



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Resolutions in Brief Ordinary Council Meeting

Tuesday 21 October 2025, commencing at 5:00 PM

To be read in conjunction with the Council Meeting Agenda 21 October 2025.

Cr Scott Rossetti (Mayor)

Cr Cindy Madeley (Deputy Mayor)

Cr Catherine Bannerman

Cr Liz Foat

Cr Edward Lowe

Cr Garry Stephens (Online)

Cr Carmel Ripper

Cr John Tatterson

Cr Geoff Wells

David Morcom, Chief Executive Officer

Arthur Skipitaris, General Manager Corporate Services

Ashley Smirl, Acting Manager Economic Development

Chris Hastie, General Manager Built and Natural Environment

Catherine Hicks, Communications Advisor

Catie Thomson, Governance Officer

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
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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 published and archived on Council's Website for viewing by the public. Recordings may be used for publicity or information purposes.

Members of the public in attendance at the Council meeting who wish to communicate with the Council regarding an agenda item or any other matter should advise the Mayor, ideally prior to the meeting starting, to ensure that their submission is called at the appropriate time during the meeting.

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

MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

NIL

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT/S OF INTEREST

NIL

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING/S

3.1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER GOVERNANCE

RECOMMENDATION	
<i>That Council adopt the minutes and resolutions of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 7 October 2025.</i>	
COUNCILLOR FOAT / COUNCILLOR LOWE	
That Council adopt the minutes and resolutions of the Ordinary Council Meeting of 7 October 2025.	
CARRIED	

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

5. ACCEPTANCE OF LATE AND URGENT ITEMS

NIL

6. NOTICE/S OF MOTION

NIL

7. RECEIVING OF PETITION OR JOINT LETTERS

7.1. OUTSTANDING PETITIONS

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

8. INVITED ADDRESSES, PRESENTATIONS OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COUNCILLOR LOWE attended the Freedom of Entry march in Sale on 18 October 2025 alongside Mayor Scott Rossetti, Councillor Carmel Ripper and Deputy Mayor Cindy Madeley. The 4th/19th Prince of Wales Light Horse Regiment was proudly observed, a unit Councillor Lowe had the privilege of serving for 5 years. The day was spectacular with an impressive display of tradition and modern capability. A particularly moving moment was seeing the guidon carried in the trip carrier, the guidon being a ceremonial flag and symbol of pride which represents the honour, history and battle achievements of a cavalry regiment symbolising the deep respect held for the service and sacrifice of the soldiers. Mayor Rossetti delivered a heart felt speech about his father, a former Mayor, and how he presided over the very first Freedom of Entry march in 1982. Events such as this bring the community together. This connection between past and present truly captured the spirit of the day.

Mayor Rossetti thanked Councillor Lowe, also acknowledging the event, and added that the historical context for the event goes back to the walled city days when a person had to determine if an army turning up at the front door was 'friend or foe', and the test was whether entry was allowed by the person, thereby proving the trustworthiness of the army.

COUNCILLOR MADELEY acknowledged the Stratford ultra distance runner, Chris Dixon who completed over 280 kilometres in 36 hours around Lake Guthridge and Lake Guyatt in Sale. This monumental effort was part of the Helping Hands charity run aimed at raising money for Free 3D Hands, a Victorian based charity run by Chris that designs and provides free assistive devices including advanced bionic arms for people with limb differences. They make their designs free for anyone around the world to use.

The event saw over 50 local runners join Chris for sections of the course, creating a powerful display of community spirit and support. Together participants covered a combined distance of 3000 kilometres over the 36 hour period and raised more than their initial target of \$50,000 by raising over \$78,000 for Free 3D Hands.

Councillor Madeley shared the story that there is now a 16 year old girl in New York who is using their designs to print limbs and arms to send to a third world country.

This initiative highlights not only the resilience and determination of Chris, but also the generosity and unity of the Sale and wider Gippsland community.

All funds will go direct to Free 3D Hands to support their ongoing development of life changing technologies.

9. QUESTION/S ON NOTICE

9.1. OUTSTANDING QUESTION/S ON NOTICE

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ITEM	FROM MEETING	COMMENTS	ACTION BY
NIL			

10. MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS REPORT

ACTION OFFICER: COUNCILLOR SCOTT ROSSETTI

RECOMMENDATION
<i>That the Mayor and Councillors report be noted for September 2025.</i>
COUNCILLOR MADELEY / COUNCILLOR WELLS
That the Mayor and Councillors report be noted for September 2025.
CARRIED

11. DELEGATES REPORT

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN provided an update on the Rural Councils of Victoria Committee where the Committee has been busy with advocacy to State and Federal Government for rural Councils, particularly on the 'hot button' issue of the Emergency Services Volunteers Fund (ESVF). Under discussion was also what sort of advocacy the rural councils want to seek with the upcoming State Election next year; the platforms that are important to rural communities, and the impact DEECA staff cuts are having on rural Councils as pressure is put on Councils to maintain or control aspects that were previously a State Government issue.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN provided an update on the Southerly Ten Committee Advisory Group. The biggest news, of late, has been the news of the pushback on the Offshore Wind proposals. Southerly Ten has invested a number of years of their time and money into being prepared and in a position to proceed with the option, so this has been very unpleasant information. Southerly Ten is seeking further clarification from the State Government as to what the process might look like, going forward, and the expected timings.

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON provided an update on attendance at the 2025 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Annual Conference, held 9 October 2025, which both the Mayor and Councillor Tatterson attended. It was a rewarding conference which was opened by Jennifer Anderson, the MAV President. The first speaker was The Hon. Nick Staikos MP, Minister for Local Government who spoke about his career and of particular interest, a number of changes to the Local Government Act and ability to ensure Councils comply with their obligations and mentioned that Councils also have the ability to cost recover under the waste infrastructure charges the cost of picking up dumped rubbish.

There was a presentation by Andrew Colvin, CEO of Australia's Red Cross who spoke about public sector leadership. Andrew came into his leadership role just prior to the Black Friday bushfires and spoke of his leadership during this emergency and the recovery after the Black Friday fires. There were also a number of workshops on Artificial Intelligence (AI); its role for Councillors and how it gets used.

The Hon. Harriet Shing MP, Minister for Housing, also spoke after lunch around housing and the housing affordability crisis. Whilst there is an affordability crisis, the focus was on the metropolitan area.

There were also a series of other workshops. The final presentation of the day 'lasting impact' was from Sally Capp, the former Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

The State Council Meeting was held the next day and there were 79 resolutions. There was a high level of passion around the fire services levy. Across the industry, there was significant debate and a number of motions in dealing with the fire services volunteers levy; how it is applied; how unfair it is on rural councils; the costs to administer. The 'Take out' for Councillor Tatterson was the overwhelming lack of support for the levy.

The Mayor was pleased to take part in the delegation and indicated a letter was hand delivered to the Premier regarding the Emergency Services Volunteers Levy which was delivered to the Premier by a group of regional and city based Mayors. The Mayor acknowledged it has been unusual to find an issue that unites both the regions and the city, but this is one of them as it is an issue impacting the whole state. The levy is having an impact across all sorts of people, particularly around the lack of consideration given to people's ability to pay and represents a 'double whack' as the Council rate cap means Councils have to spend more money and resources in administration which reduces the services Council can provide to the community, along with the community having to pay the levy themselves, as well.

The Mayor also acknowledged the Andrew Colvin's extraordinary leadership in which Andrew spoke about making decisions as a leader that do not always work and that sometimes a leader does not have the answers, but must 'pick a direction' and learn from the mistakes.

12. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

12.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

ACTION OFFICER: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDATION

That the Chief Executive Officer's report be received for September 2025.

COUNCILLOR LOWE / COUNCILLOR MADELEY

That the Chief Executive Officer's report be received for September 2025.

CARRIED

Note: Chief Executive Officer David Morcom on leave from 8 September 2025 and returned to the office on 6 October 2025.

13. GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

13.1. ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS REPORT

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER GOVERNANCE

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note and receive the attached Assembly of Councillor records for the period 29 September to 12 October 2025.

COUNCILLOR STEPHENS / COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN

That Council note and receive the attached Assembly of Councillor records for the period 29 September to 12 October 2025.

CARRIED

13.2. BIENNIAL AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE UPDATE - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2025

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the biennial report on the Audit & Risk Committee's activities, findings and recommendations for the period April 2025 to September 2025, as attached.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN / COUNCILLOR WELLS

That Council receive the biennial report on the Audit & Risk Committee's activities, findings and recommendations for the period April 2025 to September 2025, as attached.

CARRIED

13.3. AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receive and note the minutes in brief of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting 22 September 2025 as attached and the confidential attachment Audit & Risk Committee Minutes of 22 September 2025; and**
- 2. Note that the information contained in the confidential document Audit & Risk Committee Minutes of 22 September 2025 of this Council meeting agenda was designated confidential under Section 3(1) Confidential Information of the Local Government Act 2020 by the General Manager Corporate Services on 2 October 2025 because it relates to the following grounds:
1) information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.**

COUNCILLOR WELLS / COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN

That Council:

- 1. Receive and note the minutes in brief of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting 22 September 2025 as attached and the confidential attachment Audit & Risk Committee Minutes of 22 September 2025; and**
- 2. Note that the information contained in the confidential document Audit & Risk Committee Minutes of 22 September 2025 of this Council meeting agenda was designated confidential under Section 3(1) Confidential Information of the Local Government Act 2020 by the General Manager Corporate Services on 2 October 2025 because it relates to the following grounds:
1) information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.**

CARRIED

13.4. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2025

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the September 2025 Council Performance Report as attached.

COUNCILLOR LOWE / COUNCILLOR FOAT

That Council receive and note the September 2025 Council Performance Report as attached.

CARRIED

13.5. CONSIDERATION OF 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider and receive the Annual Report 2024/25 as attached, as presented by the Mayor in accordance with Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 2020.

COUNCILLOR MADELEY / COUNCILLOR FOAT

That Council consider and receive the Annual Report 2024/25 as attached, as presented by the Mayor in accordance with Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 2020.

CARRIED

14. GENERAL MANAGER DEVELOPMENT

14.1. MONTHLY PLANNING DECISIONS - AUGUST 2025

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER PLANNING AND BUILDING

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report on recent Planning Permit trends and Planning Application determinations between 1 and 31 August 2025.

COUNCILLOR FOAT / COUNCILLOR WELLS

That Council note the report on recent Planning Permit trends and Planning Application determinations between 1 and 31 August 2025.

CARRIED

14.2. QUARTERLY STRATEGIC LAND USE PLANNING UPDATE REPORT - THIRD QUARTER 2025

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER PLANNING AND BUILDING

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the third quarterly update on the strategic land use planning work program included in Attachment 14.2.1 - Current Strategic Planning Work Quarter 3 - July to September 2025.

COUNCILLOR BANNERMAN / COUNCILLOR MADELEY

That Council receive the third quarterly update on the strategic land use planning work program included in Attachment 14.2.1 - Current Strategic Planning Work Quarter 3 - July to September 2025.

CARRIED

15. GENERAL MANAGER BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

15.1. COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE GRANTS - AUGUST 2025

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER FACILITIES AND EMERGENCIES

RECOMMENDATION

That Council –

- 1. Receive and note this report;*
- 2. Approve the allocation of Community Assistance Grants for August 2025, as detailed in the confidential attachment 15.1.2 - Community Assistance Grants - Recommendations August 2025, with the outcome of submissions being notified to applicants; and*
- 3. Note that the information contained in the confidential attachment 15.1.2 Community Assistance Grants - Recommendations August 2025, was designated confidential under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 by the General Manager Built and Natural Environment on 8 October 2025 because it relates to the following grounds:
(f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;
except that once this recommendation has been adopted the name of the successful applicants can be made public.*

COUNCILLOR STEPHENS / COUNCILLOR LOWE

That Council –

- 1. Receive and note this report;*
- 2. Approve the allocation of Community Assistance Grants for August 2025, as detailed in the confidential attachment 15.1.2 - Community Assistance Grants - Recommendations August 2025, with the outcome of submissions being notified to applicants; and*
- 3. Note that the information contained in the confidential attachment 15.1.2 Community Assistance Grants - Recommendations August 2025, was designated confidential under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 by the General Manager Built and Natural Environment on 8 October 2025 because it relates to the following grounds:
(f) personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs;
except that once this recommendation has been adopted the name of the successful applicants can be made public.*

CARRIED

The Mayor announced the 27 successful grant recipients:

- Gippsland Auto Museum Inc
- Woodside Beach Surf Life Saving Club
- Tarra Festival Committee
- Stratford on Avon Shakespeare Association
- Maffra Business and Tourism Association

- Rotary Club of Maffra
- Sale United Football Club Inc
- Stratford Bowling Club Inc
- City of Sale Eisteddfod Society Inc
- Port Albert Progress Association
- Sale Music Festival
- Heyfield Timber Festival 2021 & Beyond
- Yarram Motorcycle Club Inc
- Heyfield & District Vintage Machinery Group Inc
- Longford Pony Club
- Yarram and District Progress Association
- Maffra Dramatic Society
- Lions Club of Sale
- Seaspray Surf Life Saving Club
- Gippy Rocks Inc
- Secretary Loch Sport Business & Tourism Assoc.
- Yarram Basketball Association
- Golden Paradise Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association (GPBRRA)
- Sale Amateur Basketball Association
- Maffra Hockey Club
- Sale Croquet Club Inc
- Woodside Community Hall

15.2. UNUSED ROAD LICENCE - SIGNBOARD LANE & JIMMYS CREEKS ROAD, DUTSON

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER BUILT ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, pursuant to section 400 of the Land Act 1958, gives notice that Signboard Lane and Jimmys Creek Road – adjoining CA 41A, CA 41B Section C, CA 42A & CA 42C Section C, CA 3E & 3F Section C, CA 7 & 8 Section A, and Lot 1 TP609500 in the Parish of Glencoe, Glencoe South, and Dulungalong – is not required for public traffic, and is therefore classified as an unused road.

COUNCILLOR TATTERSON / COUNCILLOR WELLS

That Council, pursuant to section 400 of the Land Act 1958, gives notice that Signboard Lane and Jimmys Creek Road – adjoining CA 41A, CA 41B Section C, CA 42A & CA 42C Section C, CA 3E & 3F Section C, CA 7 & 8 Section A, and Lot 1 TP609500 in the Parish of Glencoe, Glencoe South, and Dulungalong – is not required for public traffic, and is therefore classified as an unused road.

CARRIED

15.3. 2026 - 033 AQUA ENERGY CARPARK

ACTION OFFICER: MANAGER ASSETS AND PROJECTS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. *Adopt the recommendations contained in the confidential attachment 15.3.2 - 2026 – 033 Tender Evaluation Report for Aqua Energy Carpark and;*
2. *Note that the information contained in the confidential attachment 15.3.2 - 2026 –033 Tender Evaluation Report for Aqua Energy Carpark, was designated confidential by the General Manager Built and Natural Environment on 24 September 2025 because it contains confidential information as defined in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (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 except that once this recommendation has been adopted the name of the successful tenderer can be made public.*

COUNCILLOR MADELEY / COUNCILLOR TATTERSON

That Council

1. **Adopt the recommendations contained in the confidential attachment 15.3.2 - 2026 – 033 Tender Evaluation Report for Aqua Energy Carpark and;**
2. **Note that the information contained in the confidential attachment 15.3.2 - 2026 –033 Tender Evaluation Report for Aqua Energy Carpark, was designated confidential by the General Manager Built and Natural Environment on 24 September 2025 because it contains confidential information as defined in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 (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 except that once this recommendation has been adopted the name of the successful tenderer can be made public.**

CARRIED

The Mayor announced the successful tenderer as Clint Kelly Excavations Pty Ltd.

15.4. SALE TENNIS CLUB - SALE HARDCOURT REDEVELOPMENT

ACTION OFFICER: GENERAL MANAGER BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with the Sale Tennis Club for the delivery of the Sale Tennis Hardcourt Redevelopment project, and;*

2. **Note that this agreement details milestone payments to be made by Council to the Sale Tennis Club from grant funding provided by the Victorian Government for the project.**

COUNCILLOR FOAT / COUNCILLOR LOWE

That Council:

1. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with the Sale Tennis Club for the delivery of the Sale Tennis Hardcourt Redevelopment project, and;**
2. **Note that this agreement details milestone payments to be made by Council to the Sale Tennis Club from grant funding provided by the Victorian Government for the project.**

CARRIED

16. FURTHER GALLERY AND ONLINE COMMENTS

Gallery comments are an opportunity for members of the public to raise any particular matter they wish. This allows those in the gallery to speak directly to Councillors but is not a forum designed for open discussion or debate. We will listen respectfully to what you have to say and make the commitment that if your query requires a written response, we will advise you that a response will be forthcoming, and a copy of that response will be circulated to all Councillors.

This is not a forum for members of the public to lodge complaints against individuals, including Councillors and staff, particularly as that individual gets no public right of reply to any matter raised. We take complaints seriously, and in line with the guidance from the Victorian Ombudsman and the local Government Inspectorate, we request that any specific complaint against an individual be put in writing. This way, your concern can be properly dealt with while ensuring fairness to all parties concerned.

If you wish to speak, we remind you that this part of the meeting is being recorded and broadcast on our website. Council's official Minutes will record that you have spoken to Council and the subject you spoke to Council about but will not record specific comments. We ask you to state your name in full, where you are from, and you have three minutes.

ONLINE COMMENTS

NIL

FURTHER GALLERY COMMENTS

NIL

Meeting declared closed at: 5.40pm.

The live streaming of this Council meeting came to a close at 5.40pm.

17. IN CLOSED SESSION

That the meeting be closed to the public pursuant to section 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential matters under section 66(5)(b) as defined by section 3(1) being:

- a) Council business information*
- b) Security information*
- c) Land use planning information*
- d) Law enforcement information*
- e) Legal privileged information*
- f) Personal information*
- g) Private commercial information*
- h) Confidential meeting information*
- i) Internal arbitration information*
- j) Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information*
- k) Information prescribed by the regulations to be confidential information*
- l) Information that was confidential information for the purposes of section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989*

IN CLOSED SESSION

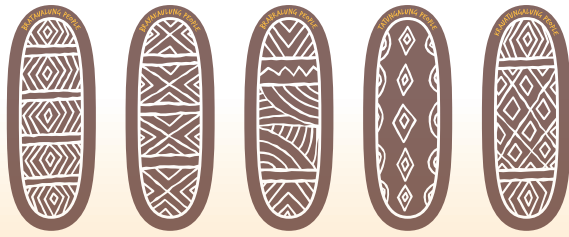
NIL

18. APPENDIX – ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25





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.



Aunty Eileen Harrison

(born Australia 1948)

Gunaikurnai

Celebration of our Culture, 2018

Acrylic on canvas, 140 x 240cm

Collection Gippsland Art Gallery

Purchased with the assistance of the
Robert Salzer Foundation and the Friends
of the Gallery, 2025

© The artist

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SECTION 1

REPORT OF OPERATIONS

1.1 Welcome to the Report of Operations (ROP) 2024/25

Wellington Shire Council is proud to present the Annual Report 2024/25.

This document is part of our ongoing commitment to open and transparent communication with the community. It provides a comprehensive account of Council's performance over the 12-month period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 and outlines how we have delivered on the strategic directions set out in the Council Plan 2021-25, while remaining accountable to our community through responsible financial management as outlined in the 2024/25 Council Budget.

The Annual Report 2024/25 details Council's activities, services, and operational highlights across a broad range of areas. It showcases major achievements, and addresses the challenges we have encountered, and provides insights into how we are working to continuously improve the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of our services. In addition to reporting on performance, this document includes key corporate governance information, statutory disclosures, and our audited financial statements, offering a clear picture of our financial position and management practices.

Council takes its role in community leadership seriously and is committed to maintaining trust through transparent and accountable reporting. This report is intended not only to inform residents, ratepayers, and local businesses, but also to meet the expectations of state and federal government partners, funding bodies, and other stakeholders. It reflects our collective efforts to create a connected, inclusive, and resilient region.

Internally, the Annual Report 2024/25 also serves as a valuable resource for Council staff. It enables teams across the organisation to understand how their work contributes to broader community outcomes and aligns with Council's long-term strategic direction.

The publication of the Annual Report 2024/25 fulfils Council's statutory reporting obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and other relevant legislation.

For further information please contact Council:

- via telephone on 1300 366 244
- via email at enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au
- or visit our website at [Wellington Shire Council](https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au)



Image: Swing Bridge, Sale

Profile



11,000
Square kilometres



Population



46,533



Male
50.4%



Female
49.6%



Families
11,979

4.23

Persons per sq km

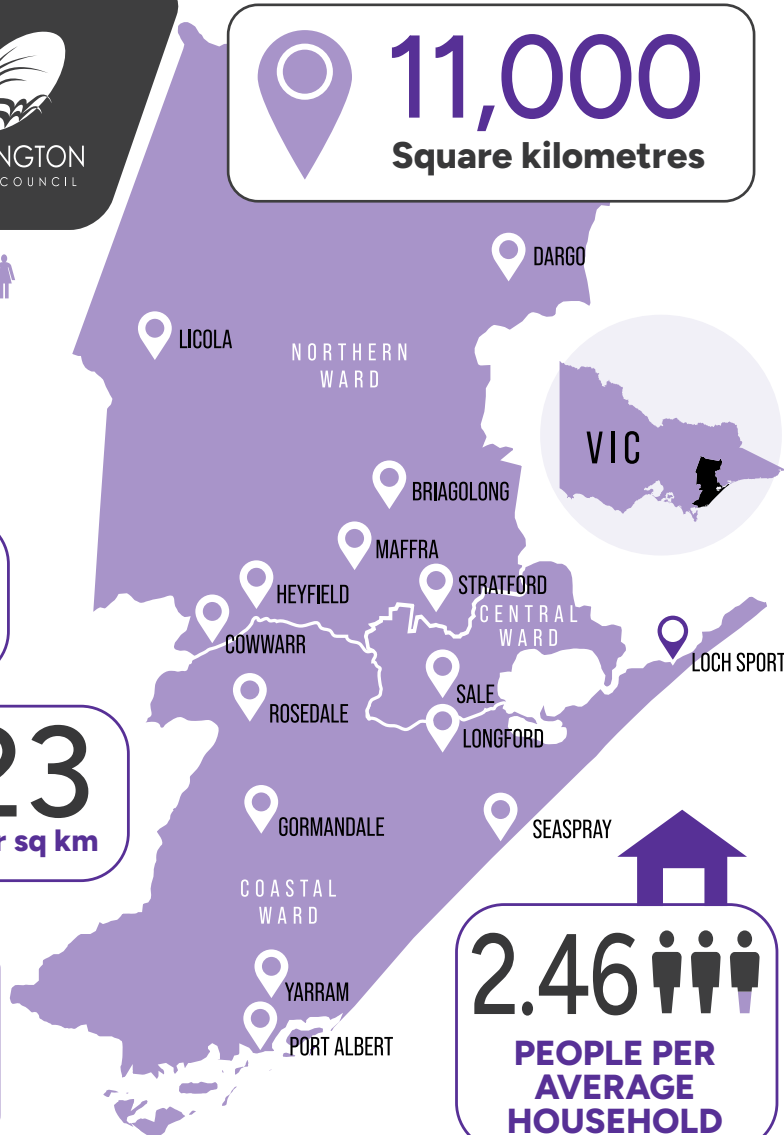


23,503

PRIVATE DWELLINGS

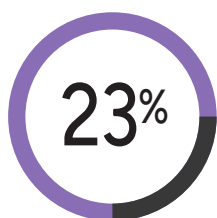
5.5%

HOUSEHOLDS
WHERE A NON-
ENGLISH
LANGUAGE IS USED

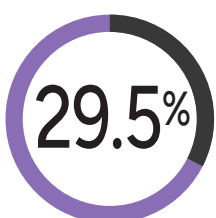


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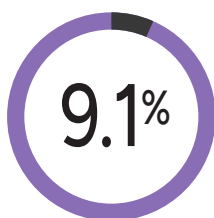
PEOPLE PER
AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD



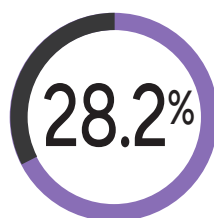
Couples
with children



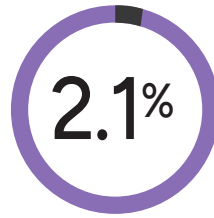
Couples
without children



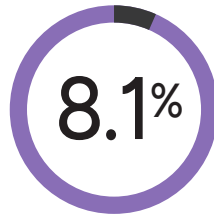
One parent
households



People
living alone



Visitor only
households



Other
households

industry

NUMBER OF
BUSINESSES

4,327

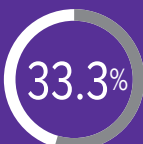
TOTAL NUMBER
OF JOBS

19,315

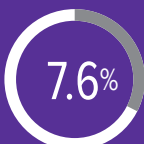
**Top 6 industries
makes up 63.1%
of employment**



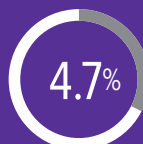
Employed
full-time



Work
part-time



Employed,
away from
work



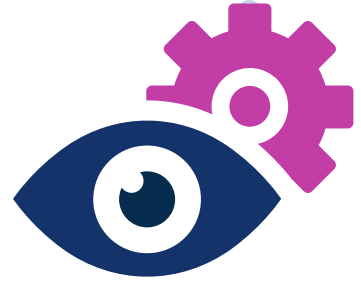
Unemployed

- 1 Health care & social assistance 15.2%
- 2 Agriculture, forestry and fishing 11.5%
- 3 Construction 9.6%
- 4 Public administration and safety 9.4%
- 5 Retail trade 8.9%
- 6 Education and training 8.5%

PURPOSE

Our Vision

*"Connected, inclusive communities,
a thriving economy, a resilient
environment and a sustainable future"*



Our Mission

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



OUR VALUES

The organisation's values guide our behaviour and underpin everything we do. Our values help us achieve our vision and improve the quality of the services we offer to our community.



Cooperation

Working together, teamwork, collaboration and being solution oriented.



Integrity

Acting with respect, honesty, reliability, trust, tolerance and understanding.



Balance

Demonstrating fairness, equity and flexibility. Considering work-life balance and balancing community needs against resources.



Professionalism

Personal development and meaningful work, being competent, innovative and courageous, focusing on excellence and continuous improvement.



Sustainability

Going above and beyond to demonstrate commitment to leading sustainable practices and encouraging and supporting others to do the same.

Fast Facts for 2024/25

Airports & Aerodromes

- 11,130 aircraft movements at West Sale Airport (5.81% increase on previous year)
- 2,492 aircraft movements at Yarram Aerodrome (8.21% increase on previous year)

Commercial Properties

- 91 commercial property investments generating in excess of \$700,000 in revenue

Customer Service

- 33,888 Customer Service telephone calls received
- 17,576 face-to-face visitors managed by the Customer Service team

Emergency Management

- 96% compliance rate for the 570 properties issued with a Fire Prevention Notice

Environmental Health

- 377 food premises inspected
- 127 Onsite Wastewater Management System (OWMS) applications received
- 179 Onsite Wastewater Management System applications completed

Gippsland Art Gallery

- 35,508 visitors
- 31 exhibitions
- 161 public programs, workshops and artist talks provided engaging 4,034 people
- 8,809 individuals, including 7,918 students and 891 teachers engaged with the Gippsland Art Gallery Education Program
- 95 donated artworks acquired, valued at \$474,225 and 11 cash donations and grants totalling \$335,727 received

Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange (GRLE)

- 27,000 head of cattle and 24,000 head of sheep sold
 - ✓ Cattle sales up by 121.7%
 - ✓ Sheep and lamb sales up by 44.8%
 - ✓ Highest numbers since 2018
 - ✓ \$200,000 operating profit

Grants to support the community

- 57 organisations successful in receiving Quick Response Grants to support community projects and events totalling \$118,890.86 in funding
- 70 organisations successful in receiving Community Assistance Grants to support community projects and events totalling \$277,726.73 in funding
- 86 community facilities supported with maintenance funding totalling \$353,213
- 91 committees of management received \$892,083 in risk and maintenance subsidies

Immunisations

- 2,242 immunisations administered

Fast Facts for 2024/25

Leisure Services

- 130,417 Aqua Energy overall visits
- 30,526 visits to outdoor summer season pools
- 5,462 attendances Living Longer Living Stronger (over 50's strength and balance exercise program)
- 22,806 swim school attendances
- 185,592 Gippsland Regional Sports Complex visits, highest ever recorded up by 12,987

Local Laws

- 1,286 animal complaints received
- 572 domestic animals received at Councils pound with 60% reunited with their owners
- 200 emergency after-hours incidents attended
- 7,426 dogs registered
- 1,850 cats registered

Planning and Building

- 439 planning permits issued with an estimated value of \$369 million
- 804 building permits issued
- 163 building complaints received

Roads

- 46,015 square metres or 21 kilometres of sealed local roads reconstructed
- Total area of Sealing 785,204 square metres or 157 kilometres
- Total area of Asphalt 2,800 square metres
- 5,102 square metres of local roads resealed (reseal and asphalt programs)
- 2,600 square metres of footpath renewal program
- 4,057 square metres of footpath reconstruction
- 1,950 linear metres of kerb and channel renewals
- 215 linear metres of drainage and culvert reconstruction
- 2,566 kilometres of gravel roads graded
- 10,548 kilometres of roadsides slashed
- 2,837 culverts cleared
- 1,900 urban drainage pits cleaned
- 2,579 Customer Action Requests (CARS) received for the Built Environment Roads team

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

- 18,615 patrons attended performances
- 107 performances from 86 events were presented

Fast Facts for 2024/25

Tourism

- 13.7% increase in tourism visitation figures to Wellington Shire from December 2023 to December 2024
- Domestic visitors spent an average of \$228 each in the region
- Council attracted, funded and co-funded 27 major events to the broader region with attendance in excess of 22,590 people
- An 11.6% overall increase in attendance across all 3 Visitor Centres
 - ✓ 25,009 visitors attended the Central Gippsland Visitor Centre
 - ✓ 2,366 visitors attended the Maffra Visitor Centre
 - ✓ 11,775 visitors attended the Yarram Visitor Centre
- 14,661 combined social media followers of The Middle of Everywhere platform

Urban Forest Renewal Program

- 1,092 street trees planted across the municipality

Waste Management

- ✓ 879,256 general waste collections
- ✓ 418,595 recycling collections

Wellington Libraries

- 226,591 visits across Wellington Shire's library network
- 205,230 library collection loans, including eResources
- 1,931 programs and events were delivered across the library network, with 15,940 attendees
- 78,100 Wi-Fi and public computer sessions totalling 58,216.4 hours of use across the Library Network

1.3 Highlights of the Year

Assets and Projects

- ✓ Successful completion of the roundabout at the intersection of Lansdowne Street and MacArthur Street, thanks to funding from the Federal Governments Black Spot Program. Construction took just over 6 months and will reduce the likelihood of incidents by 80%.
- ✓ Council celebrated the official opening of the Great Southern Rail Trail, enhancing regional connectivity and tourism opportunities through the completion of a major active transport corridor.
- ✓ Council developed a comprehensive 10-Year Asset Plan to guide sustainable infrastructure investment, maintenance, and renewal across Wellington Shire.
- ✓ The Seaspray Levee upgrade was completed, delivering improved flood protection and resilience for the local community.
- ✓ Commencement of Coongulla Street Scheme works.
- ✓ Duke Street Yarram – (Stage 1) Reconstruction.
- ✓ Commencement of North Sale Wetland Construction.
- ✓ Completed resurfacing works at the GRSC netball courts, ensuring safe and high-quality facilities for local sporting groups and promoting active lifestyles.

Aqua Energy Leisure Centre

- ✓ Successfully maintained all key aquatic services, including swimming lessons and hydrotherapy, during the major redevelopment by activating West Sale Pool.
- ✓ Delivered uninterrupted gym and Group Fitness programs throughout the redevelopment period.
- ✓ Extended the outdoor pool season to eight months annually.
- ✓ Introduced a new community-informed operating model for outdoor pools for the 2024/25 summer season.

Built Environment

- ✓ Implementation of the Road Management Plan 2025/26.
- ✓ Commenced the rollout of the Built and Natural Environment Mobilisation Project, introducing electronic devices to field staff for OHS checklists and inspections as well as general communications and record keeping tasks, replacing old paper-based systems.

Business Support

- ✓ Facilitated 12 workshops and one-on-one sessions for local businesses.
- ✓ Held Quarterly Business Boost meetings with Business and Tourism Associations (BTAs), Chambers of Commerce and Ratepayers Associations across Wellington.
- ✓ Hosted and attended Business and Tourism meetings in Sale, Rosedale, Yarram, Dargo, Heyfield and Maffra.
- ✓ Represented Wellington at key industry events including Avalon, Gippsland New Energy Conference, Defence Capability Symposium, Hanwha Australia, Timber Towns AGM, Red Meat Conference and Airports Conference.
- ✓ Hosted the Governor of Victoria, strengthening regional visibility and engagement.
- ✓ Engaged 150 students in the Science and Engineering Challenge, fostering interest in STEM careers with major sponsorship from Lockheed Martin.

1.3 Highlights of the Year

Commercial Properties

- ✓ Successfully negotiated and completed the sale of 8 hectares of land to enable the development of the new Sale College Campus.
- ✓ West Sale Airport recorded another significant increase in aircraft movements, driven by expanded RAAF pilot training activities, with movements rising over 400% since 2019.
- ✓ Delivered a targeted Expressions of Interest campaign to attract development interest at West Sale Airport.
- ✓ Secured a new operator for the West Sale Airport fuel facility under strong commercial terms.

Gippsland Art Gallery

- ✓ Launched the high-profile 'Turner & Australia' art exhibition in June 2025.

Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC)

- ✓ Expanded facility offerings to include major events and social sports programming, resulting in a record 185,592 visits.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

- ✓ Successful implementation and deployment of a new cloud based Electronic Document Records Management Solution (EDRMS) to replace the Councils' outdated / legacy Records Management system (ECM) and enable automation and uplift of Records and Information Management across Wellington Shire Council.
- ✓ Council successfully completed a joint procurement process with East Gippsland Shire Council for the supply and provision of ICT Print and Copier Equipment. The collaboration with East Gippsland will ensure procurement efficiencies for both councils over the next 3-year period.
- ✓ Completion of collaborative tender process with East Gippsland Shire Council for the Geographic Information Systems Panel of Providers to support implementation of a new GIS Mapping System in 2025/26 and to achieve mapping efficiencies across both councils.
- ✓ An Artificial Intelligence Policy was developed to enhance data quality, integrity, innovation and back-office productivity through the effective use of AI across the organisation.
- ✓ Upgrade of aging ICT equipment and infrastructure to ensure Council's ongoing cyber security and compliance.

Libraries

- ✓ Achieved the national standard for collection size at 1.7 items per capita and increased the proportion of recently acquired items (last 5 years) to 60.96%.
- ✓ Revamped the library website to enhance user information access.
- ✓ Implemented a service level restructure, improving operational efficiency and service development.
- ✓ Replaced seating at Yarram Library.
- ✓ Introduced a Library of Things collection, beginning with Home Efficiency Kits.
- ✓ Boosted investment in digital resources, with an average annual usage increase of 8.5%.
- ✓ Overhauled Storytime kits for better transport, storage, and maintenance.
- ✓ Renovated Stratford Library with new paint, carpet, air conditioning, and a redesigned layout including a dedicated children's library.
- ✓ Delivered the first in-house book sale at Sale Library, rehoming 5,000 books and attracting approximately 1,500 visitors.

1.3 Highlights of the Year

Libraries (continued)

- ✓ Created 'The Picnic Spot' at Sale Library, a welcoming space for families to enjoy food and drink while visiting the children's library.

Natural Environment and Parks

- ✓ The Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) processing contract has been finalised through a joint procurement with Latrobe, Baw Baw and South Gippsland Councils, enabling a purpose-built facility in Gippsland to be operational in 2026 and supporting the rollout of a third bin service for food and garden organics from 1 July 2026.
- ✓ Installation of public Electric Vehicle chargers in Yarram, Sale, Heyfield, Maffra and Stratford completed. This reinforces commitment to the 'Charging the Regions' Gippsland initiative and promoting local and visitor uptake of Electric Vehicles.
- ✓ Since 2021, the Urban Forest Renewal Program has made great advancement in preparing our communities for a changing climate. Council have been instrumental in enhancing the township character of Heyfield (~500 trees), Rosedale (~850), Stratford (~1,200), Maffra (~500), Wurruk (~150), Yarram (~100) and Sale (~1,400). From 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 1,092 street trees have been planted across the municipality.
- ✓ Programmed upgrades to play spaces across the shire have been completed, ensuring that young people at all different age profiles can continue to enjoy the outdoors in their own community.
- ✓ New trails and paths network at Flooding Creek Reserve Sale have been completed, along with implementation of an annualised park path maintenance program.

People and Capability

- ✓ Implemented Leadership Development training to strengthen leadership capability across Council, further equipping individuals with tools and knowledge to effectively lead teams, navigate challenges, drive positive results, ultimately improving performance, increasing employee engagement and strengthening organisational culture.
- ✓ Participated in Our Equal Local Government Work Well project collaboratively with the six Gippsland Councils and Gippsland Women's Health to embed practices to prevent work-related gendered violence and sexual harassment.
- ✓ Successfully completed implementation of a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to replace existing software solutions, amalgamating systems into one platform to save duplication of data, and improve user experience.
- ✓ Development and implementation of Gender Impact Assessment process.
- ✓ Successfully facilitated management restructure as a measure to ensure the longer-term financial sustainability of Council and improve service delivery.

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

- ✓ Increased community reach by staging performances in local halls, the Regent Theatre in Yarram, and via the new Trailer Stage, with record attendance at 'Shakespeare Under The Stars' in the botanic gardens.

1.3 Highlights of the Year

Tourism Support

- ✓ Delivered the Middle of Everywhere Jobs & Careers Fair, attracting 500 attendees including four schools and over 30 exhibitors from key industries such as defence, agriculture, health and employment services.
- ✓ Achieved a \$35,000 increase in Visitor Information Centre Gift Shop earnings, representing a 55.7% uplift in sales.
- ✓ Promoted Rosedale through the filming of "Country House Hunters," showcasing local businesses and attractions.
- ✓ Installed new signage at West Sale Airport and across key regional roads including Traralgon-Maffra Road, Bengworden Road, Hyland Highway and Dargo Road.

1.4 Our Challenges

Assets & Projects

Contractor Costs

- Availability of some contractors and materials has improved but delays and material supply issues still affect some sector costs.

Built Environment

High rainfall and Road Condition

- In addition to our response to emergency works the cumulative effect of high average rainfalls over the last three years have led to significant resources being directed to key roads in our network which have rapidly deteriorated as a result. Additional maintenance works have been undertaken and in some cases reconstruction of the most impacted roads will be required through the capital works program over the next few years.

Communities, Facilities & Emergencies

- Reducing availability and increased competitiveness of external funding opportunities may limit the progression of key community infrastructure projects.
- Reduced level of external funding to support Council's emergency management functions, including community preparedness.
- Continuing to provide fit for purpose community infrastructure in light of rising construction costs and availability of contractors.

Culture & Leisure

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

- Ongoing difficulty attracting skilled theatre technicians may impact our ability to meet hirer demand.
- Rising living costs may continue to affect membership retention and ticket sales.
- Ageing infrastructure and limited storage remain barriers to smooth operations for both hires and internal events.
- Operational demands and resource limits may delay progress on key strategic initiatives.
- The proposed venue redevelopment is a welcome investment but will require careful coordination to relocate events and maintain community access during works.
- The burden of meeting regulatory, reporting, and accessibility standards continues to grow, putting pressure on operational teams.
- Changes to funding models and tighter margins for touring companies may lead to fewer available or affordable tours, especially in regional areas.

