WELLINGTON SHIRE COUNCIL

WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

THE MIDDLE OF EVERYWHERE

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.



Image: Port of Sale

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Section: One

Report of Operations

WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL
The Heart of Gippsland



Gippsland Plains Rail Trail

1.1 Welcome to the Report of Operations (ROP) 2023/24

Wellington Shire Council is proud to present the 2023/24 Annual Report. This report is designed to keep our community updated about how we have performed over the past 12 months against the Council Plan 2021-25 and the 2023/24 Budget. In addition, this report provides a comprehensive overview of 2023/24 operations, including our accomplishments and challenges throughout the year. The report covers a wide range of topics, including information about our services and operations, corporate governance information and detailed audited financial statements.

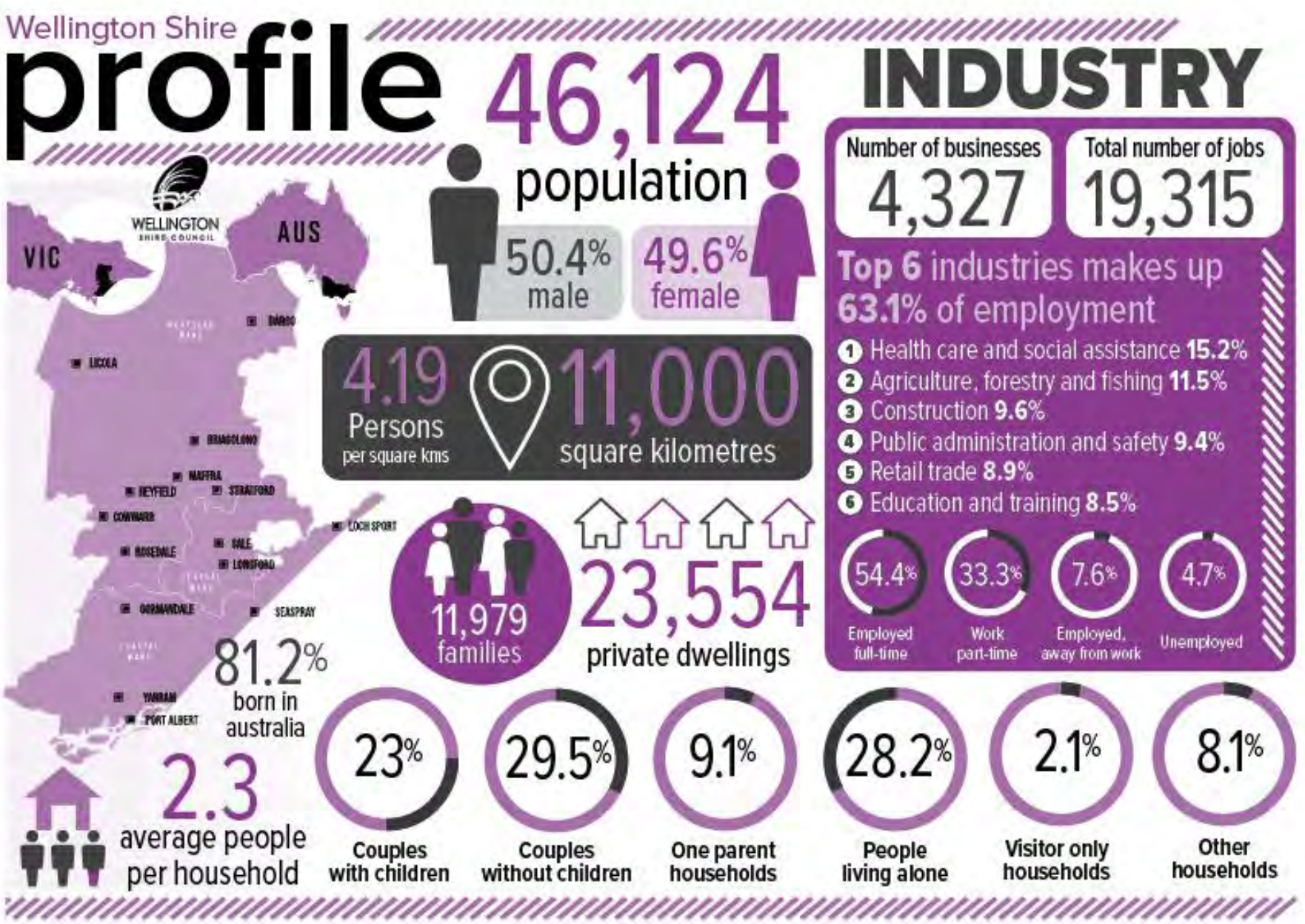
Council is committed to transparent reporting and accountability, and we aim to provide our residents, ratepayers, state and federal governments, and other key stakeholders with an open, accurate account of our performance from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. The report also provides Council staff with an overall picture of the way we have performed and how they have contributed to the community during the year. Our Annual Report fulfills the Council's statutory reporting obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and other relevant legislation.

For further information please contact Council on 1300 366 244 or email: enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au



Image: Golden Beach

1.2 Snapshot of Council



Purpose

Our Vision

'Happy people, healthy environment and thriving communities.'

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.

Roads



Image: Buttners Saddle Road - Carrajung

- 650,452 square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed
- 22,775 square metres of local roads resealed (reseal and asphalt programs)
- 2,513km of gravel roads graded
- 8,562km of roadsides slashed
- 2,075 culverts cleared
- 1,614 urban drainage pits cleaned
- 3,030 Customer Action Requests (CARS) received for the Built Environment Roads team

Fast Facts for 2023/24

- 25.4% increase in tourism visitation figures to Wellington Shire from March 2023 to March 2024
- Attracted, funded and co-funded 26 major events to the broader region with attendance in excess of a record 53,507 people
- An 8.6% overall increase in attendance across all 3 Visitor centres
  - 23,815 unique visitors attended the Central Gippsland Visitor Centre
  - 2,093 unique visitors attended the Maffra Visitor Centre
  - 9,151 unique visitors attended the Yarram Visitor Centre
- 11,616 combined social media followers

Tourism



Image: Visitor Centre - Yarram

Waste Management



Image: New waste bins

- 1,080,022 general waste collections
- 540,011 recycling collections

Immunisation

- 596 immunisations administered



Image: Immunisation session - Sale

Fast Facts for 2023/24

Gippsland Art Gallery



Image: Gippsland Art Gallery - Sale

- 57,377 visitors
- 39 exhibitions presented
- 174 public programs, workshops and artist talks provided engaging 4,294 people
- 9,305 students and teachers engaged with the Gippsland Art Gallery Education Program
- 191 donated artworks valued at $895,700 and 9 cash donations totalling $131,106 received

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

- 21,324 patrons attended performances
- A total of 78 events showcased an impressive 122 performances



Image: The Wedge – Sale
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Wellington Libraries

- 246,762 visits across Wellington Shire's Library Network
- 209,085 library collection loans, including eResources
- 15,015 attendees of the 1,345 programs and events presented across the library network
- 81,891 Wi-Fi and public computer sessions totalling 64,674 hours of use across the Library Network



Image: Library - Heyfield



Image: Wellington Shire Council Ranger - Sale

Local Laws

- 1,294 animal complaints received
- 696 domestic animals received by Councils pound with 79% reunited with their owners
- 415 emergency after-hours incidents attended
- 8,621 dogs registered
- 2,070 cats registered
- Decrease in reported dog attacks, with the total falling from 50 to 46 for the year

Fast Facts for 2023/24



Image: Outdoor pool - Stratford

Leisure Services

- 142,731 visits to Wellington Shire pools
- 27,253 visits to outdoor summer season pools
- 2,815 attendances Living Longer Living Stronger (over 50's strength and balance exercise program)
- 25,949 swim school attendances
- Gippsland Regional Sports Complex achieved a record high of 169,605 visits

Customer Service

- 28,142 Customer Service telephone calls received
- 13,886 face-to-face visitors managed by the Customer Service team

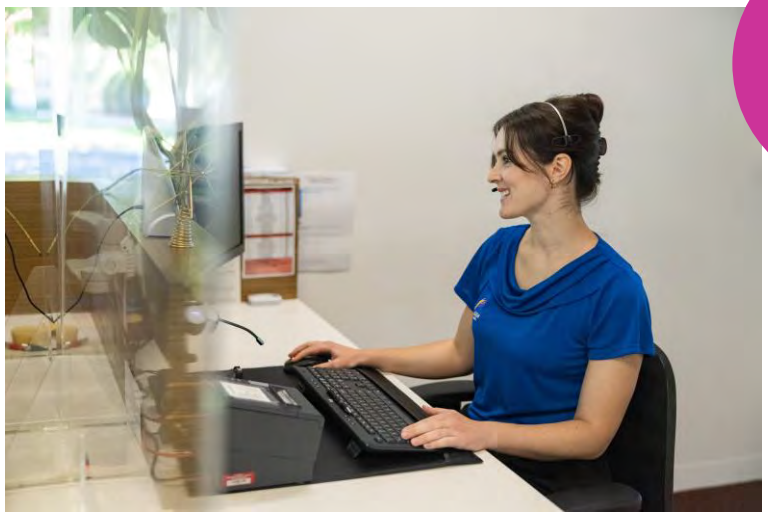


Image: Customer Service Centre - Sale

Environmental Health



- 421 food premises inspected
- 158 Onsite Wastewater Management System (OWMS) applications received
- 225 Onsite Wastewater Management System applications completed

Land Use Planning



- 424 planning permits issued with an estimated value of $135M

Fast Facts for 2023/24

Grants to support the community



Image: Neighbourhood House - Maffra

- 46 organisations successful in receiving Community Assistance Grants to support community projects and events totalling $247,087 in funding
- 59 organisations successful in receiving Quick Response Grants to support community projects and events totalling $124,658.71 in funding
- 44 Community Facilities Committees of Management were successful in receiving Reactivating Community Facility Volunteers grants totalling $81,323.51 in funding

Urban Forest Renewal Program

Image: tree planting in Woondella



- 972 street trees planted across the municipality since July 2023

Airports & Aerodromes

Image: Airport – West Sale



- 10,698 aircraft movements at West Sale Airport (10.2% increase on previous year)
- 2,698 aircraft movements at Yarram Aerodrome (2.5% increase on previous year)

1.3 Highlights of the Year



Strategic Direction: Environment and Climate Change

'We are a climate resilient community with sustainable practices and places'

Achievements:

- ✓ Approximately 1,750 trees have been planted as part of Greening Wellington.
- ✓ Approximately 1,617 trees have been planted as part of the Urban Forest Renewal Program.
- ✓ Container Deposit Schemes (CDS) were introduced. Wellington Shire recycled 172,060 containers in November 2023 which is the third highest return rate in Victoria.
- ✓ Installation and completion of Electric Vehicle Charging Station in Stratford.
- ✓ Upgrade of the Seaspray levee by increasing the wall height by 300mm over the 4.3km length of the levee. This enhancement aims to implement measures to reduce flood risk to the community.
- ✓ LED lighting was installed at the Stratford Recreation Reserve main oval, the project received funding through the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund.
- ✓ Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC) Hockey Pavilion Solar and Battery installation complete.
- ✓ The launch of emissions software platform 'Trelis' to accrue data on energy use, profile and efficiencies across the Facilities portfolio.
- ✓ Continued advocacy and planning for renewable energy investment in Wellington Shire, led by offshore wind.
- ✓ Completed the detailed design for the Yarram Outdoor Pool water treatment plant upgrade.
- ✓ Working towards finalising contract negotiations for Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) processing with a construction timeframe of 24 months, proposed to commence 2026/2027.
- ✓ Completion of a bin roll out providing the community with new landfill and recycling bins.
- ✓ Ongoing review of the effectiveness of the recently implemented cat curfew was undertaken. Since enforcement commenced in July 2023, Council has experienced a 20.8% reduction in the number of domesticated cats impounded. Complaints regarding wandering cats has also reduced, with 68 less complaints received compared to the same period the previous year.
- ✓ Upgrade of Mosquito Monitoring Vehicle enabling vector work to be conducted more efficiently.

1.3 Highlights of the Year



Strategic Direction: Economy and Sustainable Growth

'*We are growing, sustainable and prosperous community*'

Achievements:

- ✓ Facilitation and approval of three (3) development plans providing the ability to develop a mix of two hundred and forty-eight (248) residential and rural living lots within Heyfield and Longford.
- ✓ The Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange saw the strongest annual increases in throughput since pre-covid – cattle increased by 15.1% and sheep/lambs increased by 36.3%. Even stronger increases when looking only at the first half of 2024 – cattle 25%, sheep/lambs 43%.
- ✓ Delivered the second successful ANZAC Weekend Airshow at West Sale airport:
  - o 14,252 people attended – 30.68% increase in attendance from 2022
  - o $2.4million boost to local economy
  - o 26% of the crowd attended from Melbourne with a total of 77% of the crowd visiting from outside of Wellington
- ✓ Completion of major improvements at the Port of Sale including moorings, shared pathways and public open space.
- ✓ Visitation statistics according to Tourism Research Australia:
  - o 1,551,000 Domestic Nights (total number of nights visitors have stayed), marks the highest figure on record exceeding the previous record by 160,000
  - o 506,000 Domestic Overnight visitors, highest figure on record
  - o 478,000 Domestic Daytrip visitors, highest figure since 2019
  - o 25.4% increase in tourism visitation figures from March 2023 to March 2024
- ✓ Filming took place for the second and third time with 'Country House Hunters – Catriona Rowntree' shining a light on Heyfield and Seaspray.
- ✓ The Middle of Everywhere Gippsland Rally welcomed Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events.
- ✓ Completion of the Great Southern Rail Trail connecting Welshpool to Alberton.
- ✓ Completion of several Planning Scheme Amendments to provide residentially zoned land for approximately 522 residential and rural residential lifestyle blocks.

1.3 Highlights of the Year



Strategic Direction: Liveability and Wellbeing

'We are a liveable, engaged, and supported community'

Achievements:

- ✓ Another successful year for Arts & Culture with a total of 325,423 visitors to either The Wedge, Gippsland Art Gallery, or one of Wellington Shire's libraries.
- ✓ In late 2023, Arts & Culture staff conducted a community consultation in preparation for the next Arts & Culture Strategy, which yielded 405 responses.
- ✓ Wellington Libraries were successful in obtaining a Children's Week grant which enabled the development and delivery of a successful Sensitive Storytime program for children with Autism or sensory processing difficulties.
- ✓ The Yarram Early Learning Service was expanded with a 66 place, 2-room modular kindergarten. The project was funded through the Victorian Government's Building Blocks program.
- ✓ Multipurpose court redevelopment was completed at the Nambrok Recreation Reserve providing the local community with tennis and netball courts. The project received funding through the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund - Female Friendly Facilities program.
- ✓ The social rooms were redeveloped at the Stratford Recreation Reserve. The project was funded by the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund.
- ✓ Successful funding application for the Cameron Sporting Complex to complete designs to provide female and family friendly changerooms at the main oval pavilion. The project received funding through the Victorian Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund.
- ✓ Successful funding application for the Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families to complete concept and schematic designs. The project was funded through the Victorian Government's Building Blocks program.
- ✓ Commenced the major redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale.
    - o Maintained all key aquatic services, such as swimming lessons and hydrotherapy through the activation of West Sale Pool.
    - o Maintained 100% of gym and Group Fitness offerings.
    - o Launched the popular 'cold water lap swimming' at Aqua Energy Outdoor Pool.
- ✓ Increased diverse facility offerings at Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC), including major events and social sports programming, resulting in record participation.

1.3 Highlights of the Year



Strategic Direction: Services and Infrastructure

'We are a connected community with access to the services and infrastructure we require'

Achievements:

- ✓ Council was awarded an LG PRO Award for Excellence 2024 in recognition for its ground-breaking collaboration and shared services initiative with East Gippsland Shire Council for the consolidation of their Datacentres and ICT footprint. Understood to be the first of its kind in the state and perhaps Australia. The project provides improved cybersecurity and data protection, better disaster-recovery services, and has enabled the Councils to reduce their environmental footprint.
- ✓ Development of a new website for the Art Gallery to enable improved promotion and to facilitate improved accessibility and information for patrons and community members.
- ✓ Wellington Libraries Facebook page was launched in December 2023 in collaboration with the Communications and Media team. Resulting in a steady growth of followers, this tool assists us to market our services and engage with our community.
- ✓ Successfully implemented a new Customer Request Management System to provide business process efficiencies for the management and reporting of customer service requests and improved mobility access for field officers to provide more responsive services to the community.
- ✓ Completed significant upgrades to York and Foster streets, including footpaths, kerbs, asphalting, street lighting and landscaping. In addition, the Cunninghame Street intersection was upgraded with traffic lights as part of this project.
- ✓ Natural Disaster Funding recovery works at both Licola and Dargo related to 2022/23 Disaster Events completed.
- ✓ Completion of roundabout at Desailly and Macarthur streets.
- ✓ Completion of Buttners Saddle Road erosion project in addition to multiple landslips.
- ✓ Upper Dargo Road - landslip reducing lane width rectification works.
- ✓ Woorarra Road Wonyip - multiple landslips rectification works.
- ✓ Hedley Range Road - multiple landslips rectification works.
- ✓ Talbotville Road landslip reducing lane width - rectification works.
- ✓ Albert River Road - multiple landslips rectification works.
- ✓ Greenway Bridge, Yarram Morwell Road - Washout under abutment rectification works.
- ✓ Sloping Bridge Alberton West Widening Project.

