wellington Shire, but unfortunately the inclusion of toilet amenities at the Port of Sale near the boat ramps isn't included or mentioned in the proposal.

The toilets at the barbeque area near the library isn't always readily available, or in use. This is a potential health hazzard for those with disabilities/medical condition if using the barbeque area or boating on the boat ramp side.

At present males needing to go are okay and can discreetly hide behind a tree, whereas us females are unable to do this. When in fact, can be fined for "indecent exposure" if sighted by the public.

If there isn't any provision in the budget for a new toilet block, then perhaps "Port A Loos" would be a good solution in the intrim.

With all the advertising for people to come to the area there isn't enough toilet facilities to cater for all users.

Yours faithfully,

Debrah Clow.

<b>No.</b>	5
<b>Submission</b>	Request for funding of \$35,000 per year for 3 years
<b>Correspondent</b>	Stratford Courthouse Inc. Committee

Dear Councillors,

On behalf of the Stratford Courthouse Incorporated Committee I am writing to ask for financial assistance to allow us, the committee, to continue to operate the Stratford Courthouse Theatre as a viable, welcoming, community space for the locals of Stratford and the wider Wellington Community.

**Background:**

Stratford Courthouse Inc came into being as a result of a special general meeting held on 10 March 2020, with the intention of taking over operation of the Courthouse from 1 April 2020.

Negotiations between a previously established working group and the Wellington Shire had resulted in a funding agreement under which the Shire provided funding instalments over a 2½ year period, sufficient to cover rent of the Courthouse.

The meeting adopted the following statement of purpose:

The [organisation] is established to be a profit-for-purpose enterprise, whose purpose is to advance culture in a regional community hub by:

1. Supporting the arts\*, through a focus on local community endeavours
2. Providing a platform for audiences to experience a diverse local and touring program that entertains and educates
3. Supporting youth artistic development, through workshops and performance
4. Building capacity of regional communities to develop and manage arts enterprise
5. Developing inclusive creative and technical practice across all ages, abilities and genders
6. Building community capacity to respond to regional needs of economic recovery and regeneration
7. Creating opportunities and support for community members, to attend advanced training in arts practices
8. Providing workshops for industry experts to share their knowledge of the arts with the community

\*includes but not limited to visual arts, performance arts, film, music,

What a time to take over a performing arts venue.

On 16 March 2020 a state of emergency was declared for Victoria. Subsequently, on 27 April 2020 a lease was signed agreeing to the takeover of the Courthouse from 1 July 2020.

By the time of our first event, Singer Songwriters Storytellers Stratford on 31 August 2020, we were unable to have an audience in the theatre and the event was conducted as a live stream via Facebook. The live stream reached more than 5,000 people.

We now have more than 3 years under our belt. Despite a difficult and sometimes frustrating beginning we have made substantial progress. We have negotiated agreements with Segue, Overcoming Obstacles and Courthouse Kids which give us a reliable income, albeit not sufficient to completely cover all our regular expenses.

**Our Achievements:**

The Stratford courthouse is home to

- Segue Community Café
- Overcoming Obstacles
- Courthouse Kids
- Groundwork Youth Theatre company
- Stratford on Avon Shakespeare Association
- Singer Songwriter Storytellers Stratford

And has supported other local theatre companies from all over Wellington such as Maffra Dramatics Society, Court in the Act Theatre Company, KCC Theatre Company and the Sale Theatre Company, plus hosted professional and community touring groups and many talented local musicians. In addition to onstage talent, we have and continue to provide technical training to our local young people allowing them to gain valuable work experience leading to successful employment opportunities.

To overcome the challenges of the past few years we have secured a \$20,000 grant to build an outdoor stage which will allow us to host larger events in an open air environment. We have also secured a Cultural Tourism Grant for \$15,000 which has allowed us to work with a professional marketing team to develop strategies and marketing templates to bring in tourism to the region and our theatre. These grants strengthen our long term potential but they are also time consuming to facilitate and manage.

Most importantly we have created a collective cultural hub for many diverse and far reaching community groups, where people can come for entertainment, or to be educated and challenged, where performers proudly put themselves forward and visitors feel welcomed no matter their background or limitations.

**Original Funding:**

In 2020 Council agreed to support the Community Committee for 2 1/2 years, allowing the newly formed community committee the time and confidence to find its feet and establish the Stratford Courthouse as an ongoing community asset. 2020 was in retrospect not an ideal time to take over a community venue and the environment of the past three years has not allowed the community committee to achieve the purpose of the initial Council support. Ongoing enforced closures, shows cancelled due to illness and an audience base which has been hesitant to come out to indoor gatherings. While we achieved many things we have not had the opportunity to see what we could achieve in a normal environment.

The initial council support package has allowed the community to gather and celebrate on many occasions and we sincerely appreciate Council for giving us the opportunity to give that to our local community. We are now asking for additional support to allow us to continue to build and grow our support base.

**Current Challenges:**

We have a small but dedicated and hard working community committee who are currently working a combined average of at least 24 hours of volunteer hours a week. This includes securing and communicating with artists and hires, marketing the venue and the shows, technical operations, cleaning, building maintenance and all treasury functions. While the team is committed to the Courthouse long term, these hours are not sustainable. A passionate yet worn out committee is maintaining the courthouse operations while being financially stable, but there is little left over in time and energy for setting and working towards long term objectives. In order to grow the Courthouse to its full potential and become financially self-sustainable we need the overseeing committee to step back from operational work and to focus on its long term goals and plans, including fundraising, strategic planning and the recruitment of more volunteers.

The funding we are asking for will be spent on local contractors and businesses allowing us to outsource some of the operational functions with the ultimate aim of employing a part time manager.

**Budget Request:**

\$35,000 per year for 3 years

**Conclusion:**

Finally, in 2020 Council decided to give us three years to see what we could create, since that agreement was reached, we have had some unprecedented and hopefully never to be repeated times, we are now asking for a chance to redo those three years and have a proper chance to deliver the proposed outcomes to the community.

Thankyou for your consideration, the Stratford Courthouse committee looks forward to working with Council for many years to come.

Yours Sincerely,

The Stratford Courthouse Incorporated Committee.

Meeting declared closed at:

The live streaming of this Council meeting will now come to a close.