Leisure Services

- Continuing to offer adequate and sufficient service offerings during the Aqua Energy Redevelopment construction phase.
- Staged re-launch of Aqua Energy facilities and services.
- Ongoing rising operational costs, such as utilities and maintenance of Council operated facilities.
- The impact of cost-of-living pressures when offering key sport, health and fitness services to our community.
- Shortage of skilled industry personnel impacting on operation efficiency.

1.4 Our Challenges

Economic Development

- Continued widespread impact of cost-of-living crisis across business and industry alike.
- Rising operational expenses driven by increased costs for materials and contractor services.
- Ongoing resourcing shortages across the division.
- Effects of ongoing drought on business and community, resourcing of resilience work with Gippy Ag Group.

Information Services

- Increased cyber threat sophistication and cyber security challenges as a result of Generative Artificial Intelligence and increased attacks on local government agencies due to a perceived weak security profile of local councils.
- Increased cyber compliance resourcing and costs.
- Increased cost of software, technology services and equipment.
- Ongoing management and risk mitigation of cloud computing.
- Stricter expectations from Victorian Auditor General's Office and Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner regarding compliance with the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards and *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

Natural Parks & Environment

- Climatic conditions will continue to present challenges for the delivery of Parks Operations in future years. Council must remain adaptable to respond to a range of scenarios, including drought, periods of high rainfall, and extended seasonal conditions. For example, significant grass growth across the network can persist for up to six months, placing additional pressure on the workforce. These challenges need to be anticipated and carefully planned for to ensure effective service delivery.

Environment and Climate Change

- Access to external grants for climate and sustainability projects has reduced and continues, due to government reductions and higher competition.
- Further reduction in solar feed-in tariffs have shifted the viability of some solar projects. Decisions to move towards packaged solar and battery storage options will need to be explored where they match building usage patterns and deliver a suitable return on investment.

Zero Emissions by 2040

- Continue to invest, advocate and educate in renewable energy options and storage, and consider opportunities to transition buildings, fleet, plant, transport and waste and resource recovery management to more sustainable solutions.

Waste

- Increases in the Environment Protection Authority Waste Levy continue to add cost pressure to the delivery of the service and impact on each tenement contributing to waste costs.
- Introduction of a 4th bin to each tenement in the Waste Service requires further assessment to determine suitability and options. Representations to the State Government on the Recycle Victoria Policy will need to continue.
- Ensuring effective information and education with the community will be vital to build understanding of the new Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) service commencing on 1 July 2026 to ensure both effective resource capture from the waste stream and prevent contamination with non-processible elements.

Waste (continued)

- Timely completion of the new Kilmany Cell 4 in 2027 to receive municipal waste due to the completion fill of Cell 3 is important to minimise the need to seek alternate waste disposal options and maintain continuity of service.

People & Capability

- Persistent challenges in attracting and retaining skilled professionals to regional areas.
- Ongoing critical shortage of qualified personnel in essential service areas (i.e. building surveying and engineering).
- Evolving landscape of enterprise bargaining with multi-employer agreements.

Planning & Building

- Planning for future renewable energy investment in a coordinated way with multiple stakeholders and community interests.
- Facilitating increasing requests for the rezoning of land to meet housing targets set by the state government in 'Plan for Victoria'
- Adapting to and mitigating against climate change impacts and in particular, sea level rise on development within coastal areas.
- Negotiating the increasing complexity of State Government policy to support the provision of a broad range of housing types across the Shire.
- Creating effective and efficient working relationships with statutory agencies to expedite important strategic land use planning work.
- Challenges in securing and retaining qualified and experienced land use planning and building staff.

1.5 The Future

Assets & Projects

- ❖ Completion of Aqua Energy Redevelopment project.
- ❖ Completion of Coongulla Street Scheme.
- ❖ Ellen Avenue Street Scheme.
- ❖ Kilmany Landfill Cell 4 – Design and Construction.
- ❖ Natural Disaster Recovery Projects – Dargo and Grand Ridge Road Areas.

Built Environment

- ❖ Continue the rollout of the Built and Natural Environment Mobilisation Project, introducing electronic devices to field staff for OHS checklists and inspections as well as general communications and record keeping tasks, replacing old paper-based systems.
- ❖ Continue to focus on long term infrastructure plans including climate risk impact analysis.
- ❖ Commence the development of a framework to assess long term parking needs in Sale.

Communities, Facilities and Emergencies

- ❖ Commence review and development of a new Community Managed Facilities Strategy.
- ❖ Work towards the completion of the Cameron Sporting Complex main oval pavilion upgrade.
- ❖ Continued delivery of emergency resilience projects in small communities to support them to be self-sufficient in the first 72 hours following an emergency.
- ❖ Begin the initial planning and funding application for the Market Street Hub project.

Culture & Leisure

- ❖ Launch of Aqua Energy 2.0 with additional service offerings.
- ❖ Detailed design phase of The Wedge Performing Arts Centre Refresh project.
- ❖ Commence the renewal of the Yarram pool plant.
- ❖ Continue efforts to secure and present major exhibitions at the Gippsland Art Gallery to enhance cultural engagement and regional arts programming.
- ❖ Commence the development of a new Aquatic & Leisure Strategy.

Economic Development

- ❖ Completion of the Growth Management and Economic Development Strategy Plan.
- ❖ Progress the business case related to industrial land development opportunities at Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange (GRLE).
- ❖ Complete the Wellington Shire Council Tourism and Events Strategy.
- ❖ Continue to engage with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) on key tourism-based projects, including Deadly in Gippsland.
- ❖ Continue to improve local business collaboration through packaging, networking and learning opportunities guided and implemented by the Economic Development team.
- ❖ Host the following:
 - Destination Gippsland Forum;
 - Irrigation Expo 2026;
 - Timber Towns Victoria Annual General Meeting (AGM);
 - Gippsland Eco Dev Forum;
 - 3rd biennial ANZAC Week Airshow.

1.5 The Future

Economic Development (continued)

- ❖ Continue to progress the formal acquisition, and support of, the redevelopment of the Port of Sale East Bank precinct.
- ❖ Continue to progress West Sale Airport Masterplan, Expressions of Interest, Environmental Impact Assessments and Cost Benefit Analysis.
- ❖ Ensure Wellington Shire Council representative attendance at Indo Pacific International Maritime Exposition.
- ❖ Completion of the Yarram Aerodrome terminal building.
- ❖ Progress 'Renewable Energy Hub'/Commercial Road Project in Yarram
- ❖ Completing technical investigations regarding the strengthening options (and cost estimates) of the West Sale runway.

Information Services

- ❖ Development and implementation of new Cyber Security Strategy to provide a clear and coordinated approach to protecting Council's information, systems, and services from cyber threats. The new strategy will also ensure Council's ongoing compliance with the Victorian Protective Data Security Standards Framework, Australian Cyber Security Centres Essential Eight and *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.
- ❖ Implementation of protective markers and other cyber security improvement initiatives to ensure Council can continue to meet its cyber security compliance requirements, protect council information systems and ensure continuous improvement to its security profile.
- ❖ Continue with technology upgrades, and infrastructure renewal to facilitate cyber compliance requirements.

Natural Parks & Environment

- ❖ Continue efforts to maintain the Parks and Open Space network to a high standard as measured by Community Satisfaction.
- ❖ Completion of the new Public Open Space Strategy 2026-2036 as a key strategic tool to guide planning decisions and investment.
- ❖ Continue with the Urban Forest Program to invest in street and park planting to provide future shading and greening of townships for amenity and climate impact mitigation.
- ❖ Completion of the new Cell 4 at Kilmany Landfill to ensure site can continue to receive landfill.
- ❖ Finalise plans and commence delivery of a new Maffra Resource Recovery hub.
- ❖ Continue to pursue cost effective renewable energy solutions either through infrastructure upgrades, solar and battery investment, or the purchase of fully renewable power options.
- ❖ Continue to investigate the transition of fleet and plant, both large and small to electric alternatives, where this is cost-effective and delivers service outcomes that are equal to or better than current solutions.

People & Capability

- ❖ Implementation of a Capability Framework to support talent building and workforce planning.
- ❖ Implementation of anonymous reporting platform for reporting bullying and harassment.
- ❖ Commence negotiations for Enterprise Agreement No. 12.

2.0 The Year in Review

2.1 Mayor's Message

On behalf of Wellington Shire Council, I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2024/25.

This report shares a snapshot of our year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 - a year of growth, progress and resilience. It highlights what we've achieved, the strides we've made towards our strategic goals, and some of the challenges we've encountered. Despite a tough economic climate, we've continued to move forward, thanks to the dedication of our team and the support of our community.

We welcomed a new Councillor group in November, who will help guide Wellington Shire until 2028. With five new Councillors and four returning, it was outstanding to see four women elected - a fantastic outcome for gender diversity at Council.

A major restructure was undertaken in late 2024, resulting in a better use of resources and closer alignment with our needs. The removal of two senior management roles has strengthened our long-term financial stability, while absorbing business units under new umbrellas protects the services our community relies on.

In November, Council finalised the sale of more than 8.5 hectares of land on the corner of Gibsons and Cobains Road in Sale to the Victorian School Building Authority for the new Sale College campus - a huge win for growth and education in the region.

We completed the first stage of the \$23 million redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre - our largest ever infrastructure project. The community has already been enjoying 24-hour gym access and upgraded changerooms, with construction on the entire project expected to wrap up by September 2025.

Additionally, Council's decision to adopt a community-led summer swim program with guaranteed opening hours at all pools during summer, a longer summer season at the Yarram Pool, and the launch of Free Swim Fridays at all sites proved wildly popular.

Co-funded by the Australian Government, works on a \$1.4 million refurbishment of Stratford Recreation Reserve's pavilion wrapped, which included upgrades to the existing pavilion social room and installation of new amenities and a kiosk.

In August, we joined South Gippsland Shire Council and Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh to open a 21km extension of the Great Southern Rail Trail, connecting Welshpool to Alberton and enhancing visitor numbers to our region.

Our Natural Environment team has also been very busy, holding 120 events and engaging with more than 4,800 residents through the Sustainable Living Education Program, planting hundreds of trees as part of our Urban Forest Renewal Program, and successfully delivering the first ever Wellington Sustainability Expo in March 2025. Our Parks team continues to service local parks and open spaces to ensure maximum social and environmental benefits for the community.

Our Economic Development team are reporting record breaking visitor numbers to the region, with The Middle of Everywhere Gippsland Rally proving a highlight in the events calendar, and "Country House Hunters" filming at Heyfield, Briargolong and Seaspray.

Our revered Gippsland Art Gallery has opened its doors to the Turner and Australia exhibition, bringing thousands of visitors to the region, just a year after its blockbuster Annemieke Mein exhibition created an estimated \$10 million in economic activity for Wellington. A short stroll down the boardwalk, The Wedge has progressed its redevelopment to a detailed design stage, off the back of a season of sold-out shows.

We secured \$918,555 for the Cameron Sporting Complex Main Oval Changeroom refurbishment in Maffra through the state government's Regional Community Sports Infrastructure Fund, which

means it will soon have updated changerooms for umpires and teams, a first aid room, a scorers' box, an office and accessible amenities.

While we've had plenty of wins to celebrate, this year hasn't been without its challenges. We've been humbled at times by the realities of cost-shifting, rate-capping, and rising inflation - all of which mean the cost of building assets and maintaining our services is climbing much faster than our income.

In Wellington, our small population of 45,633 people is spread over 11,000 square kilometres. Compare that with our metropolitan counterparts, which average more than 147,000 residents across just 66 square kilometres. That's more than three times our population, on less than one per cent of our land.

That can present significant challenges when it comes to figuring out how to continue funding more than 100 Council services but also continue to maintain the third largest shire in Victoria.

The Victorian Government's bewildering decision to exponentially increase tax for regional and rural landowners with no consultation, and then force Council, by law, to collect it, was certainly a setback. The rebranded Fire Services Levy (now the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund) disproportionately affects regional areas and will see massive hikes of more than double across Wellington Shire. We remain opposed to it; we regard it as blatant cost shifting and will continue to advocate against it.

Applications for State and Federal Government funding for the proposed Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families were unsuccessful, putting construction of the facility, which would centralise kindergarten, childcare, maternal and child health, and family support services, on hold.

While I'm being upfront about the challenges we face, I'm also confident about the opportunities, especially with the right support from higher tiers of government and our community.

Balancing expectations with limited budgets takes careful planning and genuine engagement to ensure we're investing in what matters most. Every dollar we receive or attract through grants counts, and we never forget that we're spending your hard-earned money.

But to keep meeting local needs, we need a funding model that reflects the true cost of delivering services in regional communities like ours. A model that gives councils the flexibility to meet local needs, and the resources to do it well.

As we look to the future, it feels important to acknowledge the work that has gone into shaping our Shire's long-term vision over the past year. Future Wellington has engaged with more than 1,900 members of our community to guide Wellington Shire through to 2041 and beyond. After months of conversations, workshops, and collaboration with local residents, community groups and a specifically designed Think Tank, the Community Vision 2041 has now been adopted by Council.

If this community engagement process has shown me anything, it's that together, we can continue to build vibrant, welcoming, and resilient towns - where people of all ages and backgrounds feel supported and proud to live.



SCOTT ROSSETTI

Mayor of Wellington Shire

2.2 Financial Summary

This summary should be read in conjunction with the Financial Statement and Performance Statement which are included in Section Two and Section Three of the Annual Report.

Performance to Budget

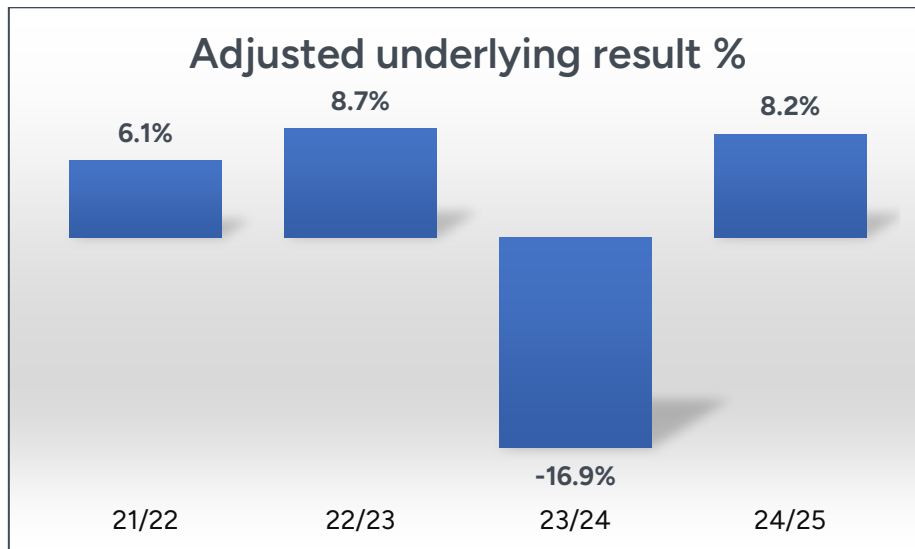
Council finished the year with a surplus of \$25.0 million (excludes asset revaluation increment), against a budgeted surplus of \$15.3 million, a variance of \$9.7 million.

The following major factors influenced this result:

- Fifty percent of the 2025/26 Victoria Grants Commission (VGC) funding, which was expected to be received in 2025/26, was instead paid by the Victorian Government to all councils on 25 June 2025. As a result, \$9.5 million was recorded in the 2024/25 financial year in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities.
- \$1.6 million interest earned on investments being greater than projected due to higher interest rates received from financial institutions over the past 12 months.
- \$2.6 million Natural Disaster Relief Funding has been received, \$1.6 million has been received to fund the recovery effort for the December 2023 Storm Event and \$0.6 million to fund the August 2024 Storm Event.
- The non-cash adjustment for the landfill reduction has reduced expenditure by (\$0.6 million). This is due to the lower bond rates used to calculate the value of the Landfill Rehabilitation Reserve.
- Depreciation has increased by (\$2.3 million) due to the annual Capital Works program as well as the annual revaluation cycle.

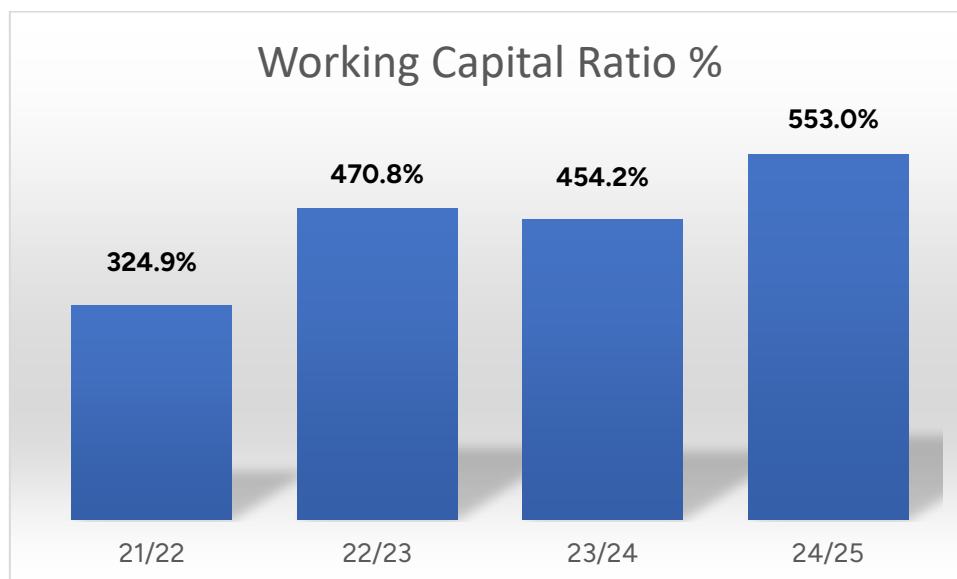
Adjusted underlying result

The adjusted underlying result excludes non-recurrent capital grants, other revenue received towards capital projects, non-monetary asset contributions (gifted assets and developer subdivision contributions) and the effects of asset revaluations. The 2024/25 adjusted underlying result of 8.2% falls within the acceptable range of (20%) to 20%. Maintaining a small underlying surplus in our long-term financial plan is a critical financial strategy that provides capacity to renew Council's assets, and this is an ongoing challenge for councils with an extensive road network and lower populations than metropolitan councils. The largest impact on the result in the past few years has been the timing of the VGC funding, no instalments were allocated to 2023/24 as this funding was received early increasing the surplus in 2022/23. In 2024/25 Council received a full year's funding as well as a 50% advance receipt of the 2025/26 allocation.



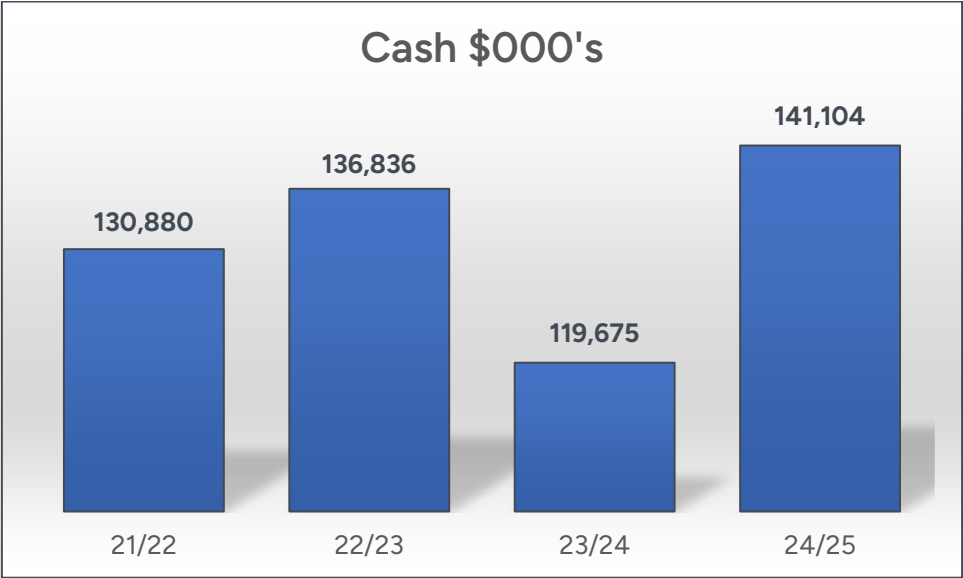
Liquidity

Working capital at the end of the year was \$128.7 million or 553.0%, which is slightly higher than the 2024/25 budgeted position of 410.5%. The working capital ratio which assesses Council's ability to meet current commitments is calculated by measuring Council's current assets as a percentage of current liabilities. Council's result of 553.0% reflects our strong financial position and is above the expected target band of between 120% and 200%. Ignoring cash, which is restricted for specific purposes the ratio reduces to 363.0%.



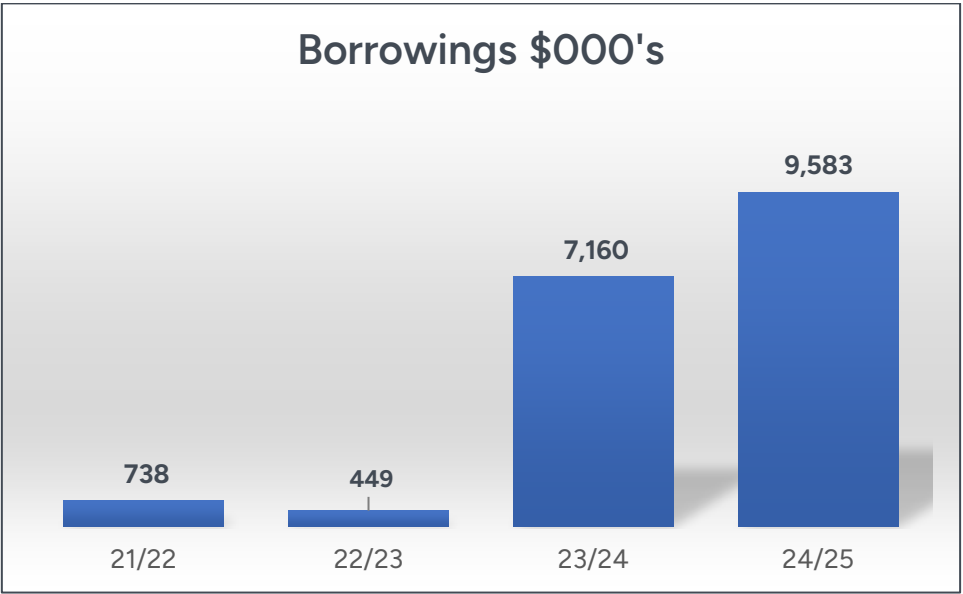
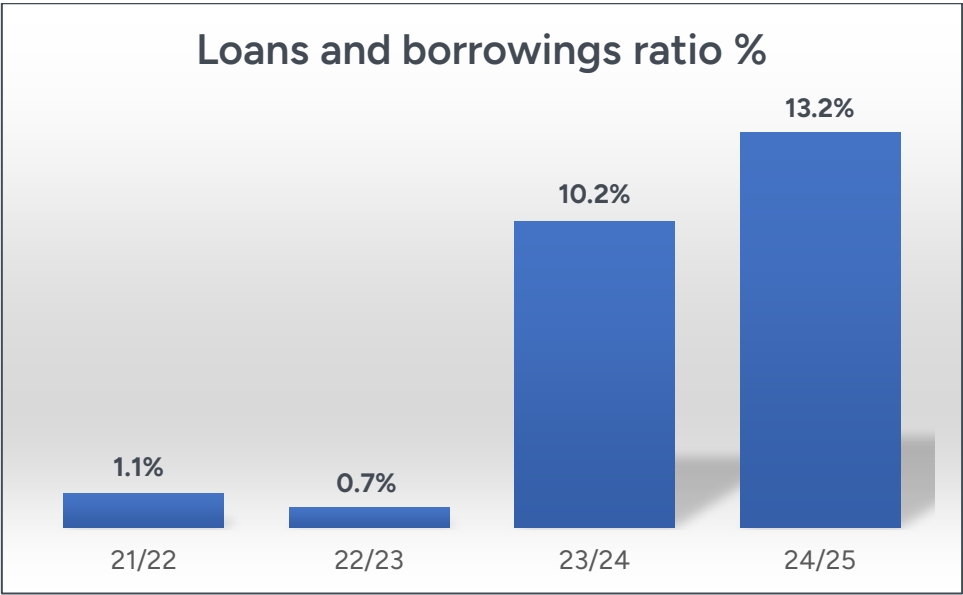
Cash

Council’s cash including term deposits greater than 90 days’ maturity (classified as other financial assets) finished at \$141.1 million against a budget of \$122.2 million, with \$54.0 million reserved for specific purposes in future years including completion of carried forward capital works and major operating projects, trust funds and deposits and funds for future waste infrastructure projects and major plant purchases.



Obligations

During the 2024/25 year the second instalment of the new loan was secured in order to fund the Aqua Energy Redevelopment. At the end of the year, Council's debt ratio was 1.2% well within the expected target band of 0% - 70% and is also in line with Council's Borrowing Strategy of no more than 40% of annual rate revenue.



2.3 Description of Operations

Council is responsible for delivering more than 100 services across a broad range of areas, including the maintenance of public open spaces, environmental health, statutory building services, land use planning, governance and compliance, animal management, infrastructure planning, road construction and maintenance, building services, community wellbeing, recreational facilities, arts and culture, access and inclusion, youth engagement, waste management, business development, tourism, and planning for sustainable development.

Council also ensures responsible financial management and accountability for its budget.

Our Community Vision 2031, strategic directions, major initiatives, initiatives and key projects are outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25 and the Council Budget 2024/25, progress against these is reported in this document. The delivery of services, facilities, support, and advocacy to achieve our strategic directions is measured through a range of service performance indicators.

In addition, Council fulfills a wide range of responsibilities under Victorian and Australian legislation.

This broad range of services and infrastructure for residents supports the wellbeing and prosperity of our community.

Refer to the section on 'Our Performance' for more information about Council services.



Image: Heyfield Wetlands

Economic Factors

Australia's economic growth in 2024/25 has slowed due to global uncertainty and weak consumer spending. Households are grappling with higher costs for essentials, ongoing inflation, and rising utility and insurance prices. Construction and infrastructure are pressured by supply chain disruptions and unstable pricing, impacting Local Government budgets and leading to stricter project prioritisation. Labour costs remain a challenge for all sectors. Positively, inflation eased in the June 2025 quarter, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) up 0.7%; annual CPI growth reached 2.1%. This improvement could gradually restore consumer confidence and support spending as households, businesses, and governments continue to adapt.

Capital Works

Overview of significant capital works completed during the 2024/25 financial year across various Council divisions.

Project	Summary
Aqua Energy Redevelopment	This project involves the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy facility, including the replacement of the almost 50-year-old, 25-meter indoor pool. The project aims to achieve significant accessibility, utilisation, and programming benefits for users. Works continue beyond the 2024/25 financial year with the official opening scheduled for 6 October 2025.
Playgrounds Renewal Program	The Playgrounds Renewal Program is an ongoing initiative aimed at renewing and upgrading existing playgrounds within the Wellington Shire. The program focuses on ensuring that playgrounds are safe, accessible, and enjoyable for the community.
Kilmany Transfer Station Walking Floor	This project included various upgrades at the Kilmany Resource Recovery Facility, such as the repair or replacement of the weighbridge site hut floor.
Port Albert Maritime Museum Refurbishment	Port Albert Maritime Museum has undergone repairs and upgrades during the 2024/25 financial year.
Coongulla Special Charge Scheme	The project involved the sealing and upgrading of unsealed streets within the Coongulla township, including the construction of Hodges Road. Works will continue into the 2025-26 financial year with completion projected to be in September 2025.
Mills Street, Heyfield Reconstruction	This project included the reconstruction of Mills Street in Heyfield, involving the replacement of kerb and channel, construction of footpaths, and renewal of the road surface.
Velore Road, Nambrok Reconstruction	The reconstruction of a section of the road involved sealing the pavement and addressing areas that are beyond maintenance intervention.
Sale Cowwarr Road, Nambrok Stage Two	This project entailed the reconstruction and widening of two segments of Sale-Cowwarr Road in Nambrok, covering a total length of 2.2 kilometres. The scope of works included rebuilding and sealing the pavement to a width of 6.2 metres.
Heyfield Seaton Road Reconstruction	This project involved the reconstruction and widening of a 3.26 kilometre stretch of Heyfield-Seaton Road, between Hugs Lane and Bowmans Lane. The existing 4-metre sealed surface was upgraded to a new full-width seal of 6.2 metres.

Project	Summary
Lansdowne and Macarthur Streets Roundabout, Sale	The roundabout at the intersection of Macarthur Street and Lansdowne Street was completed during the 2024/25 financial year, thanks to funding from the Federal Government's Black Spot Program. The construction took just over six months and is expected to reduce the likelihood of incidents by 80%.
Duke Street, Yarram Reconstruction	Duke Street Reconstruction Works Yarram project involved the reconstruction and sealing of a section of Duke Street in Yarram. The project included the replacement of the kerb and channel, reconstruction of a 420m section between Commercial Road and Campbell Street, and the installation of a footpath on the south side of the road.
Sale Toongabbie Road, Kilmany Stage Three	The project involved the reconstruction and widening of a 2.8km section of Sale-Toongabbie Road between the Maffra Rosedale Road and the Princes Highway. The project aims to address multiple road failures that are beyond maintenance intervention.
Gippsland Regional Sports Complex Netball Court resurfacing	The existing netball courts at the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex were resurfaced as part of the 2024/25 capital works program.
Wonnangatta Road Drainage Culverts	This project involved the replacement of culverts on Wonnangatta Road to improve drainage and road safety. The project was part of the 2023/24 capital works program completed in the 2024/25 financial year.
Bridge Renewal Program	This included various projects aimed at strengthening and widening bridges to meet current standards and improve load capacity. One such project was the Delta Bridge Upgrade, which involved strengthening the bridge to T44 loading and widening the bridge deck to 7.2m between barriers.
Yarram Pool Filtration upgrade	Yarram Pool Filtration and Pumphouse project involved the replacement of the plant room and filtration system at the Yarram pool. The existing plant room, constructed around 1960, was at the end of its useful life and needed replacement to improve water quality.
Freestone Creek Road, Briagolong Slip Rectification	Emergency work slip repairs were carried out to reconstruct roads affected by landslips and other emergencies.
North Sale Retarding Basin Civil and Landscape Works	This project is a significant initiative that involves the construction of civil, and landscape works for the North Sale Wetland and Retarding Basin. The project will support the development of approximately 500 residential allotments in the North Sale Growth Area. It includes the construction of a stormwater treatment wetland and passive open space, enhancing urban biodiversity within the existing North Sale Retarding Basin site. The wetland will treat stormwater from future residential and commercial development.
Upper Dargo and Talbotville Emergency Slip repairs	Emergency work slip repairs were carried out to reconstruct roads affected by landslips and other emergencies.

Project	Summary
Glencairn Road Landslide Rectification Works	The Glencairn Road Landslide Rectification Works project involves the construction of four retaining walls on a steep and narrow section of Glencairn Road, Licola, to improve safety by re-establishing the required road formation width 1. The project includes a tender evaluation process, and a contract has been prepared for Council's consideration, with works ongoing into the 2025/26 financial year.
Buttners Saddle Road	Emergency repairs for a landslip in multiple locations, emergency works will continue through to June 2026.
Asphalt Resheeting Program	This program targets highly trafficked streets, carparks, or reserves where spray sealing is not cost-effective. It includes major patching, asphalt resurfacing, and line marking.
Gravel Resheeting Program	This program focuses on maintaining and improving the condition of gravel roads within the shire.
Kerb and Channell Replacement	This program aims to maintain the kerb and channel assets in good condition. It includes the renewal of sections identified for their poor condition.
Urban Paths Program	The overall Urban Paths Program expenditure has increased over the term of the current Council Plan when compared to the original forward capex program. Since adopting the plan, almost 25% of path improvements to be delivered under the plan have been implemented which aligns with anticipated Urban Path delivery timeframes.
Riversdale Road	The Riversdale Road Safety Improvements project is part of the Federal Blackspot Program for the 2024/25 capital works program. The project focuses on improving safety along Riversdale Road from 100 meters north of the intersection with Cornwells Road to 480 meters south of Reedy's Road. This section was included in the funding program due to three reported incidents between January 1, 2017, and December 31, 2021, which resulted in one fatality, one serious injury, and one other injury. The project proposal includes the installation of guardrails around a problematic curve with a history of crashes, the installation of Curve Alignment Markers at substandard curves, Raised Reflective Pavement Markers along the length of the road, and the provision of a slip-resistant seal on two problematic curves.
GIS Imagery Renewal	This involves forming a panel of providers for the Geographical Information System platform provision over the next three years, with options for extensions.
Swing Bridge Restoration Design	This project in Longford is part of the proposed 10-year capital program. The project involves significant investment in the restoration of the Swing Bridge, with a budget allocation of \$200,000 annually over the next 10 years.
Great Southern Rail Trail	The extension of the rail trail from Alberton to Welshpool reached completion and was formally opened in August 2024.

Project	Summary
York Streetscape Enhancement	This project is now complete with significant upgrades to both York and Foster Street, including footpaths, kerbs, asphaltting, street lighting and landscaping. In addition, the Cunninghame Street intersection was upgraded with traffic lights as part of this project.
Seaspray Levee Rehabilitation	This section of land is above the flood level but does not have the 300mm freeboard.
Town Entry Improvements	Town entry improvement program Maffra and Heyfield.

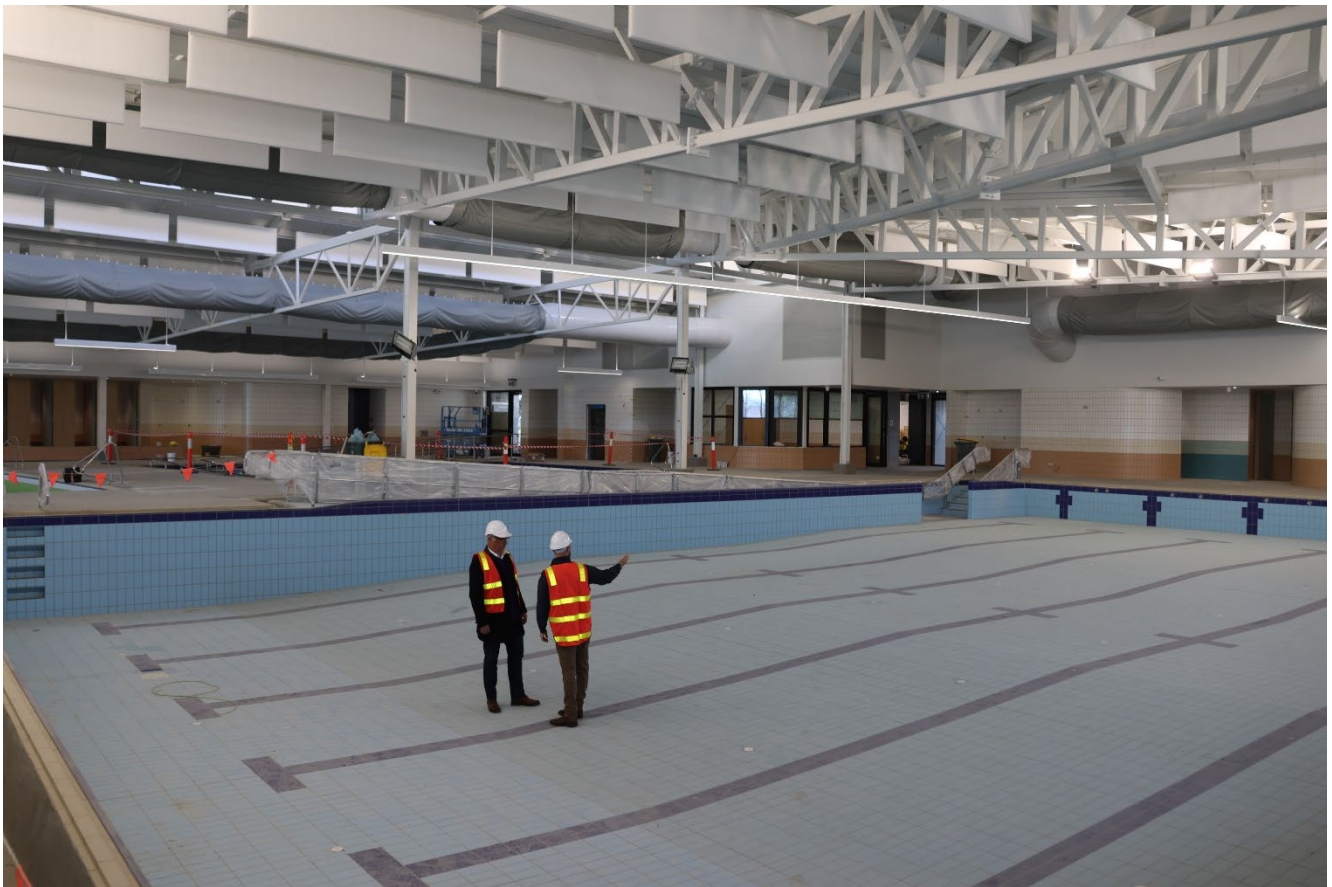


Image: Aqua Energy Redevelopment

Major Achievements

Assets and Projects

- The Great Southern Rail Trail extension from Alberton to Welshpool was officially opened on 16 August 2024. This new addition provides more opportunities for the community to enjoy outdoor activities and connect with nature.
- Completion of the Tarraville Road footpath and Wharf Street streetscape upgrade marks a key milestone in enhancing local infrastructure and community accessibility.

Communities, Facilities and Emergencies

- The Local Emergency Directory (LED) project has continued to be implemented in communities across Wellington. Progress has been made on other key recovery and resilience projects, including the installation of generators to provide back-up power at various sites and the further development of the multi-agency project to install emergency information markers at key locations in remote areas.
- In 2024/25, a large monitor was installed at the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex to support Emergency Relief Centre activation, enabling Teams-based meetings and briefings, with signage underway to help community facilities promote access to services such as backup power, charging, and opening hours.
- The Reactivating Community Volunteers project was successfully completed in May 2025. This project provided support and funding to local volunteer Committees of Management to assist with facilitating events and activities as well as equipment to help with the running of these facilities.
- In addition to the completion of the Reactivating Community Volunteers projects, several infrastructure projects were undertaken at community facilities across the municipality. These included the old Yarram Courthouse, the Regent Theatre, Golden Beach Hall, Yarram Recreation Reserve, Newry Recreation Reserve and the Rosedale Old School.
- The 2024/25 year saw Council complete the detailed designs for the Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families and deliver minor upgrade works at Kath Foley Childcare, Hyland Kindergarten, and Glassford Street Kindergarten.

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

- Strengthened relationships with Ramahyuck by co-hosting a yearly free film screening for the community.
- Achieved a significant increase in sold out shows. Highlights include the following performances:
 - Two back-to-back Cosentino *shows*;
 - *Macbeth*
 - *Pete Murray*
 - *Kasey Chambers*
 - *Seniors Country Concert*
 - *Anh Doh*
 - *Hall Stories – Munro*
 - *Scratch Night 3*.

Economic Development

- Council continued to actively support the Gippsland Agricultural Group and Food and Fibre Gippsland to research and deliver sustainable agricultural outcomes which includes the promotion of drought resistant farming practices, regeneration of farmland, and the search for new markets for Gippsland's agricultural products.

Economic Development (continued)

- The Local Development Strategy program has achieved notable advancements in both Heyfield and Yarram. Capability funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action has been awarded to the Heyfield Resource Centre and the Yarram Business Traders Association, enabling them to continue the initiatives led by Wellington Shire Council over the past two years.
- Council has supported and facilitated a number of events including Career-Expos. The most recent event was the Skills and Jobs Fair in Sale held in May 2025 and attended by over 35 employers. Based on their success, these events (and similar) will continue to be programmed in the future.
- The Wellington Growth Management Strategy was formally adopted by Council on 6 August 2024.