1.4 Our Challenges

- There were a number of roads requiring remediation that were affected by land slips that diverted attention and resources from delivering the approved capital works program
- In 2023/24, the unit rate for Wellington Shire Council's road sealing program has increased significantly over the last 12 months
- The number of customer action requests for local roads has significantly increased in the 2023/24 financial year
- Industry shortages and availability of suitably qualified staff with particular focus on direct-delivery staff in aquatic education and health and fitness areas
- Recognising ongoing cost of living pressures when offering key sport, health and fitness services
- Changing climate/season conditions when offering outdoor services, such as outdoor pools
- Pausing the delivery of outdoor community events such as the 'Victorian Sculpture Prize' and the 'Day at the Port' festival neither of which took place as a response to the financially constrained environment
- Planning and delivery of improved early years facilities in the context of rising construction costs and limited external funding opportunities
- Responding to the increased number and frequency of emergency events across the municipality, including resourcing the related claims/cost recovery process
- Reducing the time commitment and burden placed on community volunteers in managing Council's ageing community infrastructure
- Ongoing cyber security challenges and sophisticated cyber threats as a result of Artificial Intelligence
- Cyber compliance resourcing and costs
- Management and risk mitigation of cloud computing
- Legacy system modernisation (Including records management system replacement and end-of-life software)
- Navigating the evolving legislative frameworks and complying with changing regulations to effectively manage risks and ensuring good governance practices
- Increasing insurance premiums due to a consistent rise in claims costs and frequency within the sector, along with rising reinsurance costs
- Developing and refining competitive and strategic procurement strategies so Council can complete efficient and cost effective investment in asset maintenance and capital works
- Providing industry benchmarked financial returns from Council assets held under commercial leases
- Resourcing a specialist to continue the work on Council owned restructured lots
- Increased workload due to emergency events including undertaking assessments of domestic wastewater systems across the municipality
- Retaining and recruiting staff in key positions so that continuity is maintained for key services, operations and projects
- Delivery of an improved Visitor Information Center service in Yarram

1.4 The Future

- Development and implementation of new ICT Strategic Plan 2024-2027
- Implementation of 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
- Implementation of a new Electronic Document Records Management Solution (EDRMS) to replace Council's outdated records management system
- Complete implementation of a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to replace existing software solutions and amalgamate into one platform
- Implementation of a Capability Framework to support talent building and workforce planning
- Delivery of a comprehensive induction program for the newly elected Councillors who will commence in November 2024
- Securing a qualified Municipal Building Surveyor and Building Inspector
- Progress the process for the public acquisition of land to facilitate the infrastructure required to support future development within the Noth Sale Growth Area
- Preparation of the West Sale Industrial Area Development Plan
- Planning Scheme Amendment C120 - to facilitate the formal translation of the adopted Maffra Structure Plan into the Wellington Planning Scheme
- Facilitate the rezoning of land within the North Sale Growth Area for residential development
- Preparation of a town-wide Structure Plan for Stratford
- Completion of the Growth Management and Economic Development Strategy Plan
- Landfill rehabilitation and capital works - Kilmany Resource Recovery Centre and Maffra Landfill
- Progression of acquisition and new planning scheme provisions to support the redevelopment of the Port of Sale East Bank precinct
- Continue to engage with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aborginal Cooperation (GLAWAC) on key tourism based projects
- Progress the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre
- Continued delivery of Urban Paths Program to help promote alternative means of travel and healthy choices and more active lifestyles across Wellington
- Construction of street upgrades in line with Council's Residential Road and Street Construction Plan and adopted Special Charge Schemes
- Hard Waste and Green Waste Fire Reduction Program
- Outdoor courts resurfacing at Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC)
- Maintaining high levels of preparedness for emergency events in vulnerable communities
- Implementation of the Arts & Culture Strategy and Library Strategy
- Funding attraction and construction of the Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families (Gibsons Road Hub)
- The development and implementation of a new Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

2.1 CEO's Message

On behalf of Wellington Shire Council, I am pleased to present the Annual Report 2023/24.

This report highlights our achievements and challenges over the financial year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. It provides a comprehensive overview of our operational performance, details our progress against the key objectives of our Council Plan, and outlines the challenges we have faced along the way.

Despite our first operating deficit in several years, we successfully delivered over 100 key services to the community. By managing our spending carefully and advocating for more state and federal government funding, we continue to remain financially secure into the future.

Challenges

Between October 2023 and February 2024, our communities faced significant challenges from bushfires, floods, severe wind, and storms. These disasters affected our residents and disrupted the delivery of our capital works and events programs. As a result, we had to reallocate funds to emergency efforts. This shift in priorities meant that maintaining the road network took precedence over routine road maintenance tasks, such as grading, and the delivery of strategic projects.

These combined emergencies resulted in $8 million in damage to Council's assets, including roads, drains, and bridges, and caused dozens of road closures. While road maintenance works are still ongoing, I am pleased to report that significant slip rectification projects were completed on Buttners Saddle Road, Upper Dargo Road, Woorarra Road in Wonyip, Hedley Range Road, Talbotville Road, and Albert River Road. Additionally, we rectified the washout under the abutment of Greenway Bridge on Yarram-Morwell Road and have undertaken a widening project on Sloping Bridge in Alberton West. While not the most desirable of projects, they are important to keep our communities connected.



Image: Wellington Shire Council Chief Executive Officer – David Morcom

A significant part of our road efforts is maintaining approximately 1,560 kilometres of unsealed roads within the Shire. This year, we invested significantly at $1.7 million in a resheeting program to enhance the condition of local roads. This investment helps keep our road network in good shape, meeting the needs of our community.

Major projects

Over the past year, we have made significant investments in our infrastructure projects to ensure that Wellington is a great place to live and thrive.

Our capital works program saw us spend $43 million on a range of projects and infrastructure upgrades, with $29.3 million funded from Council operations and $13.7 million from external grants and contributions. Projects included road reseals, feasibility studies for future investment, shared footpaths, drainage improvements, LED lighting and building upgrades.

With excitement, we moved full steam ahead with the largest infrastructure project ever undertaken in our shire's history – the $23 million redevelopment of Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale. This project is a turning point for our whole community, set to transform the centre into a contemporary facility for every age and ability to enjoy. And it isn't just an upgrade; it's a vital step forward in making our community a better place to live, play, and stay healthy.

Over 5,300 students from 29 local schools used our outdoor pools for swimming carnivals during the 2023/24 summer season. This highlights how important our leisure facilities are. Despite the ongoing redevelopment at Aqua Energy, we welcomed over 142,700 visitors across Aqua Energy including the gym and have continued to offer swimming lessons for our youngest kids through activation of the West Sale Pool. We thank the community for their support and patience over the past year.

Community sports infrastructure is always a priority for us at Council. This year, with funding from the Victorian Government, we installed LED lighting and redeveloped the social club room at the Stratford Recreation Reserve. Additionally, we upgraded the multipurpose court at the Nambrok Recreation Reserve.

We are continuously upgrading, widening, and enhancing the safety of our streets and pathways for our residents. This year, we widened Nordens Lane in Maffra to six metres, improving safety for motorists. In addition, we upgraded Carpenter Street in Maffra with a new footpath, suitable for all abilities.

In Rosedale, we installed a new pedestrian crossing and footpath on Mackay Street, added a shared pathway on Hood Street, and constructed a new footpath on Duke Street.

The reconstruction of Bennison Drive in Wurruk was a significant project, featuring curb and channel replacement and new asphalt. We also sealed Hodges Road in Coongulla and Park Street in Cowwarr as part of our street scheme construction program.

One of our major achievements was completing the footpath and bridge over Riley Creek in Dargo. The new 32.5-metre footbridge now links the Dargo Hotel, Dargo General Store, Dargo Hall and Recreation Reserve, Bush Nursing Centre, and the town centre.

Additionally, we opened the long-awaited new toilet block at the Port Albert Water Tower, along with brand new public toilets in Stratford.

The federal government's grant for the Sale Revitalisation Project has been successfully completed, and the results are fantastic. The amenity of Sale's main York Street thoroughfare has significantly improved with updated accessibility, lighting, and landscaping. Additionally, and considering strong community feedback, we have installed a new roundabout at the intersection of Desailly Street and Macarthur Street in Sale making busy local streets safer and easier to navigate for pedestrians, motorists and heavy vehicles.

The expansion of the Great Southern Rail Trail from Alberton to Welshpool was finally completed after unexpected rainfall derailed the project for months. With $6 million in support from the Victorian Government, we, alongside neighbouring South Gippsland Shire Council delivered the construction of nine small bridges, five large bridges, gravel paths, and vegetation management between the towns of Alberton and Welshpool, including Hedley and Gelliondale. The grand opening occurred in August 2024 and all in all, these are fantastic projects that will benefit our communities for generations to come.

Renewable energy

The renewable energy landscape is continually evolving and developing at a rapid pace. This year has again seen significant advancements, with both offshore and onshore opportunities emerging.

Aligned with our current Council Plan, we are committed to supporting the local economy by promoting renewable energy initiatives, unlocking the economic potential of over $40 billion in new energy investments, and advocating for job and supply chain opportunities that benefit the entire Wellington community.

For the second consecutive year, we successfully delivered the Gippsland New Energy Conference, which has become a key event to promote sustainable energy solutions in our region. The event brought together over 1,000 people, including students, experts, community leaders, and government representatives to discuss the future of new energy. Following the conference, we have implemented our Wellington Renewable Impact and Readiness Study, issued our position statement on renewable energy, and applied for significant federal government funding to develop a land and infrastructure plan in Yarram to help set our region up for success.

We also welcomed the first feasibility licenses for six offshore wind projects off Gippsland's coast and we are excited about the next steps in this space.

A thriving economy

Agriculture, forestry, defence, and the oil and gas industries have long been the backbone of our economy. However, significant challenges due to climate change require diversifying our economy to establish greater resilience and encourage job growth, as captured in our current Council Plan.

With cost-of-living pressures affecting many in our communities, we are responding carefully. Housing demand has continued to rise this year, and we have unlocked land for major housing developments in the long-established growth areas of North Sale and Longford. I look forward to supporting this growth over the next 12 months.

We continue to actively promote Wellington Shire as a vibrant place to explore, live, play and invest. The second The Middle of Everywhere ANZAC Weekend Airshow attracted over 14,000 spectators from across the country. This event not only highlighted our strong ties with the Royal Australian Air Force and the aviation industry, but also provided an opportunity for our community to celebrate local industry. We experienced a huge boost to tourism, and the event was a catalyst for economic growth, enhancing our region's liveability.

Tourism visitation to Wellington Shire saw a significant 25.4 per cent increase from March 2023 to March 2024. This impressive growth was largely driven by our success in attracting, funding, and co-funding 26 major events in the broader region, which collectively drew a record attendance of over 53,500 people.

We recently completed a strategic review of the Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange in Sale and are committed to its continued operation, driven by a significant increase in throughput. This is excellent news for local farmers and the wider Gippsland region.

We also sought community input on our growth management strategy, which outlines the long-term development plan for the six primary urban centres in Wellington, including Sale/Wurruk/Longford, Maffra, Stratford, Heyfield, Rosedale and Yarram. This strategy identifies key opportunities for job creation and investment to drive economic growth.

Sustainability and a circular economy

This year, we entered a new chapter in our circular economy journey by awarding a 10-year kerbside collection contract to Cleanaway. This contract, developed in partnership with neighbouring Gippsland councils, aims to provide the best value for residents' waste and recycling charges and facilitate the processing of recyclables within Gippsland in the future.

Following this, we also managed to replace every household's kerbside bins as part of a suite of improvements to our waste collection service over the next few years.

Our commitment to building a sustainable future and protecting the natural environment is evident through our Urban Forest Renewal Program and our number one Council priority: Climate Change. This year alone we planted just shy of 1,000 new street trees to increase canopy cover throughout the municipality.

We focused on building disaster-resilient communities by facilitating community-led emergency management and planning, supporting our most vulnerable communities. This year, we updated the Local Emergency Directories (LEDs) for these communities, ensuring they have easy access to key emergency information.

Additionally, the Leave Early Access Road Network (LEARN) program removed 85 km of hazardous trees in areas like Valencia Creek, Briagolong, Newry, Gormandale, and Binginwarri. This effort aims to reduce risks from hazardous trees, keeping our roads safe and accessible for emergency access across our municipality.

Liveability and culture

Our renowned Gippsland Art Gallery continues to thrive, and this past year we hosted the once-in-a-lifetime exhibition, Annemieke Mein – A Life's Work – A Retrospective. This exhibition celebrated Annemieke's illustrious 60-year career, attracting over 28,000 visitors and injecting $10 million into the local economy. Remarkably, 73 per cent of visitors travelled from outside of Wellington Shire.

An incredible 246,762 library visits occurred across our library network with 1,345 programs and events held in our library branches across all demographics.

We recognised the vital role of community-led projects, awarding over $247,000 in Community Assistance Grant funding and $124,600 in Quick Response Grant funding to various community groups across the shire.

In an innovative move, we adopted a game-changing policy to level the playing field for women and girls in sport and active recreation and launched the award-winning youth mental health program – Live4Life, a program that delivers evidence-based mental health education in schools and the broader community, whilst promoting young leaders as Mental Health Ambassadors.

The future of early years

With significant population growth and the rollout of a second year of funded kindergarten, the demand for early years services in Wellington will grow substantially over the coming decades. In great news, the Yarram Early Learning Centre was expanded and opened in January 2024, providing an additional 66 places and a 2-room modular kindergarten, thanks to $2 million in state government funding.

At the same time, we have made great progress in securing the concept designs for the new Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families, expected to offer 122 spaces for early childhood and community use by 2026. This facility will meet the demand for family services, further advancing our position as an enviable region to live, work, and raise a family. It will bring together key services, including education, healthcare, and support services for children and their families, all conveniently located under one roof.

Efficiencies at Council

Internally, we strive to enhance our efficiency and stay proactive. This year, we launched a Cyber Security and Awareness Portal and training program to promote a cyber-safe culture among all Council staff. These initiatives help us manage customer service requests better and give our officers improved access, leading to more responsive community services.

We were also excited to announce that our joint project with East Gippsland Shire Council won the LGPRO Award for Excellence in Innovation Management. This project marks a big step forward in local government collaboration and technology, improving cybersecurity, data protection, and disaster recovery services.

Closing remarks

While only a snapshot of the work that has been achieved, it shows what a huge year it has been for Wellington. We are now gearing up for *Future Wellington*. As we move forward, we'll be reviewing our Community Vision and long-term plans to guide our direction and priorities to 2050.

Despite the challenges we've faced, our community's resilience and the dedication of our Council staff have helped us advance our objectives and deliver essential services to residents.

We are excited about Wellington's future, and I extend my thanks to staff, Mayor and Councillors for their dedication to our thriving shire.

David Morcom CEO

2.2 Financial Summary

This summary should be read in conjunction with section two Performance Statement and section three Financial Report of this Annual Report.

Performance to Budget

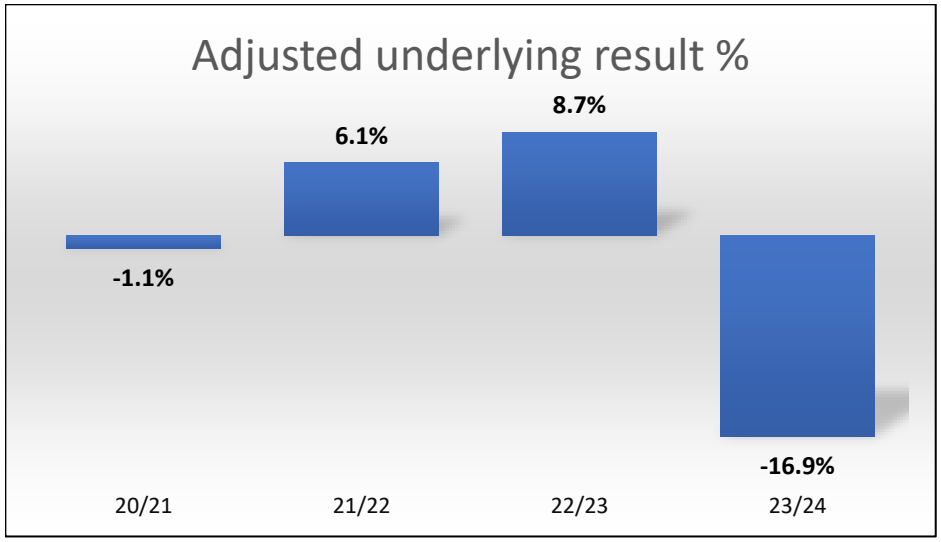
Council finished the year with a deficit of $4.62 million (excludes asset revaluation increment, against a budgeted surplus of $7.83 million, a variance deficit of $12.45 million.