Natural Environment and Parks

- Over the 2024/25 financial year, the sustainability team delivered more than 120 events engaging over 4,800 residents, including community, school and preschool sessions featuring biodiversity planting days, waste education tours, cultural conversations with Indigenous presenters, and creative collaborations like Art in the Wild at Nakunbalook and other local venues.
- In 2024/25, as part of the Urban Forest Renewal Program 1,092 trees were planted across the municipality, further advancing urban forest planning utilising the Forestree asset management system, backed by Greening Wellington to create greener, more liveable spaces for future generations.
- A 75kW Electric Vehicle (EV) fast charger was installed in Raymond Street, Stratford adjacent to the Memorial Park.
- The Wellington Sustainability Expo was successfully delivered in March 2025. Officers worked in partnership with the Gippsland Climate Change Network and other community organisations to plan and deliver the event.
- The Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC) Hockey Pavilion solar and battery installation was completed in 2024 and is now operational providing renewable generated day time power and some evening battery reserve.
- Council officers facilitated the lease of a parcel of land at Kilmany for the construction of one of the first solar panel recycling processing plants in Australia (Elecsome), which is due to be fully operational by mid-2025.

People and Capability

- Implemented Leadership Development training to strengthen leadership capability across Council, further equipping individuals with tools and knowledge to effectively lead teams.
- Participated in Our Equal Local Government Work Well project collaboratively with the six Gippsland Councils and Gippsland Women's Health to embed practices to prevent work-related gendered violence and sexual harassment.
- Successfully completed implementation of a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to replace existing software solutions, amalgamating systems into one platform to save duplication of data, and improve user experience.
- Development and implementation of an internal Gender Impact Assessment process.
- Successfully facilitated management restructure as a measure to ensure the longer-term financial sustainability of Council and improve service delivery.

Major Changes

General Election

The General Election held in October 2024 marked a significant milestone for our municipality. In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the four-year term of the sitting Council concluded, prompting a full election for all nine councillor positions.

A total of 16 candidates nominated for election, reflecting strong community interest in local governance. The outcome saw a blend of continuity and renewal: four incumbent councillors were re-elected, while five new councillors were welcomed to the chamber.

To support a smooth transition and ensure all councillors were well-prepared to undertake their responsibilities, a comprehensive induction program was delivered. This program covered key areas including governance and legislative obligations, financial management, strategic planning, community engagement, and the role of councillors in decision-making. The induction also provided opportunities for team building and familiarisation with Council operations and staff.

Following their induction, the newly elected Council began work on the development of the Council Plan 2025/29. This key strategic document enables the incoming Council to establish its priorities and direction for the next four years, ensuring alignment with both legislative obligations and the Community Vision. The planning process was collaborative and inclusive, with Councillors engaging in workshops, briefings, and community consultation to shape a shared vision for the future.

Organisational Restructure

Within local government, our ongoing priority is to deliver successful and financially sustainable outcomes for our community. Achieving this relies on the dedication of all Council staff, and we acknowledge the valuable contributions each individual makes to Council's achievements across the region.

The organisation continues to operate within a challenging financial environment, influenced by a number of external pressures. Key among these is the Victorian Government's rate cap, which has remained below CPI for several consecutive years. In addition, rising inflation, increasing service delivery costs, and growing community expectations have placed additional demands on available resources. In response to these ongoing challenges, it became clear that a review of the organisational structure was necessary to ensure the continued delivery of best value services to the community.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the Corporate Management Team undertook a comprehensive review of Council's management structure, the first in a decade. The review identified opportunities to improve efficiency by transitioning to a three General Manager model, remodelling Manager responsibilities, and realigning work areas within a revised organisational framework.

Following extensive consultation with affected staff and the broader organisation, the restructure was formally endorsed and implemented on 19 May 2025.

The Middle of Everywhere campaign has been a resounding success for Wellington Shire, transforming regional perception, driving tourism, attracting investment, and fostering a renewed sense of local pride. Launched as a bold and unifying identity, the campaign has elevated the Shire's profile across Victoria and beyond generating millions in visitor spending, securing national recognition, and providing a strong platform for economic development. By redefining the region as connected, vibrant, and full of opportunity, The Middle of Everywhere has become a powerful catalyst for community confidence, growth, and resilience.

However, The Middle of Everywhere is more than just a slogan, it's a lifestyle brand and regional identity that captures the essence of life throughout the diverse and expansive region. This campaign celebrates the region's unique geographical position and the richness of its landscapes, communities, and opportunities.

Situated just 2.5 hours east of Melbourne, Wellington Shire offers a compelling mix of coastline, high country, farmland, and vibrant towns making it one of Victoria's most dynamic and liveable regional areas. From the tranquil waters of the Gippsland Lakes to the sweeping sands of the Ninety Mile Beach, and from the lush rainforest trails of Tarra Bulga National Park to the fertile farmlands and heritage towns of the interior, Wellington Shire is defined by its extraordinary natural beauty and variety. Whether you're after adventure, serenity, or a sense of belonging, the region offers space to roam and room to grow.

By positioning itself as "The Middle of Everywhere," Wellington Shire flips the script on regional identity. It is not isolated or removed but connected in every meaningful way: to nature, to community, and to opportunity. It is a place where life feels grounded, spacious, and full of possibility, a region where you're never far from the things that matter most. This clever, optimistic messaging has been embraced by local businesses, residents, and community groups, creating genuine grassroots momentum, something other councils often find difficult to achieve.

The campaign also shares real stories from residents, small business owners, farmers, artists, and young families. This human-centered content shows the diversity and richness of life in Wellington Shire, making the brand relatable and aspirational. It's not just about tourism, it's about lifestyle, connection, and potential.

The campaign's success similarly extends to local engagement. Businesses, community groups, and residents have embraced the brand, integrating it into signage, marketing materials, and local events, reinforcing a collective identity and enhancing the visibility of the region. The Middle of Everywhere messaging has provided a unifying theme that encourages collaboration across towns and industries. Economically, the campaign has contributed to a growing interest in Wellington Shire as a place to live, work, and invest.



By highlighting the region's connectivity, affordability, and quality of life, The Middle of Everywhere brand has supported efforts to attract new residents and businesses, particularly those seeking to relocate from metropolitan areas in search of greater space and lifestyle flexibility.

Councils often struggle to tie branding efforts to economic outcomes, so the demonstrable return on investment sets this campaign apart.

- Economic uplift through tourism, events, and investment
- Increased population interest from regional relocators
- National award recognition for marketing excellence
- Community buy-in and civic pride across towns
- A regional brand now known across Victoria and Australia

By promoting Wellington Shire as a connected and liveable region, not remote, but "the middle of everywhere" the campaign appeals to:

- Investors looking for affordable, well-serviced areas for development
- Professionals and remote workers seeking lifestyle relocation opportunities
- Entrepreneurs and start-ups drawn to lower operating costs and lifestyle advantages

Helping grow the working-age population, stimulates housing development, and creates demand for new services.

The campaign has garnered national attention, being a finalist in the 2021 and 2024 National Economic Development Awards for Excellence in the Economic Development Marketing and Promotion category. This recognition underscores the effectiveness of the campaign in promoting the region's assets to a wider audience.

Overall, The Middle of Everywhere campaign has been a transformative initiative for Wellington Shire, significantly elevating the region's profile on both a state and national scale. By crafting a bold and memorable identity, the campaign has not only drawn increased attention from tourists and potential investors but also instilled a renewed sense of pride among local residents.

It has effectively positioned Wellington Shire as a place that offers the best of all worlds; natural beauty, community spirit, and economic opportunity without the compromises often associated with regional living.

Wellington Shire isn't just proud of The Middle of Everywhere we see it as a defining success story that reflects the spirit and future of the region and will continue to expand and evolve the campaign.



3.0 Our Council

3.1 City Profile

Wellington Shire Council is in Gippsland and is Victoria's third-largest municipality, covering nearly 11,000 square kilometres. The Shire was established in 1994 following the amalgamation of the Shires of Alberton, Avon, Maffra, the City of Sale and parts of Rosedale. It is situated on the traditional land of the Gunaikurnai People. Gunaikurnai country stretches across coastal and inland areas beyond Wellington's boundaries, including parts of the southern slopes of the Victorian Alps. The municipality is divided into three wards: Central, Coastal and Northern.

Known as *The Middle of Everywhere*, Wellington Shire is recognised for its diverse and striking natural landscape, ranging from pristine beaches and rainforests to mountain ranges, and expansive wetlands. Iconic locations such as the 90 Mile Beach, Alpine National Park, and the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park make the region a hub for tourism, economic activity, and sustainable development.

Wellington's geography and climate also bring environmental challenges, including bushfires, flooding, salinity, erosion and the growing impacts of changes to climate conditions.

Home to more than 30 communities and over 46,000 residents, most people live in and around the main centres of Sale, Maffra, Rosedale, Yarram, Stratford, and Heyfield. Council manages more than \$1.4 billion in assets and infrastructure, and the population is expected to grow to over 57,000 by 2041, increasing the need for housing and supporting services.

Wellington Shire has an ageing population, with 31% of residents aged 60 and over. This is significantly higher than the Victorian average of 22.4%. A total of 11% of residents were born overseas, and the top three languages spoken at home other than English are Mandarin, Tagalog (a Filipino dialect), and Vietnamese. Lone-person households are also more common in Wellington Shire, making up just over 28.2% of all households, compared to 22.4% across Victoria.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 2% of the Wellington Shire population. This is higher than the Victorian average. In addition, just shy of 10% of residents identify as LGBTQIA+. Approximately 30% of the population have a disability, and 7.1% report needing assistance with core daily tasks.

The type of housing across Wellington Shire is diverse, including rural properties, coastal homes, farms, and medium to higher-density housing. Future planning suggests that there is strong potential to increase housing diversity and make better use of urban land and infrastructure. As household sizes shrink and the population ages, there is a growing need for housing options such as apartments, shop-top living, villa units, and townhouses. Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing is essential to maintaining Wellington Shire's liveability, productivity, and inclusiveness.

Employment across the Shire is expected to grow by 4000 jobs by 2041. This growth will be supported by early planning and the availability of commercial and industrial land. Much of this employment growth will be in industries that require larger land areas and building footprints, such as primary industries. Significant job increases are forecast for urban centres, particularly in Sale and Maffra, with industrial expansion likely to occur on the outskirts of these towns and other communities.

Wellington's economy is strong and diverse, supported by long-established industries such as Defence, aviation, oil and gas, construction and tourism. Healthcare, social assistance, and agriculture are the largest employment sectors, with local farmers playing a key role in Gippsland's \$7 billion food and fibre sector. The region is also home to Fulham Correctional Centre, a medium-security prison for men with a capacity of nearly 900 inmates.

Wellington Shire sits at the centre of Australia's first declared offshore wind zone, which has a proposed capacity of 25GW and an estimated \$40 billion in investment. Supporting Australia's move to new energy is a strategic priority, and attracting renewable energy investment is essential for the

region's transition and economic future. Over the next decade, the Shire will face a number of challenges, including the need for new transmission infrastructure, grid connections, accommodation for a growing workforce, and funding for local infrastructure. Planning requirements and ongoing consultation processes may also place pressure on community and Council resources. Collaboration with neighbouring councils, including South Gippsland and Latrobe City, and strong advocacy to state and federal governments will be critical.

Wellington Shire's aviation industry is also a growing asset that extends well beyond the Royal Australian Air Force Base in East Sale. Council operates both West Sale and Yarram Airports, supporting a strong and passionate local aviation sector. The region continues to benefit from more than \$400 million in ongoing Defence aviation investment at the RAAF Base, home to Defence's Basic Pilot Training School under Project Air 5428.

This activity, along with the development of a 30-year master plan for West Sale Airport, will deliver a significant economic boost to the Shire and position Wellington as a hub for aviation training, infrastructure and innovation. It all ties into our unique identity *The Middle of Everywhere* - with the biennial Airshow at West Sale Airport serving as a major regional attraction, driving tourism, economic activity, and strengthening our profile as a key player in the aviation space.

Although Wellington is undergoing major economic shifts - such as the decline of the oil and gas industry, the end of native timber harvesting and the closure of coal plants across Gippsland - it remains well-positioned for growth. Its natural assets, strategic location, and established industries provide a strong foundation for expansion in renewable energy, Defence, and other emerging sectors.



Image: Loch Sport

3.2 Council Offices

Council Headquarters

Sale Service Centre

18 Desailly Street, Sale Vic 3850



Yarram Service Centre

156 Grant Street, Yarram Vic 3971



Contact us

Postal address: PO Box 506, Sale Vic 3850

Customer Service: 1300 366 244

Yarram Service Centre: 03 5182 5100

Email: enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au

Website: www.wellington.vic.gov.au

3.3 Our Councillors

The primary role of a Councillor is to provide leadership for the good governance of the Wellington Shire Council in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Wellington Shire is comprised of three wards: Northern, Central and Coastal. Each ward is represented by three Councillors, with a total of nine Councillors. Following a review by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) in early 2024, changes were made to the three ward boundaries in Wellington Shire, which applied in the October 2024 Council Election.

The outcome of the ward boundary review was adjustments to all three ward boundaries. The Coastal Ward was expanded to include Longford and Rosedale. Some communities north of Princes Highway, including Denison and Nambrok, are now included in the Coastal Ward.

2024 General Elections

The Victorian Electoral Commission conducted the Council General Election in October 2024. The Election was conducted by postal vote with 28,285 ballot papers proceeding to the count. The overall participation rate in the Wellington Shire Council election was 83.15%, slightly lower than the state average of 83.79%. The Election results were declared on 8 November 2024.

The newly elected Councillor group was sworn in at the Council Meeting of 18 November 2024, where they each took either the Oath or Affirmation of Office and signed their commitment to abide by the new Model Councillor Code of Conduct as prescribed in Schedule 1 of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

Accordingly, Wellington Shire has had two Councillor groups that served in the 2024/2025 financial year, as detailed in the below tables. Due to the General Election, there were no elected Councillors in the period 26 October 2024 - 17 November 2024.

Councillors elected in 2020 General Election, served until 26 October 2024

Name	Ward	Terms elected
Cr Ian Bye (Mayor)	Central	2016, 2020
Cr Carolyn Crossley	Northern	2012, 2016, 2020
Cr Gayle Maher (Deputy Mayor)	Coastal	2016, 2020
Cr Marcus McKenzie	Coastal	2020
Cr Carmel Ripper	Northern	2016, 2021
Cr Scott Rossetti	Central	2008, 2012, 2016, 2020
Cr Garry Stephens	Coastal	2016, 2020
Cr John Tatterson	Northern	2020
Cr Jill Wood	Central	2020

Current Councillors elected in 2024 General Election, serving from 18 November 2024

Name	Ward	Terms elected	Mobile	Email
Cr Catherine Bannerman	Coastal	2024	0475 241 614	catherineb@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Liz Foat	Central	2024	0472 570 115	lizf@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Edward Lowe	Northern	2024	0474 761 207	edwardl@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Cindy Madeley (Deputy Mayor)	Coastal	2024	0428 678 430	cindym@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Carmel Ripper	Northern	2016, 2021, 2024	0457 056 436	carmelr@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Scott Rossetti (Mayor)	Central	2008, 2012, 2016, 2020, 2024	0419 366 686	scottr@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Garry Stephens	Coastal	2016, 2020, 2024	0476 000 157	garrys@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr John Tatterson	Northern	2020, 2024	0448 433 036	johnta@wellington.vic.gov.au
Cr Geoff Wells	Central	2024	0474 445 741	geoffw@wellington.vic.gov.au

Mayor and Deputy Mayor roles

The positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are elected by Councillors in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rules.

The Mayor is the elected leader and is the key formal representative of Council.



OUR COUNCILLORS



Cr Liz Foat
Central Ward



Cr Scott Rossetti
Central Ward



Cr Geoff Wells
Central Ward



Cr Catherine Bannerman
Coastal Ward



Cr Cindy Madeley
Coastal Ward



Cr Garry Stephens
Coastal Ward



Cr Edward Lowe
Northern Ward



Cr Carmel Ripper
Northern Ward

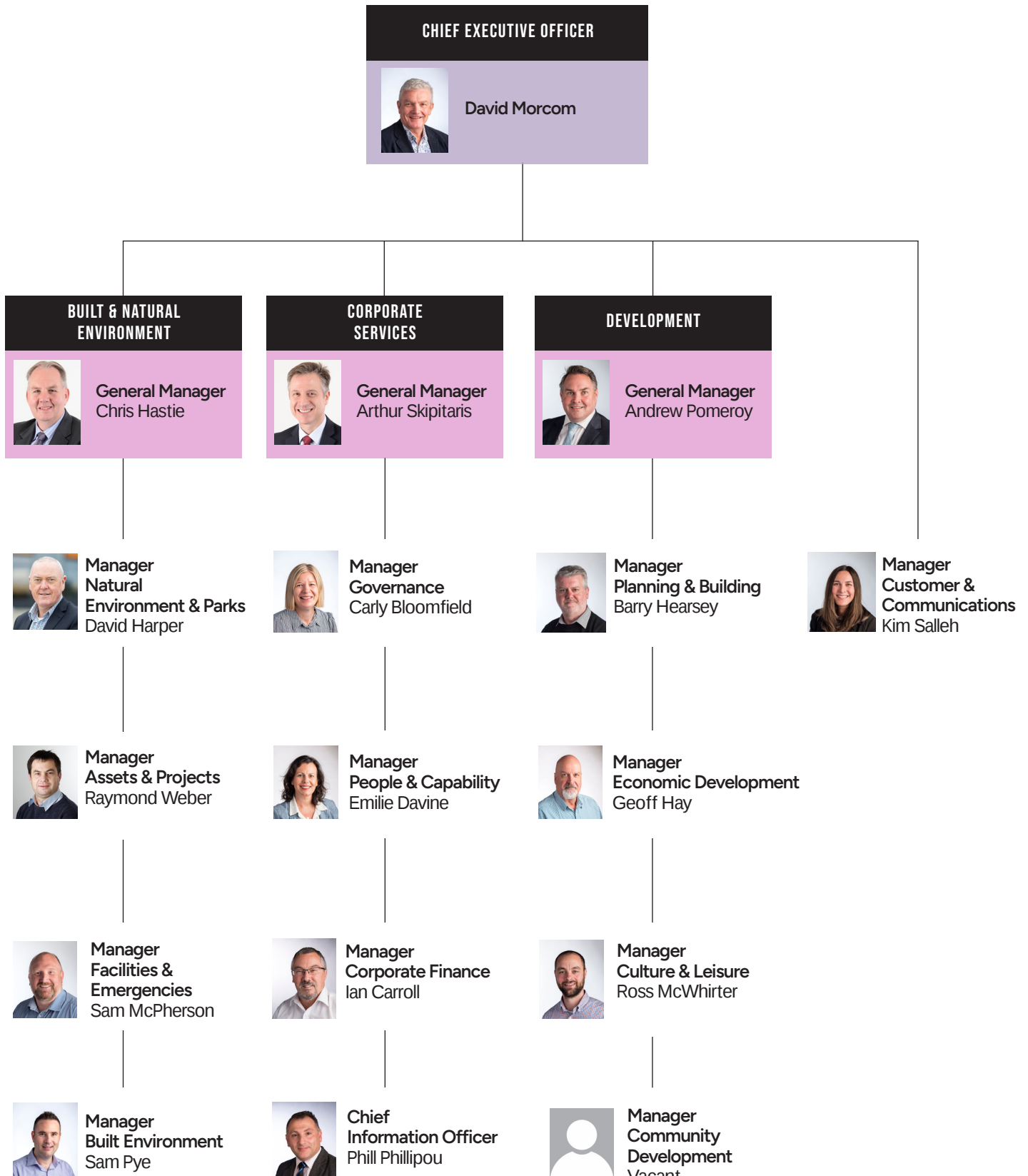


Cr John Tattersson
Northern Ward

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The organisational structure shown below reflects the status as of 30 June 2025.

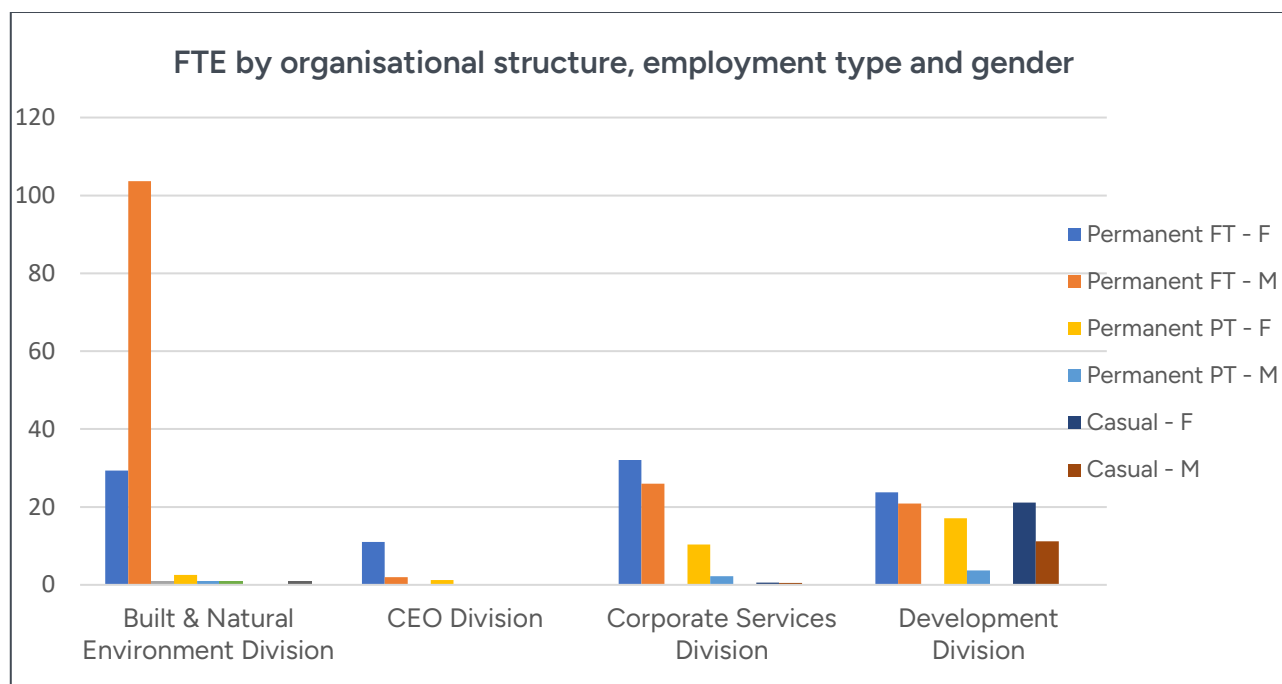
Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO has the responsibility for the day-to-day management of operations in accordance with the strategic directions of the Council Plan. The CEO and three General Managers from the Corporate Management Team (CMT) lead the organisation.



4.2 Council Staff

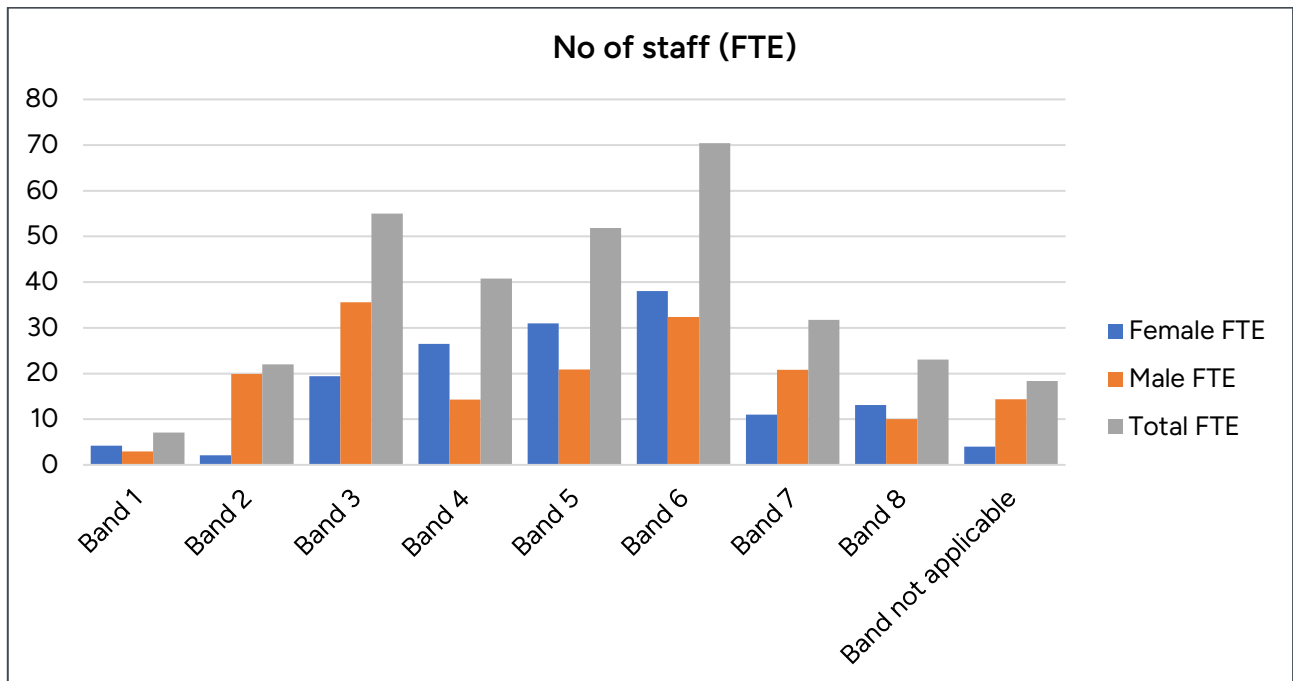
Full time equivalent (FTE) staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender.

Employee type/gender	CEO Unit	Built & Natural Environment Division	Corporate Services Division	Development Division	Total
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Permanent Full Time – Female	11.00	29.38	32.09	23.72	96.19
Permanent Full Time – Male	2.00	103.64	26.01	20.92	152.57
Permanent Part Time – Female	1.22	2.57	10.35	17.11	31.25
Permanent Part Time – Male	0	0.95	2.26	3.67	6.88
Casual – Female	0	0	0.61	21.15	21.76
Casual – Male	0	0	0.49	11.19	11.68
Total	14.22	136.54	71.81	97.76	320.33



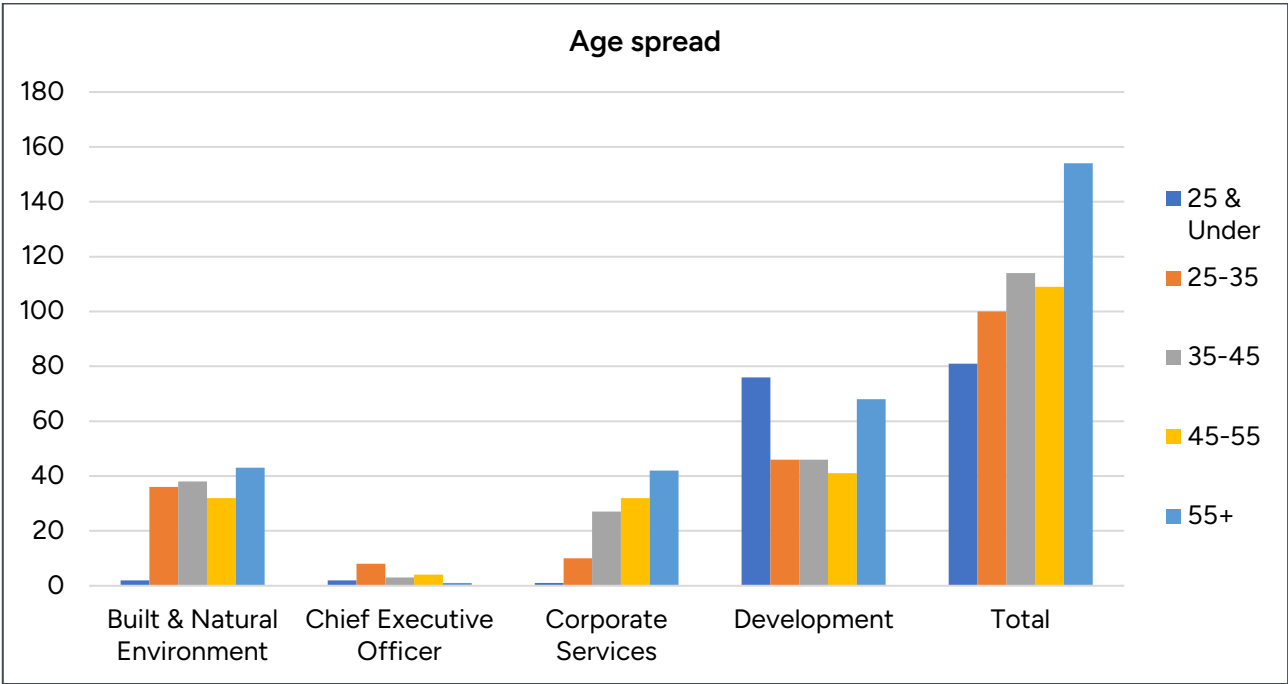
Full time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender.

Employment Classification	Female FTE	Male FTE	Total FTE
Band 1	4.18	2.91	7.09
Band 2	2.13	19.87	22.00
Band 3	19.38	35.62	55.00
Band 4	26.48	14.30	40.78
Band 5	30.94	20.91	51.85
Band 6	38.05	32.37	70.42
Band 7	10.98	20.79	31.77
Band 8	13.07	10.00	23.07
Band not applicable	4.00	14.35	18.35
Total	149.21	171.12	320.33



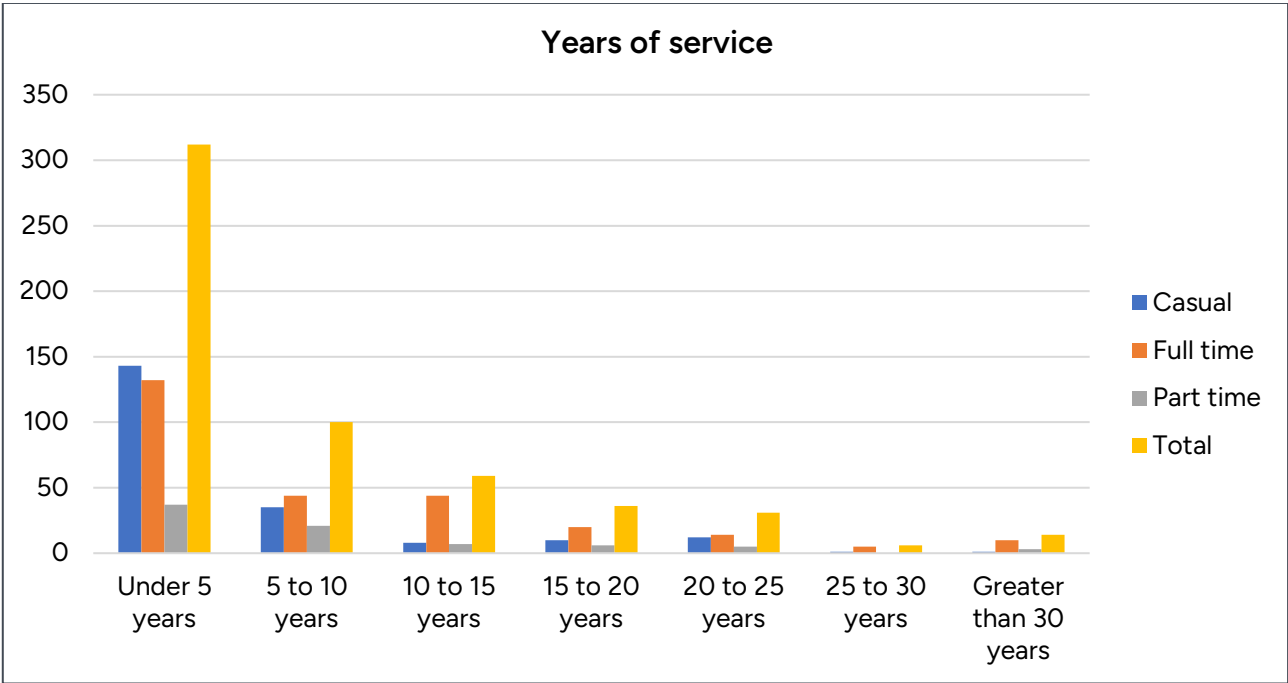
Age spread (Total staff: 558)

Age	25 & under	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 55	55+
Built & Natural Environment	2	36	38	32	43
Chief Executive Officer	2	8	3	4	1
Corporate Services	1	10	27	32	42
Development	76	46	46	41	68
Total	81	100	114	109	154



Years of service summary (Total staff: 558)

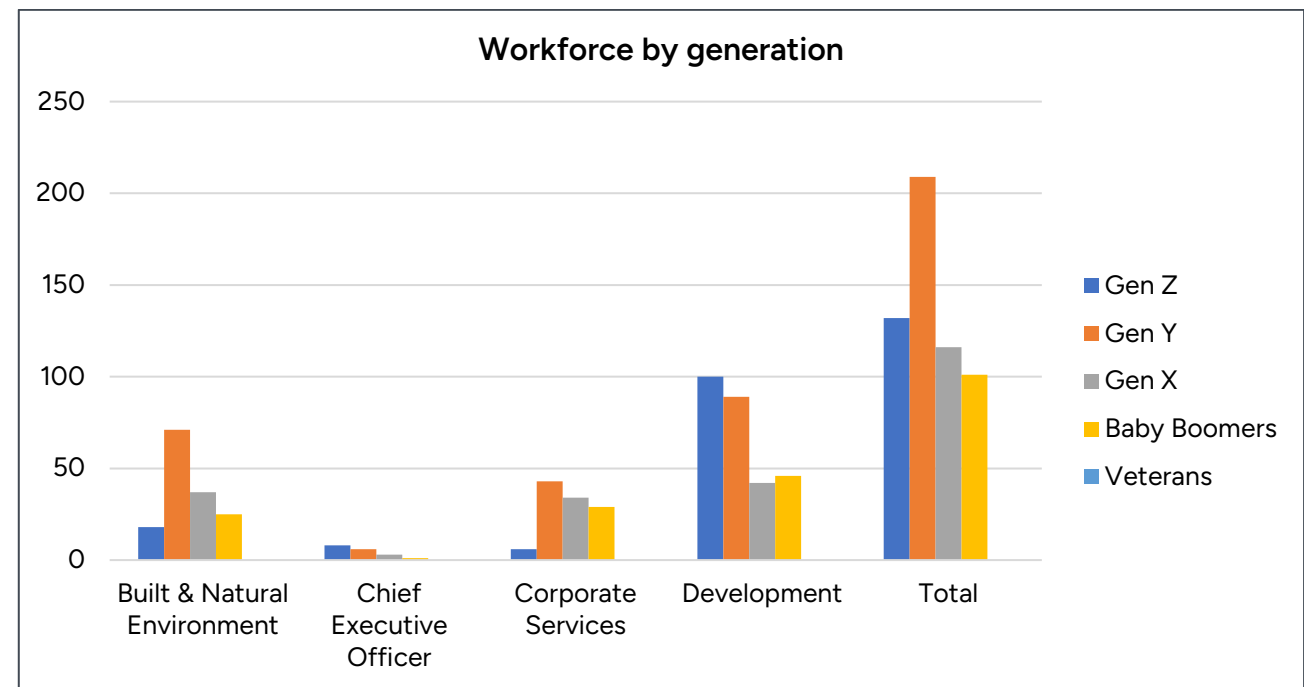
Service years	Under 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 20 years	20 to 25 years	25 to 30 years	Greater than 30 years
Casual	143	35	8	10	12	1	1
Full time	132	44	44	20	14	5	10
Part time	37	21	7	6	5	0	3
Total	312	100	59	36	31	6	14



Our workforce by generation (Total staff: 558)

Generation	Gen Z	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boomers	Veterans
Built & Natural Environment	18	71	37	25	0
Chief Executive Officer	8	6	3	1	0
Corporate Services	6	43	34	29	0
Development	100	89	42	46	0
Total	132	209	116	101	0

Key: Gen Z 1995-2025, Gen Y 1977-1994, Gen X 1966-1976, Baby Boomers 1946-1965, Veterans pre-1946



Our Volunteers

Wellington Shire Council is committed to providing opportunities for interested community members who wish to give their time, skills and enthusiasm, and enjoy giving back to the community while fostering connections and learning more about the region they live in. Volunteering helps build and support our local communities, strengthens networks, and provides a sense of belonging and connection. We believe volunteers play a critical role within our organisation by assisting in the delivery of important services and programs.

There are a number of ways in which volunteers can contribute to our services and give back to their community, including:

- Providing tourism advice and support to the Visitor Information Centres
- Delivering education programs and workshops for kindergarten, school and community groups at the Art Gallery
- Greeting visitors and providing customer service within our Gallery and Visitor Information spaces
- Assisting with Bike Education through TAC and VicRoads
- Supporting young people through FReeZA and Youth Council
- Participation on Community Committees around Wellington Shire
- Gardening with the Friends of Sale Botanic Gardens group
- Providing advice as part of the Wellington Disability Advisory Committee

Across these programs, we are thankful for the thousands of hours our volunteers dedicate to working for and assisting the community each year.

Community members who are interested in registering as a volunteer, can do so through the careers page on the Wellington Shire Council website www.wellington.vic.gov.au

4.3 Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Practices

At Wellington Shire Council, we are committed to building a workplace and community where everyone feels respected, included and safe, regardless of gender, background, identity or ability. Our focus on equity, inclusion and diversity supports our people to thrive and ensures the services we deliver meet the needs of our whole community.

Advancing Gender Equality

Guided by the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021–2025 outlines 30 commitments to improve outcomes across all areas of our workforce. Over the past 12 months, we've made strong progress in delivering actions that support equal pay, flexible work, inclusive leadership, and career progression for all staff.

In 2024, we focused on strengthening Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) across Council. Every Division now has a trained GIA Champion and forecasted GIAs over the next 12–18 months. We've launched an online GIA form, developed a decision-making matrix to guide staff, and rolled out mandatory training across all business units. A new internal Gender Equality Hub provides staff with tools, templates and case studies to support everyday practice. These systems are helping to embed gender equality into the way we design and deliver our services.

Preventing Violence Against Women

We remain steadfast in our commitment to preventing violence against women and promoting respectful, safe workplaces and communities.

In 2024, Council secured funding through the Free from Violence Local Government Program 2024–2027, employing a dedicated officer to lead this work. We reestablished the Wellington Prevention of Family Violence Network, which brings together local agencies to align efforts and strengthen regional prevention activities.

Local voices have shaped our direction. Feedback from community consultation for our Live Well in Wellington Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan highlighted violence against women as a key concern. As a result, we introduced a new "Safe and Respectful" action pillar, embedding prevention at the heart of Council's priorities.

Council proudly supported key community events including the Walk Against Family Violence and Candlelight Vigil, uniting residents in remembrance and awareness.

Internally, we continue to provide unlimited paid family violence leave and deliver "A Better Go" training, a program that builds awareness of the drivers of gender-based violence and how we can all play a role in prevention.

Respectful and Inclusive Workplaces

Council conducts an annual Respectful Workplace Survey to monitor employee experiences and inform positive change.

This year:

- 81% of staff feel respected at work
- 79% feel safe to report inappropriate behaviour
- 87% feel respected regardless of gender

While these results are encouraging, we recognise areas for improvement, reports of bullying increased from 12 to 28. These insights have shaped new actions, including the launch of our "Speak Up" campaign, the implementation of an anonymous reporting tool, and the reinvigoration of the Contact Officer program across Council sites.