The following major factors influenced this result:

- The first instalment of the 2024/25 Victoria Grants Commission funding, expected in 2023/24, was paid from the Victorian Government to all individual councils on 5 July 2024. The $17.8M will now be recorded in the 2024/25 financial year in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities.
- $2.3M interest earned on investments was greater than projected due to higher interest rates received from financial institutions over the past 12 months.
- Major community infrastructure projects such as York Street works, and Great Southern Rail Trail Extension works were multiyear projects and completed in 2023/24.
- Contractor expenses of $1.4M associated with recovery and reconstruction work for recent storm and flood emergencies. The majority of the expenses will be claimable once the works are fully completed and lodged with Department of Treasury.
- Depreciation has increased by $1.9M due to the annual Capital Works program as well as the revaluation of assets in 2023 of $202.0M.

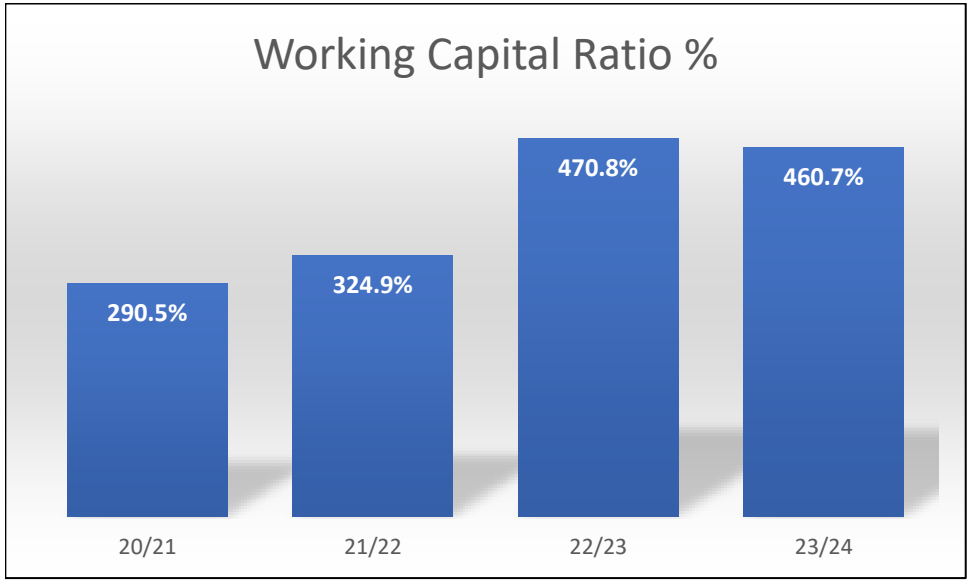
Adjusted Underlying Result

The adjusted underlying result, pictured below, 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 2023/24 adjusted underlying result of (16.9%) is in the acceptable ranges (20%) to 20%. Returning to an 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 negative result of (16.9%) is due to the timing of the receipt of the Victorian Grants Commission allocation and is not expected to influence future years.



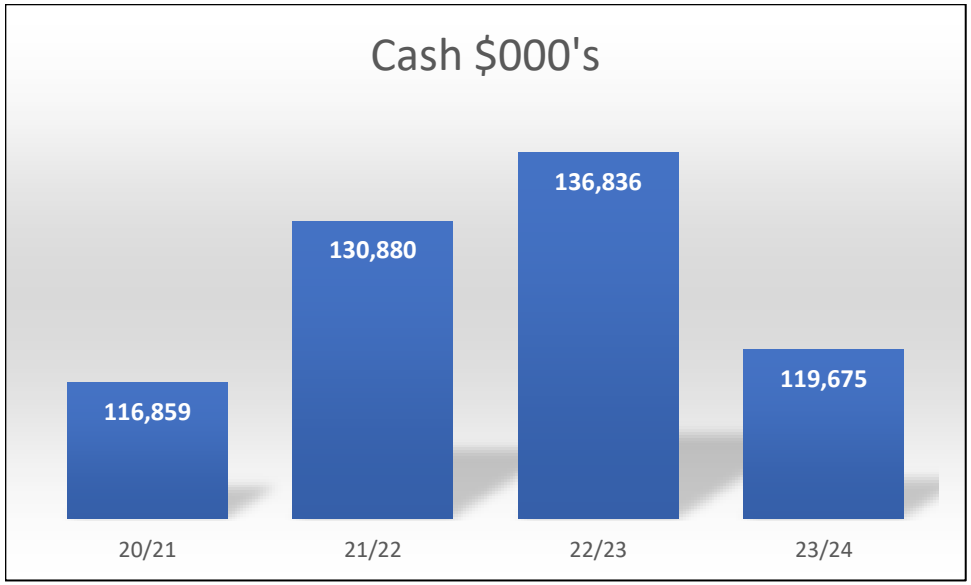
Liquidity

Working capital at the end of the year was $105.4 million or 460.7%, which is slightly lower than the 2023/24 Council's budgeted position of 470.8%. 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 460.7% 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 388.7%.



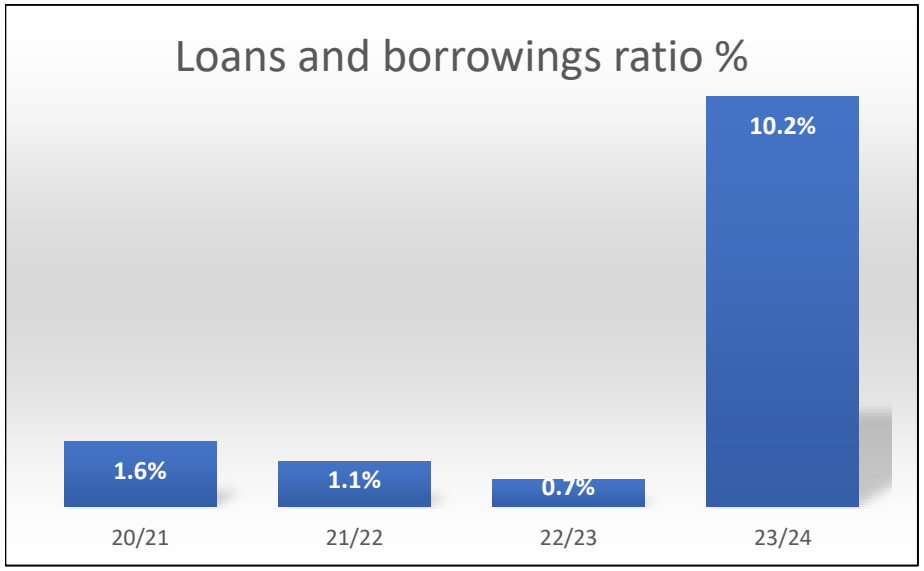
Cash

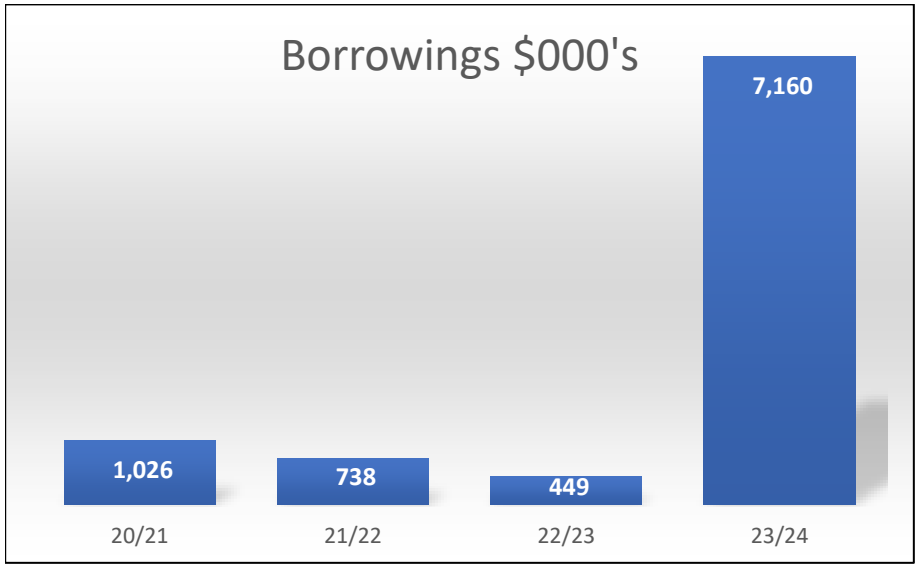
Council's cash including term deposits greater than 90 days' maturity (classified as other financial assets) finished at $119.7 million against a budget of $136.8 million, with $21.1 million reserved for specific purposes in future years including completion of carried forward capital works and major operating projects, trust funds and deposits and funds for future waste infrastructure projects and major plant purchases.



Obligations

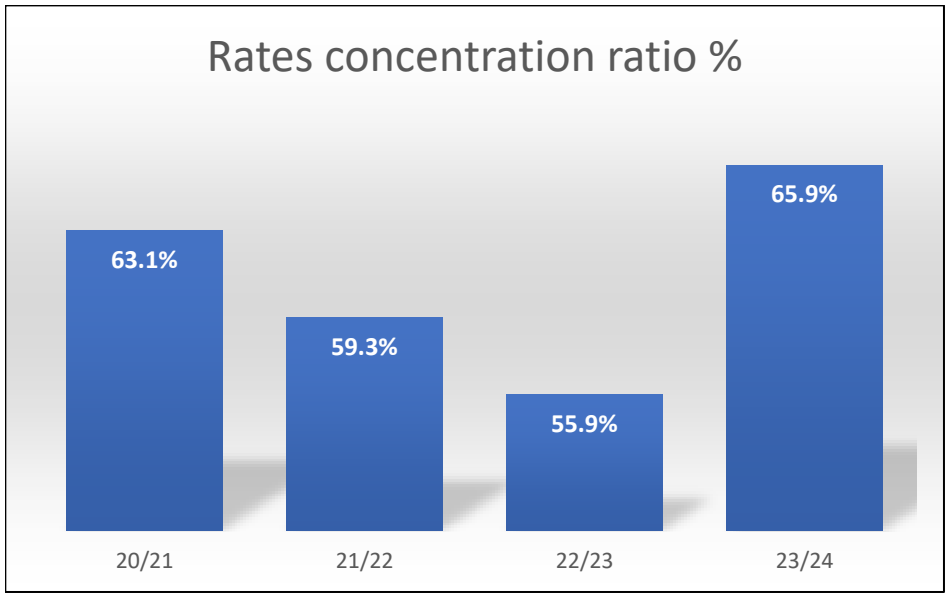
During the 2023/24 year a new loan was secured in order to fund the redevelopment of Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale. At the end of the year, Council's debt ratio was 10.2% well within the expected target band of 0% - 70% and is also in line with Council's Borrowing Strategy of no more than 40% of annual rate revenue.

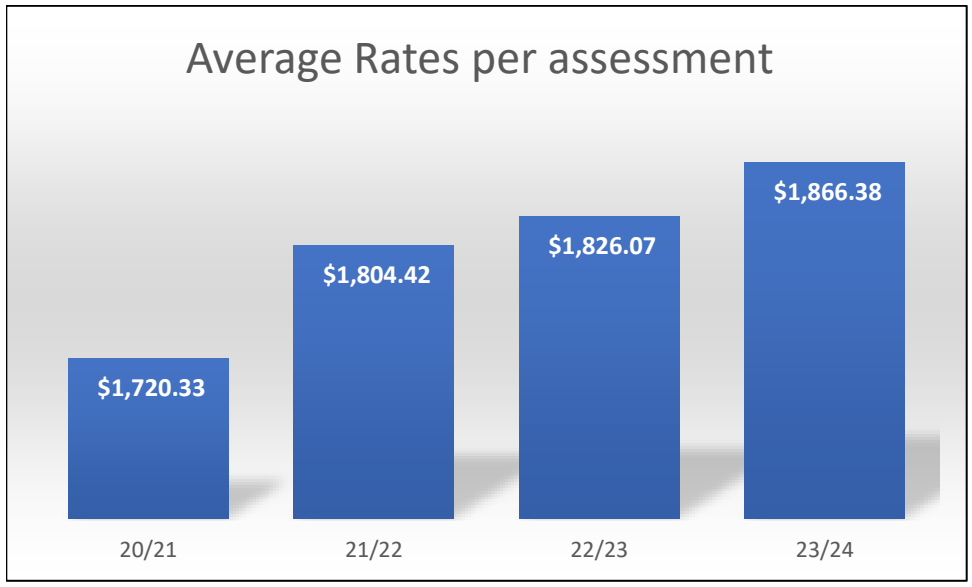




Stability and Efficiency

Council raises a wide range of revenues including rates, user fees, fines, grants and contributions. Council's rates concentration which compares rate revenue to adjusted underlying revenue was 65.9% for the 2023/24 year. Council average rates per assessment was $1,866.38, an increase of $0.78 per week on the prior year.



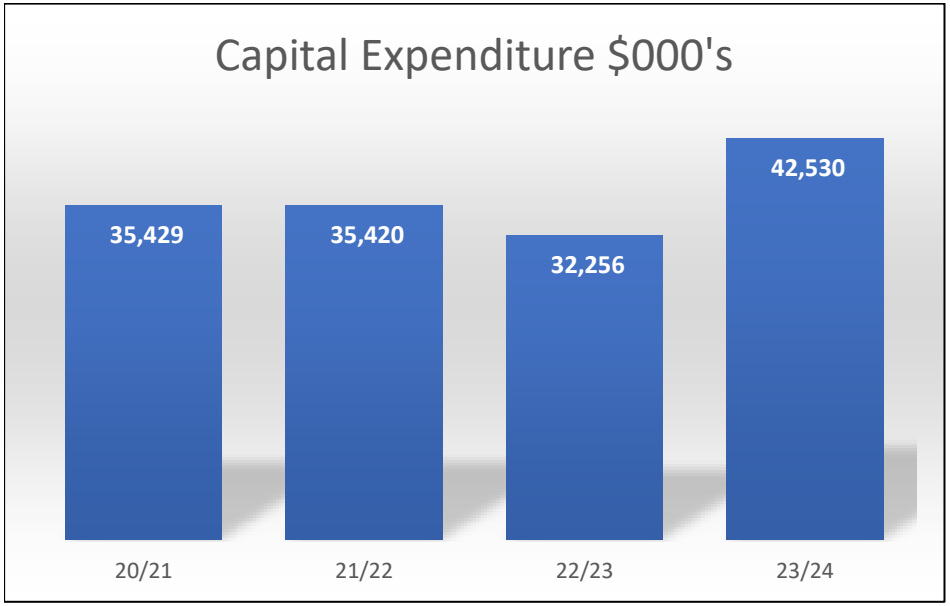


Capital Expenditure

A total of $42.5 million was expended on capital works in 2023/24 with $25.0 million spent on rehabilitating and upgrading roads, bridges and footpaths which included $4.2 million on the asphalt re-sheeting and rural and urban road reseal program.

Projects completed throughout the year included: Great Southern Rail Trail Extension; Port of Sale Mooring Access Project; Replacement of the Stratford Memorial Park and Port Albert Toilet Facilities. Construction and demolition work commenced as part of the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre. Reconstruction of the following road and streets was also undertaken – Desailly Street and Macarthur Street roundabout, Wonnangatta Road and the Sale Toongabbie Road, in addition National Disaster Funding works at Jamieson-Licola Road and Dargo-High Plains Road were completed.

A total of $5.9 million was spent on the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre, this project is a multi-year project with a total budget of $23.2 million.



2.3 Description of Operations

Wellington Shire Council is responsible for delivering more than 100 services, from the maintenance of public open spaces, environmental health, statutory building services, land use planning, governance, compliance, animal management, infrastructure planning, road management and maintenance, building and maintenance, community wellbeing, recreation facilities, arts and culture, access and inclusion, youth engagement, waste management; to matters concerning business development, tourism, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability for Council's budget.