Leadership capability remains a priority, with increased investment in training, role modelling and accountability at all levels to strengthen psychological safety and a respectful workplace culture.

Our Equal Local Government Project

In 2024/25, Wellington Shire Council was proud to participate in the Our Equal Local Government (OELG) Project, an 18-month regional collaboration led by Gippsland Women's Health and funded through the WorkSafe WorkWell Respect Fund.

The project brought together all six Gippsland councils, Federation University, TAFE Gippsland and Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault to reduce work-related gendered violence and promote safer, more inclusive local government workplaces.

Key outcomes included:

- Regional implementation of Your Call, an anonymous third-party reporting platform
- Delivery of Let's Get Going gender equity workshops across Council teams
- Training of in-house staff as facilitators to ensure sustainable future delivery
- Development of a unified "Say No to Violence" campaign (internal and community-facing)
- Facilitation of Creating Conversations sessions to engage male-dominated workgroups
- Strong cross-council collaboration to support GIAs, GEAPs, and prevention initiatives

The project reached over 3,500 local government employees and created long-term impact through shared tools, training and governance structures. Council is committed to continuing this work post-project, embedding the learnings into our systems, culture and strategic planning.

Inclusive Leadership and Education

We believe diversity makes us stronger. In 2024/25, Council delivered training across multiple areas to build a more inclusive and culturally safe environment:

- Cultural Awareness eLearning was launched for all staff during National Reconciliation Week
- Disability Awareness training was delivered through interactive workshops led by facilitators with lived experience
- LGBTIQ+ Awareness Training is scheduled for 2026 to further support inclusion and understanding across the organisation
- Senior Leaders and Councillors continue to engage in learning that strengthens their capability to lead with respect, equity and inclusion

These initiatives align with broader reforms to our people systems and policies, including a review of all position descriptions to reflect diversity and inclusion expectations.

Supporting Flexibility and Equity at Work

Council continues to support a diverse and inclusive workforce by offering a wide range of flexible work options. Our updated Workplace Flexibility Policy now allows eligible staff to work from home up to 12 days per month, alongside other flexible arrangements such as 48/52 leave and adjusted start and finish times.

These provisions support work-life balance, assist employees with caring responsibilities, and are promoted as part of our recruitment and retention strategy. Flexibility is embedded in our culture and supported by clear policies, proactive leadership, and regular review.

Looking Ahead

As we enter the final year of our Gender Equality Action Plan (2021–2025), Council is focused on preparing for the next phase of obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

This includes:

- Conducting our next Workplace Gender Audit by 1 December 2025
- Submitting our updated Gender Equality Action Plan for 2026–2030 by 1 May 2026
- Submitting a formal Progress Report on our current GEAP actions and GIA activity by 1 May 2026
- Continuing to embed GIAs as standard practice — with improved systems to track recommendations and outcomes
- Promoting gender equality through inclusive leadership, workforce education, and system-wide change

Our efforts are shifting from implementation to sustainability. We are embedding inclusion into policies, systems and service delivery, supported by stronger governance, improved data capability, and engaged leadership at all levels.

Wellington Shire Council remains committed to fulfilling our obligations under the Act and building a future where all people, regardless of gender, background or identity are safe, respected and able to fully participate in civic and working life.

4.4 Other Staff Matters

Staff Achievement Awards

Wellington Staff Achievement Awards Program seeks to recognise individuals who go 'above and beyond' in their roles, or in their service to the community.

The nomination categories have been developed in line with Council values; staff are encouraged to nominate their peers for going 'above and beyond' in the following areas:

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Customer Focus
- ✓ Relationships
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Sustainability

Staff Recognition Years of Service

Council recognises employees for their ongoing contribution, commitment and service to the organisation by acknowledging their key service milestones. Fifty-two staff members celebrated and received Service Awards in the 2024/25 year as reflected in the table below.

Years of service	Number of staff members to achieve the milestone in 2024/25
>35 years	3
>20 years	8
>15 years	2
> 10 years	11
> 5 years	28

Professional Development

Wellington Shire Council recognises the benefit of supporting staff to increase their professional development. Council acknowledges the value gained from staff advancing their qualifications and acquiring enhanced skills and knowledge that can be applied within the workplace.

We take an integrated approach to learning, focusing on a mix of on-the-job experience, online and instructor lead training and formal education.

Summary of the number of training sessions undertaken during the 2024/25 year

Online courses: 5,192

- ❖ Compliance: 326
- ❖ Professional Development: 99

Health and Safety

Council is continually enhancing its safety management system to strengthen our commitment to the health and safety of employees, contractors, customers, and visitors. These ongoing improvements support continuous progress in our workplace health and safety performance.

Prioritising work health and safety in all meetings, activities, and deliverables drives ongoing improvement towards occupational health and safety (OHS) objectives and targets.

During the year, a major safety initiative was achieved with the successful launch and integration of Donesafe, our online OHS incident reporting and management tool, as a central component of the OHS Transformation Plan.

- Finalising the recruitment of staff for the Occupational Health & Safety team, ensuring effective support for achieving OHS objectives.
- Ongoing liaison and cooperation with People and Capability to ensure adequate OHS-related workplace skillset matrix and monitoring;
- Completion of Occupational Health and Safety training across OHS staff and designated work group Health & Safety Representatives.
- Presenting incident data and OHS performance one-pagers to monitor safety performance across business units;
- Targeted site toolbox and meeting presence across all levels to encourage confidence and awareness in our health and safety systems and OHS team, whilst promoting awareness of OHS responsibilities amongst our Managers and Supervisors.

Incidents	Number of incidents
Incidents	100
Near Miss	35
Lost time incidents	5

Hazard Reports	Number of reports
Hazards identified	21

Workplace Safety Inspections	Number of inspections
Inspections completed	143

Employee Health and Wellbeing

Council's commitment to the health and wellbeing of our workforce remains strong, with programs, events and resources aimed at supporting physical, mental and social wellbeing throughout the year.

Wellbeing initiatives in 2024/25 included:

- Annual Wellness Program – Continued promotion of our SharePoint wellness hub, which provides information and support across fitness, mental health, and external support resources.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – Free, confidential counselling and wellbeing support available to all staff.
- R U OK? Day – Activities included mindfulness sessions, a compliment wall, and wellness raffles to encourage connection and support.
- International Women's Day and International Men's Day – Events and communications reinforced our ongoing commitment to gender equity, inclusion, and support for health and wellbeing.
- Movember and Men's Health Week – Campaigns to raise awareness and promote support around physical and mental health for men at work.
- Australia's Biggest Morning Tea – Staff came together to raise funds for cancer support, contributing to social connection and shared purpose.
- IDAHOBIT Day – Reinforced our support for LGBTQIA+ inclusion and allyship, with wearable resources and awareness activities.
- Our employee-led Social Club continues to play a strong role in promoting social inclusion and connection across teams, through shared events and activities such as communal lunches, trivia nights and health-focused events.

These initiatives are designed to enhance workplace culture, reduce absenteeism and presenteeism, and improve both employee experience and organisational performance.

Recruitment Trends

As an organisation committed to leveraging local talent, Wellington Shire Council continues to adapt to the evolving recruitment landscape. Influenced by broader post-pandemic workforce trends and a highly competitive regional labour market, we are refining our strategies to remain an employer of choice.

In 2024/25, Council implemented a new Recruitment system Pulse which is part of a broader Human Resource Information System (HRIS) transformation. This change has improved the efficiency of our recruitment processes and enhanced our data capabilities.

Despite a slight reduction in the number of external campaigns compared to the previous year, Council experienced a notable increase in the number of total applications received, reflecting stronger interest in Council roles and the broader shift in jobseeker behaviour across regional Victoria.

Key Statistics and Performance Indicators (2024/25):

- Total external recruitment campaigns conducted: 76
- Internal recruitment campaigns conducted: 27
- Total applications received for recruitment campaigns: 1,588
 - Internal applications received: 92
 - External applications received: 1,496
- Staff turnover rate: 10.3%
- Higher duties opportunities offered internally: 91

Management Restructure

In 2025, Council undertook a management restructure to improve organisational alignment, support long-term sustainability, and improve service delivery.

Gippsland and Local Government Context

Wellington's recruitment trends mirror those observed across the Gippsland region, where strong demand exists for skilled workers in sectors such as healthcare, construction, retail, and administration. In local government, challenges remain in attracting professionals to critical roles such as engineering, planning, governance, and finance.

Employers across the region continue to navigate skills shortages, an ageing workforce, and increased demand for flexibility. Wellington Shire Council's proactive investment in upskilling, flexible work practices, and inclusive recruitment practices helps ensure we are well placed to meet these challenges.

Looking Ahead

In 2025/26, Council continues to implement a Capability Framework to strengthen recruitment and workforce planning. This framework will help clearly define the skills, behaviours and attributes required for success across all levels of the organisation. By embedding capability-based selection and development processes, we aim to further professionalise our recruitment approach, support equitable career pathways, and align talent with organisational priorities.

By aligning our workforce strategy to these local and industry trends, and through continued implementation of our Workforce Plan, we are committed to growing a resilient, skilled, and inclusive workforce that delivers strong outcomes for our community.

Workforce Plan

At Wellington Shire Council, Workforce Planning assists us in having the right people, with the right skills and capabilities at the right time to achieve our Council Plan. We are committed to becoming an employer of choice to our current and future employees. At Council, we are committed to engaging and retaining employees by providing a workplace that embraces equality and diversity in an inclusive work environment.

The Workforce Plan 2022-2027 addresses six key areas of focus:

- Recruiting suitably qualified staff in key areas such as ICT, Planning, Engineering and Governance
- Providing targeted and consistent training
- Providing traineeships and graduate roles for local students
- Continue to promote and drive Gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness
- Emergency Management and pandemic response
- Employee Engagement

Work is continuing in these areas as we look to address the gaps we have identified, and as we look to build capability across the workforce for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

This year marked the soft launch of a new Capability Framework, which is linked to the new Leadership Development program piloted across Manager level and above. These initiatives will be further expanded into 2025/26, ensuring continued strengthening of the workforce skillset.



WELLINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL

Workforce Plan

2022-27



5.0 Our Performance

5.1 Integrated Strategic Planning and Accountability Framework

This annual report has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* (The Act) and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

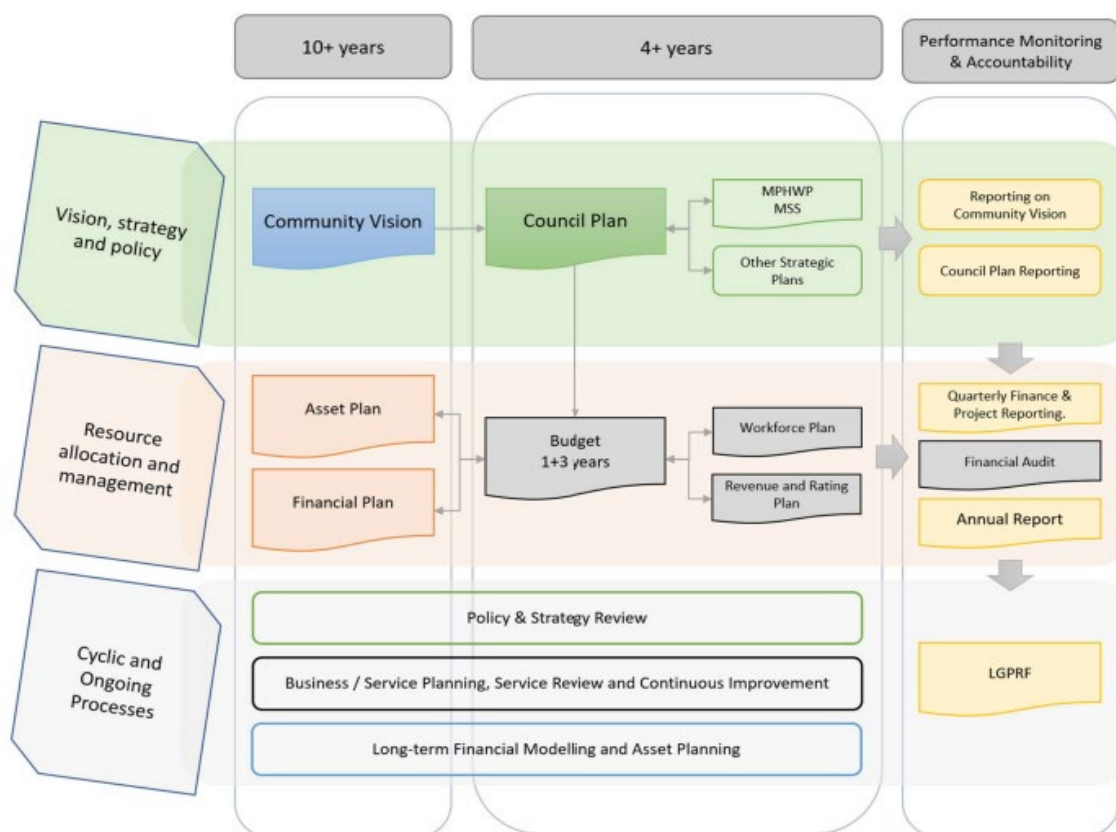
Part 4 of the Act outlines the requirements for planning and financial management, mandating that councils prepare the following documents:

- A Community Vision (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Council Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- A Financial Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- An Asset Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Revenue and Rating Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- A Budget (Completed annually covering at least the next 4 financial years);
- Quarterly budget reports;
- An Annual Report (for each financial year); and
- Financial policies.

The Act also mandates councils to prepare:

- A Workforce Plan (including projected staffing requirements for at least 4 years).

The following diagram shows the relationship between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework for local government.



Note: this shape denotes mandated plans and strategies.

Community Satisfaction Survey

The annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) enables Council to track performance over time and benchmark its results against other comparable councils. The additional insights gathered from the survey help inform service planning and delivery by highlighting community satisfaction levels across a range of service areas.

Our 2025 results show that we continue to perform strongly in comparison to other large rural councils. We achieved an overall performance rating of 58 out of 100, exceeding the average for other large rural councils (50) and the state-wide average (54).

Survey participants identified art centres and libraries, appearance of public areas, and recreational facilities as our top 3 performing areas. We also performed significantly above the large rural council average in several other areas, including sealed local roads, planning and building permits, overall council direction, and business, community development and tourism.

The survey was conducted independently of Council by JWS Research, coordinated by the Department of Government Services.

Shown below and on the next page is a snapshot and summary of core CSS results for 2025, to view full survey results please visit the Wellington Shire Council website www.wellington.vic.gov.au.

Ratepayers, residents and other stakeholders can compare our performance results against other large rural Victorian councils via the Know Your Council website [Know Your Council | Victorian Government](#).



Wellington Shire Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.



Wellington 58



Large Rural 50



State-wide 53

Council performance compared to group average

Top 3 performing areas		
	Art centres & libraries	▲ higher
	Appearance of public areas	▲ higher
	Recreational facilities	▲ higher
Bottom 3 performing areas		
	Unsealed roads	▲ higher
	Slashing & weed control	▲ higher
	Sealed local roads	▲ higher
	Customer service	= on par

J W S R E S E A R C H

Services	Wellington 2025	Wellington 2024	Large Rural 2025	Large Rural 2024	State- wide 2025	State- wide 2024
Overall Performance	58	59	50	50	53	54
Value for Money	51	48	43	43	47	48
Overall council direction	50	45	44	42	46	45
Customer service	68	71	65	65	66	67
Art centres & libraries	77	79	71	71	73	73
Appearance of public areas	71	71	66	66	68	67
Recreational facilities	70	69	65	65	67	68
Emergency & disaster management	67	65	65	65	65	65
Community & cultural	66	64	63	65	65	66
Waste management	63	64	62	65	65	67
Bus/community dev./tourism	61	61	55	55	56	57
Enforcement of local laws	60	62	59	60	59	61
Environmental sustainability	59	59	58	58	59	60
Town planning policy	58	55	46	48	48	50
Population growth	57	55	46	46	48	47
Informing the community	57	55	54	53	56	56
Local streets & footpaths	56	56	48	46	52	52
Community decisions	55	53	46	48	49	51
Planning & building permits	53	55	41	41	43	45
Lobbying	52	52	47	47	49	50
Consultation & engagement	52	53	48	48	50	51
Sealed local roads	51	50	39	38	45	45
Slashing & weed control	50	44	46	43	47	45
Unsealed roads	43	40	36	34	38	36

Council Plan

The Council Plan 2021-25 was developed following extensive community consultation in 2021 and is closely aligned with the long-term aspirations outlined in the Wellington 2031 Community Vision.

Council had identified climate change as its number one priority, acknowledging the profound impacts that rising temperatures, reduced rainfall, increased bushfire risk, more severe flooding, and sea level rise may have on our region.

This Council Plan 2021-25 focuses on attracting new industries particularly in the renewable energy sector and supporting population and economic growth in our major towns. It also emphasises equity and access to services across all parts of our community, with a range of initiatives addressing the diverse needs of our people.

These four strategic directions guide the Council Plan 2021-25:

1. Environment and Climate Change
'We are a climate resilient community with sustainable practices and places'
2. Economy and Sustainable Growth
'We are a growing, sustainable and prosperous community'
3. Liveability and Wellbeing
'We are a liveable, engaged, and supported community'
4. Services and Infrastructure
'We are a connected community with access to the services and infrastructure we require'

The strategic directions also define the actions Council will take to address community priorities and maintain focus on our regional strengths and shared aspirations. It provides a clear line of sight from the Wellington 2031 Community Vision through to tangible action for Council, its staff. Partners, stakeholders, and the broader community.

Council reports on progress through regular updates, including the Annual Report, to ensure transparency and accountability.



5.2 Performance

Performance for the 2024/25 year has been reported against each strategic direction to demonstrate Council's progress in delivering on the objectives of the Council Plan 2021-25.

Performance is assessed through the following measures:

- Achievement of the indicators of success outlined in the Council Plan 2021-25
- Progress on major initiatives
- Delivery of services funded in the 2024/25 Council Budget, including identification of the responsible service providers and the sections of the community they support
- Results against the prescribed service performance indicators and measures.

Strategic Direction One: Environment and Climate Change

Indicators of Success

The following table monitors Council's progress in achieving Strategic Direction One.

Outcome 1.1 A climate and disaster resilient community				
Community Satisfaction with Council Performance in Environmental Sustainability				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 49/100)	Wellington Shire 62/100 (Large Rural 59/100)	Wellington Shire 61/100 (Large Rural 58/100)	Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 58/100)	Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 58/100)
2025 Target – Higher than Large Rural Councils				
Percentage of Tree Canopy cover within Town Boundaries				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) 20% Tree Canopy coverage	Not due until 2025	Not due until 2025	Not due until 2025	Data will not be available until late 2025
2025 Target – 1.5% improvement				
Outcome 1.2 Assist community to transition to a low carbon economy via adoption of sustainable practices and renewable energy				
Solar penetration rate – the percentage of electricity generation from solar facilities (SDG 7.2.1)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2018) 21%	27.7% (6941 dwellings with photovoltaic)	31.6% (7387 dwellings with photovoltaic)	32.7% (7585 dwellings with photovoltaic)	34.7% (8593 dwellings with photovoltaic)
2025 Target – 50%				
Wellington Shire community greenhouse emissions intensity (emissions per person) (SDG 13.2.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2019/20) 43.57* tonnes per person *corrected from 31.3 tonnes per person (source: Snapshot Climate)	(2020/21) # 41.57* tonnes per person *corrected from 30.66 tonnes per person #12- month lag in reporting	(2021/22) # 42.75 tonnes per person	(2022/23) # 43.11 tonnes per person	Data not available until December 2025
2025 Target – Equal to or better than the Gippsland average				

Outcome 1.3 The natural environment is valued, protected and accessible				
Percentage of households located within 400m of quality open space (SDG 11.7.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2014) 73%	Due 2023. Will be measured as part of updated Public Open Space Plan to be completed.	Measurements will occur as part of the Public Open Space Plan which is scheduled for 2023/24	Measurements will occur as part of Council's Public Open Space Strategy 2026/36	Measurements will occur as part of Council's Public Open Space Strategy 2026/36
2025 Target – 85%				
Domestic travel visitor numbers to Wellington Shire (SDG 8.9)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) 750,000 travel visitors	686,000 travel visitors	858,000 travel visitors (14.4% increase on baseline)	The data was from an external third party as is not accessible	1,168,000 travel visitors (55.73% increase on baseline)
2025 Target – 2% increase				
Outcome 1.4 Council is an environmental steward with a reducing carbon footprint				
Corporate Greenhouse Gas emissions (aiming for zero net emissions by 2040) (SDG 13.2.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2017/18) 5244 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions	4120.5* tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (21.4% decrease from 2017/18) <i>*corrected from 4221 tonnes and 19%</i>	4294.4 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (18.10% decrease from 2017/18)	3777.87 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (27.95% decrease from 2017/18)	Data will not be available until December 2025
2025 Target – 23% reduction				
Percentage waste diversions rate from kerbside collection (SDG 12.5)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2019/20) 35% waste diversion	33.5% waste diversion	32.17% waste diversion	30.02% waste diversion	26.35% waste diversion
2025 Target – 65% waste diversion				

Major Initiatives

The following table reports the progress of the Major Initiatives identified in the 2024/25 budget.

Land Use Planning	
1.1.1 - Major Initiative	Status
In line with revised State Government policy documents, establish and implement a policy position around the impacts of sea level rise, flooding and bushfire on land use planning.	Progressing 90%
Progress comment: In order to progress this, Council is currently preparing Planning Scheme Amendment C125, which will supersede Amendment C99. Councillors were briefed on the proposed Amendment on 3 June 2025 with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA), prior to requesting formal Authorisation from the Minister for Planning to proceed. Council will continue to work in collaboration with the WGCMA to finalise the relevant documents to support Amendment C125 prior to a request for Authorisation.	
Chief Executive Officer	
1.1.2 - Major Initiative	Status
Deliver organisation-wide integrated implementation of the climate change aspects of the Council's Sustainability Strategy 2020-24, Healthy Wellington 2021-25 and Planning Policy Framework including our zero net carbon emissions target by 2040.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council has partnered with the Gippsland Alliance for Climate Action on key sustainability projects, including; • climate risk mapping; • electric vehicle fleet transition frameworks; • sustainable design policies for Council buildings; • decarbonisation; • emissions monitoring software; and • staff training. Community engagement has included; • information sessions; • social media outreach and events showcasing electric vehicles; • energy-saving solutions; • gas-to-electricity education; and • renewable energy options under the "Making the Switch" theme. Sustainability education continues at the Nakunbalook Environmental and Cultural Education Centre. Preparations for the 2025/26 Urban Forest program are complete, with residents selecting street tree species to enhance canopy cover, reduce heat exposure, and improve community wellbeing. Council remains focused on its 2040 net zero emissions target. Recent investments include bulk energy contracts starting January 2025, supplying 70% renewable energy to Council facilities. Solar and battery systems were installed at the GRSC Hockey Pavilion, and public EV chargers are available in Yarram, Sale, Heyfield, Maffra, and now Stratford. Diesel mowers and small plant equipment have been replaced with electric alternatives. The Sustainability Strategy 2020-24 has concluded, and Council will continue assessing facilities for solar and battery upgrades. The Trellis emissions platform will guide future energy-saving investments and retrofits.	

Natural Environment and Parks	
1.1.3 - Major Initiative	Status
Educate the community to increase understanding of the risks and impacts of climate change and the need for adaptation and sustainable living.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: During the period of 1 March to 30 June 2025, Sustainability Education has held or partnered in 7 Community events with 213 community members engaged. Other events held include: • 2 secondary school events engaging 32 students; • 11 primary school events engaging 741 students; • 14 preschool events with 388 participants; and • 1 tertiary event with 12 attendees. In the 2024/25 financial year, Council delivered 30 community events with approximately 1,310 participants including: • 18 secondary school events reaching around 360 students; • 35 primary school events involving approximately 2,110 children; and • 33 preschool events engaging about 880 young learners. These figures reflect Council's ongoing commitment to inclusive and educational programming across all age groups. These included biodiversity planting days to support local revegetation efforts, waste education sessions and tip tours aimed at promoting sustainable choices, and cultural seminars featuring local Indigenous presenters. Events were held across various locations, including the Environmental and Cultural Education Centre Nakunbalook, and included creative initiatives such as Art in the Wild in partnership with the Art Gallery team.	
1.4.1 - Major Initiative	Status
Progress towards our 2040 net zero emissions target by reviewing our roadmap, strengthening our governance and exploring carbon offset opportunities.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council continues to be opportunistic in efforts to make progress towards delivering its net zero carbon emissions target by 2040. Significant investment decisions and projects over the last 12 months included the new purchase of bulk energy contracts commencing January 2025 for Council facilities and assets which resulted in the purchase of 70% renewable energy produced power to replace carbon emitting fossil fuel generated power. The Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC) Hockey Pavilion solar and battery installation was completed in 2024 and is now operational providing renewable generated day time power and some evening battery reserve. Council's commitment to 'Charging the Regions' Gippsland and encouraging Electric Vehicle uptake with installation of public Electric Vehicle chargers in each of the townships of Yarram, Sale, Heyfield, Maffra and now Stratford has been completed. Scheduled replacement of 2 diesel powered ride on mowers were transitioned to fully electric mowers with equal performance, markedly reduced operational noise impact to the community, and no refuelling required. Small plant was also replaced to schedule with transition from 2-stroke brush-cutters and leaf blowers to electric. The Sustainability Strategy 2020-24 has concluded through the period setting the scene for both appraisal of performance to date and a review of project and investment opportunities to be considered for carbon reduction in future years.	

Council's Facilities Portfolio will continue to be assessed to select the best and most financially prudent opportunities for solar and battery installations and to determine sustainability investments that can be made to reduce energy use and consumption.

The emissions software platform 'Trellis' now has over 18 months of operational performance data which will be used to inform best value investments and retrofits to reduce Council's overall energy bills and contribute towards carbon mitigation.

Communities, Facilities and Emergencies

1.1.4 - Major Initiative

Status

Build disaster resilience and improve adaptation and recovery in high-risk and vulnerable communities by facilitating community-led emergency management planning and preparedness.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

The Local Emergency Directory (LED) project has continued to be implemented in communities across Wellington.

Significant achievement has been made on other key recovery and resilience projects including the installation of generators to provide back-up power at various sites and the further development of the multi-agency project to install emergency information markers at key locations in remote areas.

Economic Development

1.2.1 - Major Initiative

Status

Advocate for, educate, and facilitate the adoption of regenerative agriculture and investment to improve water security and assist farmers to increase resilience and profitability in a warmer, drier climate.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

Council actively supported the Gippsland Agricultural Group and Food and Fibre Gippsland to research and deliver sustainable agricultural outcomes.

This included the promotion of drought resistant farming practices, regeneration of farmland, and the search for new markets for Gippsland's agricultural products.

Environmental Health

1.3.3 - Major Initiative

Status

Better utilise existing water resources, improve waterway health, increase biodiversity values and investigate bio link opportunities through implementing the Wellington Shire Council Integrated Water Management Plan and Domestic Wastewater Management Plan.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

The Onsite Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP) and associated codes and ministerial guidelines continue to guide decision making for development works involving wastewater management in sensitive areas to improve the health of waterways.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) have released updated guidance resources and officers from East Gippsland Shire Council and Wellington Shire Council participated in risk assessment for Onsite Wastewater Management Systems (OWMS) specific training in June 2024.

The updated OWMP action plan has been accepted by Gippsland Water and an updated Memorandum of Understanding will be developed to provide guidance on development within special water supply catchments.

Council has introduced improvements to the administrative process for OWMS that allow for a consistent approach, follow up of permits due for expiry.

The Environmental Health team continue to play an active role in the Blue Green Algae portfolio to reduce the potential health impacts on residents, visitors and Parks staff.

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024/25 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Land Use Planning	The Land Use Planning unit, through statutory planning and strategic land use planning services, aims to develop and improve forward looking land use planning policies and plans to that guide and support future sustainable growth and facilitate appropriate land use and development outcomes. Many of these services are provided through and driven by statutory legislation. The unit aims to provide services that satisfy community needs by encouraging and supporting well-designed development that meets required standards.	\$163 <u>\$494</u> \$(331)
Chief Executive Officer	This area of governance includes the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Management Team and associated support which covers service provision across the entire organisation.	\$477 <u>\$486</u> \$(9)
Natural Environment and Parks	The Natural Environment & Parks (NEP) business unit covers a range of activities related to the operational management of public open space, which includes approximately 320 hectares of parkland and associated infrastructure, such as picnic shelters, BBQs, seating, boardwalks, fences and public toilets. The NEP business unit also proactively manages around 70,000 urban trees and is responsible for the management, design and development of parks and streetscapes in urban areas. While also being responsible for moving the Wellington community towards a more sustainable future by managing waste and resource recovery services including kerbside collection, recycling, transfer station/landfill operations, community education and the coordination of sustainability projects. Key priority areas include biodiversity, water consumption and quality, waste management and energy use.	\$(839) <u>\$(2,017)</u> \$1,178
Communities, Facilities and Emergencies	The Communities, Facilities and Emergencies teams provide opportunities for communities to work in partnership with local government to achieve identified priorities. These teams work to ensure all members of the community have equal opportunity to participate in community activities. Special focus is given to those who have traditionally remained marginalised such as the young, elderly, disabled and transport disadvantaged.	\$524 <u>\$538</u> \$(14)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Municipal Services	The Municipal Services unit works with people to ensure the life, health and safety of the community is maintained through educating and enforcing Environmental Health (including food safety support programs), Building and Local Laws regulations and animal management services.	\$898 \$516 \$382
Finance	The Finance unit provides financial, payroll, rating and property valuation services to the organisation, community and external stakeholders. These services underpin the drive to be a financially sustainable Council, comply with the necessary legislative requirements and meet community needs. The unit also aims to provide a safe, reliable and sustainable fleet of vehicles to support the organisation in achieving its goals. The significant procurement goal is that of gaining good value from our purchasing.	\$77 \$100 \$(23)

Service Performance Indicators

The following table presents the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), along with explanatory comments to provide context and interpretation of the outcomes.

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Waste Management				
Service Standard				
WC2 -Kerbside collection bins missed	4.13	5.15	3.86	2.83
[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000				
Comment:				
During the 2024/25 financial year, Wellington Shire Council scheduled over 1.67 million bin lifts as part of its waste collection service, which operates within a defined boundary across the municipality's 11,000 km ² area. Of these, 474 bins were reported as missed, representing a very small fraction of the total scheduled collections and a significant improvement compared to 2023/24.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Service cost WC3 - Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service <i>[Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]</i>	\$84.94	\$100.43	\$96.81	\$178.74
Comment: Kerbside collection includes the weekly garbage waste collection and disposal service for over 20,000 bins across the municipality. In previous years, associated gate fees for landfill were excluded from the cost calculation. These fees have now been incorporated into this year's figure, resulting in a notable increase, and will continue to be included in future calculations. Additional services available to residents of Wellington Shire, which are not included in this cost, comprise the annual hard waste collection service, the annual green waste program, and a fortnightly recycling bin collection service.				
Service cost WC4 - Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service <i>[Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]</i>	\$81.54	\$83.08	\$85.12	\$85.37
Comment: Kerbside collection includes the fortnightly commingled recycling collection and processing service of over 20,000 bins across the municipality. There has been approximately 16% reduction in the amount of kerbside recycling compared to the 2023/2024 financial year likely due to the significant uptake of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) by our residents. Since the introduction of the CDS Council has seen an overall reduction of 25% of materials in kerbside recycling bins.				
Waste diversion WC5 - Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill <i>[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100</i>	33.51%	32.17%	30.02%	26.35%
Comment: In the 2024/25 financial year, more than 2,700 tonnes of recyclable material was diverted from landfill through our kerbside recycling service. This figure excludes food organics and garden organics, as no service is currently provided, and does not account for material diverted via the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). On average, this equates to 136 kg of recyclables per kerbside collection household, representing a 24 kg reduction per household compared to 2023/24. Council is actively working towards the implementation of a Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service in July 2026, which is expected to divert additional waste from landfill and further improve environmental outcomes.				

Strategic Direction Two: Economy and Sustainable Growth

Indicators of Success

The following table monitors Council's progress in achieving Strategic Direction Two.

Outcome 2.1 A diverse economy that creates jobs and opportunities				
Annual growth rate of real Gross Regional Product (GRP) (SDG 8.2.1)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington \$3.652B Gippsland \$18.277B (as per REMPLAN)	Wellington \$3.898B 6.73% growth Gippsland \$19.327B 5.74% growth	Wellington \$3.864B 5.80% growth Gippsland \$20.039B 9.64% growth	Wellington \$4.667B 27.79% growth Gippsland \$23,126B 26.53% growth	Wellington \$5.134B 40.58% growth Gippsland \$24.933B 36.41% growth
2025 Target – Equal to or better than Gippsland average				
Unemployment rate by sex, age and education level (SDG 8.5.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
Wellington 5.5% (June 2021) Gippsland 5.4% April 2021	Wellington 4.9% March 2022 Gippsland 3.9% April 2022	Wellington 3.6% June 2023 Gippsland 3.7% April 2023	Wellington 3.4% March 2024 Gippsland 4.6% March 2024	Wellington 4.8% March 2025 Gippsland 4.9% March 2025
2025 Target – Equal to or better than Gippsland average				
Outcome 2.2 A community that has the capacity and skills to meet our economic needs				
Destinations of Wellington Year 12 or equivalent completers six months after leaving school (SDG 8.6.1)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
Unemployed 7.8% Further study 46.9% Apprenticeships/ trainees 10.2%	Unemployed 9.3% Further study 44% Apprenticeships/ trainees 10.7%	Unemployed 9.3% Further study 44% Apprenticeships/ trainees 10.7%	Unemployed 2.6% Further study 61% Apprenticeships/ trainees 9.1%	4% unemployed 50% further study apprenticeships/ trainees 14%
2025 Target – Unemployed 5% Further study 56%				
Outcome 2.3 An increase in variety of housing choice to support equitable access to housing				
Number of dwellings across the Shire (SDG 11.3)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2021) 23,383 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)
2025 Target – 24,790 dwellings (2026 projection)				

Number of new housing units built in the municipality				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2021) 655* corrected from 520 as per DFFH website	669* houses/units *updated data available from DFFH website	679* houses/units	694* houses/units	Data not available until November 2025
2025 Target – +26 beds				
Outcome 2.4 Infrastructure investment is targeted to maximise jobs and housing growth				
Wellington Shire total % population increase (SDG 11.3)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020 estimate) 44,770 (source: ID profile population and dwelling estimate)	45,092 (0.72% annual increase)	45,754 (1.46% annual increase)	46,124 (0.80% annual increase)	46,533 (0.88% annual increase)
2025 Target – Approximately 1% increase per annum				

Major Initiatives

The following table reports the progress of the Major Initiatives identified in the 2024/25 budget.

Economic Development	
2.1.1 - Major Initiative	Status
Encourage and facilitate investment in the local mainstay industries with the potential to generate significant economic growth: Defence, Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Education, Timber, Renewables and the Oil and Gas transition. This includes encouraging modernisation and identifying supporting industries, encouraging their establishment in Wellington Shire.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: In June 2025 Council's Defence and Renewable Energy Economic Development officer facilitated a briefing connecting local business with the construction contractor of the Fulham Solar Farm. Officers also introduced local suppliers to Australia's largest defence prime (BAE Systems) during their visit to Wellington.	
2.1.4 - Major Initiative	Status
Continue to advocate for the sustainability of the timber industry in Wellington Shire.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: The Local Development Strategy 'program' has been formally handed over to the respective community groups in both Heyfield and Yarram. The Heyfield Resource Centre and the Yarram Business Traders Association have received funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action to continue the work supported by Wellington Shire Council over the last 2 years.	
2.1.6 - Major Initiative	Status
Use 'The Middle of Everywhere' campaign to promote the Shire as an events destination and as a place to explore, learn, live, invest, play and to do business.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: This initiative has been successfully implemented, with 'The Middle of Everywhere' (TMoE) campaign continuing to evolve, expand and strengthen.	

With a promising future in promoting Wellington, it now encompasses a wide range of assets, including a website, app and social media presence on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Additionally, TMoE features branded event furniture, town signage, business support, event participation, branded merchandise and much more.

The TMoE campaign has grown beyond initial expectations, positioning Wellington as a destination to explore, learn, live, invest, play and conduct business, every moment of every day.

A robust calendar of recurring annual and biannual events has been established, such as the ANZAC Weekend Airshow, TMoE Gippsland Rally, Truegrit, TMoE Christmas Party and TMoE Pro-Am, among others.

These events collectively reinforce Wellington's reputation as a premier event destination.

Beyond events, ongoing efforts include developing new advocacy materials for the region, such as investment and promotional content for West Sale Airport and the broader aviation industry.

Weekly short-form video promotions highlighting local businesses, activities and destinations, further strengthening the region's profile.

Website enhancements are continuously underway, with the recent addition of the 'Services' tab a centralised resource for childcare, positive ageing, youth services and more.

This development is a collaboration with the Social Connection and Inclusion team of Wellington Shire Council, ensuring continued support and accessibility for the community.

Land Use Planning

2.3.1 - Major Initiative

Status

Satisfy housing demand by facilitating the development of a range of living settings and lifestyle choices including response to an ageing demographic and facilitating affordable and social housing models.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

A number of Planning Scheme Amendments are underway to facilitate the rezoning of residential land in identified Growth Areas.

These include proposals for the development of housing that is targeted towards an older demographic.

2.3.2 - Major Initiative

Status

Promote and facilitate appropriate land release/ incentives and subsequent housing development in growth areas, being guided by sustainable development principles.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

Several key planning scheme amendments are currently in various states of progress that will contribute to facilitating significant urban development within the Shire's key growth areas.

2.4.1 - Major Initiative

Status

Prepare a Shire-wide Growth Management and Economic Development Strategy to establish a hierarchy of growth areas and identify priority projects.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

Following consultation, the final Growth Strategy was adopted by Council on 6 August 2024.

2.4.2 - Major Initiative

Status

Prioritise investment projects in the main growth areas, including exploring all options for upgrades to trunk stormwater drainage, sewer, water reticulation, internet, and gas that will stimulate growth and housing.

Completed
100%

Progress comment:

Progress continues across various planning projects/approvals, with completed and current Planning Scheme Amendments proposals to support urban growth across the municipality.

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024/25 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost <u>Actual</u> <u>Budget</u> Variance \$000
Economic Development	Council's Economic Development service aims to support business growth and employment, the sustainable management of Council's commercial properties, and the active promotion of both lifestyle opportunities and our vibrant tourism sector.	\$796 <u>\$686</u> \$110
Land Use Planning	The Land Use Planning unit, through statutory planning and strategic land use planning services, aims to develop and improve forward looking land use planning policies and plans to that guide and support future sustainable growth and facilitate appropriate land use and development outcomes. Many of these services are provided through and driven by statutory legislation. The unit aims to provide services that satisfy community needs by encouraging and supporting well-designed development that meets required standards.	\$1,065 <u>\$1,128</u> \$(63)
Arts and Culture	The Art Gallery and Libraries, as part of the Arts & Culture unit, seek to assist in the development of a vibrant, culturally active community that: • promotes expression and participation through visual, literary and performing arts; • informs and educates the community on various aspects of the arts; • enhances the lifestyle of Wellington residents; and • encourages visitors to explore the heritage and culture of the region.	\$283 <u>\$351</u> \$(68)

Service Performance Indicators

The following table presents the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), along with explanatory comments to provide context and interpretation of the outcomes.