Council's vision, strategic objectives and strategies to further improve services and facilities are described in our Council Plan 2021-25 and the associated Budget 2023/24 and are reported upon in this document.

The delivery of services, facilities, support and advocacy to achieve the strategic objectives is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures. Council also has a wide range of responsibilities under Victorian and Australian legislation.

This broad range of community 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: Lake Glenmaggie

Economic Factors

Australia's economic growth has moderated due to global economic uncertainties and reduced consumer spending. The average Australian has faced increased household expenses in essential categories such as fuel and groceries. Rising construction costs, partly due to global supply chain disruptions, have strained Local Governments budgets for infrastructure projects necessitating careful prioritisation. Utility prices continue to rise especially for gas and electricity as global factors influence local supply. Insurance premiums continue to rise driven by rising claim costs, extreme weather events and inflation. Labour market costs and future cost pressures will continue to be a challenge in the year ahead.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 1.0% in the June 2024 quarter, regaining some stability. Over the twelve months leading up to the June 2024 quarter, the CPI rose 3.8%.



Capital Works

Aqua Energy Redevelopment

Construction is progressing on the major redevelopment of Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale, with Brooker Builders leading the $23 million redevelopment.

The multi-million project has kept around 80 per cent of the construction work within the Gippsland economy, with a focus on sustainability practices also evident throughout the design and construction phase.

Construction commenced onsite in October 2023, which resulted in the closure of the indoor aquatic facilities, which subsequently relocated to the West Sale Pool, ensuring key services such as swimming lessons and hydrotherapy are maintained throughout the closure period.

The multi-million redevelopment project is set to transform the centre, with accessibility at the forefront of the design.

Once complete, the redeveloped facility will boast an entirely new wet area, including a new state-of-the-art 25-metre pool and hall, zero depth water play area, fully accessible single level pool deck for universal access, brand new change facilities, a Changing Places Facility, new sauna, and a long-awaited dedicated Learn to Swim office and coordination space.

The first 12 months of construction has seen the completion of key areas of the project including; the Gym and Group Fitness changing facilities, 24/7 Gym entry and supporting amenities completed. Construction works are still progressing within the aquatic area of the facility, with contractors recently commencing construction of the new 25m pool structure, as well as the erection of steel works on the eastern side of the building.

Practical completion is still on track for mid-2025, with key services maintained at both the West Sale pool, as well as the Sale Outdoor Pool during the warmer months.

Further information about the project can also be found at: https://www.aquaenergy.com.au/redevelopment-portal

The Aqua Energy Redevelopment project is funded by Wellington Shire Council, the Victorian Government through a Changing Places Grant and Local Sports Infrastructure Fund (Sport and Recreation Victoria), the federal government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program and local philanthropist, The John Leslie Foundation.

The total project cost is $23 million, which includes construction, contingencies, facility fit-out, furniture and equipment.



Aqua Energy Redevelopment Render Designs







Aqua Energy Redevelopment Construction images





Sale – Toongabbie Road Widening Project

- $3.3 million funding received through a successful application to the Federal Government Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program, Council contributed 20%
- Project involved the strengthening and widening of 7.25 kilometres of the Sale-Toongabbie Road between the Traralgon-Maffra and Rosedale-Heyfield Roads
- Works completed in two stages as part of Council's 2022/23 and 2023/24 capital works program







Desailly and Macarthur Streets Roundabout Project

Installation

- Installation of a roundabout at a busy 4-way intersection in Sale
- Designed to reduce vehicle speed through the intersection, improve overall traffic flow and increase safety
- Installation and additional pedestrian refuges and connections to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity



Flood Impact & Restoration Program October 2023 to January 2024 Events

Estimated cost of recovery:

- October event - $1 million
- November event - $1.57 million
- December 2023 / January 2024 event - $5.4 million

Talbotville Road

- Erosion reducing lane width
- Repair timeframe 12 months
- Design underway and preparing tender works



Upper Dargo Road

- Erosion reducing lane width
- Initial stabilising works undertaken in Dec 2023 $30,000
- Repair timeframe 12 months
- Design underway and preparing tender works



Buttners Saddle Road

- Multiple land slips
- Estimated total repair cost $1.5 million
- Repair timeframe 12 – 18 months
- Initial package of works awarded and complete
- Remaining works to be tendered in the coming months

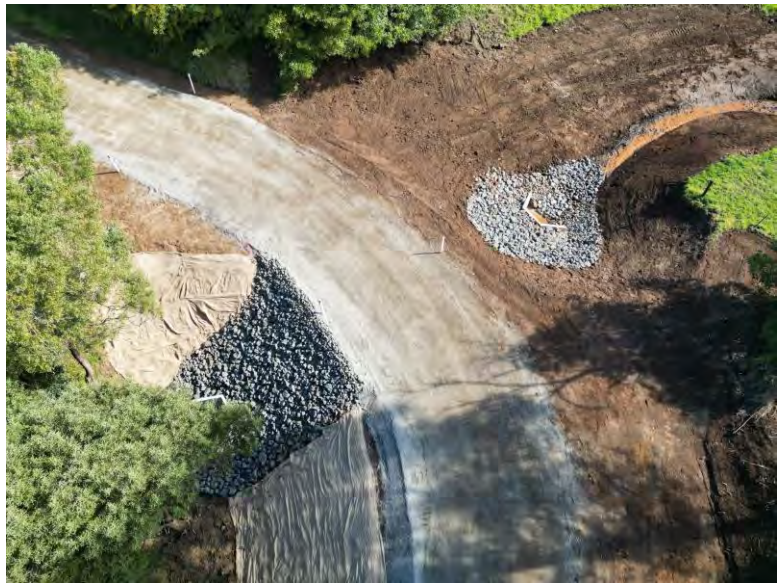
Before



After



After



Before



Before



After



Albert River Road

- Multiple land slips / erosion
- Repair timeframe 12 months
- Urgent erosion repairs awarded and completed
- Remaining works to be tendered in the coming months

Before



Before



After urgent erosion repairs completed



Major Achievements

- Council was awarded an LGPro Award for Excellence 2024 in recognition of its ground-breaking collaboration and shared services initiative with East Gippsland Shire Council for the consolidation of their Datacentres and ICT footprint
- Continued advocacy and planning for renewable energy investment in Wellington Shire, led by offshore wind
- Preparation of a Growth Management Strategy for the Shire
- Delivery and positive stakeholder engagement associated with the $2.1M Port of Sale Moorings Project
- Utilising existing commercial property owned by Council for the Victorian Electoral Commission instead of funding a private lease
- Aerodromes becoming certified under new CASA requirements - a two plus year effort
- $1.1 million benefit to Council achieved by obtaining an offset of costs for certain Crown Land managed leases
- Completing the strategic review of Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange (GRLE) incorporating strong industry engagement
- Delivery of the 2024 ANZAC Weekend Airshow and the Middle of Everywhere Gippsland Rally
- "Country House Hunters" filming at Heyfield, Briagolong and Seaspray
- The completion of the Great Southern Rail Trail Extension, a collaborative venture with South Gippsland Shire links Alberton to Welshpool over a distance of 21 kilometres. This project allows cyclists to journey from Yarram to Nyora
- Record breaking domestic tourist visitation numbers
- Maintained all key aquatic services, such as swimming lessons and hydrotherapy through the activation of West Sale Pool during the indoor pool closures at Aqua Energy
- Commenced the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre
- Increased diverse facility offerings at Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC), including major events and social sports programming, resulting in record participation of 169,000 facility visitations
- Gippsland Art Gallery presented the major 'blockbuster' exhibition Annemieke Mein: A Life's Work, which attracted 28,351 visitors and created approximately $10 million in economic activity for the municipality
- A shire-wide community consultation was held to provide input into drafting a new 'Creative Wellington' Arts & Culture Strategy for 2025-29
- Completion of the Yarram Early Learning Centre expansion to provide an additional 66 licensed kindergarten places for the community
- Completion of schematic design of the Sale Integrated Centre for Children and Families (Gibson Road Hub)
- Completion of the redevelopment of the social room space at the Stratford Recreation Reserve
- Achieving a 100% claim rate on multiple claims made under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
- Adoption of the Fair Access Policy, making Wellington the first Council within Gippsland to adopt such a policy
- Sustainability Education has held or partnered in 13 Community events with 545 community members engaged
  Other events held include:
  - 1 secondary school event engaging 23 students;
  - 11 primary school events engaging 621 students;
  - 3 preschool events with 89 participants; and
  - 2 Not for profit organisation events with 21 attendees

3.1 City Profile

Wellington is geographically the third largest municipality in Victoria, covering an area of 11,000 square kilometres. Easily accessible from Melbourne via road or rail, travel time is a convenient 2.5 hours.

The Wellington region is marketed as 'The Middle of Everywhere', due to its enviable location, with everything any resident, visitor, tourist or investor could ever want or need. Showcasing all that Gippsland has to offer, Wellington Shire extends from the Great Dividing Range and Victoria's High Country, through rich irrigated flats and pristine grazing land, to the internationally significant Gippsland Lakes and wetlands and the Ninety Mile Beach and Bass Strait.

The most recent population data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates that there are many people who agree that Wellington is 'The Middle of Everywhere', with the population increasing by 4.99% growing from 43,928 in 2018 to 46,124 in 2023. Wellington Shire Council continues working hard to ensure there is a supply of new residential and industrial land to encourage current and future growth.

Wellington is renowned for its quality public spaces, including parks and gardens and public buildings and infrastructure. A drawcard is top quality facilities for sport, health and entertainment. The Port of Sale precinct continues to bring together the very best in arts and culture, with The Wedge Performing Arts Centre, Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale Library, meeting areas, cafes and youth spaces such as the skate park and broader outdoor precinct.



Image: Port of Sale

The Gippsland Regional Sports Complex offers outstanding facilities including indoor basketball/multi-use courts, a state-of-the-art hockey precinct, outdoor netball courts, meeting rooms and kiosk. Aqua Energy Leisure Centre offers indoor and outdoor swimming pools, modern gym, group fitness space and a café. We are looking forward to the completion of the Aqua Energy Redevelopment in 2025.

Wellington Shire also boasts some of the best schools in Gippsland across public and private primary and secondary, vocational training and further education. In August 2022 TAFE Gippsland officially opened a new campus just a stone's throw away from the Port of Sale precinct, offering a wide range of programs.

Over 15.2% of the Wellington Shire population works within the health care and social assistance sectors and over 11.5% in the agricultural/forestry/fishing sectors, with other local opportunities ranging from manufacturing and construction to retail, mining, public sector and education, community services, arts and recreation.

Wellington Shire is becoming a major renewable energy hub, with the establishment of $40 billion in renewable energy investment underway throughout Gippsland.

Wellington Shire is also the location of RAAF Base East Sale, a major air and ground training base and home to the famous Roulettes aerobatic team. Training units include No 1 Flying Training School, Air Mission Training School, Central Flying School, Officer Training School and the School of Air Traffic Control, as well as Headquarters Air Academy.

With Yarram Aerodrome in Wellington Shire and aerodromes located throughout central and east Gippsland, there are extensive facilities for defence, general and recreational aviation and considerable capacity for expansion.

Esso Australia's Longford gas plant, south of Sale, supplies gas to Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania. A number of local companies provide services to the Bass Strait oil and gas industry, operated by Exxon Mobil (Esso).

The Macalister Irrigation District (MID), with its centre at Maffra, supports Wellington Shire's strong dairy, beef and vegetable growing industries comprising award-winning businesses providing goods Australia-wide.

Native timber industries continue to contribute to the local economy through direct employment, contract and transportation services. Australian Sustainable Hardwoods (ASH) located in Heyfield, mills timber products from sustainably grown forests and manufactures products such as windows, doors, staircases, flooring and architraves. Radial Timber in Yarram also manufactures durable timber which has an Australian wide market.

Wellington is a diverse, vibrant and connected community where delivering liveability, economic prosperity and sustainability outcomes underpin all that we do.

3.2 Council Offices

Council Headquarters

Sale Service Centre
18 Desailly Street
Sale VIC 3850
Postal address
PO Box 506
Sale VIC 3850
Telephone: 1300 366 244
Email: enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au
Website: www.wellington.vic.gov.au



Yarram Service Centre
156 Grant Street
Yarram VIC 3971
Telephone: (03) 5182 5100



3.3 Councillors

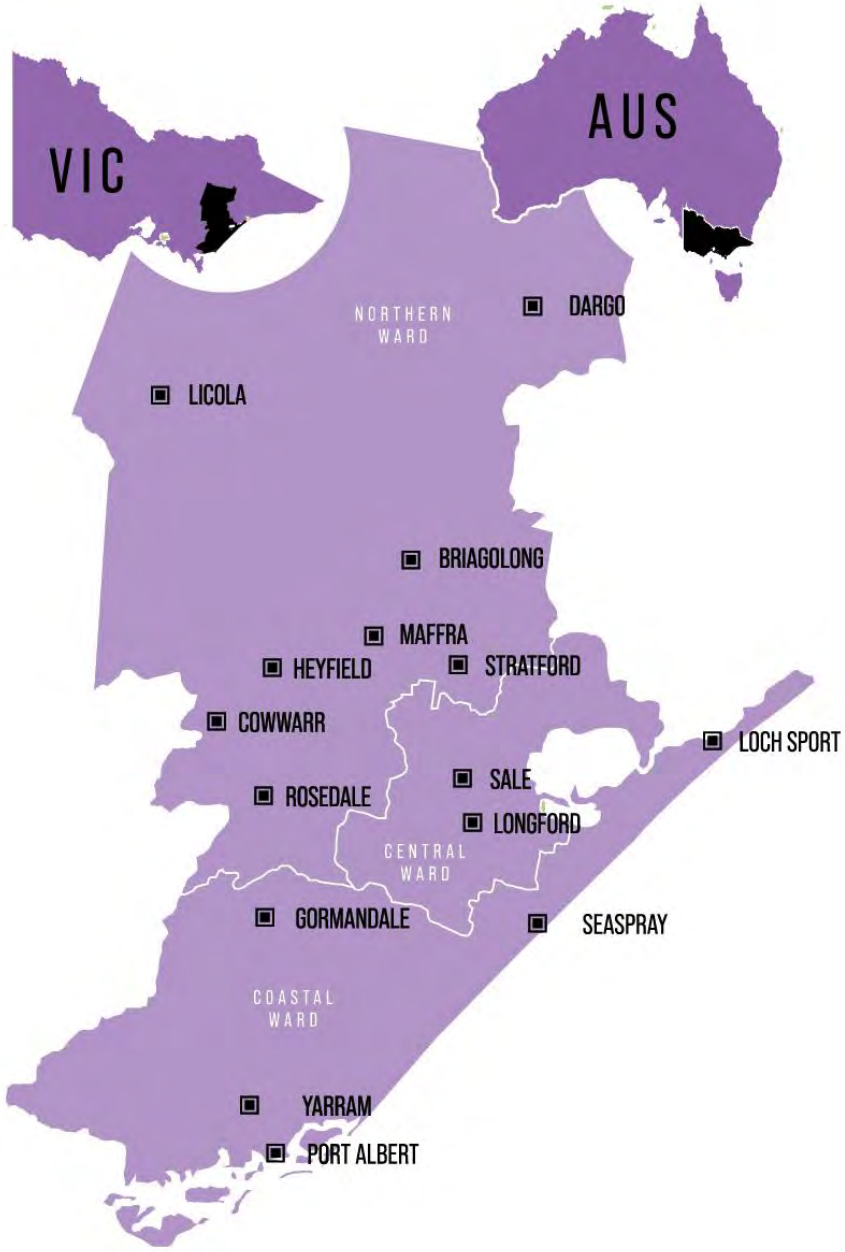
The primary role of a Councillor is to provide leadership for the good governance of the Wellington Shire Council in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020*.

Wellington Shire comprises a three ward structure (Northern, Central and Coastal), which is represented by nine Councillors, three elected in each ward.

The positions of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are determined in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Governance Rules at a Council meeting.

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

In 2020, the Wellington Shire Council community elected this council for a four year term.



Introducing our Councillors



Cr Ian Bye
Mayor



Cr John Tatterson
Deputy Mayor



Cr Carolyn Crossley
Councillor



Cr Gayle Maher
Councillor



Cr Marcus McKenzie
Councillor



Cr Carmel Ripper
Councillor



Cr Scott Rossetti
Councillor



Cr Garry Stephens
Councillor



Cr Jill Wood
Councillor

	NAME	WARD	TERMS ELECTED	MOBILE	EMAIL
1	Cr Ian Bye (Mayor)	Central	2016, 2020	0476 000 146	ianb@wellington.vic.gov.au
2	Cr John Tatterson (Deputy Mayor)	Northern	2020	0448 433 036	johnta@wellington.vic.gov.au
3	Cr Carolyn Crossley	Northern	2012, 2016, 2020	0409 495 833	carolync@wellington.vic.gov.au
4	Cr Gayle Maher	Coastal	2016, 2020	0476 000 162	gaylem@wellington.vic.gov.au
5	Cr Marcus McKenzie	Coastal	2020	0448 482 509	marcusm@wellington.vic.gov.au
6	Cr Carmel Ripper	Northern	2016, 2021 *	0457 056 436	carmelr@wellington.vic.gov.au
7	Cr Scott Rossetti	Central	2008, 2012, 2016, 2020	0419 366 686	scottr@wellington.vic.gov.au
8	Cr Garry Stephens	Coastal	2016, 2020	0476 000 157	garrys@wellington.vic.gov.au
9	Cr Jill Wood	Central	2020	0448 573 297	jillw@wellington.vic.gov.au

*Cr Carmel Ripper elected on a countback following the passing of Cr Malcolm Hole – Cr Ripper was sworn in to Council on 18 May 2021

4.1 Organisational Structure

(as at 30 June 2024)

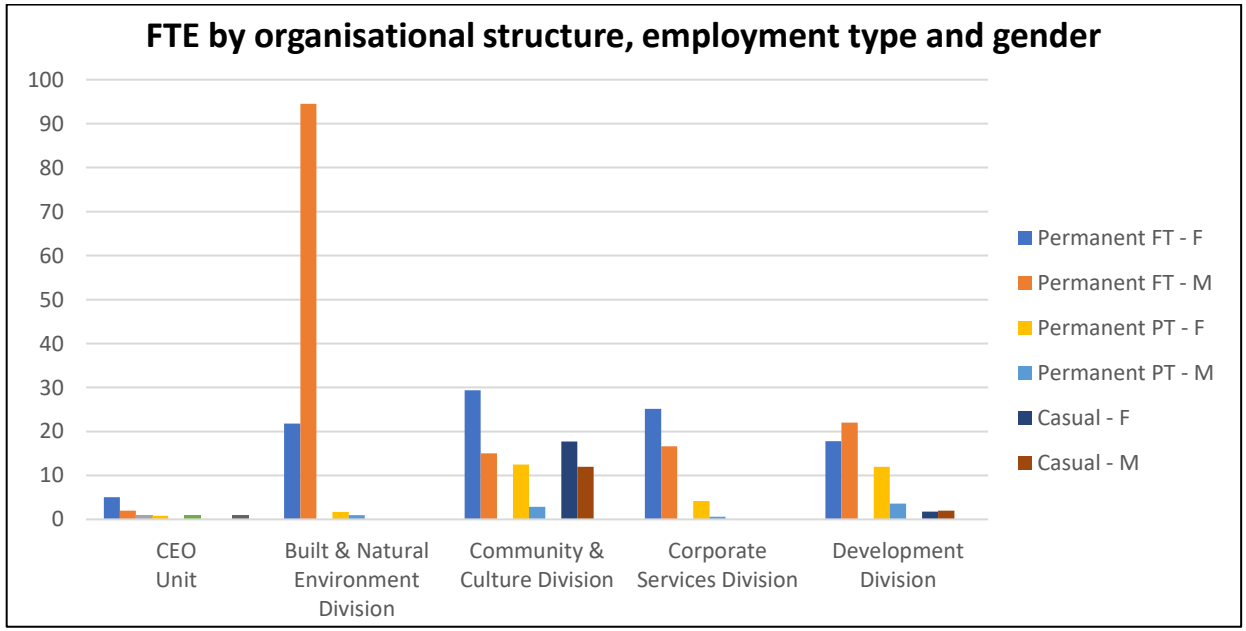


Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
The CEO has responsibility for the day-to-day management of operations in accordance with the strategic directions of the Council Plan.
The CEO and four General Managers form the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and lead the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

4.2 Council Staff

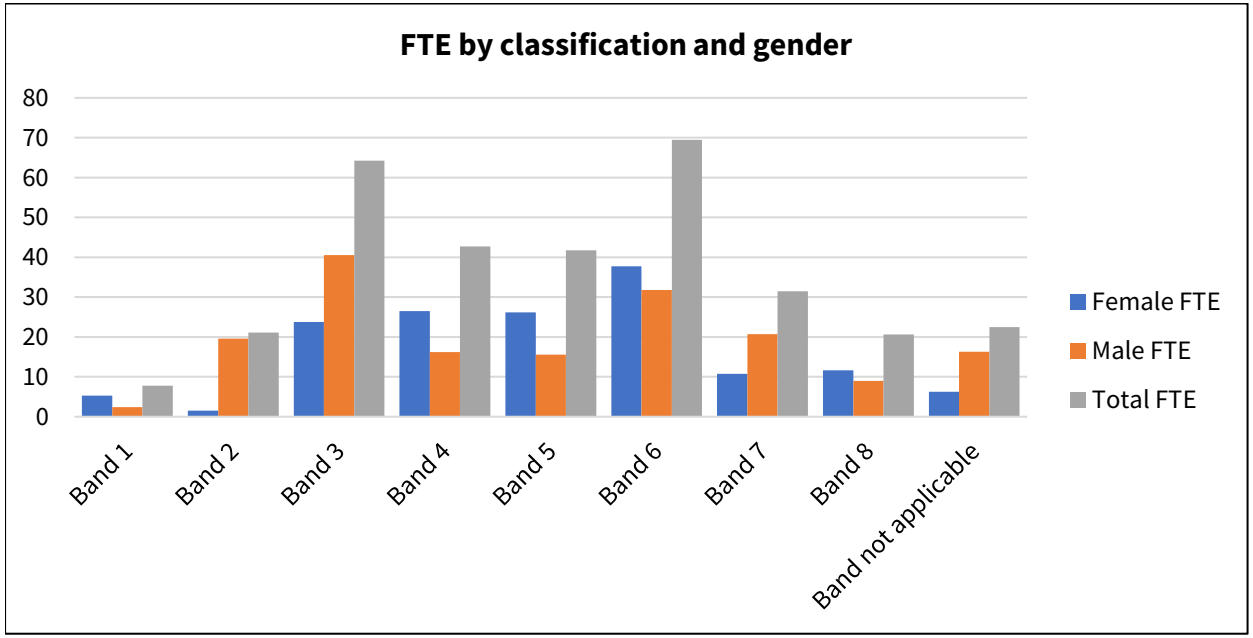
Full time equivalent (FTE) staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender.

Employee type/gender	CEO Unit FTE	Built & Natural Environment Division FTE	Community & Culture Division FTE	Corporate Services Division FTE	Development Division FTE	Total FTE
Permanent Full Time – Female	5.03	21.80	29.35	25.11	17.82	**99.11**
Permanent Full Time – Male	2.00	94.50	15.04	16.62	22.00	**150.16**
Permanent Part Time – Female	0.8	1.71	12.49	4.17	11.98	**31.15**
Permanent Part Time – Male	0	0.94	2.85	0.60	3.59	**7.98**
Casual – Female	0	0	17.71	0	1.77	**19.48**
Casual – Male	0	0	11.94	0	1.96	**13.9**
Total	**7.83**	**118.95**	**89.38**	**46.50**	**59.12**	**321.78**



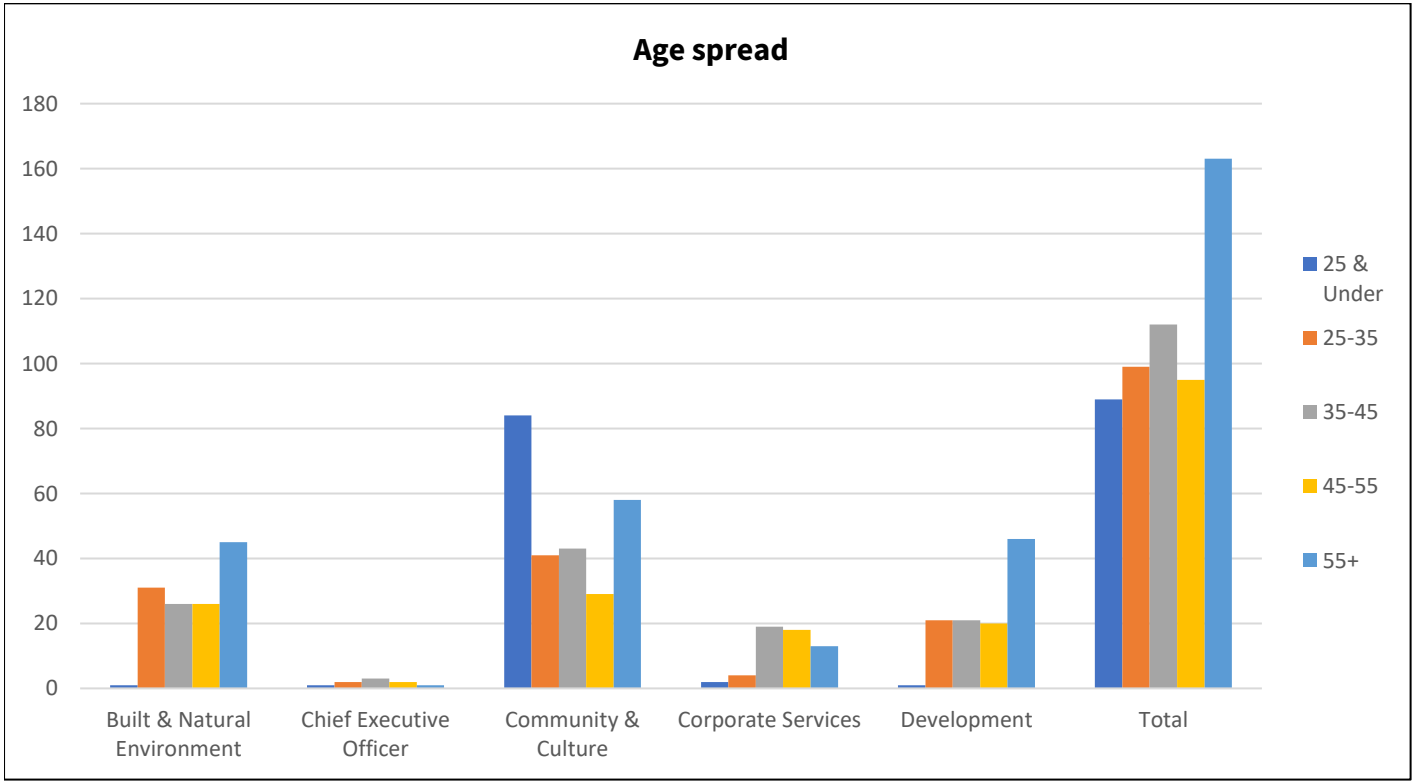
Full time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender.

Employment Classification	Female FTE	Male FTE	Total FTE
Band 1	5.33	2.42	7.75
Band 2	1.56	19.59	21.14
Band 3	23.75	40.53	64.28
Band 4	26.51	16.19	42.70
Band 5	26.21	15.56	41.78
Band 6	37.74	31.76	69.5
Band 7	10.78	20.73	31.51
Band 8	11.63	9.00	20.63
Band not applicable	6.23	16.26	22.49
Total	**149.74**	**172.04**	**321.78**



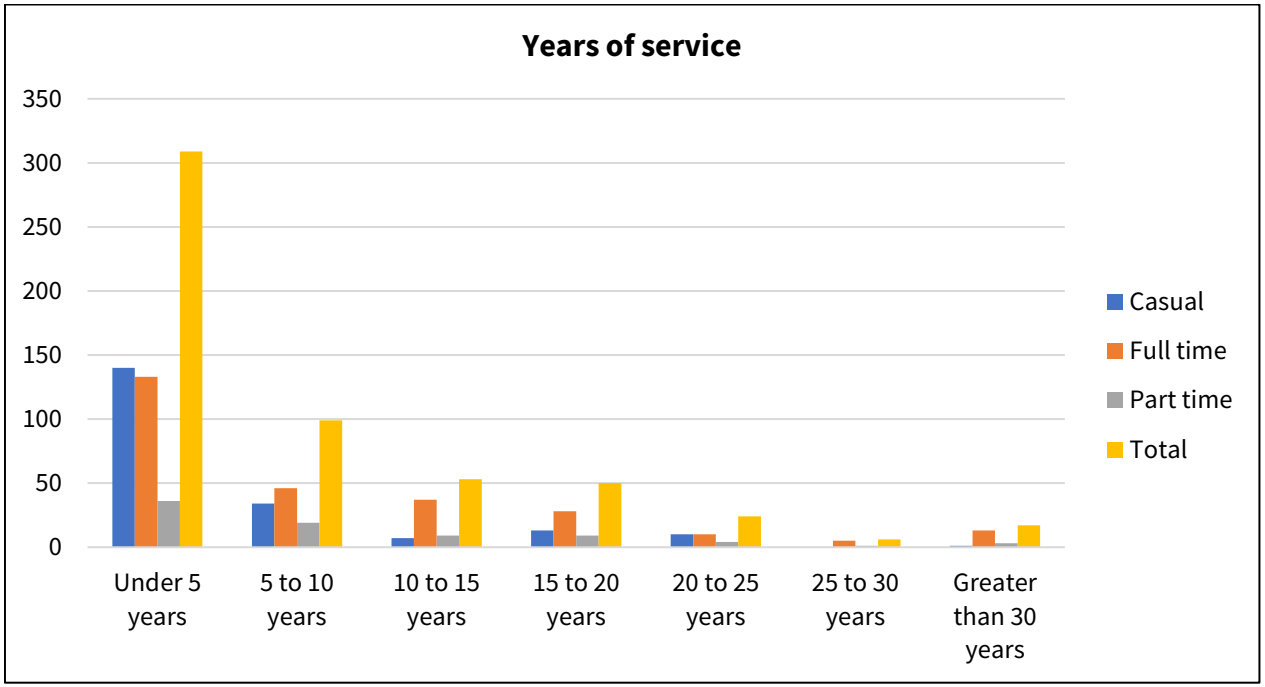
Age spread (Total staff: 558).

Age Division	25 & Under	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 55	55+
Built & Natural Environment	1	31	26	26	45
Office of the Chief Executive Officer	1	2	3	2	1
Community & Culture	84	41	43	29	58
Corporate Services	2	4	19	18	13
Development	1	21	21	20	46
Total	**89**	**99**	**112**	**95**	**163**



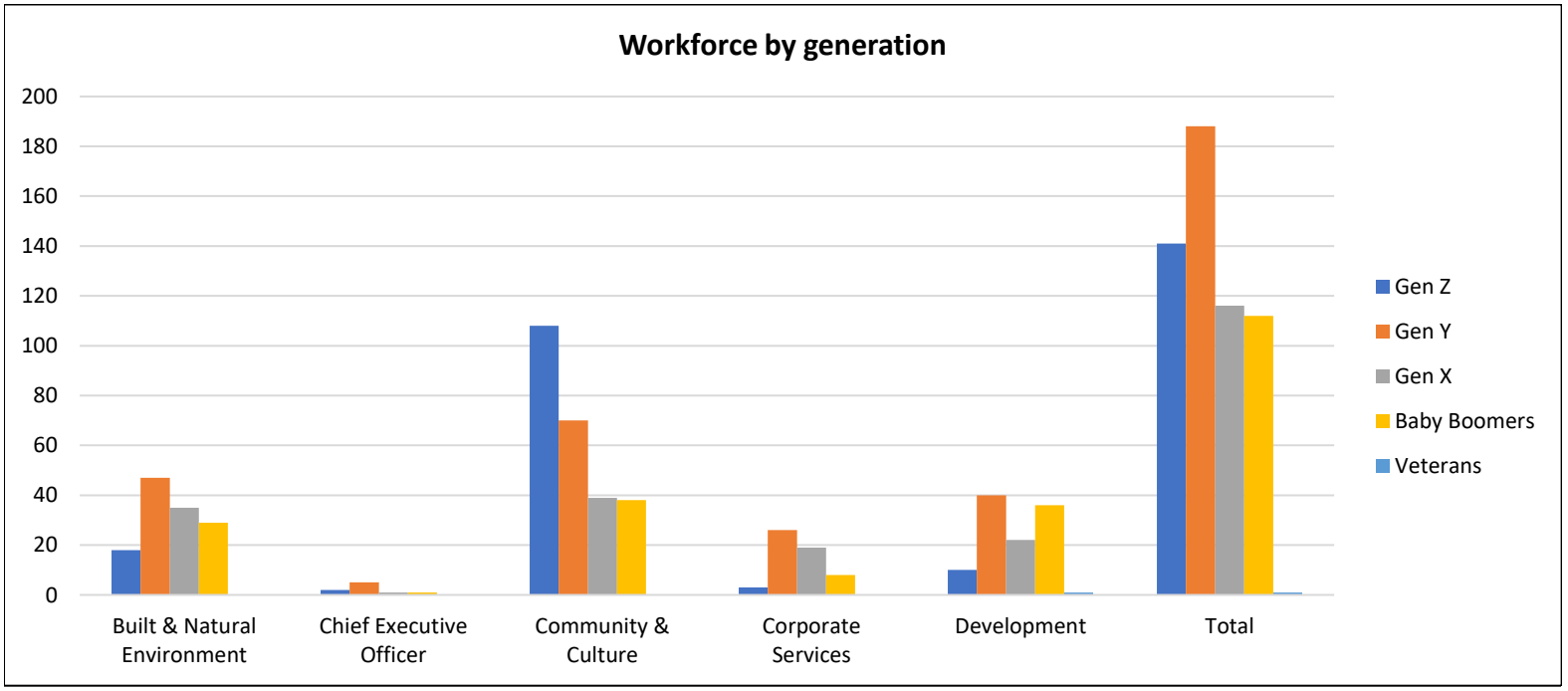
Years of service summary (Total staff: 558).