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Statutory Planning				
Timeliness SP1 - Time taken to decide planning applications [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	43.00	41.00	36.00	47.00
Comment: Council recorded a median processing time of 47 days from receiving a planning application to making a decision, substantially outperforming the State Average of 75 days. The 2024/25 result has seen an increase in days compared to the previous years due to having less resources within the planning team, more complex permit applications received and delays in statutory referral responses.				
Service standard SP2 - Planning applications decided within required timeframes [(Number of regular planning applications decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x 100	90.95%	86.23%	90.57%	92.16%
Comment: The statutory timeframe for determining planning permit applications is 60 days for standard applications and 10 days for VicSmart applications. Council has performed strongly, finalising 91.53% of standard applications and 93.89% of VicSmart applications within the required timeframes. This compares favourably to the State averages of 66.07% and 82.78%, respectively.				
Service cost SP3 - Cost of statutory planning service [Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	\$1,320.09	\$1,407.16	\$1,212.97	\$2,105.28
Comment: During the 2024/25 financial year, there was a notable increase in heritage-related and associated legal costs, alongside a decline in the total number of planning applications received compared to 2023/24.				
Decision making SP4 - Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Comment: Council engages proactively with permit applicants and objectors prior to making planning decisions, aiming to minimise the need for VCAT hearings. In 2024/25, two matters were upheld by VCAT.				

Strategic Direction Three: Liveability and Wellbeing

Indicators of Success

The following table monitors Council's progress in achieving Strategic Direction Three.

3.1 An inclusive, diverse, and resilient community				
Community satisfaction with perception of diversity and accessibility in the community (SDG 10.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2024) 71% of respondents agree that diversity and accessibility are well-represented in the community, contributing to a culturally safe and inclusive living environment	Indicator being reviewed	Indicator review completed; additional question included in the 2024 Community Satisfaction survey	71% of respondents agree that diversity and accessibility are well-represented in the community, contributing to a culturally safe and inclusive living environment	72% of respondents agree that diversity and accessibility are well-represented in the community, contributing to a culturally safe and inclusive living environment
2025 Target – Identify baseline. Continual improvement on WSC score				
3.2 An actively engaged community				
Community Satisfaction with Council decisions (SDG 16.7.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 58/100 (Large Rural was 52/100)	Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 51/100)	Wellington Shire 54/100 (Large Rural 48/100)	Wellington Shire 53/100 (Large Rural 46/100)	Wellington Shire 55/100 (Large Rural 46/100)
2025 Target – Continual improvement on WSC score				
Community Satisfaction with Council engagement (SDG 16.7.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 57/100 (Large Rural was 54/100)	Wellington Shire 55/100 (Large Rural 51/100)	Wellington Shire 53/100 (Large Rural 49/100)	Wellington Shire 53/100 (Large Rural 48/100)	Wellington Shire 52/100 (Large Rural 48/100)
2025 Target – Continual improvement on WSC score				
Community Satisfaction with level of Council lobbying (SDG 16.7.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 57/100 (Large Rural was 53/100)	Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 51/100)	Wellington Shire 55/100 (Large Rural 49/100)	Wellington Shire 53/100 (Large Rural 49/100)	Wellington Shire 52/100 (Large Rural 47/100)
2025 Target – Continual improvement on WSC score				

3.3 Opportunities for everyone to work, learn, create, play, and share				
<i>Participation rates in kindergarten for 4-year-olds (SDG 4.2.2)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Participation rate 91.89%	Participation rate 89.9% Enrolment rate is 98.7%	Participation rate 93% Enrolment rate is 99.1%	Participation rate 97% Enrolment rate is 98.1%	Participation rate 102% Enrolment rate is 98.1%
2025 Target – Better than Gippsland average				
<i>Active library members in municipality (SDG 4.6)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2019-20) 13% active library members	10.68% active library members	10% active library members	Data not available the indicator is no longer measured	Data not available the indicator is no longer measured
2025 Target – 15%				
<i>Participation in Council-run performing arts events (SDG 4.7)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2018-19) 21,300 visits	17,296 visits (18.79% decrease on baseline)	20,652 visits (3.04% decrease on baseline)	21,324 visits (0.11% increase on baseline)	18,615 visits (12.6% decrease on baseline)
2025 Target – Increase by 2%				
<i>Participation in Gippsland Art Gallery programs and events (SDG 4.7)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2018-19) 39,600 visits	48,475 visits (includes 26,000 visits to the Archibald Prize) (22.41% increase on baseline)	39,611 visits (0.02% increase on baseline)	57,337 visits (44.79% increase on baseline)	35,508 visits (10.33% decrease on baseline)
2025 Target – Increase by 2%				
3.Improved access to and participation in support services focusing on those who are vulnerable including: young children, youth, people living with a disability and seniors				
<i>Availability of NDIS services within Wellington Shire to meet service demand (SDG 10.2)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) 49% of NDIS funding used by participants	LGA data not available, overall Victorian result 72% of NDIS funding used by participants	70% of NDIS funding used by participants as at Q4 2022/23	71% of NDIS funding used by participants as at Q4 2023/24	71% of NDIS funding used by participants as at Q3 2024/25
2025 Target – 80% NDIS funding used by participants				
<i>Proportion of children attending Maternal and Child Health 3.5 years ages and stages visit (SDG 3.8)</i>				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2017) 71.3%	Yarram & District Health Service 52% Central Gippsland Health Service 45%	Yarram & District Health Service 29.2% Central Gippsland Health Service 65.2%	Yarram & District Health Service 38% Central Gippsland Health Service 60.82%	Data not available until November 2025
2025 Target – 90%				

Major Initiatives

The following table reports the progress of the Major Initiatives identified in the 2024/25 budget.

Communities, Facilities and Emergencies	
3.1.1 - Major Initiative	Status
Implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to build relationships, improve cultural awareness and reconciliation with Gunaikurnai people, and deliver on cultural, environmental, and economic projects in the spirit of the Gunaikurnai Whole of Country Plan.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council continues to partner with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) on key projects. As mutually agreed, a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is not the preferred method to progress our partnership. Instead, the focus has moved towards Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's,) with specific outcomes, on shared priority areas and projects.	
3.4.1 - Major Initiative	Status
Investigate gaps in service provision for vulnerable community members, review options and determine Council's future role.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council continues to provide community programming and initiatives to vulnerable groups within the community. Advocacy, capacity building and partnerships as established through the Wellington Health and Wellbeing Coalition are key mechanisms utilised by Council and key stakeholders. Each life age and stage are considerations when planning, mapping and benchmarking services and programming.	
3.4.2 - Major Initiative	Status
In response to the Federal Government reforms for Home and Community Care determine the most appropriate supports to be facilitated by Council for people to age positively in community.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council continues to fund an officer who focuses on strengthening community connection, strategic planning, stakeholder engagement and planning for residents who are ageing, living with a disability and from other priority groups.	
3.4.5 - Major Initiative	Status
Create a Wellington Shire Health and Wellbeing Partnership with health and community agencies which focuses on preventing, supporting and responding to health and wellbeing issues as outlined in the Healthy Wellington 2021-25 Strategy.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Wellington Health and Wellbeing Coalition has been successfully established. The coalition comprises of key health and wellbeing organisations within Wellington.	
3.4.6 - Major Initiative	Status
Use Healthy Wellington 2021-25 to focus on the health and wellbeing needs of the senior population.	Completed 100%
Prevent and address barriers to accessing community, social, health and lifelong learning services.	

Progress comment: Healthy Wellington concludes on 30 June 2025, and an evaluation of the four-year plan will be undertaken. There have been many successes under the Healthy Wellington plan related to Wellington's ageing population. The next municipal public health and wellbeing plan, Live Well in Wellington will see the continuation of policy, programming and initiatives that focus on the senior population.	
Arts and Culture	
3.1.2 - Major Initiative	Status
Facilitate activities and events that celebrate and promote inclusion and engagement of our culturally and socially diverse communities. Deliver via defining and resourcing Council and the community's role in place activation and event delivery.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council facilitated activities that celebrated and promoted inclusion and engagement of our culturally and socially diverse communities. A range of actions will continue to be delivered such as increased access to creative spaces, programming for diverse communities, strengthening knowledge of Gunaikurnai culture, enhancing pathways to employment and professional development opportunities.	
3.3.4 - Major Initiative	Status
Work with the community to understand which arts and cultural services and opportunities are important to them and facilitate development in these areas.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council is committed to understanding which arts and culture services and opportunities are important to the community and to facilitate development in these areas. This is supported through programs delivered via Council's Libraries, The Wedge Performing Arts Centre and the Gippsland Art Gallery.	

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024/25 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Communities, Facilities and Emergencies	The Communities, Facilities and Emergencies teams provide opportunities for communities to work in partnership with local government to achieve identified priorities. These teams work to ensure all members of the community have equal opportunity to participate in community activities. Special focus is given to those who have traditionally remained marginalised such as the young, elderly, disabled and transport disadvantaged.	\$586 <u>\$1,679</u> \$(1,093)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Economic Development	Council's Economic Development service aims to support business growth and employment, the sustainable management of Council's commercial properties, and the active promotion of both lifestyle opportunities and our vibrant tourism sector.	\$848 <u>\$919</u> \$(71)
Natural Environment and Parks	The Natural Environment & Parks (NEP) business unit covers a range of activities related to the operational management of public open space, which includes approximately 320 hectares of parkland and associated infrastructure, such as picnic shelters, BBQs, seating, boardwalks, fences and public toilets. The NEP business unit also proactively manages around 70,000 urban trees and is responsible for the management, design and development of parks and streetscapes in urban areas. While also being responsible for moving the Wellington community towards a more sustainable future by managing waste and resource recovery services including kerbside collection, recycling, transfer station/landfill operations, community education and the coordination of sustainability projects. Key priority areas include biodiversity, water consumption and quality, waste management and energy use.	\$7,859 <u>\$7,503</u> \$356
Leisure Services	The Leisure Services unit provides services and functions directed at fostering a healthier and more active community through the facilitation and provision of a range of recreation, fitness and community activities and programs at Council's recreation facilities. They ensure Council owned recreation facilities are managed sustainably, are fully utilised and accessible to people of all abilities.	\$1,654 <u>\$1,170</u> \$484
Municipal Services	The Municipal Services unit works with people to ensure the life, health and safety of the community is maintained through educating and enforcing Environmental Health (including food safety support programs), Building and Local Laws regulations and animal management services.	\$156 <u>\$1,174</u> \$(1,018)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost <u>Actual</u> <u>Budget</u> Variance \$000
Arts and Culture	The Art Gallery and Libraries, as part of the Arts & Culture unit, seek to assist in the development of a vibrant, culturally active community that:	Arts & Culture \$854 <u>\$681</u> \$173
	• promotes expression and participation through visual, literary and performing arts;	Libraries \$1,407 <u>\$1,274</u> \$133
	• informs and educates the community on various aspects of the arts;	
	• enhances the lifestyle of Wellington residents; and	Art Gallery \$1,148 <u>\$818</u> \$330
	• encourages visitors to explore the heritage and culture of the region.	

Service Performance Indicators

The following table presents the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), along with explanatory comments to provide context and interpretation of the outcomes.

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Aquatic Facilities				
Service standard AF2 - Health inspections of aquatic facilities [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Comment: Microbiological testing and inspections were conducted across all eight of Council's aquatic facilities during the current year.				
Utilisation AF6 - Utilisation of aquatic facilities [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Population]	3.70	5.15	3.69	3.46
Comment: The ongoing Aqua Energy redevelopment project, including the closure of the indoor pools, continues to negatively affect memberships and attendance, resulting in reduced overall utilisation of Council's aquatic facilities.				
Service cost AF7 - Cost of aquatic facilities [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	\$9.03	\$7.81	\$11.82	\$13.86
Comment: As a result of reduced memberships and attendance driven by the ongoing Aqua Energy redevelopment and the closure of indoor pools overall utilisation of Council's aquatic facilities has declined, leading to a continued increase in the unit cost to Council.				
Animal Management				
Timeliness AM1 - Time taken to action animal management requests [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	1.10	1.12	1.16	1.32
Comment: Local Laws officers responded to 1,286 domestic animal management requests during the 2024/25 financial year, with an average initial response time of 1.3 days. Animal management requests included lost, wandering or nuisance pets, animal welfare concerns, dog attack reports, reports of dangerous/menacing dogs and reports of unregistered/illegal pet breeding facilities.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Animal Management (continued)				
Service standard AM2 - Animals reclaimed [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x 100	71.69%	67.25%	64.48%	59.62%
Comment: During the 2024/25 year, 572 registerable domestic animals were collected by Council's Local Laws officers. Of these 341 were reunited with their owners. Unclaimed animals are placed into the care of Victorian Animal Aid Trust and if suitable, rehomed through their pet adoption program.				
AM5 - Animals rehomed [Number of unclaimed collected animals rehomed / Number of unclaimed collected animals] x 100	25.37%	32.75%	67.81%	86.58%
Comment: Through the dedicated work of Victorian Animal Aid Trust, 200 unclaimed animals were rehomed during the 2024/25 financial year. Unclaimed animals took an average of 45 days to be successfully rehomed.				
Service cost AM6 - Cost of animal management service per population [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	\$19.99	\$20.05	\$19.64	\$22.13
Comment: Direct animal management costs for the 2024/25 financial year are estimated at \$1,029,770, equating to \$22.13 per head of population. This increase is primarily attributed to higher Pound Management fees, driven by a rise in the number of animals seized and held for extended periods.				
Health and Safety AM7 - Animal management prosecutions [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions]	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Comment: During the 2024/25 financial year, 15 successful animal management prosecutions were finalised. These prosecutions addressed serious dog attacks, unregistered breeders, and animal cruelty matters.				
Food Safety				
Timeliness FS1 - Time taken to action food complaints [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Comment: In 2024, Council received 14 food safety related complaints, four fewer than in 2023. To reduce risks to the community, Council prioritises prompt responses to food safety concerns. This commitment is reflected in the 2024 results, with all food safety related complaints being responded to within one day.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Food Safety (continued)				
Service standard FS2 - Food safety assessments [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>] x 100	100.00%	88.89%	94.74%	100.00%
Comment: In 2024, a total of 27 premises required food safety assessments, with 27 assessments completed. The overall number of premises requiring assessment has fluctuated compared to previous years due to new business registrations, closures, and changes in business operations.				
Service cost FS3 - Cost of food safety service [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>] x 100	\$420.88	\$418.12	\$386.45	\$422.87
Comment: Direct cost of Council's food safety program per registered and notifiable food premises is \$422.87. This reflects an increase from the 2023/24 year, primarily due to data cleansing efforts that reduced the number of premises requiring food safety services.				
Health and safety FS4 - Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x 100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100%
Comment: In the 2024 calendar year, 16 non-compliance notifications were issued. Each of the identified food premises received one or more follow-up inspections to ensure compliance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> .				
FS5 – The percentage of food samples obtained per required number of food samples [Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] x 100	New	New	108%	110.81%
Comment: In 2024, the <i>Food Act 1984</i> (Section 32A) required Wellington Shire Council to procure 74 (10 Class 1 and 64 Class 2) samples from food premises. 82 samples were obtained during the registration period - 18 Class 1 and 64 Class 2.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Libraries				
Resource currency LB2 - Recently purchased library collection [Number of library collection items purchased in the last 5 years / Number of library collection items] x 100	55.76%	56.00%	57.77%	60.96%
Comment: This year, we've seen a significant uplift in our collection standards, driven by more effective collection management. This progress is enabling us to build a contemporary collection that remains current and relevant to the needs of our community.				
Service cost LB5 - Cost of library service per population [Direct cost of the library service / Population]	\$31.11	\$34.27	\$35.29	\$34.71
Comment: The reduction in library costs for the 2024/25 financial year is primarily due to a decrease in the number of casual staff shifts.				
Utilisation LB6 - Loans per head of population [Number of library collection item loans / Population]	New	New	4.56	4.58
Comment: The number of library loans has remained steady compared to last year, supported by the continued expansion of traditional lending to include e-resources, technology, and online services throughout the 2024/25 financial year.				
Participation LB7 - Library membership [Number of registered library members / Population] x 100	New	New	21%	21.80%
Comment: Library memberships increased in the 2024/25 financial year, reflecting the continued popularity and relevance of our services to the community.				
LB8 - Library visits per head of population [Number of library visits / Population]	New	New	5.35	4.87
Comment: Library visitation continues to be very strong indicating that library spaces and services are being well utilised. Although the overall 2024/25 visitation is lower than previous years this can be attributed to Stratford Library being closed for renovations for over 2 months.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)				
Service standard				
MC2 - Infant enrolments in the MCH service [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Comment:				
Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.				
Service cost				
MC3 - Cost of the MCH service [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked MCH nurses]	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Comment:				
Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.				
Participation				
MC4 - Participation in the MCH service [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Comment:				
Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.				
MC5 - Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Comment:				
Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.				
Satisfaction				
MC6 - Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notification received] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Comment:				
Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.				

Strategic Direction Four: Services and Infrastructure

Indicators of Success

The following table monitors Council's progress in achieving Strategic Direction Four.

4.1 A financially sustainable, high performing organisation				
Working capital (Current assets as a percentage of current liabilities) (SDG 16.6)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(Similar Councils 2019-20) 299.58%	324.89% *corrected from 326.58%	470.80% *corrected from 409.98%	460.68%	410.00%
2025 Target – Better than similar Councils				
Loans and borrowings as a percentage of rates (SDG 16.6)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(Similar Councils 2019-20) 18.73%	1.13%	0.67%	10.21%	10.21%
2025 Target – Better than similar Councils				
4.2 Services deliver operating efficiencies and best value				
Community Satisfaction with Council's overall performance (SDG 16.6.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 62/100 (Large Rural was 55/100)	Wellington Shire 62/100 (Large Rural 55/100)	Wellington Shire 58/100 (Large Rural 52/100)	Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 50/100)	Wellington Shire 58/100 (Large Rural 50/100)
2025 Target – Continual improvement on WSC score				
4.3 Well planned and sustainable towns, facilities and infrastructure				
Reduction in the Wellington Shire retail vacancy rate (SDG 11.a)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2021) 6.7%* Baseline corrected from 11.40%	6.0%	7.98%	4.0%	4.5%
2025 Target – 10%				
% of Community Managed Facilities accessibility audit recommendations delivered (SDG 9.1)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) 5% items	10% audit recommendations delivered	12% audit recommendations delivered	14% audit recommendations delivered	0% audit recommendations delivered
2025 Target – 10% each year				

4.4 Safe and well-used transport connections across all modes of travel				
Community Satisfaction with condition of sealed local roads (SDG 9.1)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2020) Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural was 47/100)	Wellington Shire 54/100 (Large Rural 45/100)	Wellington Shire 50/100 (Large Rural 40/100)	Wellington Shire 50/100 (Large Rural 38/100)	Wellington Shire 51/100 (Large Rural 39/100)
2025 Target – >52/100				
Increase in kilometres of active travel routes in Wellington Shire as identified under the Urban Paths Plan (SDG 11.2)				
Baseline	2021/22 Result	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Result	2024/25 Result
(2021) 259km* *corrected from 237km	264km (2km annual increase target met)	269.5km (2km annual increase target met)	271.44km (2km annual increase target not met)	274.42km (2km annual increase target met)
2025 Target – Increase by 2km of paths annually				

Major Initiatives

The following table reports the progress of the Major Initiatives identified in the 2024/25 budget.

Communities, Facilities and Emergencies	
4.4.2 - Major Initiative	Progress
Advocate strongly to State Government and local stakeholders for improvements to the inter-town transport network connecting major towns to key regional centres in Gippsland.	Completed 100%
Progress comment: Council continues to advocate for inter-town connection to state bodies. Investigation into various funding sources and initiatives are continually being investigated and, reviewed with a focus on community run transport programs when appropriate.	
Chief Executive Officer	
4.4.1 - Major Initiative	Progress
Advocate strongly to State Government and local stakeholders for improvements to the passenger train service to key regional centres.	Ongoing 90%
Progress comment: Council continues to advocate to the Minister for Transport for an increase in train services for Sale. Awaiting completion of level crossing removal program.	

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024/25 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Assets and projects	The Assets and Projects unit manages a diverse range of services for Council including the implementation and management of capital projects across the organisation in the order of \$41 million to \$50 million per annum and providing asset management and information systems and support.	\$1,774 <u>\$2,435</u> \$(661)
Built Environment	The Built Environment unit manages the maintenance, renewal and improvement of Council's road and boating infrastructure, in addition to various civic facilities and buildings, including roadways, paths, drainage, boat ramps and jetties etc. This includes planning for new infrastructure development opportunities and managing Council's road maintenance teams and ensures that maintenance of Council's road and other infrastructure is performed in a coordinated way to maximise benefits to the community and other users.	\$3,156 <u>\$8,144</u> \$(4,988)
Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Team	This area of governance includes the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Management Team and associated support which covers service provision across the entire organisation.	\$2,328 <u>\$4,298</u> \$(1,970)
Communities, Facilities and Emergencies	The Communities, Facilities & Emergencies team provides services and functions directed at fostering a healthy, well serviced community with a primary focus on community infrastructure planning, priorities and projects; project funding attraction; management and governance of community facilities and administration of Council's community assistance grants scheme. The team plans for and supports recreation facilities that encourage the community to participate in physical and general wellbeing activities and the development of community infrastructure that addresses community service needs.	\$2,571 <u>\$2,640</u> \$(69)
Finance	The Finance unit provides financial, payroll, rating and property valuation services to the organisation, community and external stakeholders. These services underpin the drive to be a financially sustainable Council, comply with the necessary legislative requirements and meet community needs. The unit also aims to provide a safe, reliable and sustainable fleet of vehicles to support the organisation in achieving its goals. The significant procurement goal is that of gaining good value from our purchasing.	\$2,868 <u>\$3,476</u> \$(608)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance \$000
Information Services	The Information Services unit provides a range of cost effective, centralised, and integrated services related to technology, data management, cybersecurity, ICT infrastructure and telecommunications, Information Management, Business Systems and Application Management and new and emerging technologies; to assist Council to meet its business and legislative requirements and to support Council staff to deliver services in a smart, productive, and efficient way.	\$4,571 <u>\$5,324</u> \$(753)
Communications and Media	The Communications and Media Business Unit offers comprehensive support across communications, media, community engagement, and advocacy. With a focus on keeping the Wellington Shire community well-informed about Council projects, initiatives, and events, the team utilises a range of digital and traditional media channels. Additionally, the Communications and Media team plays a crucial role in supporting the organisation's brand and reputation, ensuring transparency, consistency, and clarity across all messaging and engagement opportunities.	\$944 <u>\$982</u> \$(38)
People and Capability	The People & Capability unit provides expert and responsive advice and services in providing end-to-end Human Resources Management.	\$1,403 <u>\$1,486</u> \$(83)
Municipal Services	The Municipal Services unit works with people to ensure the life, health and safety of the community is maintained through educating and enforcing Environmental Health (including food safety support programs), Building and Local Laws regulations and animal management services.	\$534 <u>\$549</u> \$(15)
Economic Development	Council's Economic Development service aims to support business growth and employment, the sustainable management of Council's commercial properties, and the active promotion of both lifestyle opportunities and our vibrant tourism sector.	\$(2,387) <u>\$213</u> \$(2,600)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost <u>Actual</u> <u>Budget</u> Variance \$000
Organisational Performance and Governance	The Organisational Performance & Governance business unit is responsible for delivering legislated and strategic services and expert advice to the organisation in the areas of: Governance: Corporate Governance and compliance including Council Meetings, Conflicts of Interest, Delegations and Authorisations, Gifts Benefits and Hospitality declarations, Council elections, Councillor orientation induction and training, Council policy management and Business Continuity Planning. Integrated planning and reporting: Coordination and delivery of all levels of Council's planning, including the development, engagement and monitoring of the Council Plan, and the operationalisation of the Council Plan through business unit planning, service delivery indicators and the annual reporting of achievements. Insurance and risk management: Coordination and delivery of activities to mitigate risk, including the risk management framework, organisational insurance and claims management.	\$3,867 <u>\$3,286</u> \$581

Service Performance Indicators

The following table presents the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures, as outlined in the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), along with explanatory comments to provide context and interpretation of the outcomes.

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Governance				
Transparency				
G1 - Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public [Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x 100	4.21%	4.39%	3.35%	8.48%
Comment: Council made a total of 224 resolutions during the 2024–25 financial year, with 19 decisions (8.48%) made in meetings closed to the public. Decisions relating to leave requests from Councillors are considered in closed sessions due to the sensitive nature of these matters. Of the 19 closed session decisions, 9 specifically related to Councillor leave. All meetings open to the public are broadcast live via Council's website and archived online for future access. Council remains committed to transparency and accountability and actively seeks to minimise the number of decisions made in closed sessions.				
Consultation and engagement				
G2 - Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	55.00	53.00	53.00	52.00
Comment: Councils' participation in the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in a community satisfaction rating that was four points above the large rural average and two points higher than the state-wide average. This reflects positively on Council's performance in community consultation and engagement processes.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Governance (continued)				
Attendance G3 - Councillor attendance at council meetings [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council meeting / (Number of Council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election] x 100	92.75%	93.72%	92.75%	100.00%
Comment: Councillors demonstrated a strong commitment to serving the community, reflected in a 100% attendance rate across 22 ordinary Council meetings and one unscheduled meeting during the 2024/25 financial year. The continued use of a hybrid meeting model combining in-person and virtual attendance supports a high level of participation.				
Service cost G4 - Cost of elected representation [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]	\$45,334.88	\$50,451.00	\$54,134.93	\$53,878.33
Comment: The 2024/25 result is slightly lower than the previous year. This decrease is attributed to the new prescribed training requirements, which have led to most Councillor training being delivered in group settings, reducing the cost of individual sessions.				
Satisfaction G5 - Satisfaction with council decisions [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	59.00	54.00	53.00	55.00
Comment: The satisfaction score for Council decision making as measured by the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in a two-point increase compared to last year. Council notes that the large rural average and state-wide average resulted in a decline of two points. Wellington's results are 9 points higher than the large rural average and 6 points higher than the state-wide average.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Roads				
Satisfaction of use R1 - Sealed local road requests [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	26.17	26.09	20.53	14.72
Comment: The number of customer action requests for local sealed roads has decreased by approximately 28% when compared to the previous 2023/24 financial year. While Wellington Shire did experience some heavy storm and rain events, extended dry weather periods likely contributed to a further reduction in road-related requests. Council has continued to focus on rehabilitating roads in poor condition as well as roads impacted by emergencies through both capital and maintenance programs. In 2025/26, Wellington Shire Council will increase its investment in road resealing and re-sheeting.				
Condition R2 - Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	99.68%	97.84%	99.23%	99.40%
Comment: The percentage of roads below the set condition level has improved slightly to 99.40%, up from 99.22% in the previous year. This continued improvement reflects Wellington Shire Council's sustained focus on renewing and rehabilitating sealed roads in poor condition, particularly those impacted by past emergency events. While the frequency of major storm and rain events has eased compared to previous years, Council has maintained its investment in road infrastructure through both capital and maintenance programs. In 2024/25, works began to target roads approaching the set condition threshold, helping to prevent further deterioration and extend the life of the network.				
Service cost R3 - Cost of sealed local road reconstruction [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$44.83	\$57.03	\$52.50	\$67.56
Comment: The cost of sealed local road reconstruction has increased approximately 30% compared to the previous financial year. Council's 2024/25 capital works program contained several urban road reconstruction jobs which typically have higher costs due to increased traffic management and treatment type compared to rural road reconstructions. This has likely resulted in a higher average rate compared to the previous year.				

Service / indicator / measure [Formula]	Results			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Roads (continued)				
Service cost R4 - Cost of sealed local road resealing [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$3.67	\$4.65	\$4.72	\$5.52
Comment: In 2024/25, the unit rate for Wellington Shire Council's road resealing program has increased notably compared to the 2023/24 financial year. This increase is likely attributed to ongoing price pressures in key materials such as bitumen and oil, which continue to affect the cost of delivering infrastructure projects. These rising input costs have impacted not only the resealing program but also broader operational activities across the Shire. Additionally, Council re-tendered its reseal program in 2024/25 which has updated our prices in line with the current market.				
Satisfaction R5 - Satisfaction with sealed local roads [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	54.00	50.00	50.00	51.00
Comment: Results from the 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey show a slight increase in community satisfaction with Wellington Shire's sealed local roads, rising by one point compared to the 2024 survey. This brings the score to 51 points, placing Wellington Shire 12 points above the average for similar Large Rural Councils. The improvement may reflect the benefits of recent road rehabilitation efforts, as Council continues to prioritise the renewal of sealed roads in poor condition through both its capital and maintenance programs. Despite ongoing cost pressures and resource constraints, Wellington Shire increased its investment in road resealing and re-sheeting in 2025, enabling more extensive works across the network. These efforts aim to enhance road safety and surface quality which may have contributed to the slight uplift in community sentiment. Wellington Shire Council manages a road network of 3,116 km, comprising 1,547 km of sealed roads and 1,569 km of unsealed roads.				

6.0 Governance & Management

6.1 Governance

Council is committed to maintaining high standards of governance, promoting ethical conduct, and proactively managing risk. Constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council provides leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and its community.

Council has a number of roles including:

- considering the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making;
- providing leadership through the establishment of strategic objectives and monitoring performance;
- managing resources in a responsible and accountable manner;
- advocating on behalf of the community to other levels of government and external stakeholders;
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging active civic participation.

A strong focus is placed on effective corporate governance, which serves as the foundation for Council's ability to deliver on community priorities and maintain public trust. This includes transparent decision-making, responsible resource management, and adherence to legislative and ethical standards. The community plays an active role in shaping Council's direction through a range of engagement opportunities, including consultation activities, public forums, and the ability to make formal submissions on key issues and initiatives.

Transparency and accountability are central to Council's operations. Decisions are made through robust processes and systems, with officers supported to implement them appropriately and in line with legislative and policy requirements. Council is committed to operating efficiently, impartially, and with integrity.

Formal decision-making is carried out through scheduled Council meetings and through delegated authority to staff. These delegations are exercised in line with adopted policies and relevant legislation, ensuring that decisions are implemented in a consistent, effective, and accountable manner.

Meetings of Council

Meetings of the Council are held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 5pm, excluding January. Council meeting procedures are outlined in the Council's Governance Rules.

Council meetings provide the opportunity for community members to submit a question to the Council either in person or online. Interested members of the public may attend Council meetings in person or view live stream over the internet. Council meeting agendas, minutes and video recordings are available on Council's website at <https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/council/meeting-minutes-and-agendas>.

Council held a total of 23 Council Meetings during 2024/25:

- 21 Ordinary Council Meetings; and
- Two Unscheduled Council Meetings for the following purposes:
 - Swearing in the new Council in November 2024; and
 - Receiving Budget Submissions in May 2025.

Councillor Meeting Attendance 2024/25

The following tables provide a summary of Councillor attendance at Council meetings for the 2024/25 financial year.

Councillors in office from 1 July 2024 to 26 October 2024 (8 meetings held during this timeframe)

Councillor	Council meetings attended
Cr Ian Bye (Mayor)	7 of 8 meetings
Cr Carolyn Crossley	6 of 8 meetings
Cr Gayle Maher (Deputy Mayor)	6 of 8 meetings
Cr Marcus McKenzie	8 of 8 meetings
Cr Carmel Ripper	8 of 8 meetings
Cr Scott Rossetti	8 of 8 meetings
Cr Garry Stephens	7 of 8 meetings
Cr John Tatterson	8 of 8 meetings
Cr Jill Wood	8 of 8 meetings

Councillors in office from 18 November 2024 to 30 June 2025 (15 meetings held during this timeframe)

Councillor	Council meetings attended
Cr Catherine Bannerman	13 of 15 meetings
Cr Liz Foat	14 of 15 meetings
Cr Edward Lowe	15 of 15 meetings
Cr Cindy Madeley (Deputy Mayor)	15 of 15 meetings
Cr Carmel Ripper	14 of 15 meetings
Cr Scott Rossetti (Mayor)	14 of 15 meetings
Cr Garry Stephens	15 of 15 meetings
Cr John Tatterson	13 of 15 meetings
Cr Geoff Wells	13 of 15 meetings

Note: All instances of Councillor absence in the above tables are attributed to approved leave.

However, non-attendance at a Council meeting due to an approved leave of absence is counted as an attendance for the purposes of calculating LGPRF service performance indicator G3 – Councillor attendance at council meetings, as reflected in section 6.3 'Governance and Management checklist'.

Delegated Committees

Delegated committees have the powers, duties and functions of Council as set out in the applicable Instrument of Delegation and Terms of Reference. Wellington Shire Council does not currently have any delegated committees.

Councillor participation on Committees (as of 30 June 2025)

Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees have been established to assist Council and the community in a number of areas. These committees are generally governed by a Terms of Reference endorsed by Council and may consist of Councillors, Council Officers and community members as determined by the Terms of Reference.

Advisory Committees do not have decision making authority. Their purpose is to provide information or advice to Council to assist it in its decision-making role.

Advisory Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Aqua Energy Redevelopment – Project Reference Group	To implement community engagement, planning and review processes for the Aqua Energy Redevelopment Project, providing a forum for information to stakeholders in terms of project progress.	Councillor Tatterson Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor)
Audit & Risk Committee	To assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for financial and non-financial reporting and performance, management of risk, information services governance, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and facilitating the organisation's ethical development.	Councillor Bannerman Councillor Lowe
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee	To oversee the review of the CEO's performance as per the terms and conditions of the contract of employment.	Councillor Rossetti (Mayor) Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Stephens
Gippsland Art Gallery Advisory Group	To provide input to the Council on the operation, policy development and future planning of Gippsland Art Gallery.	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Foat (alternate)
Gippsland Regional Sports Complex User Group Committee	To provide advice, information, and feedback in relation to operational, maintenance and use of Gippsland Regional Sports Complex. Also, to share information with other users of the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex.	Councillor Lowe Councillor Wells (alternate)
Place Names Committee	To make recommendations to Council on naming issues.	Councillor Ripper Councillor Foat Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor)
Port of Sale Masterplan Implementation Steering Committee	To facilitate the coordinated implementation of the key elements of the Port of Sale Masterplan.	Councillor Ripper Councillor Foat Councillor Wells

Advisory Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Remuneration Committee	To monitor and review Councillor expenses, Councillor allowances in line with the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal determinations for adjustments, Enterprise Bargaining Agreements and any other related matters that may arise.	Councillor Rossetti (Mayor) Councillor Bannerman Councillor Ripper
Strategic Land Use Planning and Economic Development Group	To provide local Councillor input into and review the range of current strategic planning projects and Planning Scheme Amendments.	Councillor Foat Councillor Tatterson Councillor Bannerman
Wellington Disability Advisory Committee	To provide advice to Wellington Shire Council on matters relating to access and inclusion for people living with a disability.	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Stephens (alternate)
Wellington Youth Service Network	To optimise the quality of life of all young people within the Wellington Shire.	Councillor Bannerman
Wellington Shire Youth Council	To develop and deliver projects and campaigns, and advocate for young people in Wellington	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Bannerman (alternate)

Community Asset Committees

Under section 65 of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Council may establish one or more Community Asset Committees, made up of any combination of Councillors, Council Officers and community members or organisations as determined by Council.

Community Asset Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Briagolong Recreation Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Briagolong Recreation Reserve.	No current Councillor representative
Cameron Sporting Complex Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Cameron Sporting Complex, Maffra.	Councillor Tatterson
Gordon Street Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Gordon Street Reserve.	No current Councillor representative
Maffra Recreation Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Maffra Recreation Reserve.	Councillor Wells
Newry Recreation Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Newry Recreation Reserve.	No current Councillor representative

Other groups

These groups and statutory committees are subject to formal Council approval processes.

Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Wellington Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	A multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisational, industry or personal expertise to the task of emergency management planning for Wellington Shire. Councillors fulfill the role of Community representatives on the Committee.	Councillor Stephens Councillor Lowe (alternate)
Business Boost Reference Group (Business Recovery Sub-committee)	To provide a forum for representatives of business associations and Council to share information and feedback relating to economic development activity across Wellington Shire.	Councillor Foat Councillor Tatterson
Wellington Renewable Energy Forum	To demonstrate support and provide input to the Renewable Energy projects and proposals in Wellington Shire.	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor) Councillor Foat Councillor Wells
Sale Performance Space Fundraising Committee	To maintain a public fund into which the public may contribute towards the construction, maintenance, upgrade and expansion of Council owned cultural spaces, facilities and equipment.	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor)

Committees of other organisations

Councillors are often requested or required to represent Council via participation on Committees formed by other organisations.

Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Gippsland Climate Change Network Incorporated	To provide Gippsland, at an individual and organisational level; information, consultation, and facilitation to enable action on climate change, whilst also providing a voice for Gippsland on climate change issues.	Councillor Madeley (Deputy Mayor)
Municipal Association of Victoria	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.	Councillor Rossetti (Mayor) Councillor Tatterson (alternate)
Rural Councils Victoria (RCV) Committee	RCV is a representative body and has both CEOs and Councillors on its Committee. RCV has six regions and a CEO and Councillor from each region is elected to the Committee for a four-year term. This process will occur at the end of 2025.	Councillor Bannerman
Southeast Australian Transport Strategy	Integrated transport strategy for Southeast Australia.	Councillor Tatterson
Star of the South Community Advisory Group	The Star of the South Community Advisory Group (the Group) is one avenue for community involvement in the Star of the South project (the Project) and will be an important point of connection between the Project and the Gippsland community.	Councillor Bannerman Councillor Wells (alternate)
National Timber Council Association Inc	To pursue a variety of issues relevant to local governments that have forest industries/timber issues with the Federal Government.	Councillor Bannerman
Timber Towns Victoria	To pursue a variety of issues relevant to local governments which have forest industries in Victoria and keep abreast of the issues and trends in forestry development that may have an impact upon rural communities.	Councillor Bannerman
Gippsland Critical Minerals Community Advisory Group	To provide a vital link between the project team for the Fingerboards Mine Project (the Project) and the local community and to foster transparent, inclusive, meaningful and constructive engagement, ensuring the community's views, concerns and aspirations help shape key project milestones.	Councillor Wells

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

As a result of the Victorian Government's Local Government Governance and Integrity reforms, from 26 October 2024 all Councillors are required to observe the Model Code of Conduct which is prescribed in Schedule 1 of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

The Model Code of Conduct replaces the previous statutory requirement for Council to develop its own Councillor Code of Conduct. The Model Code of Conduct establishes clear standards for the behaviour and responsibilities of Councillors.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct is displayed on Council's website and internal Councillor resource homepage for reference.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest and duty is about transparency and accountability. Councillors hold positions of public trust and should always work to serve the interests of the community, not themselves or someone else's interests. Councillors must act with integrity and not inappropriately benefit or be influenced by improperly using their position.

A conflict of interest arises when an individual has an interest that could improperly influence, or be seen to influence, their decisions or the performance of their Council duties. The *Local Government Act 2020*, Conflict of Interest Policy and Governance Rules require each Councillor to identify, manage, and disclose any conflicts of interest which they may have. Failure to disclose any conflicts is a breach of the *Local Government Act 2020* and penalties may apply.

Section 132 of the *Local Government Act 2020* also requires Councillors to submit an 'initial personal interests return' and 'biannual personal interests return' in March and September every year. Council meets the requirements of the Act and publishes the summary of personal interests on the Council's website.

During 2024/25, the following conflicts of interest were declared at Ordinary Council meetings:

Date of declaration	Councillor	Meeting date and item that raised conflict of interest
29/08/2024	Councillor Maher	3 September 2024 - Item 15.3 - Glass and Mixed Recycling Processing Contract
3/09/2024	Councillor Stephens	3 September 2025 - Item 13.2 - Community Assistance Grants July 2024
14/10/2024	Councillor Maher	15 October 2024 - Item 13.1 - Monthly Planning Decisions August 2024
3/12/2024	Councillor Stephens	3 December 2024 - Item 12.4 - Quick Response Grants
1/04/2025	Councillor Madeley	1 April 2025 - Item 14.1 - Quick Response Grants
1/04/2025	Councillor Foat	1 April 2025 - Item 13.1 - Plant and Equipment Services Panel Tender 2025 147
20/05/2025	Councillor Stephens	20 May 2025 - Item 16.1 - Community Assistance Grants
17/06/2025	Councillor Foat	17 June 2025 - Item 14.1 - Amendment C122well Public Acquisition Overlay

Councillor Allowances

Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a Councillor pursuant to section 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor receive a higher allowance. Allowance amounts are specified by a Determination of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (VIRT) under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*. Wellington Shire Council is classified as a Category 2 Council. Council Allowances are paid monthly, and a pro-rata adjustment made with the change of Mayor, Deputy Mayor and with the change of Councillors following the General Election.