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	140	34	7	13	10	0	1
Full time	133	46	37	28	10	5	13
Part time	36	19	9	9	4	1	3
Total	**309**	**99**	**53**	**50**	**24**	**6**	**17**



Our workforce by generation (Total staff: 558).

Generation	Gen Z	Gen Y	Gen X	Baby Boomers	Veterans
Built & Natural Environment	18	47	35	29	0
Office of the Chief Executive Officer	2	5	1	1	0
Community & Culture	108	70	39	38	0
Corporate Services	3	26	19	8	0
Development	10	40	22	36	1
Total	**141**	**188**	**116**	**112**	**1**



Key: Gen Z 1995-2023, 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, thousands of hours of volunteered time are dedicated 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 https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/council/careers

4.3 Gender Equality and Equal Opportunity Practices

Wellington Shire Council believes in inclusivity, diversity, fairness, and equity.

This means that the ideas, aspirations, and needs of all our people are considered and valued in our workplace. We are committed to access and equity for all employees, fostering a workplace where everyone can be themselves. Our policies and processes ensure employees are aware of obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Gender Equality Act 2020, and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

The Gender Equality Act 2020, effective from 31 March 2021, mandates positive action towards gender equality in the Victorian public sector, universities, and local councils.

Wellington Shire Council's obligations under the Act include developing and implementing a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) with a workplace gender audit and improvement strategies. We must publicly report progress, promote gender equality in our policies and services, and complete Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs). Significant progress over the last four years has embedded many elements as business as usual, and our efforts continue to progress in this area.

Our current GEAP, set for redevelopment in 2025, outlines 30 commitments for 2021-2025, addressing all seven gender equality indicators. Progress includes several completed, ongoing, and in-progress items, with some yet to be started. We completed three GIAs, and moving forward, we aim to promote gender equality, enhance GIA practices, and prepare for the 2026 reporting period.

Wellington Shire Council is dedicated to creating a workplace where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered, providing equal opportunities regardless of gender identity, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, background, or life stage. Recognising the importance of intersectionality, we support flexible and accessible working arrangements for all, including people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally diverse communities, young people, older people, women, and LGBTQI+ individuals. Employees are expected to treat others fairly and with respect, extending this to customers, contractors, representatives, and volunteers.

This year, we reinvigorated our Gender Equality Committee and trained members as champions for Gender Equality, continuing our commitment to a fair and equitable workplace. Intersectionality remains a key focus as we strive to understand and address the diverse and interconnected experiences of our employees.

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



Image: Community & Culture team

Staff Recognition Years of Service

Council recognises employees for their ongoing contribution, commitment and service to the organisation by acknowledging their key service milestones, 79 staff members celebrated and received Service Awards in the 2023/24 year.

Years of service	45 years	40 years	35 years	30 years	25 years	20 years	15 years	10 years	5 years
Number of staff members to achieve the milestone in 2023/24	1	1	2	2	1	10	18	19	25



















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.



Image: DiSC training

4,302 online courses completed by staff during 2023/24

747 offsite compliance training courses attended by staff during 2023/24

441 professional development courses undertaken by staff during 2023/24

Preventing Violence Against Women

Wellington Shire Council remains steadfast in our commitment to promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women as integral components of our community strategy. Our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021-2025, submitted in 2022, underscores our dedication to fostering an inclusive and gender-diverse environment at our Council. Aligned with our obligations under the Gender Equality Act 2020, the GEAP outlines comprehensive objectives aimed at advancing diversity, inclusion, and gender equality.

As part of the Our Equal Local Government initiative, Wellington Shire Council is in the early stages of collaborating with Gippsland Women's Health and other local stakeholders to create safe, inclusive workplaces by ending work-related gendered violence, including sexual harassment, through gender equality education and promotion. This project employs a human-centered design approach to promote inclusive and respectful behaviours in the workplace. It focuses on implementing sustainable systems and creating system-level changes to foster a culture of equality and respect.



In addition to this Wellington Shire Council was successful in our application for funding in the Free from Violence Local Government Program 2023-2026 which supports councils across Victoria in embedding gender equality and family violence prevention practices into their operations and service delivery. This initiative aligns with the Victorian Government's vision to create a community where everyone experiences equality, respect, and lives free from violence.

Violence against women encompasses various forms beyond physical abuse, including sexual, emotional, psychological, and financial exploitation. Wellington Shire Council actively raises awareness of these issues within our organisation and collaborates closely with Family Violence Support Services to support affected individuals. Central to this effort is our Family Violence Leave Policy, which provides unlimited leave to employees facing family violence, enabling them to attend essential appointments and legal proceedings.

In December 2023, a Respectful Workplace Survey was conducted to gauge employee experiences regarding workplace behaviours such as bullying and sexual harassment. Findings from this report show that 82% of respondents expressed feeling safe to report inappropriate behaviour and indicated a strong sense of respect within our workplace environment.

Wellington Shire Council is committed to leveraging the resources and insights gained through the Free from Violence Local Government Program to further enhance our initiatives in preventing family violence and promoting a culture of equality and respect. We will continue to implement the strategies outlined in our GEAP, ensuring that Wellington Shire remains a leader in fostering a safe and inclusive community for all.

Health and Safety

Wellington Shire Council remains committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees, contractors, customers and visitors and the achievement of continuous improvement in our workplace health and safety performance. Positioning health and safety at the forefront of all our activities and deliverables will ensure successful achievement of our strategic objectives and targets.

In 2023-2024, the main focus has been on achieving our key safety initiative, implementation of our Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Action Transformation Plan. Significant progress has been made with achievements including:

- Development of a documented Occupational Health & Safety Management System (OHSMS) framework to effectively support the achievement of our OHS objectives;
- Systematic review of job tasks to identify those that are potentially high risk and then implementing controls to mitigate the risks;
- Implementation of a new IT Software system to complement the Occupational Health and Safety Management System, incorporating 'real time' accessible data dashboards to monitor safety performance;
- Targeted initiatives designed to build capacity in our health and safety team and promote awareness of OHS responsibilities amongst our Managers and Supervisors.



Employee Health and Wellbeing

Our health and wellbeing programs, initiatives and support services are designed to:

- Enhance the workplace culture at Council and retain employees
- Reduce costs associated with absenteeism, presenteeism, disability and workers' compensation
- Improve work performance and productivity
- Improve our branding and image



Employee Engagement survey - The Pulse

"The Pulse" staff survey is undertaken every 24 months focusing on employee experiences across 16 areas ranging from perspectives on Innovation, Learning, Community Focus to Recognition. Since undertaking these surveys in 2014, our engagement scores have increased steadily from 65% to 75%.

Promoting employee social inclusion:

Wellington Shire Council Social Club provides social connection for staff by providing social events such as communal lunches, weekend outings, movie and trivia nights and health initiatives such as yoga.

Online Wellness page

We continuously provide updates on our Wellness page for staff to access valuable information relating to their health and wellbeing.

Our Wellness Page features resources and information relating to health and fitness through Aqua Energy, Employee Assistance Program and supporting organisations, and general wellness.

Recruitment Trends

As an organisation committed to leveraging local talent, we recognise the evolving landscape of recruitment trends, influenced significantly by post-pandemic dynamics and the rise of remote work opportunities across Australia. These trends have presented new competitive challenges and opportunities that we are actively addressing.

In response to shifting market offerings, including increased options for remote work, Wellington Shire Council has observed a notable increase in applications for advertised positions compared to previous years. This trend reflects broader changes in workforce preferences and mobility, shaping our recruitment strategies.

Key recruitment statistics for 2023/2024:

- Total external recruitment campaigns conducted: 95
- Internal recruitment campaigns conducted: 27
- Total applications received for external recruitment campaigns: 1371
- Staff turnover rate: 13.04%
- Number of higher duties opportunities offered internally: 112

Aligned with our commitment to building skills and capabilities for the future, we continue to enhance local talent pipelines through various initiatives. This includes offering traineeships and work experience placements across Council, aimed at fostering career growth and enhancing employability within our community.

The insights gleaned from our recruitment activities resonate with broader trends observed in Gippsland's employment region. Challenges such as skills shortages and demographic shifts underscore the importance of our proactive approach to talent development and retention.

As we navigate these dynamic recruitment landscapes, Council remains steadfast in our commitment to local talent development and community engagement. By focusing on the strategies outlined in our Workforce Plan we aim to nurture a resilient and inclusive workforce.

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 2021–2025 and the Wellington 2031 Community Vision. We are dedicated 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 to build capability across the workforce for the challenges and opportunities ahead.



Image: Wellington Shire Council – Workforce Plan 2022-27

5.0 Our Performance

5.1 Integrated Strategic Planning and Accountability Framework

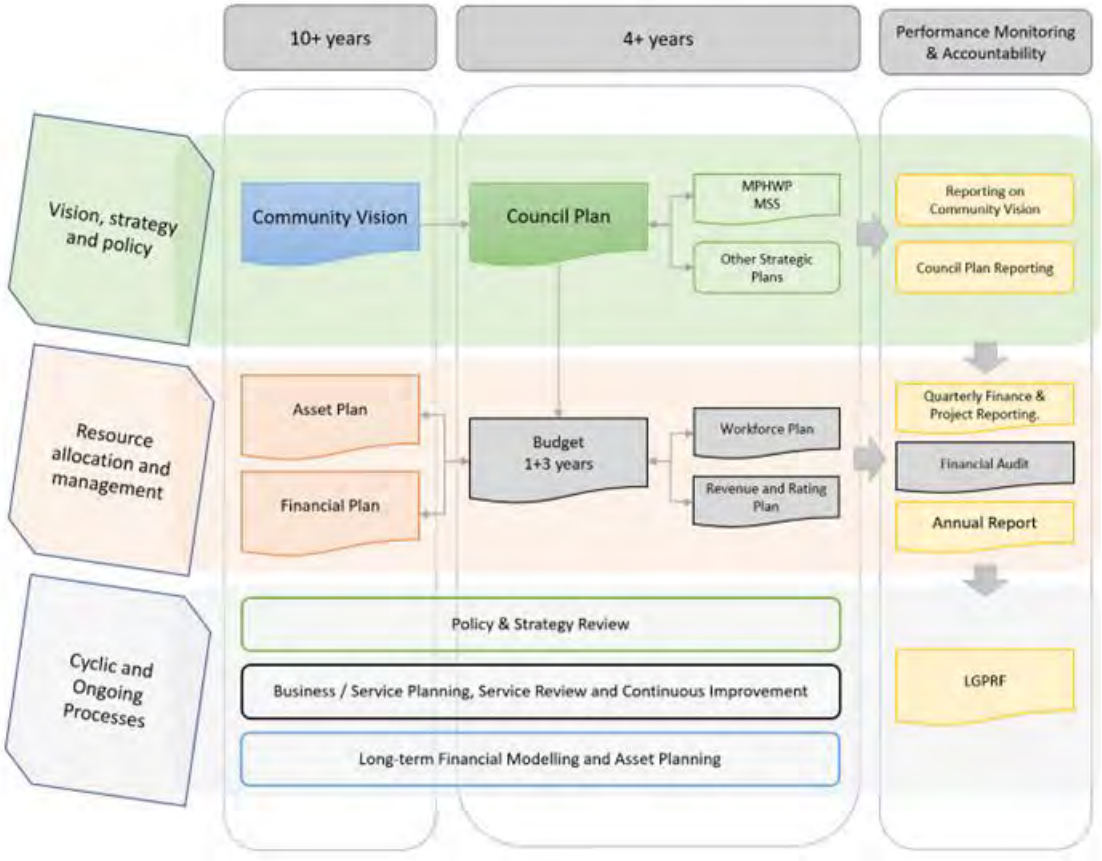
This annual report is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.

Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* addresses planning and financial management and requires councils to prepare the following:

- 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);
- An Annual Budget (for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years);
- A Quarterly Budget Report;
- An Annual Report (for each financial year); and
- Financial Policies.

The *Local Government Act 2020* also requires councils to prepare:

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



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

Community Satisfaction Survey

The annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) ensures Council is able to track change over time as well as compare performance with other similar councils over recent years. The additional information that is captured provides insight into the community's satisfaction with council services and assists with service planning and delivery.

The CSS results for 2024 demonstrate that Wellington Shire Council is excelling compared to other large rural councils. Wellington Shire Council achieved an overall performance rating of 59 out of 100, surpassing the average score of 50 among its counterparts and the state-wide average of 54.

The three areas that the survey participants highlighted Wellington Shire Council performing particularly well in are: arts centres and libraries, recreational facilities and appearance of public areas.

Wellington Shire Council achieved significantly higher results compared to other large rural councils in numerous other areas including; sealed local roads, planning and building permits, local streets and footpaths and population growth.

The CSS is conducted independent of Council annually, headed by JWS Research on behalf of the Department of Government Services.

The following two pages provide a snapshot and summary of core CSS results for 2024, 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 comparison dashboard | vic.gov.au (www.vic.gov.au)



Wellington Shire Council – at a glance

Overall council performance

Results shown are index scores out of 100.



Wellington 59



Large Rural 50



State-wide 54

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	= on par
Sealed local roads	▲ higher
Customer service	▲ higher

JWS RESEARCH

Services	Wellington 2024	Wellington 2023	Large Rural 2024	Large Rural 2023	State-wide 2024	State-wide 2023
Overall performance	59	58	50	52	54	56
Value for money	48	48	43	45	48	49
Community consultation	53	53	48	49	51	52
Making community decisions	53	54	46	48	50	51
Sealed local roads	50	50	38	40	45	48
Waste management	64	65	65	65	67	66
Customer service	71	69	65	65	67	67
Direction of council	45	49	42	44	45	46

5.2 Council Plan

The Council Plan 2021-25 was developed with significant community consultation during 2021 and aligns with the long-term goals the community have expressed in the Wellington 2031 Community Vision.



Wellington Shire Council has identified Climate Change as our number one priority, recognising that temperature increases, lower rainfall, more frequent bushfires, more intense flooding, and sea level rises will have a significant impact on our community.

The Council Plan 2021-25 has a focus on attracting new industry, particularly renewable energy, and facilitating growth in our major towns. Equity and access to services across all parts of our population are also highlighted in a range of initiatives within the plan.

The four Strategic Directions define the actions Council will take to achieve these and other community priorities. These priorities and Strategic Directions will keep us focused on our regional advantages and community aspirations.

The Council Plan 2021-25 provides Council, its staff, key partners and stakeholders and the community with a clear line of sight from the Wellington 2031 Community Vision to daily action. Progress is reported regularly back to the community through regular Council Reports in addition to the Annual Report.

The four Strategic Directions of the Council Plan 2021-25 are centred under the headings below:



5.3 Performance

Performance for the 2023/24 year has been reported against each theme and strategic direction to demonstrate how Council performed in progressing the Council Plan 2021-25.

Performance is measured as follows:

- Results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Council Plan 2021-25
- Progress in relation to the major initiatives identified in the budget
- Services funded in the budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided those services
- Results against the prescribed service performance indicators and measures.

Strategic Direction 1: Environment and Climate Change

Indicators of Success

The following table reviews performance against the Council Plan 2021-25 including results achieved in relation to the Indicators of Success.

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
Outcome 1.1 A climate and disaster resilient community					
Community Satisfaction with Council Performance in Environmental sustainability	(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)	Higher than large rural Councils
Percentage of Tree Canopy cover within Town Boundaries	(2020) 20% Tree Canopy coverage	Not due until 2025	Not due until 2025	Not due until 2025	1.5% improvement

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
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)	(2018) 21%	27.7% (6941 dwellings with PV)	31.6% (7387 dwellings with PV)	32.7% (7585 dwellings with PV)	50%
Wellington Shire community greenhouse gas emissions intensity (emissions per person) (SDG 13.2.2)	(2019/20) 43.57* tonnes per person **corrected from 31.3 tonnes per person*	(2020/21)* 41.57* tonnes per person **corrected from 30.66 tonnes per person*	(2021/22)# 42.75 tonnes per person	Data is currently unavailable	Equal to or better than 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)	(2014) 73%	Due 2023. Will be measured as part of updated Public Open Space Plan to be completed 2023	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 2026-2036	85%
Domestic travel visitor numbers to Wellington Shire (SDG 8.9)	(2020) 750,000 travel visitors	686,000 travel visitors	858,000 travel visitors (14.4% increase on baseline)	The data was obtained from an external third party and is no longer accessible	2% increase

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
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)	(2017/18) 5244 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions	4120.5* tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (21.4% decrease from 2018) ** corrected from 4221 tonnes and 19% decrease from 2018*	4294.4 tonnes of carbon equivalent emissions (18.10% decrease from 2018)	Data is currently unavailable	23% reduction
Percentage waste diversion rate from kerbside collection (SDG 12.5)	(2019-20) 35% waste diversion	33.5% waste diversion	32.17% waste diversion	30.02% waste diversion	65% waste diversion

Major Initiatives

The following table reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2023/24 Budget for the year.

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Natural Environment & Parks	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.	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. EPA have released updated guidance resources and officers from East Gippsland Shire Council and Wellington	Completed 100%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
		Shire Council participated in risk assessment for 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 administrative process for OWMS that allow for a consistent approach, follow up of permits due for expiry and high-risk locations. Our 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.	
Natural Environment & Parks	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.	Council is continuing to support the Gippsland Agricultural Group and Food and Fibre Gippsland to research and deliver sustainable agricultural initiatives. Most recently, council officers have been invited to sit on the Macalister Fresh Customer and Stakeholder Reference Group (MFSRG) to support Southern Rural Water in the delivery of the Macalister Fresh Investment Proposal.	Progressing at 90%
Natural Environment & Parks	Advocate alongside our renewable energy industry and community to secure priority transmission upgrade funding and aim for the area for our offshore wind projects to be declared the first renewable energy zone.	In December 2022, the Minister for Climate Change and Energy declared an area in the Bass Strait off the coast of Gippsland as being suitable for offshore renewable energy.	Completed 100%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Natural Environment & Parks	Progress towards our 2040 net zero emissions target by reviewing our roadmap, strengthening our governance and exploring carbon offset opportunities.	New electric vehicle charger installation at Stratford Tender awarded. Project makes a site available in Stratford to the market to provide charging service to the community encouraging the transition to electric vehicles (EV). Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC) Hockey Pavilion solar and battery installation Tender awarded with installation delayed due to some roof suitability issues now resolved with changed panel layout and slight reduction in generation capacity. Project now due to be completed and operational end September 2024. Options assessment of Facilities Portfolio undertaken to explore opportunities for solar installations and upgrade. Top 10 sites identified for deeper assessment with Facilities team to determine sustainability investments that can be made to reduce energy use and consumption. Emissions software platform 'Trelis' now operational and accruing data on energy use, profile and efficiencies across Facilities portfolio. Software will aid in targeting energy efficiency and renewable infrastructure investment to reduce Council's carbon emissions and progress Council towards its 2040 Net Zero Goal.	Progressing at 75%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
		Due to a number of energy accounts finishing contract terms, tendering opportunities in 2024/25 will seek to transition to "Green Energy' bulk providers should that be financially reasonable.	

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Natural Environment & Parks	The Natural Environment & Parks 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 service also proactively manages around 70,000 urban trees and is responsible for the management, design and development of parks and streetscapes in urban areas. The unit is also responsible for moving the Wellington community towards a more sustainable future. Key priority areas include: • biodiversity, • water consumption and quality, • waste management and • energy use	7,971 8,996 (1,025)

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Wellington Coast Subdivision Strategy	The Wellington Coast Subdivision Strategy Project Manager is responsible for implementing the Ninety Mile Beach Plan Voluntary Assistance Scheme. This is funded through State Government grant funding.	548 336 212

Service Performance Indicators

The following table provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

	Service / ***indicator*** / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Waste Collection ***Service standard***					
WC2	*Kerbside collection bins missed* [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000	1.91	4.13	5.15	3.86	Over 1.62 million bin lifts were performed during 2023/24 as part of Wellington Shire's waste collection service which operates within a defined collection boundary within the 11,000km2 municipality. 626 bins were reported as missed during 2023/24. The transition to a new collection contractor in September has resulted in a decrease in bins missed.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
WC3	***Service cost*** *Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service* [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	$83.34	$84.94	$100.43	$96.81	Wellington Shire's kerbside collection includes the weekly garbage waste collection service of over 20,600 bins across the municipality. Additional services for residents in Wellington Shire, not incorporated in this cost, include an annual hard waste collection service, and our annual green waste program and a fortnightly recycling bin collection service. The procurement of a new collection and transport contractor contributed to the reduction in costs of delivery of the kerbside waste service.
WC4	***Service cost*** *Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service* [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	$77.93	$81.54	$83.08	$85.12	There has been approximately 10% reduction in the amount of kerbside recycling compared to the 2022/2023 financial year likely due to the impact of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) introduced in November 2023.
WC5	***Waste Diversion*** *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage,	31.45%	33.51%	32.17%	30.02%	More than 3,300 tonnes of recyclable material were diverted from landfill in 2023/24. This does not include food organics and garden organics as there is no current service provided, nor does it include the diverted material

Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results				Comments
	2021	2022	2023	2024	
recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100					through the introduction of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). With an average of 160kg of recyclables per kerbside collection household in Wellington Shire, a reduction of 18kg per household has been achieved when compared to 22/23 figures this could be a direct result of the introduction of the CDS. Council is working towards the future implementation of a Food and Garden Organics collection which will divert additional waste from landfill.

Strategic Direction 2: Economy and Sustainable Growth

Indicators of Success

The following table reviews performance against the Council Plan 2021-25 including results achieved in relation to the Indicators of Success.

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
2.1 A diverse economy that creates jobs and opportunities					
Annual growth rate of real Gross Regional Product (GRP) (SDG 8.2.1)	(2020) Wellington -$3.652B Gippsland - $18.277B (as per REMPLAN)	Wellington - $3.898B (6.73% growth) Gippsland - $19.327B (5.74% growth) (as per REMPLAN)	Wellington - $3.864B (.87% growth) Gippsland - $20.039B (3.68% growth) (as per REMPLAN)	Wellington - $4.667B (20.78% growth) Gippsland - $23.126B (15.40% growth) (as per REMPLAN)	Equal to or better than Gippsland average
Unemployment rate by sex, age and education level (SDG 8.5.2)	Wellington – 5.5% (June 2021 quarter) Gippsland – 5.4% (April 2021 quarter)	Wellington - 4.9% (March 2022 Quarter) Gippsland – 3.9% (April 2022 quarter)	Wellington – 3.6% (June 2023 Quarter) Gippsland – 3.7% (April 2023 quarter)	Wellington – 3.4% (March 2024 Quarter) Gippsland – 4.6% (March 2024 quarter)	Equal to or better than Gippsland average
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)	7.8% unemployed 46.9% further study 10.2% apprenticeships/ trainees	9.3% unemployed 44% further study 10.7% apprenticeships/ trainees	9.3% unemployed 44% further study 10.7% apprenticeships/ trainers	Data is currently unavailable	5% unemployed, 56% further study

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
2.3 An increase in variety of housing choice to support equitable access to housing					
Number of dwellings across the Shire (SDG 11.3)	(2021) 23,383 dwellings (source ID Profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	23,554 dwellings (source ID profile next census date 2026)	24,790 dwellings (2026 projection)
Number of new housing units built in the municipality (SDG 11.1.1)	(2021) **655 houses/units* **corrected from 520 as per the DFFH website*	669* houses/units **updated data available from DFFH website*	679* houses/units	Data is currently unavailable	+26 beds
2.4 Infrastructure investment is targeted to maximise jobs and housing growth					
Wellington Shire total % population increase (SDG 11.3)	(2020 estimate) 44,770 (source ID Profile population and dwelling estimate)	45,092 0.72% increase	45,754 1.46% increase	46,124 0.80% increase	Approximately 1% increase per annum

Major Initiatives

The following table reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2023/24 Budget for the year.

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Economic Development	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.	Council has funded a range of successful events, from music festivals to Boxing matches, and have participated in numerous local events to spread The Middle of Everywhere message. Posts are shared on the Facebook page prior to upcoming events to encourage the community to get involved and support local offerings. Exciting new events are on the horizon including Seniors Golf. Some of the highlights over the 2023/24 year have been: • 29-30 August 2023 - Mountain Cattlemans Get Together • 28 September 2023 - Centenary Relay Sale main streets • 6-7 October 2023 - Gippslandia Steam Train • 4 November 2023 - The Middle of Everywhere Car Show in Sale • 24-26 November 2023 - 4x4 Expo at the Sale Racecourse • 25 November 2023 - The Middle of Everywhere Sale Community Christmas Parade • 25 November 2023 Gippsland Beer Festival at Tinamba • November - December 2023 - Great Victorian Bike Ride • 4 December 2023 The Middle of Everywhere Yarram Pro Am • 10 December 2023 Strzelecki Koala Festival at Sale Botanic Gardens • 17 February 2024 - Heyfield Timber Festival • 25 February 2024 - Grow Festival in Rosedale • 2 March - 26 May - Annemieke Mein: A Life's Work - A Retrospective at the Gippsland Art Gallery in Sale	Completed 100%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
		• 8 March 2024 Victorian Square Dancing Association State Convention • 10 March 2024 - Sale Music Festival - Port of Sale • 16 March 2024 - Maffra Mardi Gras - Johnson Street, Maffra • 14 April 2024 - Tinamba Food and Wine Festival - Main Street Tinamba • 19 April - 5 May 2024 -Stratford Shakespeare Festival - Stratford • 27-28 April 2024 - ANZAC Weekend Airshow • 15-16 June 2024 - True Grit at Licola Road Glenmaggie	
Economic Development	Prepare a Shire-wide Growth Management and Economic Development Strategy to establish a hierarchy of growth areas and identify priority projects.	A draft Strategy has been prepared and publicly exhibited. Submissions received will inform final changes to the Strategy which is expected to be presented to Council for adoption in August 2024.	Progressing at 95%
Economic Development	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.	Ongoing with various planning projects/approvals and Planning Scheme Amendments completed to support urban growth across the municipality.	Progressing at 90%
Economic Development	Encourage and facilitate investment in the local mainstay industries with the potential to generate significant economic growth: Defence, Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Education, Timber,	Council's Defence and Renewable Energy Economic Development office continues to encourage and facilitate local businesses to become 'supply chain ready'. Council is also supporting the Gippsland Agricultural Group and Food and Fibre Gippsland to research and deliver sustainable agricultural initiatives. More recently, Council has engaged with Southern Rural	Progressing at 95%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
	Renewables and the Oil and Gas transition. This includes encouraging modernisation and identifying supporting industries, encouraging their establishment in Wellington Shire.	Water to understand the benefits and opportunities that will be generated by the 'Macalister Fresh' project. The $660,000 Macalister Fresh project, funded by the Victorian Government and Southern Rural Water, will be delivered over 18 months in four phases. Council officers also sit on Southern Rural Water's Stakeholder Reference Group for the Macalister Fresh project.	
Economic Development	Continue to advocate for the sustainability of the timber industry in Wellington Shire.	Council continues to work with impacted communities particularly through the delivery of the Local Development Strategies in both Heyfield and Yarram which is in the process of being transitioned over to local community groups for progression.	Progressing at 95%

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Economic Development	Council's Economic Development service aims to support business growth and employment, lifestyle opportunities and a vibrant tourism sector.	1,531 1,591 (60)

Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	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]	41.00	43.00	41.00	36.00	Council achieved a result of 36 for the median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision being made, which is significantly better than the State Average of 85 days.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
SP2	***Service standard*** *Planning applications decided within required time frames* [(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	96.69%	90.95%	86.23%	90.57%	The statutory timeframe for issuing planning permits is 60 days for standard applications and 10 days for VicSmart applications. Council has achieved good results with 90.1% of standard applications and 91.89% of VicSmart applications being decided within specified time frames, compared to the State result of 62.98% and 79.9% respectively.
SP3	***Service cost*** *Cost of statutory planning service* [Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	$1,286.83	$1,320.09	$1,407.16	$1,212.97	Costs to deliver the statutory planning service are comparable to the previous year.
SP4	***Decision making*** *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	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	Council effectively consults with permit applicants and objectors prior to making planning decisions to limit the need for VCAT Hearings. In 2023/24 three reviews were sought at VCAT, two of which were 'set aside' and one upheld Council's position.

Strategic Direction 3: Liveability and Wellbeing

Indicators of Success

The following table reviews performance against the Council Plan 2021-25 including results achieved in relation to the Indicators of Success.

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
3.1 An inclusive, diverse, and resilient community					
Community satisfaction with perception of diversity and accessibility in the community (SDG 10.2)	(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	Identify baseline. Continual improvement on WSC score
3.2 An actively engaged community					
Community satisfaction with Council decisions (SDG 16.7.2)	(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)	Continual improvement on WSC score
Community satisfaction with Council engagement (SDG 16.7.2)	(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)	Continual improvement on WSC score

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
Community satisfaction with level of Council lobbying (SDG 16.7.2)	(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)	Continual improvement on WSC score
3.3 Opportunities for everyone to work, learn, create, play and share					
Participation rates in kindergarten for 4 year olds (SDG 4.2.2)	(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%	Better than Gippsland average
Active library members in municipality (SDG 4.6)	(2019-20) 13% active library members	10.68% active library members	10.00% active library members	Data is currently unavailable	15%
Participation at Council-run performing arts events (SDG 4.7)	(2018-19) 21,300 visits	17,296 visits	20,652 visits	21,324 visits	Increase by 2%
Participation in Gippsland Art Gallery programs and events (SDG 4.7)	(2018-19) 39,600 visits	48,475 visits (includes 26,000 visits to the Archibald Prize)	39,611 visits 0.02% increase	57,337 visits 44.75% increase	Increase by 2%

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
3.4 Improved access to and participation in support services focussing on those who are vulnerable including: young children, youth, people living with a disability and seniors					
Availability of NDIS services within Wellington Shire to meet service demand (SDG 10.2)	(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 (June 2023 quarter)	71% of NDIS funding used by participants (June 2024 quarter)	80% of NDIS funding used by participants
Proportion of children attending Maternal and Child Health 3.5 years ages and stages visit (SDG 3.8)	(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%	Data is currently unavailable	90%

Major Initiatives

The following table reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2023/24 Budget for the year.

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	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 2021-2025 Strategy.	The Wellington Health and Wellbeing Coalition will meet in August for the second time. This meeting will finalise the terms of reference and mission statement.	Progressing at 95%
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	Use Healthy Wellington 2021-2025 to focus on the health and wellbeing needs of the senior	Positive ageing and the senior population are a key demographic within the community.	Progressing at 75%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
	population. Prevent and address barriers to accessing community, social, health and lifelong learning services.	The four priorities of Healthy Wellington; active living, mental health, health and climate change and equality help guide when planning events and programs. Council continues to prioritise and provide programs to people over 55+ through Council health, community development, libraries, sports complex and leisure services.	
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	Support employers with the attraction, recruitment and long term retention of health specialists and allied health workers into hospitals and schools and to service NDIS and My Aged Care packages.	Council continues to provide assistance where appropriate, and in particular extending the offer to utilise The Middle of Everywhere branding to attract workforce applicants.	Progressing at 95%
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	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.	Council continues to partner with GLaWAC and is awaiting direction for Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Cooperation (GLaWAC) on how to proceed with a Reconciliation Action Plan.	Progressing at 80%
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	Investigate gaps in service provision for vulnerable community members, review options and determine Council's future role.	Council continues to advocate for vulnerable groups within the community. Council utilises strong partnerships with key community and health organisations to assist with collecting key data in mapping service	Progressing at 75%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
		gaps, advocate for resourcing or promoting services and programs that assist vulnerable people in Wellington.	
Leisure Services	Complete Aqua Energy Redevelopment project detailed design, to progress to ''construction tender ready'' status ahead of planned construction works.	Detailed design completed, with construction contract awarded. Construction commenced and ongoing.	Completed 100%

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget.