In the financial year of 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, the VIRT determined the following increases:

- 1 July 2024: 3.5% increase to the values of the base allowances payable to the Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors
- 18 December 2024: a 2.63% increase to the values of the base allowances, applicable to Mayors and Deputy Mayors only.

Table 1 provides the allowance amounts set during the financial year. The allowance is inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution amount, or equivalent, that may be payable under Commonwealth law to the Council member with respect to their service. Allowances were not paid during the Council Election period from 27 October 2024 to 17 November 2024.

Table 1

Councillor role	Base allowance 01/07/2024 – 17/12/2024	Base allowance 18/12/2024 – 30/06/2025
Mayor	\$109,114	\$111,987
Deputy Mayor	\$54,558	\$55,994
Councillor	\$34,028	\$34,028 (no change)

Table 2 contains a summary of the allowances paid to each Councillor during the 2024/25 year

Councillor	Term of Office during the financial year	Allowance
Cr Catherine Bannerman	18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$20,968.53
Cr Ian Bye	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Mayor allowance	\$35,179.55
Cr Carloyn Crossley	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69
Cr Liz Foat	18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$20,968.53
Cr Edward Lowe	18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$20,968.53
Cr Marcus McKenzie	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69
Cr Cindy Madeley	18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Deputy Mayor allowance	\$34,386.56
Cr Gayle Maher	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Deputy Mayor allowance	\$17,589.75
Cr Carmel Ripper	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance 18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69 \$20,968.53
Cr Scott Rossetti	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance 18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Mayor allowance	\$10,970.69 \$68,772.42
Cr Garry Stephens	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance 18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69 \$20,968.53
Cr John Tattersson	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance 18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69 \$20,968.53
Cr Geoff Wells	18/11/2024 to 30/06/2025 - Councillor allowance	\$20,968.53

Councillor	Term of Office during the financial year	Allowance
Cr Jill Wood	01/07/2024 to 26/10/2024 - Councillor allowance	\$10,970.69

Allowances were not paid during the Council Election period from 27 October 2024 to 17 November 2024.

Councillor expenses

In accordance with section 40 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, it is mandatory for Council to reimburse Councillors for expenses incurred while performing their official duties. Additionally, Council is required to establish and maintain a policy governing the reimbursement of expenses. The *Councillor Expense and Administration Policy* was reviewed and adopted in March 2025. This policy clearly outlines procedures for expense reimbursement, professional development, and the provision of resources, facilities, and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to assist them in fulfilling their roles.

Council publishes, within this report, detailed information on expenses paid to each Councillor, including reimbursements, in the interest of transparency and accountability.

It is a requirement for all Councillors to complete the training programs listed below in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020:

- **Councillor Induction:** Must be completed within 4 months of taking the oath or affirmation of office. This applies to all newly elected Councillors, including those filling extraordinary vacancies, regardless of prior experience
- **Annual Professional Development:** Must be completed each calendar year of the Councillor's term, beginning in the first full calendar year after election. In election years, this must be completed by 1 September
- **Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Training:** Must be completed within 1 month of appointment.

The costs associated with delivering the mandatory training programs, along with any approved individual professional development activities, are recorded under the column titled '**Professional Development**'.

In November 2025, all Councillors participated a 5-day Councillor Induction Program, which featured both internal and external presenters. For reporting purposes, the total cost of the program was evenly distributed across the nine Councillors.

Additionally, the cost of attending the external Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Training was specifically allocated to Cr Rossetti (Mayor) and Cr Madeley (Deputy Mayor).

Note: Council does not have any delegated committees and accordingly does not report on delegated committee expenses.

Table 3 provides a detailed breakdown of Councillor expenses incurred during the 2024/25 financial year.

Councillor	Period in office	Travel	Remote area allowance	Professional Development	Mobile phone	Conferences	Office & other expenses
Cr Catherine Bannerman	18/11/24 - 30/06/25			2,368.29	216.56	2,530.92	709.04
Total							5,824.81

Councillor	Period in office	Travel	Remote area allowance	Professional Development	Mobile phone	Conferences	Office & other expenses
Cr Ian Bye (Mayor 1 July 2024 - 26 October 2024) *	01/07/24 - 26/10/24				140.37	2,843.32	30.00
Total							3,013.69
Cr Carolyn Crossley	01/07/24 - 26/10/24				166.80	700.12	
Total							866.92
Cr Liz Foat	18/11/24 - 30/06/25	66.88		2,368.29	216.56		709.04
Total							3,360.77
Cr Edward Lowe	18/11/24 - 30/06/25			2,368.29	216.56		709.04
Total							3,293.89
Cr Cindy Madeley (Deputy Mayor 18 Nov 2024 - 30 June 2025)	18/11/24 - 30/06/25	624.80	237.50	3,974.20	216.56	2,113.87	1,026.35
Total							8,193.28
Cr Gayle Maher (Deputy Mayor 1 July 2024 - 26 October 2024)	01/07/24 - 26/10/24	1,996.82	596.70		140.37	847.65	289.09
Total							3,870.63
Cr Marcus McKenzie	01/07/24 - 26/10/24	2,725.99	902.50		140.37		
Total							3,768.86
Cr Carmel Ripper	01/07/24 - 30/06/25	2,035.23	95.00	2,368.29	349.91		709.04
Total							5,557.47
Cr Scott Rossetti	01/07/24 -	2,712.41	520.90	3918.29	505.92	4366.68	808.64

Councillor	Period in office	Travel	Remote area allowance	Professional Development	Mobile phone	Conferences	Office & other expenses
(Mayor 18 November 2024 - 30 June 2025) *	30/06/25						
Total							12,832.84
Cr Garry Stephens	01/07/24 - 30/06/25	4,324.89	1,472.50	2,573.76	349.91	368.86	822.68
Total							9,912.60
Cr John Tatterson	01/07/24 - 30/06/25	1,814.16		2,368.29	140.37	2,113.87	900.58
Total							7,337.27
Cr Geoff Wells	18/11/24 - 30/06/25		95.00	2,368.29	216.56		709.04
Total							3,388.89
Cr Jill Wood	01/07/24 - 26/10/24				349.91		
Total							349.91

Total Expenses	
Travel	16,301.18
Remote Area Allowance	3,920.10
Professional Development	24,675.99
Mobile Phone	3,366.73
Conferences	15,885.29
Office & other expenses	7,422.54

*Note: The Mayor is provided with a Wellington Shire Council owned motor vehicle at a total cost of \$3,815.35 for the financial year.

6.2 Management

Management

A range of processes are in place to support and enhance the organisation's management and governance framework. Robust systems in these areas contribute to informed decision-making and promote accountability across all levels. In line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, an assessment was conducted against the prescribed Governance and Management Checklist and included in the Report of Operations. The following items are presented as key elements of the current management framework.

Audit & Risk Committee

Under section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* Council must establish an Audit & Risk Committee to advise Council in the discharge of its responsibilities for financial reporting, risk management, maintaining a reliable system of internal controls and fostering the organisation's ethical development. Council must prepare and approve the Audit & Risk Committee Charter, that specifies the functions and responsibilities of the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Audit & Risk Committee is advisory and does not have decision making authority. The committee's role is to oversee and monitor the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management, good corporate governance, maintaining an effective system of internal control and risk management and fostering an ethical environment. The Audit & Risk Committee consists of three independent members, Mr Chris Badger (Chair), Mr Tony Smith and Dr Craig Nisbet and two Councillors. Independent members are appointed for a maximum term of three years. The Chair is elected from amongst the independent members.

The Audit & Risk Committee meets at least five times per year. The Internal Auditor, Chief Executive Officer, General Manager Corporate Services and Manager Corporate Finance attend all Audit & Risk Committee meetings. Other management representatives attend as required to present reports. Each year the External Auditors provide an external audit plan and independent audit report.

Recommendations from each Audit & Risk Committee meeting are subsequently reported to and considered by Council.

The Committee met on five occasions during 2024/25, providing advice to Council on a wide range of issues including:

- quarterly legal and insurance reports;
- risk management updates;
- financial reports;
- updates on outstanding audit recommendations;
- review of the following Council policies considered strategic in nature -
 - Acceptance & Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality Policy
 - Investment Policy
 - Fraud Control Policy
 - Corporate Credit Card Policy
 - Major Events Policy
 - Disposal of Surplus Council Equipment Policy
 - Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination & Harassment Policy
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Mobile Phones (Communication and Mobile Devices) Policy;
- Occupational Health & Safety matters; and
- information services and cyber security.

Other key outcomes for the 2024/25 year are summarised below.

In **August 2024** the Committee:

- Received and noted the internal audits on;
 - Assurance Map; and
 - Follow up review;
- Evaluated the Audit & Risk Committee performance;
- Evaluated the performance of internal audit;
- Reviewed the Strategic Risk Report;
- Reviewed the Risk Management Framework;
- Received a report on the Victorian Grants Commission advances and the impact on year end results;
- Received a report on Road Management Act processes;
- Received a budget summary of the Annemeike Mein Exhibition;
- Received a report on Related Party Transactions;
- Received a report on the Chief Executive Officer's credit card expenditure; and
- Received a report on the reimbursements made to Councillors and members of delegated Committees.

In **September 2024** the Committee:

- Reviewed the 2023/24 draft financial report and performance statement in accordance with legislative requirements;
- Received the final Management Letter for the year ending 30 June 2024; and
- Received the draft Annual Report 2023/24.

In **December 2024** the Committee:

- Received a follow up report on the Assurance Map internal audit;
- Endorsed the Strategic Risk Report;
- Received a report on operational risks that have a rating of extreme or high;
- Received a report on the Gender Equality Progress Report Compliance Assessment;
- Reviewed and agreed to proposed changes to the Audit & Risk Committee Charter;
- Received the Biannual Report to Council on Audit & Risk Committee Activities;
- Received an update on a travel refund; and
- Received a summary of the Gifts Register.

In **February 2025** the Committee:

- Elected Chris Badger as Chair of the Committee;
- Received and noted the Internal Audit on Human Resources Management;
- Reviewed the new strategic risk on statutory and regulatory requirements;
- Received a report on the VAGO follow up report on Local Government Performance;
- Received a report on the Parliamentary Inquiry into fraud and corruption control in local government;
- Received the annual report of Staff Excess Leave;
- Received a report on Related Party Transactions; and
- Received a report on the Chief Executive Officer's credit card expenditure.

In **May 2025** the Committee:

- Received and reviewed the Audit Strategy Memorandum as provided by Council's External Auditors, Crowe;
- Considered the draft Strategic Internal Audit Plan;
- Received and noted the Internal Audits on:
 - Cyber Training (with a specific focus on awareness & survey); and
 - Council Building Asset Maintenance;
- Received the VAGO report: *Results of 2023/24 Audits: Local Government*;
- Reviewed the Asset Revaluation Methodology Report;

- Evaluated the performance of internal audit;
- Reviewed and approved strategic risks;
- Received a report on operational risks that have a rating of extreme or high;
- Received an update on Council's response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into fraud and corruption control in local government;
- Received a summary of the Gifts Register; and
- Received an update on the draft 2025/26 Budget.

Internal Audit

Council's internal audit function provides independent and objective assurance that the appropriate processes and controls are in place across Council. The function is undertaken by an independent external provider. A risk-based three-year Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP) is revised annually to ensure the audit resources remain focused on the appropriate areas. The review process considers Council's risk framework, the Council Plan, the impact of any change to operations, systems or the business environment, prior audit coverage and outcomes and management input. The SIAP is reviewed and approved by the Audit & Risk Committee annually.

The Internal Auditor attends each Audit & Risk Committee meeting to report on the status of the SIAP, to provide an update on the implementation of audit recommendations and to present findings of completed reviews. All audit issues identified are risk rated. Recommendations are assigned to the responsible Manager and tracked in Council's corporate planning system. Managers provide quarterly status updates that are reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee.

The SIAP for 2024/25 was undertaken with the following reviews conducted:

- Follow Up Review – August 2024
- Assurance Map – August 2024
- Human Resources Management – February 2025
- Commercial Lease Management Practices – November 2024
- Cyber Training (With a specific focus on Awareness & Survey) – May 2025
- Council Building Asset Maintenance Services – May 2025.

External Audit

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's representatives to provide an assurance that financial statements reflect the financial position at the end of the financial year. The auditors conducted audits of Council's Financial Statements and Performance Statement for 2023/24 by testing a sample of Council's internal controls, observing processes being performed, making enquiries of key staff within Council and examining financial and accounting records and other relevant documents.

The external auditors also attended the September 2024 and May 2025 Audit & Risk Committee meetings to present the annual audit plan and Independent Audit Report. The external audit management letter and responses were also provided to the Audit & Risk Committee.

Risk Management

Council's Risk Management Framework provides a structured approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risks across the organisation. It comprises a series of guiding documents that outline the rationale for undertaking risk management and the expectations placed on staff in applying these principles in their daily work.

The *Risk Appetite Statements* and *Risk Management Strategy* were reviewed and endorsed by Council on 1 April 2025, reinforcing Council's commitment to proactive and responsible risk oversight.

A key component of the framework is Council's *Risk Register*—an online system used to record and monitor both strategic and operational risks. Each risk is assigned to a designated owner and must

be reviewed at least twice annually to ensure ongoing relevance and appropriate mitigation measures.

To support the effective implementation of the framework, staff receive regular training on risk management practices and the importance of embedding risk awareness into decision-making and service delivery. Councillors are also engaged through periodic workshops that provide updates on strategic risks, emerging issues, and Council's overall approach to managing risk.

This integrated approach ensures that risk management is not only a compliance requirement but a core element of Council's governance and operational culture.

Insurance

Council worked closely with its insurance broker to renew its comprehensive insurance portfolio, ensuring alignment with Council's identified risk profile and operational requirements. This process supports the organisation's broader risk management strategy by maintaining appropriate coverage across key areas of exposure.

As part of Council's membership in the liability insurance scheme, a range of risk management support services are available. These include access to expert advice, resources, and learning opportunities designed to strengthen organisational resilience.

Business Continuity Planning

The purpose of Council's Business Continuity Plan is to build organisational capability to deliver critical functions of Council in the event of an interruption affecting our buildings, technology, or resources. Council staff conducted risk management workshops across each Council division in June 2025. The interactive workshops involved the presentation of a business continuity event set to occur in the future, with unfolding developments.

All management staff participated in the workshop, including the CEO and General Managers. Following the workshops, a report was prepared with recommended actions for the future year.

6.3 Governance and Management Checklist

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
1	Community engagement policy (policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	The Community Engagement Strategy and Policy was adopted in accordance with Section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption of policy: 17 June 2025	✓
2	Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	The Community Engagement Strategy and Policy provides the guidelines to assist staff with how and when to engage with the community. Date of commencement of current guidelines: 17 June 2025	✓
3	Financial Plan (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	The Financial Plan 2021/22 - 2030/31 was adopted in accordance with Section 91 of the Act. Date of adoption: 19 October 2021	✓
4	Asset Plan (plan under section 92 of the Act setting out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	The Asset Plan 2021-25 was adopted in accordance with Section 92 of the Act. Date of adoption: 19 October 2021	✓
5	Revenue and Rating Plan (plan under section 93 of the Act setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Not adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act. The draft Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 was presented to Council on 18 March 2025, followed by a community engagement process which concluded in June 2025. The final Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 will be presented to Council for formal adoption on 19 August 2025. Although the statutory deadline of adoption by 30 June 2025 was not met, the delay resulted from a procedural step which was not completed during the finalisation of the document process. This has since	✗

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
		been resolved, ensuring the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 is complete and ready for formal adoption.	
6	Annual budget (plan under section 94 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken during the budget year and the funding and other resources required)	The 2025/26 Annual Budget was adopted in accordance with Section 94 of the Act. Date of adoption: 17 June 2025	✓
7	Risk policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Council has a Risk Management Policy in operation. Date of commencement of current policy: 2 July 2024	✓
8	Fraud policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Council has a Fraud Control Policy in operation. Date of commencement of current policy: 17 December 2024	✓
9	Municipal emergency management planning (Council's participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC))	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson of the MEMPC) during the financial year. Dates of meetings/sessions attended: • 22 August 2024 • 27 November 2024 • 27 February 2025 • 3 April 2025 - Community Emergency Risk Assessment session • 5 June 2025	✓
10	Procurement policy (policy under section 108 of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council)	The Procurement Policy was adopted in accordance with Section 108 of the Act. Date of adoption: 21 December 2021	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
11	Business Continuity Plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Council has a Business Continuity Plan in operation. Date of commencement of current plan: May 2025	✓
12	Disaster Recovery Plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Council has an ICT Disaster Recovery Plan in operation. External review conducted and scenario test undertaken on 29 January 2025. Date of commencement of current plan: 29 January 2025	✓
13	Complaint policy (policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints)	The Complaints Handling Policy was developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act. Date of commencement of the current policy: 17 December 2024	✓
14	Workforce Plan (plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation)	Council developed Workforce Plan 2022-2027 in accordance with section 46 of the Act. Date of commencement of the current plan: 31 December 2021	✓
15	Payment of rates and charges hardship policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates)	Council has the Rates Hardship and Debt recovery Policy in operation. Date of commencement of the current policy: 17 December 2024	✓
16	Risk management framework (framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Council has a Risk Management Framework in operation. Date of commencement of current framework: 1 April 2025	✓
17	Audit & Risk Committee (advisory committee of Council under section 53 and 54 of the Local Government Act whose role is to monitor the compliance of Council	Council established the Audit & Risk Committee in accordance with section 53 of the Act. Date of establishment:	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
	policies and procedures, monitor Council's financial reporting, monitor and provide oversight on internal and external audit functions)	1 September 2020	
18	Internal audit (independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls)	Council continues to engage the services of an internal audit provider. Date of engagement of current provider: 1 December 2024	✓
19	Performance reporting framework (a set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>)	Council measures financial and non-financial performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act. Date of commencement of the current framework: 1 July 2023	✓
20	Council Plan report (report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan including the results in relation to the strategic indicators for the first six months of the financial year)	Council Plan Reporting provided as follows: Dates reports were presented to Council: • 17 September 2024 (June 2024 Quarter) • 17 December 2024 (September 2024 Quarter) • 15 April 2025 (December 2024 Quarter) • 17 June 2025 (March 2025 Quarter)	✓
21	Quarterly budget reports (quarterly reports presented to Council under section 97 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> , comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	Quarterly Performance reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act Dates reports were presented to Council: • 20 August 2024 (June 2024 Quarter) • 15 October 2024 (September 2024 Quarter) • 4 February 2025 (December 2024 Quarter) • 15 April 2025 (March 2025 Quarter)	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
22	Risk reporting (six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Six-monthly risk reports prepared and presented risk reports to be endorsed by Audit & Risk Committee. Dates of endorsement: 9 December 2024 26 May 2025	✓
23	Performance reporting (six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Council measures financial and non-financial performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act. Date reports presented: 15 October 2024 (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025) 15 April 2025 (1 Jul 2024 – 31 Dec 2024)	✓
24	Annual report (annual report under sections 98, 99 and 100 of the Act 2020 containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	The 2023-24 Annual Report compiled under sections 98 and 99 of the Act was presented at a meeting of Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act. Date of presentation: 15 October 2024	✓
25	Councillor Code of Conduct (code under section 139 of the Act setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters)	The Model Councillor Code of Conduct was effective from 26 October 2024 and has been published on the Wellington Shire Council website.	✓
26	Delegations (documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act)	The S5 Instrument of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive was most recently reviewed on 7 March 2023 and is scheduled for review on 2 September 2025, which is within 12 months of the 2024 General Election. Date reviewed: - S5 - Instrument of Delegation from Council to CEO: 7 March 2023 - S6 Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff: 21 May 2025 - S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by Chief Executive Officer: 11 June 2025	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
		• S13 Instrument of Delegation of Chief Executive Officer Powers, Duties and Functions: 19 May 2025 • S14 Instrument of Delegation from CEO to Staff (VicSmart and Future Homes Applications): 26 February 2024 • S16 Instrument of Delegation by Chief Executive Officer for Bushfire Reconstruction: 20 September 2022 • S18 Instrument of Sub-Delegation under the <i>Environment Protection Act 2017</i>: 21 May 2025 • S19A Instrument of Delegation of the Municipal Fire Prevention Office under the <i>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</i>: 30 October 2025	
27	Meeting procedures (Governance Rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Council has current Governance Rules in accordance with section 60 of the Act. Date rules were adopted: 2 August 2022	

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council's governance and management arrangements.



David Morcom
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 6 October 2025



Cr Scott Rossetti
Mayor
Dated: 6 October 2025

6.4 Statutory Information

Documents Available for Public Inspection

Council documents and registers are available for public viewing in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Public Transparency Policy. The Public Transparency Policy has been developed in accordance with Section 57 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and was last reviewed and endorsed by Council in December 2024.

Under the policy, Council is committed to the principles of public transparency and commits to making Council information publicly available, except where the information is:

- 'Confidential Information' as defined under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, unless Council has determined by resolution that the information should be made publicly available,
- Confidential by virtue of any other Act; or
- Such that making it publicly available, would be contrary to the public interest.

Under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government Act 1989* there are specific provisions for certain information to be made publicly available, namely:

- Council Meeting Agendas and Minutes
- Local Laws and any documents incorporated
- Council Plan
- Community Vision
- Financial Plan
- Asset Plan
- Budget
- Annual Report
- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Various policies including Council's Procurement Policy, Public Transparency Policy, Acceptance and Declaration of Gifts Policy, Community Engagement Policy, Benefits and Hospitality Policy, Election Period Policy and Council Expense and Administration Policy
- Summary of Election Campaign Donation Returns
- Audit and Risk Committee Charter
- Summary of Personal Interest Returns
- Governance Rules
- Workforce Plan

This information is available by visiting www.wellington.vic.gov.au

Council will also undertake to make the following Council information available on request to ensure the community are informed and can benefit from access to information regarding Council's functions and operations:

- Register of Authorised Officers
- Register of Delegations
- Election Campaign Donation Returns Register
- List of all Leases
- List of Donations and Grants
- Record of Assembly of Councillors
- Travel Register
- Details of Chief Executive Officer reappointment and total remuneration.

Under various other Acts administered by Council, the following information will be made publicly available:

- Subject to the specified requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the following may be inspected (note that charges may apply):
 - Approved Planning Scheme Amendments
 - Panel Reports
 - Planning Permits/Applications
 - Submissions/objections
 - Planning Register
 - Planning Scheme
- Register of Building Permits and Occupancy Permits
- Copies of Building Permits, plans and documentation (by application from the property owner or persons authorised by the property owner only, charges will apply)
- Register of Animal Registrations
- Register of Public Roads
- Freedom of Information Part II Statement
- Child Safe Policy

To request council information, which is not available on Council's website, community members are advised to contact Wellington Shire Council via phone, email or in person.

Child Safe Standards

Wellington Shire Council is committed to child safety, and takes a proactive approach towards child safety, and has a zero-tolerance towards child abuse. A child safe organisation fosters and demonstrates openness, which creates a culture in which staff, volunteers, community members, parents, children and young people feel empowered and supported to safely disclose child safety or wellbeing concerns should they arise.

Council's child safe processes provide a holistic approach to ensuring the safety of young people in interactions with Council and consider the cultural safety, diverse backgrounds and needs of young people in our community, and their safety in online environments. The safety of our youngest community members is everyone's responsibility.

This year has seen a range of policy amendments to strengthen child safety components. This has included the roll out of Cultural Awareness e-learning to all staff to strengthen organisational compliance with Child Safe Standard 1 which requires organisations to establish a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children and young people.

Community Engagement

Wellington Shire Council is committed to conducting genuine and effective community engagement through community engagement that is open and clear. Council continues to embed, and is guided by, its Community Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Policy. Both documents were updated in 2025 following community consultation. The updated strategy outlines these commitments:

- Council is committed to improving transparency by focusing on officers reporting back to the community, with the understanding that the community need updates in a timely manner to feel heard and involved in the process.
- Council will continuously seek out ways to communicate with the community, reflecting that everyone accesses information differently.
- Council recognises that poor engagement may lead to mistrust of the organisation. To improve this, engagement needs to be consistent and open.
- Council commits to reducing barriers related to engagement activities, acknowledging that engagement activities should be flexible to allow for reasonable adjustments for community participation.

The 'Your Wellington Your Say' function continues to be a strong engagement tool that is used across council. This tool ensures Council is fulfilling its commitment to continue to build strong relationships with the community and ensure the decisions Council makes reflect the desires of Wellington Shire residents.

Carers Recognition

The *Carers Recognition Act 2012* formally recognises and values the role of carers and the importance of care relationships in the Victorian community. The *Carers Recognition Act 2012* defines a carer as someone who provides care to another person and includes carers under the age of 18.

Carers can provide care for a person who:

- Has a disability
- Has a mental illness
- Has an ongoing medical condition
- Is an older person with care needs.

Care relationships also include those situations where a person is being cared for in a foster, kinship or permanent care arrangement.

Within the *Carers Recognition Act 2012* Wellington Shire Council is required to report annually on its care measurement obligations under Section 11 of the Act.

Wellington Shire Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

In 2024/25, the development of the next Wellington Disability Action Plan focused on understanding and listening to the experiences and voices of carers in Wellington. As part of the wide-reaching community engagement, carers of people living with a disability were given the opportunity to express their experiences and valued knowledge.

In conjunction with the Disability Action Plan, the Wellington Disability Advisory Committee ended its two-year term, and a new committee was formally adopted by Council. The advisory committee comprises of people with lived experience, but also carers to ensure that Wellington residents who care for someone have the opportunity to advise Council on various projects, strategic plans and programs.

Disability Action Plan

The *Disability Act 2006* aims to reaffirm and strengthen the rights and responsibilities of people with a disability, which includes recognising the role that local government and community support plays in achieving this.

In accordance with section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*, as Council has prepared a Disability Action Plan it must report on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan in its annual report.

Council is currently in the final stages of drafting the next Disability Action Plan 2025-29. This plan will see Council strengthen its role as an employer, service provider, connector and leader in disability over the next four years. Inclusive and wide-reaching community engagement was conducted in preparing the next iteration of the Disability Action Plan to ensure that the voices of people living with a disability, those who care for them and service providers in the sector were recognised and included.

Contracts

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, there are no pre-specified financial thresholds above which council must seek tenders. Council has specified its own threshold of \$250,000 within its Procurement Policy.

Council's Procurement Policy specifies the principles and processes applying to the procurement of goods, services and works and promotes open and fair competition to provide value for money for council.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

An annual review of the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plans was conducted in December 2024.

The annual review of the 2021-2025 Plan highlighted the following actions throughout the past twelve months:

- 1,286 Domestic animal requests received, with an initial response time of 1.5 days.
- 9,763 domestic animals registered in the Shire
- 572 Domestic animals received at Council's pound and animal shelter. 341 were reunited with their owners and 200 successfully rehomed
- All (twenty) registered domestic animal's businesses inspected to ensure compliance with relevant codes of practice.
- Since the 24-hour cat curfew was introduced to Wellington Shire in July 2023, Council has experienced a 20% reduction in the number of domesticated cats impounded.

Complaints relating to wandering/nuisance cats also reduced. Over the first 12 months of the curfew, 81 fewer domestic cats were collected, compared with the 12 months directly preceding the cat curfew. This declining trend continues.



Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* was created to promote openness, accountability and transparency in the Victorian public service by giving the public the right to access government information.

This general right of access to information is limited only by exceptions and exemptions which have been prescribed to protect essential public interests, and the private or business affairs of people about whom information is held by the Council.

Requests for access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* must be in writing, clearly describe the documents to which access is requested and include the applicable application fee (\$32.70 - 2024/2025), unless entitled to fee waiver. Access charges are also payable under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* prior to the release of documents processed under Freedom of Information (FOI). These are charges for search time, providing supervision of inspection of documents and or photocopying charges, where applicable.

Council encourages applicants to log onto their website www.wellington.vic.gov.au prior to lodging a FOI request to view publicly available documents, the Freedom of Information (FOI) Part II Statement or to contact the Freedom of Information Officer by phoning 03 5142 3057. By contacting the FOI Officer, applicants can discuss their request, and assistance may be provided to enable clear descriptions and timeframes for which the requested documents relate, and/or provided details on how the documents can be obtained outside of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Council's Freedom of Information Part II Statement is a document, required under Section 7 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, which describes Council's powers and functions, the documents and information maintained by Council and the ways in which people can view or access copies.

Wellington Shire Council's Freedom of Information Policy is also published on Council's website www.wellington.vic.gov.au. The Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) website www.ovic.vic.gov.au also includes information for individuals on how to make an FOI request, how to request an amendment, exempt documents and more.

FOI requests can be addressed to Freedom of Information Officer, Wellington Shire Council, PO Box 506, SALE VIC 3850, or emailed to foi@wellington.vic.gov.au.

Mrs Denise Lovett, Coordinator Information Management Services, is authorised under Section 26(1) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* to make decisions in respect of Freedom of Information requests made to Wellington Shire Council.

The Principal Officer of Council is Mr David Morcom, Chief Executive Officer.

From 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, Wellington Shire Council received 21 Freedom of Information requests.

Summary of FOI requests	
New requests	21
Access granted in full	8
Access granted in part	0
Access denied	1
Requests not finalised at the end of the reporting period	2
Withdrawn	1
Requests processed outside of the <i>Freedom of Information Act</i>	4
Requests – no documents existed	2
Other: not processed, not proceeded with	3

Summary of FOI requests	
Application fees collected	\$327.00
Access charges collected	\$320.17
Access charges not paid (processed documents not collected)	NIL
Freedom of Information requests transferred to another agency to whom the requested documents relate	1
Freedom of Information requests transferred from another agency to Council	1

Summary of FOI Appeals	
Complaints lodged with the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) and investigated	0
Applications for review of FOI decision to the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC)	0
Application to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)	0
Notices served on the agency under Section 12(1)	0
Disciplinary action taken out against any officer in respect of the administration of this Act.	0
Outcomes of requests outstanding from previous reporting period	1 request released, access granted in full

Privacy and Data Protection

The *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (PDPA) applies to Victorian government departments, Ministers, local councils, statutory offices, government schools, universities, and TAFEs. The Act also applies to contracted service providers in the private sector and not-for-profit organisations when they handle personal information on behalf of a Victorian public sector organisation.

Council is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals and the responsible and fair handling of personal information, consistent with the requirements of the PDPA and the requirements of the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

In keeping with the PDPA, Council will only collect personal information where it is necessary to perform Council functions or when required by law. Wellington Shire Council protects personal information from misuse, loss, inappropriate access and disclosure in accordance with the requirements of the PDPA's ten Information Privacy Principles.

In Victoria, individuals also have the right to know why their information is being collected, how an organisation handles their personal information and to which third parties their information may be disclosed. Council uses Privacy Collection Notices to inform individuals about what and why we are collecting personal affairs information and how it will or may be used.

Online training courses and information bulletins are regularly communicated within our organisation to assist staff, contractors, Councillors, volunteers and agency staff to understand their information privacy obligations under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

Wellington Shire Council's Privacy and Data Protection Policy is available on Council's website www.wellington.vic.gov.au.

Individuals also have the right to make a privacy complaint if they have concerns about how an organisation has handled their personal information. If an individual believes that Council has

breached their privacy rights, they should first make a complaint to Wellington Shire Council's Privacy Officer to try to resolve the issue. If they are not satisfied with the way Council deals with their concerns, they can then make a complaint to the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) who will attempt to resolve the matter.

Detailed information on the requirements of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* including the privacy complaints process is available on the OVIC website www.ovic.vic.gov.au.

Council is always readily available to assist with general privacy enquiries and privacy concerns which can be made to Council's Privacy Officer by phoning 03 5142 3057 or by emailing enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au.

Protected Disclosure Procedures

The Protected disclosure policy for Council was developed pursuant to section 58 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*. The policy was most recently reviewed and adopted by Council at a meeting in December 2024. Protected disclosures provide protections for people who make disclosures about improper conduct in the public sector, including Wellington Shire Council, its staff, employees and Councillors. Procedures for anyone wanting to make a disclosure are available publicly on our website at <https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/council/public-interest-disclosures-process>.

During the 2024/25 year, no disclosures were made to the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC).

Food Act Ministerial Direction

In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report. No such Ministerial Directions were received by council during the financial year.

Road Management Act Ministerial Direction

In accordance with Section 22 of the *Road Management Act, 2004*, Council must publish a copy or summary of any Ministerial direction in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during the financial year.

Infrastructure and Development Contributions

Council has no Development Contribution Plan Overlays in the Wellington Planning Scheme and hence there are no such reports in 2024/25.

7.0 Other Organisational Information

Citizenship

Wellington Shire Council conducted three Citizenship ceremonies during 2024/25. These were held in July 2024, Australia Day (26 January) 2025 and April 2025. Due to the Election Period and Council elections in September/October 2024, no Citizenship ceremony was held at this time.

A total of 91 candidates were excited to be welcomed into our community as new Australian citizens. Our newest Australian citizens came from 22 different countries around the world including France, Cambodia, Kuwait, Singapore, South Africa, Italy, Zimbabwe, Canada and multiple other locations.

Civic Receptions

The focus of Civic Receptions and events during 2024/25 has been to again celebrate, and thank, the many magnificent volunteers that we have in all corners of our Shire.

Our first "Thank You" luncheon was held in the Longford community with Councillors on 8 April 2025, with approximately 40 local volunteers attending. Councillors were able to personally thank volunteers for their work and gain an insight into how and why they commenced volunteering and the social benefits they all enjoy.

The largest celebration of the year was our Volunteer Expo and Thank You event held in Sale on 22 May 2025 during National Volunteer Week. Over 300 people attended the Expo to view the 35 organisations who showcased each of their volunteer groups whilst informing everyone how they could help out. Numerous volunteer groups were successful in attracting much needed new volunteers to assist them. Feedback suggested it was very popular and a great success in all areas with attendees looking forward to future events.



Image: 2025 Australian Citizenship ceremony

Gippsland Art Gallery

Gippsland Art Gallery welcomed 35,508 visitors during 2024/25, which is the fourth highest attendance figure since the Gallery opened in 1965.

In 2025 the Gippsland Art Gallery (originally the Sale Regional Arts Centre) celebrates its 60th birthday with a suite of exhibitions designed to celebrate the past by paying homage and acknowledgment to those who have contributed to the Gallery over that time, and to look to the future by supporting the next generation of creatives.

The Gallery's permanent collection now contains 4,740 individual artworks collectively worth over \$15.5 million, of which over 80% has been either directly donated, or purchased with donated funds.

The Gallery's volunteer program continues to go from strength to strength, with over thirty regular volunteers now assisting with the Education Program as Volunteer Guides. Volunteers also assist as Gallery Attendants to provide a warm welcome to visitors on entry.

Three boards and committees serve the Gippsland Art Gallery, with all sitting members assisting in a voluntary capacity:

- Gippsland Art Gallery Advisory Group
- Friends of the Gallery Committee
- Gippsland Art Gallery Foundation Board of Trustees

The Gallery's professional exhibition program saw a total of 19 exhibitions presented, in addition to 12 children's exhibitions, held monthly either in the YES (Young Exhibitor's Showcase) Gallery, or on Level 2.

The highlight of the 2024/25 exhibition program was the major 'blockbuster' exhibition *Turner & Australia*, which commenced on Saturday 7 June, and has so far attracted 3,316 visitors as at 30 June, with another eight weeks (and the busiest weeks) still to come. *Turner & Australia* is the largest exhibition yet presented by the Gallery, with over 200 artworks sourced from 47 individual lenders, and complemented by a comprehensive, fully illustrated catalogue.

First Nations engagement in 2024/25 has also been significant, with the Koorie Heritage Trust touring exhibition of First Nations jewellery, *Layers of Blak*, showing through July and August, coinciding with NAIDOC week 2024. Participating artist Tracey Wise held two successful weaving workshops during NAIDOC week. Following the exhibition, the Borun & Tuk Gallery was installed into Gallery 5 as a dedicated showcase of First Nations artists living and working on Gunaikurnai Country and including an array of artworks drawn either from the Gallery's permanent collection, or on loan from the artists.

July and August also saw the wonderful exhibition *Our Identities*, presented by Assist Gippsland, of work by artists with intellectual disabilities. Seniors have been well catered for with the stunning exhibition *Centenarians* by Archibald Prize-winning artist Peter Wegner, which featured 100 portraits of sitters aged 100 or more. The Gallery also showcased the work of senior artists Jan Learmonth and Mandy Gunn, both in their mid-80s.

Young artists and audiences have also figured prominently in the 2024/25 program, with the 2024 *Wellington Youth Art Prize* returning, in addition to feature exhibitions *Adventure*, *Elves & Gumnuts*, which included original illustrations by May Gibbs, Norman Lindsay and many others from the early 20th century, and an exhibition of original illustrations from Alison Lester's cherished 2004 book *Are We There Yet?*, which have been donated to the Gallery in their entirety.

In all, the Gallery presented 161 public programs in 2024/25, which attracted a total of 4,034 participants, while 7,918 students and 891 teachers (8,809 total) engaged with the Gippsland Art Gallery Education Program. Highlights included a sold-out watercolour masterclass with Turner specialist Tony Smibert AM, Alison Lester's engaging workshops for children, Tony Hanning's drawing workshop, regular school holiday programs, and the weekly 'Baby on Board' and 'Origami Friday' sessions.

Philanthropic support for the Gallery continued to increase, with 95 artworks being received as donations during the year (or purchased with donated funds), with a total value of \$474,225. Further, the Gallery received eleven cash donations and grants during the year, totalling \$335,727, from the State Government through Creative Victoria, Visit Victoria and the Department of Education, the Gippsland Art Gallery Foundation, Metal Manufacturers Pty. Ltd., Dr Peter Kingsbury, the Aldakda Foundation, the Gordon Darling Foundation, the Robert Salzer Foundation, Diane Fischer, and the Friends of the Gippsland Art Gallery.

The extremely high levels of philanthropic support are evidence of the increasingly high regard for the Gallery in the Gippsland community, and the high levels of satisfaction residents have for the Gallery.

The Gallery's permanent collection has continued to benefit from study and discussion in scholarly articles published in the Gippsland Art Gallery's magazine *Gallery News*, revealing its depths and value to the community. The collection also continues to inform education programs and provides the foundation for exhibition programs.



Image: Opening night of 'Turner & Australia'

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

In 2024/25 The Wedge, delivered a season that was diverse, community-led and creatively rich. Across 86 events and more than 100 performances held at the venue and regional spaces, audiences were offered a wide range of stories and experiences. From familiar favourites and big-name artists to bold new works by local writers, the program offered something for everyone.

More than 18,600 audience members attended performances, engaging with a program designed to entertain, inspire and connect. Highlights included First Nations-led works *The Visitors* and *The Wet*, which drew the largest student and youth audiences outside of our children's programming.

The *Tactile Tour* offering continued to grow, with a strong take-up for *The Boy From Oz* by Maffra Dramatic Society. The Wedge also strengthened its connection with Overcoming Obstacles through the adult drama class becoming a regular part of the incursion program. Local high school groups participated in backstage tours, with positive feedback particularly from Catholic College Sale prompting plans to expand work experience opportunities.

Artist development remained a major focus. The *SCRATCH NIGHT* program returned, showcasing new work by emerging local female-identifying writers and offering low-stakes performance opportunities for up-and-coming performers. Delivered in partnership with the FEAST Writers Collective, the program now includes monthly writers' sessions hosted by Wedge staff at Nakunbalook.

Contemporary music continued to be a major drawcard, with sold-out shows from *Kasey Chambers*, *Pete Murray* and *Vika & Linda*. Alongside these icons, there was a surge in classical attendance with the near sell-out of Opera Australia's *La Boheme* and strong interest in the innovative concert *What Noise Do Numbers Make?* These successes mark an encouraging return of classical and opera audiences' post-COVID.

Venue hire remained a cornerstone of operations, with ongoing demand from touring acts, community groups and tribute performers. Artists like *Cosentino*, *Sarah Blasko*, *Burn the Floor* and *BABBA* headlined a packed calendar. Hirers continued to provide positive feedback on the quality of front-of-house and technical support teams.

The Wedge extended performances out into the community. The hilarious *Hall Stories* project brought original comedy theatre to three of the rural halls, deepening connections with local committees and helping reach audiences beyond our venue walls.

This year, the Newborn Intensive Care Foundation joined The Wedge's valued group of sponsors, alongside 11 existing partners. Council also celebrated the continued support of 247 members, whose loyalty and advocacy remain central to The Wedge's success.

The year was marked by steady and meaningful growth, grounded in connection, creativity and community.



Image: *The Boy from Oz* – Maffra Dramatics & Sale Theatre Co

SECTION 2

PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 JUNE 2025



WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL

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Certification of the Performance Statement

In my opinion, the accompanying performance Statement has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.



Ian Carroll CPA
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated: 7 October 2025

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of Wellington Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly the results of Council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify this performance statement in its final form.



Geoff Wells
Councillor
Dated: 7 October 2025



Catherine Bannerman
Councillor
Dated: 7 October 2025



David Morcom
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 7 October 2025

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of Wellington Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Wellington Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2025 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 • notes to the accounts • certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of Wellington Shire Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Other information	The Councillors are responsible for the Other Information, which comprises the information in the council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the performance statement and my auditor's report thereon. My opinion on the performance statement does not cover the Other Information and accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the Other Information. However, in connection with my audit of the performance statement, my responsibility is to read the Other Information and in doing so, consider whether it is materially inconsistent with the performance statement or the knowledge I obtained during the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the Other Information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. • obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation. I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE
13 October 2025

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Description of Municipality

Wellington Shire is the third largest municipality in Victoria, covering an area of more than 11,000 square kilometres with a population of 45,600 people. Found in central Gippsland, known as The Middle of Everywhere, between the Latrobe Valley and East Gippsland local government areas. Wellington Shire is on the traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai people. It offers a perfect blend of rural and urban living, with unspoilt coastal, lake and mountain environments, including pristine beaches, stunning wetlands and lush temperate rainforests.

Wellington Shire was formed in 1994 after the amalgamation of the Shire of Alberton, the Shire of Avon, the Shire of Maffra, the City of Sale and parts of the Shire of Rosedale. Most of Wellington's population resides in and around the six main urban centres of Sale, Maffra, Rosedale, Yarram, Stratford and Heyfield.

Wellington Shire's economy was built on a range of industries and businesses, including mining, offshore oil and gas extraction, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, construction, and various service sectors. While natural resources remain key, the region also benefits from key economic anchors such as the Royal Australian Air Force Base in East Sale and a growing tourism sector. The transition to new energy, particularly offshore wind, promises substantial economic growth for Wellington Shire.

Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Service / indicator / <i>Measure</i> [Formula]	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Results 2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	Comments
Aquatic Facilities						
Utilisation						
Utilisation of aquatic facilities	3.70	5.15	3.69	N/A	3.46	The ongoing Aqua Energy redevelopment project, including the closure of the indoor pools, continues to negatively affect memberships and attendance, resulting in reduced overall utilisation of Council’s aquatic facilities.
[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]						
Animal Management						
Health and safety						
Animal management prosecutions	100%	100%	100%	N/A	100%	During the 2024/25 financial year, 15 successful animal management prosecutions were finalised. These prosecutions addressed serious dog attacks, unregistered breeders, and animal cruelty matters.
[Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100						
Food Safety						
Health and safety						
Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications	100%	100%	100%	N/A	100%	In the 2024 calendar year, 16 non-compliance notifications were issued. Each of the identified food premises received one or more follow-up inspections to ensure compliance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> .
[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x 100						

Service / indicator / Measure [Formula]	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Results 2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	Comments
Governance						
Consultation and engagement						
Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	55	53	53	53	52	Councils' participation in the 2025 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in a community satisfaction rating that was four points above the large rural average and two points higher than the state-wide average. This reflects positively on Council's performance in community consultation and engagement processes.
Libraries						
Participation						
Library membership [Number of registered library members / Population] x 100	#N/A	#N/A	21.32%	N/A	21.80%	Library memberships increased in the 2024/25 financial year, reflecting the continued popularity and relevance of our services to the community.
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)						
Participation						
Participation in the MCH service [Number of children who attended the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the NCH service] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for delivering Maternal and Child Health Services therefore, performance data for these indicators is not available.

Service / indicator / Measure [Formula]	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Results 2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	Comments
Roads						
Condition						
<i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards</i> [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	99.68%	97.84%	99.23%	98.00%	99.40%	The percentage of roads below the set condition level has improved slightly to 99.40%, up from 99.23% in the previous year. This continued improvement reflects Wellington Shire Council's sustained focus on renewing and rehabilitating sealed roads in poor condition, particularly those impacted by past emergency events. While the frequency of major storm and rain events has eased compared to previous years, Council has maintained its investment in road infrastructure through both capital and maintenance programs. In 2024/25, works began to target roads approaching the set condition threshold, helping to prevent further deterioration and extend the life of the network.
Statutory Planning						
Service Standard						
<i>Planning applications decided within required time frames</i> [Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x 100	90.95%	86.23%	90.57%	85.77%	92.16%	The statutory timeframe for determining planning permit applications is 60 days for standard applications and 10 days for VicSmart applications. Council has performed strongly, finalising 91.53% of standard applications and 93.89% of VicSmart applications within the required timeframes. This compares favourably to the State averages of 66.07% and 82.78%, respectively.

Service / indicator / Measure [Formula]	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Results 2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	Comments
Waste Management						
Waste diversion						
<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100	33.51%	32.17%	30.02%	28.95%	26.35%	In the 2024/25 financial year, more than 2,700 tonnes of recyclable material were diverted from landfill through our kerbside recycling service. This figure excludes food organics and garden organics, as no service is currently provided, and does not account for material diverted via the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). On average, this equates to 136 kg of recyclables per kerbside collection household, representing a 24 kg reduction per household compared to 2023/24. Council is actively working towards the implementation of a Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service in July 2026, which is expected to divert additional waste from landfill and further improve environmental outcomes.

Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Dimension / indicator / Measure [Formula]	Results			Forecasts					
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	2026 Forecasts	2027 Forecasts	2028 Forecasts	2029 Forecasts
Efficiency									
Expenditure level									
Expenses per property assessment	\$3,183.89	\$3,312.18	\$3,742.47	\$3,476.00	\$3,609.76	\$3,564.01	\$3,640.62	\$3,719.27	\$3,814.35
[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]									
Material Variations and Comments	Rates are increasing in line with the annual Fair Go Rate Cap guidelines. Property assessment numbers have remained relatively stable, with only minor growth attributed to new subdivisions.								
Revenue level									
Average rate per property assessment	\$1,793.18	\$1,792.55	\$1,862.89	N/A	\$1,960.07	\$2,003.67	\$2,069.61	\$2,137.42	\$2,207.01
[Sum of all general rates and municipal charges / Number of property assessments]									
Material Variations and Comments	Rates are increasing in line with the annual Fair Go Rate Cap guidelines. Property assessment numbers have remained relatively stable, with only minor growth attributed to new subdivisions.								
Liquidity									
Working capital									
Current assets compared to current liabilities	324.89%	470.82%	454.20%	410.00%	552.97%	424.48%	364.18%	391.34%	365.09%
[Current assets / Current liabilities] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	The advance receipt of \$9.4 million (or 50%) from the 2025/26 Victoria Grants Commission, received in June 2025, has significantly increased the cash levels as of 30 June 2025. Consequently, this has augmented the current assets. Meanwhile, non-current liabilities have remained largely consistent with previous years. As this funding is spent on operating expenses during 2025/26, the working capital ratio will return to amounts consistent with prior years.								

Dimension / indicator / Measure [Formula]	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Results		2025 Actual	2026 Forecasts	Forecasts		
			2024 Actual	Target as per budget			2027 Forecasts	2028 Forecasts	2029 Forecasts
Unrestricted cash <i>Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities</i> [Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x 100	56.16%	21.01%	38.09%	N/A	139.46%	62.20%	60.07%	60.35%	67.47%
Material Variations and Comments	The advance receipt of \$9.4 million (or 50%) from the 2025/26 Victoria Grants Commission, received in June 2025, has significantly increased the cash levels as of 30 June 2025. Consequently, this has augmented the current assets. Meanwhile, non-current liabilities have remained largely consistent with previous years. The unrestricted cash will be spent on operating expenses during 2025/26. Advance receipts are not budgeted for in future periods.								
Obligations									
Loans and borrowings <i>Loans and borrowings compared to rates</i> [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x 100	1.13%	0.67%	10.21%	N/A	13.16%	14.00%	13.36%	12.61%	11.76%
Material Variations and Comments	In June 2025, the second drawdown of the Treasury Corporation of Victoria loan, amounting to \$3,000,000, was made to fund the Aqua Energy Redevelopment. The total loans for this project now amount to \$10,000,000.								
<i>Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates</i> [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x 100	0.55%	0.50%	0.45%	N/A	0.58%	1.54%	1.80%	1.89%	1.97%
Material Variations and Comments	The 2024/25 actuals consist of a full year of repayments for the first \$7 million drawdown. In the 2024/25 financial year, a \$3 million loan was drawn down for the Aqua Energy Redevelopment project. This loan is to be repaid over a period of 10 years. As principal payments are made on the loan, the non-current liabilities will gradually decrease.								

Dimension / indicator / Measure [Formula]	Results			2025		2026	Forecasts		
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	Target as per budget	Actual	Forecasts	2027 Forecasts	2028 Forecasts	2029 Forecasts
Obligations (continued)									
Indebtedness									
<i>Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i>	22.00%	21.03%	21.43%	N/A	22.88%	21.58%	17.86%	19.78%	17.87%
[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	In the 2024/25 financial year, a \$3 million loan was drawn down for the Aqua Energy Redevelopment project. This loan is to be repaid over a period of 10 years. As principal payments are made on the loan, the non-current liabilities will gradually decrease.								
Asset renewal and upgrade									
<i>Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation</i>	111.67%	97.10%	107.81%	162.60%	104.91%	159.41%	126.04%	122.88%	107.12%
[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	Asset renewal and upgrade expenditure fell short of budget due to the cancellation of major planned works, including the Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families. This project was removed from the capital works program following an unsuccessful grant application.								

Dimension / indicator / Measure [Formula]	Results					Forecasts			
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Target as per budget	2025 Actual	2026 Forecasts	2027 Forecasts	2028 Forecasts	2029 Forecasts
Operating position									
Adjusted underlying result									
<i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i>	6.10%	8.66%	-16.85%	N/A	8.22%	6.45%	3.57%	6.60%	3.59%
[Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	No funds were received from the Victorian Grants Commission in 2023/24. However, in 2024/25, the full allocation of \$17.9 million was received, along with a 50% advance of the 2025/26 allocation amounting to \$9.4 million. This additional revenue has directly contributed to the annual surplus.								
Stability									
Rates concentration									
<i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i>	59.25%	55.91%	65.92%	63.98%	56.78%	60.16%	62.64%	61.31%	63.69%
[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	Rates have been increasing annually in line with the Fair Go Rates Cap. Revenue in 2024/25 has been increased by the advance receipt of 50% of the 2025/26 Victoria Grants Commission allocation.								
Rates effort									
<i>Rates compared to property values</i>	0.40%	0.41%	0.37%	N/A	0.38%	0.39%	0.40%	0.40%	0.40%
[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x 100									
Material Variations and Comments	The 2024/25 result is representative of the continued slow and steady growth trend.								

Sustainability Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Service / indicator / Measure [Formula]	Results				Comments
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	
Population					
Expenses per head of municipal population [Total expenses / Municipal population]	\$2,287.72	\$2,388.91	\$2,693.83	\$2,529.15	Expenses have slightly decreased compared to the previous year, primarily due to the completion of one-off annual projects in 2023/24, such as the York Street Works and the Great Southern Rail Trail Extension.
Infrastructure per head of municipal population Value of infrastructure / Municipal Population]	\$21,028.52	\$25,883.27	\$25,950.94	\$26,746.37	Infrastructure asset values are steadily increasing, driven by the ongoing annual capital works program, the scheduled revaluation cycle, and yearly valuation reviews. In 2024/25, a revaluation resulted in higher asset values, particularly for structures and bridges.
Population density per length of road [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	14.48	14.69	14.82	14.92	There are 3,119km of sealed and unsealed local roads for an estimated municipal population of 46,533 within Wellington Shire.
Own-source revenue					
Own-source revenue per head of municipal population [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	\$1,742.26	\$1,860.82	\$1,963.88	\$2,010.72	Own source revenue, including rates has steadily increased in line with the Fair Go Rate Cap guidelines.
Recurrent grants					
Recurrent grants per head of municipal population [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	\$525.50	\$519.80	\$167.79	\$649.00	No recurrent grant funds were received from the Victorian Grants Commission in 2023/24, as they were receipted in the year prior. However, in 2024/25, the full allocation of \$17.9 million was received, along with a 50% advance of the 2025/26 allocation amounting to \$9.4 million.

Service / indicator / Measure [Formula]	Results				Comments
	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	
Disadvantage					
Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) ranks areas on a scale from one to ten, where one represents the most disadvantaged areas and ten the least. Based on this measure, Wellington Shire is rated at level three within Victoria, reflecting a relatively high level of socio-economic disadvantage. The most recent index was derived from the 2021 Census and released in April 2023, with the next update to be based on the 2026 Census and expected to be released in 2027.
Workforce turnover					
Percentage of staff turnover [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	15.1%	14.3%	13.0%	10.3%	Staff turnover remains at a healthy rate, reflecting regular patterns of employees seeking new challenges and opportunities elsewhere. These movements continue to create valuable openings across the organisation bringing in fresh talent while also strengthening our internal capabilities through development and progression.

2.6 Notes to the accounts

Basis of preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report. The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed, service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Council's satisfaction survey provider).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year, and the results forecast for the period 2025-26 to 2028-29 by the Council's financial plan.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

Definitions

Key term	Definition
Aboriginal children	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>
adjusted underlying revenue	means total income other than: • non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and • non-monetary asset contributions; and • contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
annual report	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
asset renewal expenditure	means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
asset upgrade expenditure	means expenditure that— (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
critical non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by council under section 19N (3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
food premises	has the same meaning as in the <i>Food Act 1984</i>
intervention level	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
local road	means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the <i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N (3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken
MCH	means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
non-current liabilities	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
own-source revenue	means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
population	means the resident population estimated by council

Key term	Definition
rate revenue	means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
restricted cash	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

Wellington Shire Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT
for the year ended 30 June 2025



Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2025

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Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2025

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Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.



Ian Carroll (CPA)
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated: 08 October 2025
Sale

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of Wellington Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify the financial statements in their final form.



Catherine Bannerman
Councillor
Dated: 08 October 2025
Sale



Geoff Wells
Councillor
Dated: 08 October 2025
Sale



David Morcom
Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 08 October 2025
Sale

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Councillors of Wellington Shire Council

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Wellington Shire Council (the council) which comprises the: • balance sheet as at 30 June 2025 • comprehensive income statement for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • statement of capital works for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • certification of the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2025 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Other information	The Councillors are responsible for the Other Information, which comprises the information in the council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon. My opinion on the financial report does not cover the Other Information and accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the Other Information. However, in connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the Other Information and in doing so, consider whether it is materially inconsistent with the financial report or the knowledge I obtained during the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the Other Information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. • obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control • evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors • conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern. • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial report (continued)	I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.
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MELBOURNE
13 October 2025

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Comprehensive Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Income / Revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	73,111	70,090
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	931	927
User fees	3.3	10,773	10,913
Grants - operating	3.4	32,690	9,432
Grants - capital	3.4	13,305	15,313
Contributions - monetary	3.5	459	1,048
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	2,712	3,258
Other income	3.7	8,750	8,652
Total income / revenue		142,731	119,633
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	36,969	35,361
Materials and services	4.2	40,864	48,621
Depreciation	4.3	35,361	32,195
Amortisation - Intangible assets		903	860
Depreciation - Right of use assets		389	414
Allowance for impairment losses		6	94
Borrowing costs		136	26
Finance Costs - Leases		4	8
Other expenses	4.4	1,288	1,933
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	1,769	4,738
Total expenses		117,689	124,250
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		25,042	(4,617)
Other comprehensive income:			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	9.1	41,030	54,211
Total other comprehensive income		41,030	54,211
Total comprehensive result		66,072	49,594

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance Sheet

as at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	58,829	32,345
Trade and other receivables	5.1	14,209	13,674
Other financial assets	5.1	82,275	87,330
Inventories		213	270
Prepayments		1,595	1,060
Total current assets		157,121	134,679
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1	3,556	3,287
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	1,453,456	1,406,700
Right-of-use assets		53	92
Intangible assets		1,220	1,435
Total non-current assets		1,458,285	1,411,514
Total assets		1,615,406	1,546,193
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.2	8,109	7,627
Trust funds and deposits	5.2	4,862	4,979
Contract and other liabilities	5.2	3,768	4,730
Provisions	5.4	10,808	11,705
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.3	834	577
Lease liabilities		33	34
Total current liabilities		28,414	29,652
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.4	12,618	12,750
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.3	8,749	6,583
Lease liabilities		43	78
Total non-current liabilities		21,410	19,411
Total liabilities		49,824	49,063
Net assets		1,565,582	1,497,130
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		501,942	475,500
Reserves	9.1	1,063,640	1,021,630
Total Equity		1,565,582	1,497,130

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	Total \$ '000	Accumulated Surplus \$ '000	Revaluation Reserves \$ '000	Other Reserves \$ '000
2025					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		1,497,130	475,500	1,010,620	11,010
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		25,042	25,042	—	—
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		41,030	—	41,030	—
Found Assets Adjustment directly to equity		287	287	—	—
Transfer of reserve for assets sold		2,093	4,316	(2,223)	—
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	—	3,073	—	(3,073)
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	—	(6,276)	—	6,276
Balance at end of the financial year		1,565,582	501,942	1,049,427	14,213
2024					
Balance at beginning of the financial year		1,440,323	471,077	956,409	12,837
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		(4,617)	(4,617)	—	—
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)		61,393	—	61,393	—
Found Assets Adjustment directly to equity		149	149	—	—
Transfer of reserve for assets sold		(118)	7,064	(7,182)	—
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	—	6,301	—	(6,301)
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	—	(4,474)	—	4,474
Balance at end of the financial year		1,497,130	475,500	1,010,620	11,010

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$ '000	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$ '000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		72,276	68,414
Statutory fees and fines		931	927
User fees		12,016	8,002
Grants - operating		32,161	9,262
Grants - capital		11,585	10,862
Contributions - monetary		405	1,033
Interest received		6,312	6,171
Trust funds and deposits taken		16,120	5,587
Other receipts		1,567	985
Net GST Refund / (Payment)		89	(667)
Employee costs		(36,076)	(34,761)
Materials and services		(41,661)	(51,465)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(16,237)	(4,632)
Other payments		(1,230)	(1,240)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9.2	58,258	18,478
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	(42,304)	(50,313)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		3,578	8,405
Payments for investments		(141,133)	(151,162)
Proceeds from sale of investments		146,188	169,808
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(33,671)	(23,262)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(136)	(26)
Proceeds from borrowings		3,000	7,000
Repayment of borrowings		(577)	(289)
Interest paid - lease liability		(4)	(8)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(386)	(408)
Net cash flow provided by/(used in) financing activities		1,897	6,269
Net Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		26,484	1,485
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		32,345	30,860
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		58,829	32,345

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Property			
Land		107	664
Land improvements		3	–
Total land		110	664
Buildings		15,653	7,909
Total buildings		15,653	7,909
Total property		15,763	8,573
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		2,809	4,590
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		149	403
Computers and telecommunications		458	74
Library books		274	258
Total plant and equipment		3,690	5,325
Infrastructure			
Roads		15,188	19,273
Bridges		682	861
Footpaths and cycleways		1,456	4,875
Drainage		1,660	324
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		1,659	350
Waste management		471	309
Parks, open space and streetscapes		427	605
Aerodromes		544	163
Off street car parks		–	128
Other infrastructure		614	1,744
Total infrastructure		22,701	28,632
Total capital works expenditure	6.1	42,154	42,530
Represented by:			
Asset renewal expenditure		30,914	29,731
Asset expansion expenditure		5,057	7,608
Asset upgrade expenditure		6,183	4,977
New asset expenditure		–	214
Total capital works expenditure		42,154	42,530

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Overview

Introduction

The Wellington Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 2 December 1994 and is a body corporate.

The Council's main office is located at 18-20 Desailly Street, Sale, Victoria, 3850.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The Council is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional AUS paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Accounting policy information

1.1 Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1.).
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1.).
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.4.).
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.4.).
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 3).
- the determination, in accordance with *AASB 16 Leases*, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value.
- whether or not *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* is applicable.
- other areas requiring judgements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1. Overview (continued)

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

1.2 Impact of emergencies and natural disasters

During 2024-25 emergencies or natural disasters continued to impact on Council's operations. Council has noted the following significant impacts on its financial operations:

- Additional revenue – grant funding received during the year for past natural disasters and emergencies total \$6.3M to date. The major fundings received includes for; Dargo High Plains Road \$3.0M, Storm & Flood December 2023 \$1.5M, Storm Event August 2024 \$0.6M and Jamieson-Licola Road \$0.6M.
- Additional costs – Additional costs were incurred for natural disasters and emergencies total \$0.94M to date. \$0.7M relates to the Storm Event August 2024, with minor expenses for prior year emergencies.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2. Analysis of our results

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of the lower of 10 percent or \$750,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

2.1.1 Income / Revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2025 \$ '000	Actual 2025 \$ '000	Variance \$ '000	Variance %	Ref
Income / Revenue					
Rates and charges	72,234	73,111	877	1%	1
Statutory fees and fines	1,064	931	(133)	(13)%	2
User fees	10,565	10,773	208	2%	
Grants - operating	20,501	32,690	12,189	59%	3
Grants - capital	15,562	13,305	(2,257)	(15)%	4
Contributions - monetary	393	459	66	17%	5
Contributions - non monetary	2,899	2,712	(187)	(6)%	
Other income	6,944	8,750	1,806	26%	6
Total income / revenue	130,162	142,731	12,569	10%	
Expenses					
Employee costs	37,384	36,969	415	1%	
Materials and services	40,690	40,864	(174)	0%	
Depreciation	33,040	35,361	(2,321)	(7)%	7
Amortisation - intangible assets	990	903	87	9%	
Depreciation - right of use assets	349	389	(40)	(11)%	
Allowance for impairment losses	15	6	9	60%	8
Borrowing costs	172	136	36	21%	9
Finance costs - leases	120	4	116	97%	10
Other expenses	719	1,288	(569)	(79)%	11
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,398	1,769	(371)	(27)%	12
Total expenses	114,877	117,689	(2,812)	(2)%	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	15,285	25,042	9,757	64%	

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Explanation

1. **Rates & Charges**
The favourable variance represents additional supplementary rates \$0.39M and garbage charges \$0.16M raised since the 2024/25 budget adoption, mainly due to increased demand for new residential developments throughout the Shire. Special Charge Schemes have contributed to raise \$0.23M through Longford Central Township and Seaspray schemes.
2. **Statutory Fees & Charges**
Income raised from infringement and compliance (\$89k) and planning fees (\$74k) were lower than projected. This is slightly offset by higher income generated from permits issued throughout the year \$25k.
3. **Grants (Operating)**
The positive variance mainly include the advance receipt of the 2025/26 Victorian Grant Commission allocation of \$9.5M in June 2025. Natural disaster grant claims received during the year for past events occurred amounts to approximately \$2.5M.
4. **Grants (Capital)**
The reduction in capital grants is a result of non receipt of funding towards Sale Early Years - Gibson's Road community facility project (\$4.0M), Cameron Sporting Club Redevelopment (\$0.9M) and LED lighting program (\$0.4M) due to unsuccessful grant applications. This is partly offset by the receipt of natural disaster funding for capital infrastructure restoration works for past events of \$3.6M.
5. **Contributions (Monetary)**
This is represented by external contributions received for waste management programs of \$32k and for The Wedge performances of \$19k.
6. **Other Income**
Other income mainly represents interest earned on investments of \$1.6M being higher than budget for the year due to competitive market rates generating additional income.
7. **Depreciation**
Overall higher than expected depreciation (non cash), primarily due to revaluations, mainly in roads (\$2.0M), footpaths and cycleways (\$0.36M), fleet (\$0.27M), plant and machinery (\$0.26M) and recreation and leisure (\$0.24M). This is offset by lower than expected depreciation for buildings \$0.43M and open space \$0.32M.
8. **Allowance for Impairment Losses**
Bad debts written off during 2024/25 were lower than expected mainly for statutory and commercial facility outstanding debtors.
9. **Borrowing Costs**
Interest paid on loan borrowings for the year, one more instalment yet to be paid.
10. **Finance Costs (Leases)**
Interest recognised on lease payments was slightly lower than projected.
11. **Other Expenses**
This represents derecognition of assets (\$0.28M) and assets written off during the year mainly for buildings (\$0.20M).
12. **Net (Gain) / Loss on Disposal of Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment**
Written down value of assets sold and replaced during the year were higher than gain from proceeds of assets, thus creating a loss on disposals (\$0.37M).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2025 \$ '000	Actual 2025 \$ '000	Variance \$ '000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	410	107	(303)	(74)%	1
Land improvements	1,560	3	(1,557)	(100)%	2
Total land	1,970	110	(1,860)	(94)%	
Buildings	27,510	15,653	(11,857)	(43)%	3
Total buildings	27,510	15,653	(11,857)	(43)%	
Total property	29,480	15,763	(13,717)	(47)%	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	3,646	2,809	(837)	(23)%	4
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	40	149	109	273%	5
Computers and telecommunications	497	458	(39)	(8)%	
Library books	270	274	4	1%	
Total plant and equipment	4,453	3,690	(763)	(17)%	
Infrastructure					
Roads	21,360	15,188	(6,172)	(29)%	6
Bridges	1,565	682	(883)	(56)%	7
Footpaths and cycleways	1,523	1,456	(67)	(4)%	
Drainage	4,179	1,660	(2,519)	(60)%	8
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	2,940	1,659	(1,281)	(44)%	9
Waste management	888	471	(417)	(47)%	10
Parks, open space and streetscapes	585	427	(158)	(27)%	11
Aerodromes	275	544	269	98%	12
Off street car parks	100	—	(100)	(100)%	13
Other infrastructure	270	614	344	127%	14
Total infrastructure	33,685	22,701	(10,984)	(33)%	
Total capital works expenditure	67,618	42,154	(25,464)	(38)%	
Represented by:					
Asset renewal expenditure	39,963	30,914	(9,049)	(23)%	
Asset expansion expenditure	12,866	5,057	(7,809)	(61)%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	14,789	6,183	(8,606)	(58)%	
New asset expenditure	—	—	—	∞	
Total capital works expenditure	67,618	42,154	(25,464)	(38)%	

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance	Explanation
1.	Land Delays in negotiations for the purchase of the land for the Maffra Drainage Strategy (\$293k) and the Department of Education Land (\$10k).
2.	Landfill Improvements Design awaiting on Environmental Protection Agency approval before the works approval (\$1.5M).
3.	Buildings Sale Early Years Gibsons Road Design were completed in October 2024 however as no Government funding was received the project will not be proceeding (\$6M). Aqua Energy Redevelopment (\$5M) is a multiyear project, works continued in the 2024/25 financial year and are on schedule to be completed by September 2025. The Cameron Sporting Complex (\$918k) did not receive Government funding so works did not proceed. The Wedge Redevelopment Design (\$334k) and Wedge Airconditioning (\$240k) works have been delayed awaiting the finalisation of the design and works are now scheduled for the 2025/26 financial year. Works carried over from the 2023/24 financial year include; Yarram Court House Roof Repairs (\$199k), Solar PV installation works (\$95k), Rosedale Prince Street Reserve Old School (\$82k) and Dargo Public Toilet Septic Upgrade (\$53k). The Wellington Centre improvement (\$53k) works will be completed in the 2024/25 financial year. Loch Sport Caravan Park Amenities \$275k works were funded from Reserve. Unbudgeted works were completed on the following projects; Golden Beach Toilet Septic Upgrade \$33k, and The WEDGE Kitchen Equipment Replacement \$9k.
4.	Plant, Machinery and Equipment There is (\$1.63M) in Fleet and Plant Renewal with some purchases being put on hold due to low kilometres on some fleet cars, these will be purchased in the 2025/26 financial year. Some delays were experienced by items ordered which were non-standard builds. The Kilmany Loader (\$180k) was put on hold until all options can be reviewed. The Wedge Stage line (\$120k) is expected to be completed in conjunction with the Wedge Redevelopment. Government funding has been received for two power generators \$90k to assist in natural disasters.
5.	Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture There were unbudgeted furniture and fittings purchases of \$86k. With cash donations received artwork of \$24k was purchased.
6.	Roads Gibsons and Cobains Road Roundabout works have been delayed awaiting the finalisation of the sale of land (\$2.3M). Residential Street Construction works delayed due to the extensive Community Consultation (\$1.6M). The Emergency Slip works are awaiting the confirmation of Government funding (\$800k). Glencairn Road Rehabilitation (\$690k) works were delayed awaiting the Geotech Report. Johns Street upgrade (\$375k) did not receive funding. The Brayakulung Close Traffic Improvements program (\$100k) will be completed in the 2025/26 financial year after the completion of the Aqua Energy Redevelopment. There were savings on the following projects: Velore Road Reconstruction(\$331k), Sale - Toongabbie Road reconstruction (\$231k), Riversdale Road Reconstruction works (\$176k), and the Crest Widening Program (\$110k). These are offset by additional spending on the Final Seals program \$239k, Gravel Resheets \$129k being funded from the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program \$129k, with additional works being completed on the Reseal Rural Roads \$64k and Unsealed Intersection upgrades \$36k.
7.	Bridges Delta Bridge Strengthening - Briagolong did not receive government funding (\$865k). There were savings in the Bridge Renewal Program (\$83k), Major Culvert Renewals program of (\$25k) and End Post Bridge Approaches (\$13k).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

8. **Drainage**

North Sale Drainage Development works have commenced (\$1.2M) and are expected to be completed in 2025/26 financial year. George Street Drainage Works (\$882k) and East Maffra Drainage Improvements (\$150k) have been delayed due to Community Consultation. There were savings on the Developers Contribution Works Programme (\$310k), Relph Avenue (\$16k). The Yarram Outfall Drain assessment \$38k required additional funds.

9. **Recreational, Leisure and Community Facilities**

Yarram Pool Water Treatment Plant (\$820k) construction works commenced following the end of season pool closure with expected completion in the 2025/26 financial year. The LED Lighting Program (\$510k) did not commence due to not being successful in receiving funding. There were savings on the Yarram Recreation Reserve AFL Posts (\$18k) and Hardcourt Renewal Program (\$7.5k). This was offset by additional funds required for the GRSC Netball Court Resurfacing \$223k and unbudgeted asset purchases \$70k.

10. **Waste Management**

The Kilmany Landfill Leachate Pond Evaporation (\$395k) works have commenced with completion expected in September 2025. The Street Sweeper Waste Storage Design has commenced (\$80k) with expected completion in the 2025/26 financial year. Maffra Resource Recovery Facility design works commenced in the 2024/25 financial year \$37k and the Kilmany Walking Floor works were finalised with additional works of \$36k.

11. **Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes**

Sale Depot Potting park benches works were put on hold to identify other solutions (\$40k). The Basketball Ring/shade structure renewal program works did not reach the capital threshold and the project was moved to operating (\$35k). There were savings in the following projects; Project Development (32k), Sale Depot Safety & Minor Renewal (\$27k), Pump Track Reseal Program (\$12k), Park Light Replacement (\$9k) and Playground Renewals (\$7k). There was \$6k in unbudgeted turf works.

12. **Aerodromes**

Western Apron Towlane (\$80k) has been delayed due to community consultation and will now be completed in the 2025/26 financial year. Aerodrome Minor Works (\$40k) have been put on hold. There was savings of (\$17k) on the Yarram Aerodrome Runway reprofiling. An unbudgeted WSA Hangar \$165k purchase was completed in April 2025. The following 2023/24 projects were completed the Yarram Aerodrome Landside Facilities \$202k and the WSA Electrical Distribution Cabinet \$35k.

13. **Off Street Car Parks**

Works were put on hold for the 2024/25 financial year.

14. **Other Infrastructure**

Boisdale Common Effluent system works are part of a multi-year project and expected works (\$100k) are to continue in the 2025/26 financial year. The Middle of Everywhere signage (\$60k) works were moved to operating. This was offset by Port of Sale Mooring Access Project \$350k, which was delayed in the 2023/24 financial year due to flooding and was completed in the 2024/25 Financial year. Seaspray Levee Upgrade works \$74k and Seagull Drive Boat Ramp works \$48k were completed.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

2.2.1 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

Built & Natural Environment

The Built & Natural Environment division promotes, plans, and implements strategies that significantly contribute to the responsible care and sustainable management of our municipality's diverse natural and built environment. This division delivers services such as Capital Works, Asset Management, Infrastructure Development, Road Planning and Maintenance, Built Environment Facilities, Parks Services, Open Space Planning, and Waste & Sustainability. It prioritises sustainable growth and development in appropriate locations, supported by infrastructure that meets the evolving needs of the community while safeguarding valued local amenities. Additionally, it includes services that support local communities and their facilities, such as Emergency Management, Community Facilities Planning, and Community Committees.

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO Office ensures leadership and engagement with our community to help residents feel engaged and informed by Council through services including Media and Communications and Customer Service.

Community and Culture

The Community and Culture Division was dissolved and its responsibilities were integrated into the remaining four divisions in May 2025.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services division provides support services across council to enable the delivery of council's vision and strategic objectives. The provision of these services includes Human Resources, Occupational Health & Safety, Risk Management, Corporate Planning, Accounting & Payroll, Rates & Valuations, Fleet, Procurement, Records Management, Information Technology and Business Systems. This division ensures legislative compliance by conducting our affairs openly and with integrity, reflecting the highest level of good management and governance. The division also manages customer-focused services such as Local Laws and Environmental Health.

Development

The Development division supports and advocates for the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of our community by providing essential and innovative amenities, services and fostering beneficial partnerships with key stakeholders. Its diverse service areas include Social Planning & Policy, Community Engagement, Youth Services, Rural Access, as well as a focus on sustainable growth and development. The division offers Strategic and Statutory Planning, Municipal Building Services, Economic Development and Tourism and Visitor Economy services. It oversees various commercial property portfolios, including the Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange, and manages cultural and recreational assets such as the Art Gallery, Library Services, 'The Wedge' Entertainment Centre, and Leisure Services, including pools and the Gippsland Regional Sports Complex in Sale.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 2.2 Analysis of Council results by program (continued)

2.2.2 Summary of income / revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

Functions/activities	Income / Revenue \$ '000	Expenses \$ '000	Surplus / (Deficit) \$ '000	Grants included in income / revenue \$ '000	Total assets \$ '000
2025					
Built & Natural Environment	41,517	79,879	(38,362)	25,086	1,438,928
Chief Executive Officer	37	2,251	(2,214)	–	–
Community and Culture	–	–	–	–	–
Corporate Services	90,961	15,307	75,654	17,990	163,292
Development	10,216	20,252	(10,036)	2,919	13,186
Total functions and activities	142,731	117,689	25,042	45,995	1,615,406
2024					
Built & Natural Environment	32,085	82,442	(50,357)	15,353	1,392,184
Chief Executive Officer	23	1,868	(1,845)	–	–
Community and Culture	11,666	17,548	(5,882)	7,607	13,307
Corporate Services	71,082	12,754	58,328	792	140,702
Development	4,777	9,638	(4,861)	993	–
Total functions and activities	119,633	124,250	(4,617)	24,745	1,546,193

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
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3.1 Rates and charges

Council uses Capital Improved Value (CIV) as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The CIV of a property is its total land and improvements value.

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2024/25 was \$19,344 million (2023/24: \$18,917 million).

General rates	63,403	61,233
Waste management charge	6,083	5,707
Service rates and charges	2,340	2,167
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	501	615
Interest on rates and charges	485	373
Special rates and charges	299	(5)
Total rates and charges	73,111	70,090

The date of the general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2024 and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2024.

Annual rates and charges are recognised as income when Council issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Town planning fees	504	538
Land information certificates	171	155
Permits	168	149
Infringements and costs	88	85
Total statutory fees and fines	931	927

Statutory fees and fines are recognised as income when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

3.3 User fees

Waste management services	4,082	3,578
Leisure centre and recreation	1,984	2,023
Other fees and charges	2,247	3,200
Registration and other permits	959	1,045
Entertainment centre	390	471
Saleyards	958	458
Emergency management works	62	90
Animal services	91	48
Total user fees	10,773	10,913
User fees recognised at a point in time	10,773	10,913
Total user fees	10,773	10,913

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
3.4 Funding from other levels of government		
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	33,092	12,396
State funded grants	12,903	12,349
Total grants received	45,995	24,745
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants	27,356	766
Recurrent - State Government		
Libraries	354	359
Rural Access and Transport connection	—	19
Cultural Services	236	233
Municipal emergency	240	238
School crossing supervisors	172	167
Parks and Environmental services	150	126
Environmental health	67	67
Community support programs	54	69
Other	—	6
Fire Service Property Levy	—	131
Total recurrent operating grants	28,629	2,181
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Parks and Environmental services	183	766
Municipal Emergency	170	200
Street Lights	26	13
Community and Recreation facilities upgrade	—	1,374
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Natural disaster funding	2,795	1,386
Community support programs	446	402
Economic Development and Tourism	217	516
Community and Recreation facilities upgrade	104	50
Cultural Services	50	22
Municipal emergency	38	54
Waste Management	32	—
Parks and Environmental services	—	2,033
Other	—	380
Wellington Coastal Subdivision Strategy	—	55
Total non-recurrent operating grants	4,061	7,251
Total operating grants	32,690	9,432

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	1,571	5,558
Total recurrent capital grants	1,571	5,558
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads	3,669	759
Buildings	90	2,208
Parks, open space and streetscapes	14	386
Aerodrome	—	30
Footpaths and cycleways	—	313
Recreation and leisure community facilities	—	23
Other	13	—
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Roads	5,691	1,349
Other Infrastructure	149	181
Drainage	539	11
Buildings	1,446	2,206
Plant	90	62
Recreation and Leisure Facilities	25	—
Library books	8	5
Footpaths and cycleways	—	1,952
Intangibles	—	258
Open Space and Streetscapes	—	12
Total non-recurrent capital grants	11,734	9,755
Total capital grants	13,305	15,313

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
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(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue the Council assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers. When both these conditions are satisfied, the Council:

- Identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- Determines the transaction price
- Recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- Recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the point in time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, the Council applies AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities.

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed. The following table provides a summary of the accounting framework under which grants are recognised.

Income recognised under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

General purpose	28,123	765
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	13,305	15,313
Other specific purpose grants	–	359

Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

Specific purpose grants	4,567	8,308
	45,995	24,745

(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner:**Operating**

Balance at start of year	2,873	3,732
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	767	894
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(1,282)	(1,753)
Balance at year end	2,358	2,873

Capital

Balance at start of year	1,854	5,925
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	339	1,720
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(876)	(5,791)
Balance at year end	1,317	1,854

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
3.5 Contributions		
Monetary contributions		
Monetary	459	1,048
Total monetary contributions	459	1,048
Non-monetary contributions		
Non-monetary	2,712	3,258
Total non-monetary contributions	2,712	3,258
Total contributions	3,171	4,306

Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.

Infrastructure	2,555	2,444
Property	157	814
Total non-monetary contributions	2,712	3,258

Monetary and non monetary contributions are recognised as income at their fair value when Council obtains control over the contributed asset.

3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	3,578	1,189
Written down value of assets disposed	(5,347)	(5,927)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(1,769)	(4,738)

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

3.7 Other income

Interest on investments	6,312	6,171
Changes to net present value due to interest rate movements	641	291
Other rent	726	521
Volunteer Income	196	244
Donations	515	151
Recognition of assets	211	1,205
Insurance	86	24
Miscellaneous income	22	18
Interest on debtors	22	27
Bad and doubtful debts recovered	19	—
Total other income	8,750	8,652

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when Council gains control over the right to receive the income.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 4. The cost of delivering services

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000

4.1 Employee costs

(a) Employee costs

Wages and salaries	28,598	27,960
Superannuation	3,683	3,358
Casual staff	3,047	2,674
Other	788	710
WorkCover	627	423
Fringe benefits tax	226	236
Total employee costs	36,969	35,361

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	164	168
	164	168

Accumulation funds

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	1,695	1,532
Employer contributions to Australian Super	501	393
Employer contributions to Aware-Vicsuper Scheme	223	191
Employer contributions to REST Superannuation	192	173
Employer contributions to Hostplus	201	161
Employer contributions to Cbus	195	160
Employer contributions - other funds	934	780
	3,941	3,390

Total superannuation costs

	4,105	3,558
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Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

Contractors	8,057	14,143
Infrastructure & parks maintenance	8,896	9,173
Materials	7,966	8,982
Waste management services	4,123	4,826
Contributions	2,335	2,508
Utility payments	2,926	2,555
Insurances	2,444	2,193
Environmental Authority fees	1,597	1,808
Building maintenance	1,533	1,490
Consultants	987	943
Total materials and services	40,864	48,621

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 4. The cost of delivering services (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
4.3 Depreciation		
Property	8,801	8,775
Plant and equipment	2,715	2,432
Infrastructure	23,845	20,988
Total depreciation	35,361	32,195

Refer to note 6.2 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
4.4 Other expenses		
Unused grant funding	–	55
Derecognition of assets	277	297
Work in progress assets written off	259	847
Councillors' allowances	380	366
Volunteer Expenses	196	244
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	73	61
Auditors' remuneration - Internal Audit	58	63
Operating lease rentals	45	–
Total other expenses	1,288	1,933

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
5.1 Financial assets		
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	7	7
Cash at bank	2,719	1,678
Term deposits	56,103	30,660
Total cash and cash equivalents	58,829	32,345
(b) Other financial assets		
Term deposits	82,275	87,330
Total other financial assets	82,275	87,330

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of 3 to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(c) Trade & Other Receivables		
Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates debtors	5,223	4,722
Special rate assessment	160	31
Infringement debtors	55	77
Net GST receivable	1,419	1,508
<i>Non-statutory receivables</i>		
Government grants	1,762	474
Allowance for expected credit loss - other debtors	(2)	(25)
Other debtors	4,917	6,388
Waste management	675	499
Total current trade and other receivables	14,209	13,674
Non-Current		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates debtors	4,043	3,656
Provision for doubtful debts	(972)	(991)
Special rate scheme	407	511
Infringements and fire hazards	80	114
Allowance for expected credit loss - infringements	(2)	(3)
Provision for doubtful debts - special charge scheme	—	—
Total non-current trade and other receivables	3,556	3,287
Total trade and other receivables	17,765	16,961

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. An allowance for expected credit losses is recognised based on past experience and other objective evidence of expected losses. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(d) Ageing of receivables

The ageing of the Council's trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:

Current (not yet due)	6,587	7,032
Past due by up to 30 days	61	66
Past due between 31 and 180 days	351	51
Past due between 181 and 365 days	3	3
Past due by more than 1 year	352	209
Total trade and other receivables	7,354	7,361

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
5.2 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities		
(a) Trade and other payables		
Current		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
Trade payables	7,114	6,849
Accrued expenses	995	778
Total current trade and other payables	8,109	7,627
(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Current		
Overpaid rates	1,730	1,605
Refundable deposits	1,075	954
Fire services levy	1,261	1,530
Retention amounts	639	692
Other refundable deposits	157	198
Total current trust funds and deposits	4,862	4,979
(c) Contract and other liabilities		
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance:		
Grants received in advance - operating	2,358	2,873
Grants received in advance - capital	1,317	1,854
Other	93	3
Total current contract and other liabilities	3,768	4,730

Trust funds and deposits

Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Contract liabilities

Contract liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of government grants. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Grants received in advance

Unearned income/revenue represents contract liabilities and reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of capital and operating projects. Unearned income/revenue are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Purpose and nature of items

Overpaid Rates - Overpaid rates received from ratepayers which are offset when the financial year's rates are raised.

Refundable deposits - Deposits are taken by Council as a form of surety in a number of circumstances, including in relation to building works, tender deposits, contract deposits and the use of civic facilities.

Fire Service Levy - Council is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a quarterly basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the state government in line with that process.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

Retention Amounts - Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

Other Trust funds and deposits - Council holds in trust ticket sales for shows performed by third parties at 'The Wedge' Entertainment Centre which are on forwarded to performer on completion of the show.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
5.3 Interest-bearing liabilities		
Current		
Other borrowings - secured	834	577
Total current interest-bearing liabilities	834	577
Non-current		
Other borrowings - secured	8,749	6,583
Total non-current interest-bearing liabilities	8,749	6,583
Total	9,583	7,160

Borrowings are secured by Council Rate Income.

a) The maturity profile for Council's borrowings is:

Not later than one year	834	577
Later than one year and not later than five years	3,517	2,495
Later than five years	5,232	4,088
	9,583	7,160

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether the Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities based on contractual repayment terms at every balance date.

In classifying borrowings as current or non-current Council considers whether at balance date it has the right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting period. Council's loan arrangements include covenants based on Council's financial performance and position at the end of the reporting period. These covenants are assessed for compliance after the reporting period based on specified financial ratios.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	Employee provisions \$ '000	Landfill restoration \$ '000	Total \$ '000
5.4 Provisions			
2025			
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	7,834	16,621	24,455
Additional provisions	3,670	–	3,670
Amounts used	(3,207)	(1,461)	(4,668)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	214	(641)	(427)
Change in cost estimates	–	396	396
Balance at the end of the financial year	8,511	14,915	23,426
Provisions			
Provisions - current	8,077	2,731	10,808
Provisions - non-current	434	12,184	12,618
Total Provisions	8,511	14,915	23,426
2024			
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	7,297	17,530	24,827
Additional provisions	3,732	–	3,732
Amounts used	(3,193)	(89)	(3,282)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(2)	(291)	(293)
Change in cost estimates	–	(529)	(529)
Balance at the end of the financial year	7,834	16,621	24,455
Provisions			
Provisions - current	7,535	4,170	11,705
Provisions - non-current	299	12,451	12,750
Total Provisions	7,834	16,621	24,455

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(a) Employee provisions		
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	2,072	1,942
Long service leave	517	544
	2,589	2,486
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	889	725
Long service leave	4,599	4,324
	5,488	5,049
Total current employee provisions	8,077	7,535
Non-Current		
Long service leave	433	298
Sick leave	1	1
Total Non-Current Employee Provisions	434	299
Aggregate Carrying Amount of Employee Provisions:		
Current	8,077	7,535
Non-current	434	299
Total Aggregate Carrying Amount of Employee Provisions	8,511	7,834

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if the Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:

- index rate (Annual Leave)	3.00%	3.50%
- index rate (Long Service Leave)	4.00%	3.50%
- discount rate (Annual Leave)	3.212%	4.665%
- discount rate (Long Service Leave)	4.161%	4.670%

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
(b) Landfill restoration		
Current	2,731	4,170
Non-current	12,184	12,451
Total	14,915	16,621

Council is obligated to restore the Kilmany, Longford, Maffra, Rosedale, Stratford and Yarram landfill sites to a particular standard. The forecast life of the site is based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the site to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs.

Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	3.754%	4.011%
- index rate (2024/25)	3.000%	4.000%
- index rate (2025/26 onwards)	3.000%	3.000%
- settlement rate	10 Years	10 Years
- estimated cost to rehabilitate	\$16.4 Million	\$17.6 million

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
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5.5 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2025.

Bank overdraft	200	200
Credit card facilities	130	130
Other facilities	9,583	10,160
Total Facilities	9,913	10,490
Used facilities	9,656	7,160
Unused facilities	257	3,330

5.6 Commitments

The Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

(a) Commitments for expenditure

	Not later than 1 year \$ '000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$ '000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$ '000	Later than 5 years \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2025					
Operating					
Waste management	3,825	6,748	14,364	13,032	37,969
Animal pound and shelter service	390	402	35	—	827
Software maintenance	1,032	324	208	—	1,564
Litter bins	383	—	—	—	383
Health Services	373	—	—	—	373
Longford Landfill Capping Project	1,665	—	—	—	1,665
Total	7,668	7,474	14,607	13,032	42,781
Capital					
Roads	1,283	—	—	—	1,283
Buildings	4,924	—	—	—	4,924
Plant, Machinery & Equipment	1,098	—	—	—	1,098
Recreational leisure and community facilities	1,067	—	—	—	1,067
Drainage	1,432	—	—	—	1,432
Waste Management	482	—	—	—	482
Total	10,286	—	—	—	10,286

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations (continued)

	Not later than 1 year \$ '000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$ '000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$ '000	Later than 5 years \$ '000	Total \$ '000
2024					
Operating					
Waste management	3,525	3,825	17,421	16,723	41,494
Animal pound and shelter service	417	429	480	—	1,326
Software maintenance	1,073	473	160	—	1,706
Litter bins	372	383	—	—	755
Health Services	364	—	—	—	364
Election Services	309	—	—	—	309
Consultant	88	16	—	—	104
Total	6,148	5,126	18,061	16,723	46,058
Capital					
Roads	110	—	—	—	110
Buildings	19,428	—	—	—	19,428
Plant, Machinery & Equipment	887	—	—	—	887
Aerodromes	88	—	—	—	88
Intangibles	75	—	—	—	75
Infrastructure Other	277	—	—	—	277
Total	20,865	—	—	—	20,865

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Carrying amount 30 June 2024 \$ '000	Additions \$ '000	Recognised \$ '000	Found Assets \$ '000	Contribution \$ '000	Revaluation \$ '000	Depreciation \$ '000	Disposal \$ '000	Derecognised \$ '000	Write-off \$ '000	Transfers \$ '000	Carrying amount 30 June 2025 \$ '000
Property	366,075	1,740	–	–	158	15,046	(8,802)	(84)	(116)	–	(307)	373,710
Plant and equipment	25,240	3,511	–	–	–	–	(2,716)	(500)	(160)	–	132	25,507
Infrastructure	1,004,941	18,486	211	287	2,555	25,984	(23,844)	(2,265)	(1)	(5)	2,259	1,028,608
Work in progress	10,444	18,416	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(937)	(2,292)	25,631
Total	1,406,700	42,153	211	287	2,713	41,030	(35,362)	(2,849)	(277)	(942)	(208)	1,453,456

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP \$ '000	Write-off \$ '000	Additions \$ '000	Transfers \$ '000	Closing WIP \$ '000
Property	6,274	(206)	14,038	(36)	20,070
Plant and equipment	709	(672)	95	–	132
Infrastructure	3,461	(59)	4,283	(2,256)	5,429
Total	10,444	(937)	18,416	(2,292)	25,631

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Land specialised \$ '000	Land improve- ments \$ '000	Land Under Roads \$ '000	Total land and land improve- ments \$ '000	Buildings specialised \$ '000	Total buildings \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total property \$ '000
Property								
At fair value 1 July 2024	154,440	4,587	54,068	213,095	330,569	330,569	6,274	549,938
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	—	(3,356)	—	(3,356)	(174,233)	(174,233)	—	(177,589)
	154,440	1,231	54,068	209,739	156,336	156,336	6,274	372,349
Movements in fair value								
Additions	93	—	—	93	1,647	1,647	14,038	15,778
Contributions	135	—	23	158	—	—	—	158
Derecognised	(116)	—	—	(116)	—	—	—	(116)
Revaluation	—	—	—	—	39,396	39,396	—	39,396
Disposal	—	—	—	—	(448)	(448)	—	(448)
Write-off	—	—	—	—	—	—	(206)	(206)
Transfers	(405)	—	—	(405)	98	98	(36)	(343)
	(293)	—	23	(270)	40,693	40,693	13,796	54,219
Movements in accumulated depreciation								
Depreciation and amortisation	—	(601)	—	(601)	(8,201)	(8,201)	—	(8,802)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	—	—	—	—	364	364	—	364
Accumulated depreciation on revaluation	—	—	—	—	(24,350)	(24,350)	—	(24,350)
	—	(601)	—	(601)	(32,187)	(32,187)	—	(32,788)
At fair value 30 June 2025	154,147	4,587	54,091	212,825	371,262	371,262	20,070	604,157
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	—	(3,957)	—	(3,957)	(206,420)	(206,420)	—	(210,377)
Carrying amount	154,147	630	54,091	208,868	164,842	164,842	20,070	393,780

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Plant machinery and equipment \$ '000	Fixtures fittings and furniture \$ '000	Computers and telecomms \$ '000	Library books \$ '000	Art Works \$ '000	Total \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total plant and equipment \$ '000
Plant and Equipment								
At fair value 1 July 2024	16,745	3,253	1,450	2,787	11,511	35,746	709	36,455
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(6,477)	(2,134)	(634)	(1,261)	—	(10,506)	—	(10,506)
	10,268	1,119	816	1,526	11,511	25,240	709	25,949
Movements in fair value								
Additions	2,830	66	277	275	63	3,511	95	3,606
Disposal	(1,947)	—	—	—	(160)	(2,107)	—	(2,107)
Write-off	—	—	—	—	—	—	(672)	(672)
Transfers	130	(325)	325	—	—	130	—	130
	1,013	(259)	602	275	(97)	1,534	(577)	957
Movements in accumulated depreciation								
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,982)	(273)	(219)	(242)	—	(2,716)	—	(2,716)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,447	—	—	—	—	1,447	—	1,447
Transfers	—	327	(325)	—	—	2	—	2
	(535)	54	(544)	(242)	—	(1,267)	—	(1,267)
At fair value 30 June 2025	17,758	2,994	2,052	3,062	11,414	37,280	132	37,412
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(7,012)	(2,080)	(1,178)	(1,503)	—	(11,773)	—	(11,773)
Carrying amount	10,746	914	874	1,559	11,414	25,507	132	25,639

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Roads \$ '000	Bridges \$ '000	Footpaths and cycleways \$ '000	Drainage \$ '000	Recrea- tional, leisure and community \$ '000	Waste management \$ '000	Parks open spaces and streets- capes \$ '000	Aerodromes \$ '000	Off street car parks \$ '000	Other infra- structure \$ '000	Total \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total infra- structure \$ '000
Infrastructure													
At fair value 1 July 2024	1,007,051	131,452	66,710	137,639	69,694	9,075	53,272	58,350	6,182	56,496	1,595,921	3,461	1,599,382
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(339,883)	(51,837)	(21,718)	(50,203)	(32,280)	(4,008)	(25,022)	(31,394)	(2,914)	(31,721)	(590,980)	–	(590,980)
	<u>667,168</u>	<u>79,615</u>	<u>44,992</u>	<u>87,436</u>	<u>37,414</u>	<u>5,067</u>	<u>28,250</u>	<u>26,956</u>	<u>3,268</u>	<u>24,775</u>	<u>1,004,941</u>	<u>3,461</u>	<u>1,008,402</u>
Movements in fair value													
Additions	13,342	660	1,859	325	813	277	445	301	–	464	18,486	4,283	22,769
Contributions	1,019	–	457	798	272	–	9	–	–	–	2,555	–	2,555
Newly Recognised	100	–	37	40	34	–	–	–	–	–	211	–	211
Derecognised	–	–	–	(5)	–	–	–	–	–	–	(5)	–	(5)
Found Assets	–	–	–	404	–	–	–	–	–	–	404	–	404
Revaluation	–	23,210	–	–	8,272	1,067	6,337	7,000	740	6,732	53,358	–	53,358
Disposal	(4,209)	(166)	(398)	(46)	(1,224)	(155)	(168)	–	–	–	(6,366)	–	(6,366)
Write-off	–	–	–	–	(5)	–	–	–	–	–	(5)	(59)	(64)
Transfers	260	–	325	47	566	–	139	99	–	823	2,259	(2,256)	3
	<u>10,512</u>	<u>23,704</u>	<u>2,280</u>	<u>1,563</u>	<u>8,728</u>	<u>1,189</u>	<u>6,762</u>	<u>7,400</u>	<u>740</u>	<u>8,019</u>	<u>70,897</u>	<u>1,968</u>	<u>72,865</u>
Movements in accumulated depreciation													
Depreciation and amortisation	(13,839)	(1,338)	(1,450)	(1,350)	(1,781)	(305)	(1,409)	(958)	(117)	(1,297)	(23,844)	–	(23,844)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	2,927	97	223	17	641	75	121	–	–	–	4,101	–	4,101
Accumulated Depreciation - Derecognise	–	–	–	4	2	2	–	–	–	–	8	–	8
Accumulated depreciation on revaluation	370	(10,837)	–	–	(4,201)	(626)	(3,492)	(4,294)	(361)	(3,932)	(27,373)	–	(27,373)
Prior period error	–	–	–	(117)	–	–	–	–	–	–	(117)	–	(117)
Transfers	(3)	–	–	–	(484)	–	–	–	–	482	(5)	–	(5)
	<u>(10,545)</u>	<u>(12,078)</u>	<u>(1,227)</u>	<u>(1,446)</u>	<u>(5,823)</u>	<u>(854)</u>	<u>(4,780)</u>	<u>(5,252)</u>	<u>(478)</u>	<u>(4,747)</u>	<u>(47,230)</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>(47,230)</u>
At fair value 30 June 2025	1,017,563	155,156	68,990	139,202	78,422	10,264	60,034	65,750	6,922	64,515	1,666,818	5,429	1,672,247
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(350,428)	(63,915)	(22,945)	(51,649)	(38,103)	(4,862)	(29,802)	(36,646)	(3,392)	(36,468)	(638,210)	–	(638,210)
Carrying amount	<u>667,135</u>	<u>91,241</u>	<u>46,045</u>	<u>87,553</u>	<u>40,319</u>	<u>5,402</u>	<u>30,232</u>	<u>29,104</u>	<u>3,530</u>	<u>28,047</u>	<u>1,028,608</u>	<u>5,429</u>	<u>1,034,037</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

ASSET TYPE	Depreciation Period	Threshold Limit
Property		
Land	-	All
Land Improvements	4 years	All
Buildings	20 - 100 years	>\$10,000
Plant and Equipment		
Motor Vehicles	3 - 10 years	All
Plant	3 - 10 years	>\$5,000
Furniture, Equipment & Information Technology	3 - 10 years	>\$5,000
Art Gallery Works	-	All
Library Books	3 - 10 years	All
Infrastructure		
Roads		
Pavement - Concrete	100 Years	All
Pavement - Sealed	100 Years	All
Pavement Gravel (Local Access A & Above)	15 Years	All
Pavement Gravel (Local Access B & C)	20 Years	All
Subgrade	Indefinite	All
Kerb & Channel	70 Years	All
Road Drainage - Minor Culverts	100 Years	All
Bridges		
Bridges - Concrete	100 Years	All
Bridges - Timber	60 Years	All
Floodways & Major Culverts	100 Years	All
Footpaths and cycleways		
Asphalt/Bitumen	15 Years	All
Concrete/Paved	60 Years	All
Gravel/Sand	10 Years	All
Drainage		
Pits	100 Years	All
Pipes	100 Years	All
Pump Wells	20 Years	All
Other Drainage	20 - 100 Years	All
Open Drain - Earth/Retention Basin	Indefinite	All
Structures		
Off Street Car Parks	30 - 100 years	
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	10 - 100 years	>\$5,000
Waste management	20 - 100 years	>\$5,000
Parks, open space and streetscapes	10 - 120 years	>\$5,000
Aerodromes	20 - 120 years	>\$5,000
Other infrastructure	10 - 120 years	>\$5,000
Intangible Assets		
Landfill Airspace	4 - 38 Years	All
Software	3 - 10 years	>\$5,000

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

Land under roads

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Valuation of land and land under roads

The general rates revaluation was undertaken by qualified independent valuer Daniel Scarfo Registered Valuer No 71139, the valuation of land was derived from the data supplied from the general rates revaluation and applied at 30 June 2023.

The valuation of land is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement. The valuation of land was undertaken by an independent valuer.

Land under roads is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Land and land under roads will be subject to a full revaluation in 2025/26.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets.

Buildings

The replacement cost of buildings was determined by the qualified independent valuer Daniel Scarfo, Registered Valuer No 71139 of Gippsland Property Valuations.

For assets categorised as specialised, valuation at fair value was undertaken by Council based on the cost approach (replacement cost), using asset condition and useful life as the fair value inputs, less accumulated depreciation at valuation date 30 June 2023.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

The valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

As a result of the revaluation, the total net increase in the value of buildings was \$82.7M (102.12%) in 2023.

The review of the Non-residential building construction Victoria ABS index resulted in an increase of approximately 12% in the current replacement cost of the building asset class since the last revaluation on 30 June 2023. It was thus determined that the movement was material in nature and a managerial revaluation was required at 30 June 2025 to accurately reflect the value of this asset class. As a result of the revaluation using the Non-residential building construction Victoria ABS index, the total net increase in the value of buildings increased by \$15.0M (12%).

Buildings will be subject to a full revaluation in 2026/27.

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of valuation	Type of Valuation
Land - Specialised	—	196	153,951	Jun/23	Index
Land improvements	—	—	631	n/a	n/a
Land under roads	—	—	54,090	Jun/23	Index
Buildings - Specialised	—	—	164,842	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Total	—	196	373,514		

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

Valuation of Infrastructure

Drainage

Valuation of the drainage asset class was undertaken at 30 June 2023 by Council Officer Mr. Chris Hastie B.Eng (Civil), Gcert Mgt. As a result of the revaluation, the total replacement value of the drainage asset class has increased by \$31.269M (30.11%) in 2023. The valuation considers rates from Rawlinsons Construction Handbook 2023, supplier quotes and price lists, contractor information for construction works provided by Council engineers and Council's gifted assets relating to new subdivisions, to determine a construction rate for each component.

Bridges, Major Culverts & Floodways

Valuation of the bridges, major culverts & floodways asset class was undertaken at 30 June 2025 by Coordinator Asset Management and verified by the Manager Built Environment. Valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation. The valuation considers rates from contract information for annual program construction works provided by Council Engineers and Rawlinsons Construction Handbook 2024, to determine a construction rate for each component. As a result of the revaluation, the total net increase in the value of bridges, major culverts & floodways increased by \$12.37M.

Roads and Footpaths

Valuation of the roads and footpath asset classes was undertaken at 30 June 2024 by Coordinator Asset Management and verified by the Manager Built Environment. Valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation. The valuation considers rates from contract information for annual program construction works provided by Council Engineers and Rawlinsons Construction Handbook 2024, to determine a construction rate for each component.

As a result of the revaluation, the total net increase in the value of roads increased by \$60M (10%) in 2024.

As a result of the revaluation, the total replacement value of footpaths increased by almost \$.4M (1%) in 2024.

Structures

The replacement cost of structures was determined by the following qualified independent valuers:

Public Artworks - Rodney James, Art Consultant and Registered Valuer with Art Consulting Association of Australia;

Skate Parks and Pump Tracks – Tysen Haley of Haley Constructions;

Playgrounds – Hutchison Park Services;

Aerodromes; Carparks; Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes; Recreational, Leisure and Community facilities; Waste Management; Other Infrastructure (excluding the above) - Daniel Scarfo, Registered Valuer No 71139 of Gippsland Property Valuations.

The valuation is at fair value based on replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation.

As a result of the revaluation, the total net increase in the value of buildings was \$65.9M (102.05%) in 2023.

The Structure asset classes are defined to include Recreational, leisure & community facilities, Waste management. Parks, open space & streetscapes, Aerodromes, Off street car parks and Other infrastructure. The review of the ABS Non-residential building construction Victoria ABS index resulted in an increase of approximately 12% in the current replacement cost of the structure asset classes since the last revaluation on 30 June 2023. It was thus determined that the movement was material in nature and a managerial revaluation was required at 30 June 2025 to accurately reflect the value of these asset classes using the Non-residential building construction Victoria ABS index. As a result of the revaluation, the total net increase in the value of structures increased by \$13.2M (12%).

Structures will be subject to a full revaluation in 2026/27.

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of valuation	Type of Valuation
Roads	—	—	667,135	Jun/24	Full
Bridges	—	—	92,351	Jun/25	Full
Footpaths and cycleways	—	—	46,046	Jun/24	Full
Drainage	—	—	87,552	Jun/23	Full
Recreational, leisure & community facilities	—	—	40,319	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Waste management	—	—	5,402	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Parks, open space & streetscapes	—	—	30,232	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Aerodromes	—	—	29,104	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Off street car parks	—	—	3,530	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Other Infrastructure	—	—	28,048	Jun/25	ABS Index Applied
Total	—	—	1,029,719		

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land and land under roads is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 5% and 95%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between \$0.02 and \$30,909.73 per square metre and land under roads values range between \$0.23 and \$4.10 per square metre.

Specialised buildings are valued using a depreciated replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are comprised of a square metre basis ranging from \$626 to \$16,650 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 4 years to 99 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the depreciated replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 10 years to an indefinite life. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Reconciliation of specialised land		
Land under roads	54,090	54,069
Parks, open space and streetscapes	84,388	84,192
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	48,197	48,716
Off-street car parks	8,424	8,424
Aerodromes	5,302	5,302
Waste management	3,909	3,877
Other infrastructure - Piers/Jetties/Caravan parks/Markets/Saleyards	3,026	3,026
Drainage	901	901
Total specialised land	208,237	208,507
Transfer from the asset revaluation reserve to accumulated surplus for assets disposed of or sold		
Reversal of revalued assets disposed or written off (transfer from asset revaluation reserve to accumulated surplus).		
Roads, Streets, Drainage, Bridges & Culverts	(1,286)	(1,946)
Buildings & Structures	(867)	(5,034)
Land	(69)	(84)
Total	(2,223)	(7,064)
Assets held for sale and sold throughout the year	(2,093)	(118)
Revaluation Reserve Adjustment	(4,316)	(7,182)

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 7. People and relationships

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties*Parent entity*

Council is the parent entity.

Subsidiaries and Associates

Council has no subsidiaries or associates.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Wellington Shire Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and General Managers are deemed KMP.

Details of KMP at any time during the year are:

Councillors

Mayor Scott Rossetti (18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Scott Rossetti (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)
 Dep Cindy Madeley (18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Garry Stephens (01/07/24 - 26/10/24, Re-elected 18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr John Tatterson (01/07/24 - 26/10/24, Re-elected 18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Carmel Ripper (01/07/24 - 26/10/24, Re-elected 18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Catherine Bannerman (18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Geoff Wells (18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Liz Foat (18/11/24 - Present)
 Cr Edward Lowe (18/11/24 - Present)
 Mayor Ian Bye (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)
 Dep Gayle Maher (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)
 Cr Carolyn Crossley (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)
 Cr Marcus McKenzie (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)
 Cr Jill Wood (01/07/24 - 26/10/24)

CMT

Chief Executive Officer - David Morcom
 General Manager Built and Natural Environment - Chris Hastie
 General Manager Development - Andrew Pomeroy
 General Manager Corporate Services - Arthur Skipitaris
 General Manager Community & Culture - Clemence Gillings (1 Jul 2024 - 28 Feb 2025)

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Total Number of Councillors	14	9
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	5	5
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	19	14

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 7. People and relationships (continued)

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,593	1,627
Other long-term employee benefits	25	29
Post-employment benefits	127	126
Termination benefits	16	—
Total	1,761	1,782

	2025 No.	2024 No.
The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:		
\$10,000 - \$19,999	4	—
\$20,000 - \$29,999	4	—
\$30,000 - \$39,999	5	7
\$40,000 - \$49,999	—	1
\$70,000 - \$79,999	1	—
\$100,000 - \$109,999	—	1
\$190,000 - \$199,999	1	—
\$240,000 - \$249,999	—	1
\$250,000 - \$259,999	1	2
\$260,000 - \$269,999	1	—
\$280,000 - \$289,999	—	1
\$300,000 - \$309,999	1	—
\$360,000 - \$369,999	—	1
\$370,000 - \$379,999	1	—
	19	14

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 7. People and relationships (continued)

(d) Remuneration of other senior staff

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds \$170,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP.

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Short-term employee benefits	1,954	1,145
Other long-term employee benefits	47	26
Post-employment benefits	226	122
Termination benefits	131	—
Total	2,358	1,293

	2025 No.	2024 No.
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The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:

\$170,000 - \$179,999	4	3
\$180,000 - \$189,999	5	3
\$190,000 - \$199,999	2	—
\$210,000 - \$219,999	—	1
\$220,000 - \$229,999	1	—
	12	7

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:	2,358	1,293

7.2 Related party disclosure

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties:	405	591
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During the period Council entered into a number of transactions with related parties of KMP's or their close family members. These transactions occurred within normal commercial terms and conditions.

These transactions included \$10,827 of annual maintenance and risk subsidies, and \$56,464 of community grants for various events and minor facilities improvements. Transactions with Central Gippsland Health Services included contributions towards health services of \$181,861 (2024: \$355,469), as well as \$968 for linen services and emergency department costs. A \$122,074 (2024: \$41,241) contribution was made towards Destination Gippsland's Event Acquisition Fund. A further \$20,928 (2024: \$82,025) was spent on contractors for facilities maintenance, advertising, and signage, and \$12,046 (2024: \$11,616) was spent on memberships.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 8. Managing uncertainties

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
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8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council.

Non cash contributions expected to be received in respect of subdivision and gifted assets are as follows:

Developer contributions	5,988	7,943
Total Contingent Assets	5,988	7,943

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
 - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Wellington Shire Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Liability Mutual Insurance

Council is a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

(c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

The amount disclosed for financial guarantee in this note is the nominal amount of the underlying loan that is guaranteed by the Council, not the fair value of the financial guarantee.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or Council has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

Council has guaranteed a loan taken out by a community group, to undertake significant capital works to the Club's facilities on Council Land.

Council's estimated liability with respect to contingent items is as follows:

Bank Guarantees	735	935
Total Bank Guarantees	735	935

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2025 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards. As at 30 June 2025 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2025 that are expected to impact Council.

In September 2024 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued two Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS). This followed Commonwealth legislation establishing Australia's sustainability reporting framework. Relevant entities will be required to undertake mandatory reporting of climate-related disclosures in future financial years. Public sector application issues remain under consideration and Council will continue to monitor developments and potential implications for future financial years.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and TCV borrowings. Details of the material accounting policy information and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of Council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes Council to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on the Council's year end result.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

(c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council has exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- Council has a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities Council deals with;
- Council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- Council only invests surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in Council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the Council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when Council provides a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any allowance for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

(d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of Council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- has a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- has readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- has a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitors budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- sets limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of - 0.50 % and 0.50 % in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.23%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair Value Hierarchy

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

Council has considered the amendments to AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement that apply for the 2024-25 financial year as a result of AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities. For assets, where the Council adopts a current replacement cost approach to determine fair value, the Council now considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation.

The AASB 13 amendments apply prospectively, comparative figures have not been restated.

The amendments to AASB 13 relate to fair value measurements of non-financial assets and have resulted in changes to our revaluation methodology for assets. The applicable changes relate to determining the replacement costs of the asset and specifically including disruption costs, site preparation costs, and costs to restore third-party assets.

The above change in accounting policy had an immaterial impact on the Statement of Financial Position.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities

Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and

Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis of 4 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

Asset Class	Revaluation frequency
Land	4 years
Buildings	4 years
Roads	4 years
Bridges	4 years
Footpaths and cycleways	4 years
Drainage	4 years
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	4 years
Waste management	4 years
Parks, open space and streetscapes	4 years
Aerodromes	4 years
Other infrastructure	4 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increases are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increase reverses a prior year decrease for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increase is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increases and decreases within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$ '000	Adjustment directly to equity \$ '000	Increase (decrease) \$ '000	Balance at end of reporting period \$ '000
9.1 Reserves				
(a) Asset revaluation reserves				
2025				
Property				
Land and land improvements	139,493	(69)	–	139,424
Land Under Roads	36,445	–	–	36,445
Buildings and Structures	203,793	(867)	15,046	217,972
	379,731	(936)	15,046	393,841
Other				
Art Gallery Stock	6,330	–	–	6,330
	6,330	–	–	6,330
Infrastructure				
Roads	526,787	(1,047)	370	526,110
Bridges	32,316	(79)	12,372	44,609
Footpaths and cycleways	21,930	(143)	–	21,787
Drainage	43,526	(18)	–	43,508
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	–	–	4,071	4,071
Waste management	–	–	441	441
Parks, open space and streetscapes	–	–	2,845	2,845
Aerodromes	–	–	2,706	2,706
Offstreet car parks	–	–	379	379
Other infrastructure	–	–	2,800	2,800
	624,559	(1,287)	25,984	649,256
Total asset revaluation reserves	1,010,620	(2,223)	41,030	1,049,427
2024				
Property				
Land and land improvements	139,690	(197)	–	139,493
Land Under Roads	36,445	–	–	36,445
Buildings and Structures	208,827	(5,034)	–	203,793
	384,962	(5,231)	–	379,731
Other				
Art Gallery Stock	6,330	–	–	6,330
	6,330	–	–	6,330
Infrastructure				
Roads	466,913	(1,166)	61,040	526,787
Bridges	32,814	(450)	(48)	32,316
Footpaths and cycleways	21,754	(225)	401	21,930
Drainage	43,636	(110)	–	43,526
	565,117	(1,951)	61,393	624,559
Total asset revaluation reserves	956,409	(7,182)	61,393	1,010,620

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters (continued)

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters (continued)

	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Reconciliation of net revaluation movement		
Increment recognised	41,495	61,393
Adjustment directly to equity	(2,223)	(7,182)
Net revaluation increment	39,272	54,211

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$ '000	Transfer from Accumulated Surplus \$ '000	Transfer to Accumulated Surplus \$ '000	Balance at end of reporting period \$ '000
(b) Other reserves				
2025				
Discretionary reserves				
Asset improvement	2,428	(368)	2,515	4,575
Plant replacement	1,104	(1,343)	1,100	861
Waste management	4,241	(831)	2,329	5,739
Total discretionary reserves	7,773	(2,542)	5,944	11,175
Non discretionary reserves				
Recreational land	1,431	(195)	186	1,422
Infrastructure contributions	198	—	1	199
Art gallery acquisition	8	(13)	10	5
Art gallery contribution	52	(47)	—	5
Leased property improvements	1,548	(276)	135	1,407
Total Non Discretionary reserves	3,237	(531)	332	3,038
Total Other reserves	11,010	(3,073)	6,276	14,213

2024				
Discretionary reserves				
Asset improvement	1,229	(32)	1,231	2,428
Plant replacement	1,468	(1,564)	1,200	1,104
Waste management	5,640	(2,991)	1,592	4,241
Total discretionary reserves	8,337	(4,587)	4,023	7,773
Non discretionary reserves				
Recreational land	1,226	—	205	1,431
Infrastructure contributions	158	—	40	198
Art gallery acquisition	8	(3)	3	8
Art gallery contribution	5	—	47	52
Leased property improvements	3,103	(1,711)	156	1,548
Total Non Discretionary reserves	4,500	(1,714)	451	3,237
Total Other reserves	12,837	(6,301)	4,474	11,010

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters (continued)

Purpose of Reserves**Discretionary Reserves****Asset Improvement**

Reserve to fund capital improvements.

Plant Replacement

Reserve is to fund future purchases of major plant and equipment.

Waste Management

Reserve is to fund the establishment of recycling and transfer stations and an increase in landfill capacity in the future.

Non Discretionary Reserves**Recreational Land**

Reserve to fund future open space facilities as per Section 18 of Subdivision Act.

Infrastructure Contributions

Reserve is an accumulation of developer contributions which are to be expended at a future date on infrastructure.

Art Gallery Acquisition

Reserve is to fund future approved art gallery acquisitions.

Art Gallery Contributions

Reserve is to fund future specific major art gallery exhibitions.

Leased Property Improvements

Reserve to fund future works on leased properties in accordance with Crown Land Act.

	2025	2024
	\$ '000	\$ '000

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)

Surplus/(deficit) for the year	25,042	(4,617)
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Non-cash adjustments:

Depreciation/amortisation	36,653	33,469
Profit/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,769	4,738
Other	(316)	(352)
Borrowing costs	136	26
Finance Cost - Leases	4	8
Bad and Doubtful Debts (net written off and expensed)	(13)	94
Contributions - Non-monetary assets	(2,712)	(3,258)
Contributions - monetary (non-operating)	(54)	(15)

Change in assets and liabilities:

(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(789)	(4,564)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	57	(200)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(535)	(251)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	483	(2,164)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	(388)	(81)
(Decrease)/increase in trust funds and deposits	(117)	955
(Decrease)/increase in contract and other liabilities	(962)	(5,310)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	58,258	18,478

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Operating Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2025, this was 11.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2024: 11.0%)).

Defined Benefit

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

Funding Arrangements

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

As at 30 June 2024, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category.

The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2024 (of which Council is a contributing employer) was 105.4%. The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

- Net investment returns 5.6% pa
- Salary information 3.5% pa
- Price inflation (CPI) 2.7% pa

As at 30 June 2025, an interim actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is expected to be completed by 31 October 2025.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

- Net investment returns 5.7% pa
- Salary information 3.5% pa
- Price inflation (CPI) 2.6% pa

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2024 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2024 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2025, this rate was 11.5% of members' salaries (11.0% in 2023/24). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2023 triennial valuation.

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

(b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters (continued)

category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 97%).

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up. If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

The 2024 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2024 while a full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund's actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2024 (Interim) \$m	2023 (Triennial) \$m
- A VBI Surplus	108.4	85.7
- A total service liability surplus	141.4	123.6
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	156.7	141.9

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2024.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2024.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2024.

The 2025 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2025 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2025. The last interim actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2025 was at 30 June 2024.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

- Net investment returns 5.7% pa
- Salary information 3.5% pa
- Price inflation (CPI) 2.6% pa

It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2025.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 9. Other matters (continued)

The 2023 triennial investigation

The last triennial actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2023 was at 30 June 2020. This actuarial investigation was completed by 31 December 2020. The financial assumptions for the purposes of these investigations were:

	2023	2020
	Triennial investigation	Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.7% pa	5.6% pa
Salary inflation	3.50% pa	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter
Price inflation	2.8% pa	2.0% pa

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of scheme	Rate	2025 \$ '000	2024 \$ '000
Vision Super	Defined benefits	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	164	168
Vision Super	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	1,695	1,532
Other Schemes	Accumulation	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	1,874	1,858

In addition to the above contributions, Council has paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super totalling \$0 (2023/24 \$0). There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2025.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2026 is \$164,000.

Note 10. Changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2024/25 year.



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