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Communities, Facilities & 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.	(264) 1,131 (1,395)
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.	1,402 1,078 324

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Regulatory Services	The Regulatory 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.	1,554 1,813 (259)
Emergency Management	The Emergency Management team coordinates Council's emergency management responsibilities ensuring the organisation has the skills and capacity to respond appropriately to emergencies and facilitates a coordinated shire approach through the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.	416 254 162
Arts & 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.	1,786 1,103 683

Service Performance Indicators

The following table provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Aquatic Facilities					
	Service standard					
AF2	*Health Inspections of aquatics facilities*	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	All 6 aquatic facilities were inspected during the 2023/24 financial year.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	[Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]					
AF6	***Utilisation*** *Utilisation of aquatic facilities* [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	3.57	3.70	5.15	3.69	Aqua Energy located in Sale is currently being redeveloped which requires the temporary closure of the indoor pools while work is undertaken. The redevelopment has contributed to a significant reduction in memberships and facility attendance which has decreased utilisation.
AF7	***Service cost*** *Cost of aquatic facilities* [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	$10.79	$9.03	$7.81	$11.82	The ongoing Aqua Energy redevelopment and consequent closure of the indoor pools has contributed to a significant reduction in memberships and facility attendance with the unit cost to council increasing accordingly.
	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 /	1.18	1.10	1.12	1.16	Local Laws officers responded to 1,353 domestic animal management requests during the 2023/24 financial year, with an average initial response time of 1.16 days. Animal management requests included lost, wandering or nuisance pets, animal welfare

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Number of animal management requests]					concerns, dog attack reports, reports of dangerous/menacing dogs and reports of illegal pet breeding activities.
AM2	***Service standard*** *Animals reclaimed* [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x 100	71.38%	71.69%	67.25%	64.48%	656 domestic animals were collected by Council's Local Laws officers during the 2023/24 financial year, 423 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	***Service standard*** *Animals rehomed* [Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x 100	27.82%	25.37%	32.75%	67.81%	Victorian Animal Aid Trust, who is contracted to manage Council's animal pound and shelter is committed to ensuring unclaimed animals are suitably rehomed, no matter how long it takes. During the 2023-24 financial year, 158 unclaimed animals were successfully rehomed.
AM6	***Service cost*** *Cost of animal management service per population* [Direct cost of the animal management service / population]	$17.82	$19.99	$20.05	$19.64	Direct animal management costs for the financial year have been calculated at $906,054 with a cost per head of population of $19.64. This figure is lower than last year due to savings in expenditure.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Health and safety					
AM7	*Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	11 successful animal management prosecutions were finalised during the 2023/24 financial year. Prosecutions included serious dog attacks, unregistered breeders and prevention of cruelty to animal 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	Council received a total of 18 food complaints in 2023 which is eight more than 2022. This demonstrates that community members are aware they can report concerns about the safety or handling of food that is sold within Wellington Shire via Council's Customer Action Request system. To minimise any further risk to the community, Council is committed to responding to food safety complaints as a priority. This is demonstrated by the 2023 results once again showing all food safety related complaints were responded to within 1 day.
	Service standard					
FS2	*Food safety assessments* [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the	75.65%	100.00%	88.89%	94.74%	For the year ending 31 December 2023, 38 premises required a food safety assessment with 36 food safety assessments being undertaken.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Food Safety Act 1984 / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1984] x 100					The high inspection rate demonstrates that Council has prioritised the conduct of these inspections. The two premises not undertaken were due to scheduling difficulties with business operators. Numbers required for assessments continues to vary each year due to premises closures, new registrations and change in business activities altering the Food Act requirements.
	Service Standard					
FS5	Food safety samples [Number of food samples obtained / required number of food samples] x 100	New	New	New	108.33%	For the year ending 31 December 2023, Wellington Shire Council were required under the Food Act 1984 to obtain 72 food samples. 9 samples must come from a Class 1 premises and 63 from a Class 2 premises. 78 food samples were obtained by Council officers – 12 samples from Class 1 premises and 66 samples from Class 2 premises. Council exceeded the 100% sampling requirement.
	Service cost					
FS3	*Cost of food safety service* [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises	$402.31	$420.88	$418.12	$386.45	Direct cost of Council's food safety program per all registered and notifiable food premises is $386.45.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	registered or notified in accordance with the Food Act 1984]					The cost of delivering food safety service has remained reasonably steady during the last couple of years.
	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 outcome notifications about a food premises] x 100	96.15%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	For the 2023 calendar year, there were 18 non-compliance notifications. All 18 food premises received one or more follow up inspections to ensure compliance with the Food Act 1984.
	Libraries					
	Resource Standard					
LB2	*Recently purchased library collection* [Number of library collection item loans / Number of physical library collection items]	46.18%	55.76%	56.00%	65.43%	The percentage of the library collection purchased in the last 5 years has improved significantly for Wellington Libraries. Following a collection review, work has been undertaken to reduce the size of the collection and replace end of life items. This work has developed a contemporary collection which meets the informational,

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
						educational, recreational and cultural needs of the community; fostered a love of reading and inspiring intellectual curiosity and supports lifelong learning. Continued work on collection maintenance has helped to improve the size and age of our collection. This work will be further continued into the new year which should see rates improve further.
LB5	***Service cost*** *Cost of library service per population* [Direct cost of the library service / Population]	$32.74	$31.11	$34.27	$35.28	Overall costs of the library service have slightly increased due to additional investment in electronic resources and programming. Additional investment allows for the purchase of more eResource titles such as eBooks and eAudiobooks. Programming has also been expanded to include more offerings for adults and youth.
LB6	***Utilisation*** *Loans per head of population* [Number of library collection item loans / Population]	New	New	New	4.56	Loans have fluctuated throughout the year. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Wellington Libraries have observed a change in user needs and expansion of services outside of traditional loans such as technology and online services assistance, space use for study, work, cost of

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
						living pressure etc., and increasing demand for community programming.
LB7	***Participation*** *Library membership* [Number of registered library members / Population] x100	New	New	New	21.32%	Library Membership in Wellington Shire Council falls comfortably within the expected range. Data shows a minor drop in membership throughout the year, with a return to initial levels at the conclusion of the year.
LB8	***Participation*** *Library visits per head of population* [Number of library visits / Population]	New	New	New	5.35	Wellington Shire Council Library branches and Outreach services are well utilized by the community, both local and visiting. Visitation numbers have been steadily growing following the end of the Pandemic. Attendance has also been positively impacted by a blockbuster exhibition hosted by the Gippsland Art Gallery at Wellington Shire's Port of Sale cultural precinct which is home to our Sale Library. Wellington Shire was also impacted by unprecedented Bushfires and Floods in quick succession which saw many residents seeking refuge in our library facilities.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	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] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.
	Service Cost					
MC3	*Cost of the MCH services* [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.
	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] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.
	Participation					
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] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	Satisfaction					
MC6	*Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit* [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.

Strategic Direction 4: Services and Infrastructure

Indicators of Success

The following table reviews performance against the Council Plan 2021-25 including results achieved in relation to the Indicators of Success.

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
4.1 A financially sustainable, high performing organisation					
Working capital (Current assets as a percentage of current liabilities) (SDG 16.6)	(Similar Councils 2019-20) 299.58%	324.89%* **corrected from 326.58%*	470.8% **Corrected from 409.98%*	460.68%	Better than similar councils
Loans and borrowings as a percentage of rates (SDG 16.6)	(Similar councils 2019-20) 18.73%	1.13%	0.67%	10.21%	Better than similar councils
4.2 Services deliver operating efficiencies and best value					
Community satisfaction rate with Council's overall performance (SDG 16.6.2)	(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)	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)	(2021) 6.7%* ** Baseline corrected from 11.40%*	6.0%	7.98%	4.0%	10%

Indicators of Success:	Baseline	2021-22 Result	2022-23 Result	2023-24 Result	2025 Target
% of Community Managed Facilities accessibility audit recommendations delivered (SDG 9.1)	(2020) 5% of items	10% audit recommendations delivered	12% audit recommendations delivered	14% audit recommendations delivered	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)	(2020) Wellington Shire 59/100 (Large Rural 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)	>52/100
Increase in kilometres of active travel routes in Wellington Shire as identified under the urban paths plan (SDG 11.2)	(2021) 259km* * *Baseline corrected from 237km*	264km (2km annual increase target met)	269.5km (2km annual increase target met)	271.44km (2km annual increase target not met)	Increase by 2km of paths annually

Major Initiatives

The following table reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2023/24 Budget for the year.

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Arts & Culture	Plan for and present major loan exhibitions following The Archibald Prize at the Gippsland Art Gallery in October 2021.	The first blockbuster exhibition since the Archibald Prize, 'Annemieke Mein: A Life's Work' was presented from 2 March to 26 May 2024 following two years of planning. Planning has commenced for the next blockbuster exhibition, 'Turner & Australia' proposed for June 2025.	Completed 100%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
Arts & Culture	Finalise the production of a business case and concept design for redevelopment options of The Wedge Performing Arts Centre.	Business case completed. Concept design and funding sourcing currently underway.	Completed 100%
Land Use Planning	Advance private rezoning requests in North Sale and Longford to support future urban growth in these areas.	Three Planning Scheme Amendments (C114/115/116) have been adopted by Council to support future urban growth in North Sale and Longford and have now been approved by the Minister for Planning.	Completed 100%
Community Facility Planning	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.	Council continues to advocate for inter-town transport and connection to State Government and key stakeholders. Council provides localised knowledge and data around the complex issues and barriers around transportation for residents of Wellington.	Progressing at 65%
CEO	Advocate strongly to State Government and local stakeholders for improvements to the passenger train service to key regional centres.	Council continues to advocate to the Minister for Transport for an increase in train services for Sale. Funding for new train stabling at Bairnsdale was provided in the 2022-23 State Budget. Awaiting completion of level crossing removal program.	Progressing at 90%
Economic Development	Facilitate support, investment and growth in business, government enterprises and infrastructure development, with particular focus on continued COVID-19 business recovery through promoting the middle of everywhere campaign in partnership with the BTA's.	Council provided businesses with direct support through the business concierge program throughout Covid lockdown periods. Council also directly assisted hospitality businesses with support as part of the State Government Outdoor Dining Grant Program to enable more outdoor dining options during the Covid outbreak.	Completed 100%

Business Unit	Major Initiatives	Progress comment	Status
People & Capability	Implement a Memorandum of Understanding to utilise HR resources and services across both Wellington Shire and East Gippsland Shire Councils.	Both councils have agreed to pause this initiative due to challenges in recruiting a suitably qualified HR professional to manage this service.	Not progressing
Organisational Performance & Governance	Implementation of the expanded Risk Management Framework to increase organisational capability and further embed a risk culture.	The expanded Risk Management Framework continues to be implemented. Activities to embed risk management include regular reporting and the development of an online training course.	Completed 100%

Services

The following table provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget.

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 $41M to $50M per annum and providing asset management and information systems and support.	2,094 2,460 (366)
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.	15,660 7,436 8,224

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
Arts & Culture	The Wedge, as part of the Arts & Culture unit, seeks to assist in the development of a vibrant and 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.	1,094 1,181 (87)
Land Use Planning	The Land Use Planning unit, through our statutory planning and strategic land use planning services, aims to develop and improve forward looking land use planning policies and plans that guide and support sustainable growth and appropriate land use and development. Many of these services are provided through and driven by legislation. We aim to provide services that satisfy community needs by encouraging and supporting well-designed development that meets required standards.	661 1,277 (616)
Communities, Facilities & Emergencies	The Community Facility Planning 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.	4,697 3,333 1,364
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.	2,554 3,390 (836)
Information Services	The Information Services unit provides centralised and integrated information services and new and emerging technologies to assist Council to reach the 2031 Vision.	3,658 4,361

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
		(703)
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, Freedom of Information, 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.	2,554 2,623 (69)
Councillors, Chief Executive 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.	2,774 3,279 (505)
Communications and Media	This area provides internal and external communication services and support and branding initiatives for Council. The team also seeks to proactively inform our community and our staff ensuring transparency, consistency and clarity of our message.	734 683 51
Regulatory Services	The Customer Service team, as part of the Regulatory Services unit, provides responsive, quality customer service to all stakeholders.	457 409

Service Area	Description	Net Cost Actual Budget Variance $000
		48
Economic Development	The Commercial Facilities team, as part of the Economic Development unit, manages a range of commercial property portfolios including strategic projects in addition to completing the transactions for property acquisitions, disposal and transfers.	491 258 233
People & Capability	The People & Capability unit provides expert and responsive advice and services in the areas of Human Resources, Learning & Development, Occupational Health & Safety and Risk Management.	1,352 1,066 286

Service Performance Indicators

The following table provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of results in the comments.

	Service / ***indicator*** / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	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	2.69%	4.21%	4.39%	3.35%	Council made 209 resolutions during the 2023/24 financial year. Of those decisions, only 7 or 3.35% were made in meetings closed to the public. All council meetings open to the public are broadcast live via Council's website and made available via an online video archive.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	meetings of Council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of Councillors] x 100					Council actively strives to limit decisions made in closed session to ensure transparency and accountability to the community in its decision making.
G2	***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	58.00	55.00	53.00	53.00	Councils' participation in the 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in the community satisfaction rating being five points higher than the large rural average and two points higher compared to state-wide average, for the category of community consultation and engagement processes.
G3	***Attendance*** *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	95.65%	92.75%	93.72%	92.75%	Councillors' commitment to actively serve the community is reflected in the 92.75% attendance rate at the 22 ordinary Council meetings and one unscheduled Council meeting held in the 2023/24 financial year. The flexibility of a hybrid meeting model, combining in person and virtual attendance, has continued to maintain a high attendance rate.
G4	***Service cost*** *Cost of elected representation* [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors	$36,776.85	$45,334.88	$50,451.00	$54,134.93	The cost of Councillor representation is primarily made up of allowances legislated by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	elected at the last Council general election]					The 2023/24 costs include annual increases to allowances which are paid to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors and the value of the Remote Area Travel Allowance.
G5	***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with council decisions* [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	61.00	59.00	54.00	53.00	The satisfaction score for Council decision making as measured by the 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in a decline of one point compared to last year. Council notes there was also a decline in the large rural average of two points and state-wide average resulted in a decline of one point. However, the result for Wellington Shire Council is seven points higher than the large rural average and three points higher compared to state-wide average.
R1	**Roads** ***Satisfaction of use*** *Sealed local road requests* [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	15.58	26.17	26.09	20.53	The number of customer action requests for local sealed roads has decreased by approximately 20% when compared to the previous 2022/23 financial year. Whilst Wellington Shire did experience storm and heavy rain events, there were prolonged periods of dry weather which has likely contributed towards the decrease in requests.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
						Wellington Shire has also been focusing on works to rehabilitate roads in poor condition or impacted by emergencies through both our capital and maintenance programs.
R2	***Condition*** *Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards* [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	99.97%	99.68%	97.84%	99.23%	The percentage of roads below the set condition level is 99.23%, which is an improvement of the previous year's results of 97.84%. Over the last few years, Wellington Shire's Road network has been impacted by a number of emergency storm and rain events causing a number of land slips, as well as damage across our low lying road network. Wellington Shire focused on emergency repair works and the renewal of its poor condition assets as part of its 2023/24 capital works program, which has resulted in the improved figure. This investment will continue in 2024/25 and will begin to include roads which are approaching our set condition level.
R3	***Service cost*** *Cost of sealed local road reconstruction*	$41.22	$44.83	$57.03	$52.50	The cost of sealed local road reconstruction has slightly decreased compared to the previous financial year.

	Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results 2021	2022	2023	2024	Comments
	[Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]					Council's 2023/24 capital works program did contain some reconstruction jobs in Urban areas, but it primarily focused on larger rural road reconstruction and widening works using spray seal rather than asphalt. Given the scale of the projects, this is considered a likely reason why the overall cost decreased.
R4	***Service cost*** *Cost of sealed local road resealing* [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	$4.03	$3.67	$4.65	$4.72	In 2023/24, the unit rate for Wellington Shire Council's Road resealing program has slightly increased compared to the 2022/23 financial year. The cost of bitumen has remained steady over the last 12 months for our area, meaning that our reseal rates have been stable.
R5	***Satisfaction*** *Satisfaction with sealed local roads* [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	65.00	54.00	50.00	50.00	Results from the 2024 Community Satisfaction Survey shows no change from the previous year in resident's satisfaction rating for Wellington Shire's sealed local roads compared to the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey. Wellington Shire has continued to be impacted by ongoing storm and rain events with high intensity rainfalls and flooding impacting the majority of the Shire.

Service / *indicator* / *measure*	Results				Comments
	2021	2022	2023	2024	
					Some planned maintenance works were delayed so our maintenance teams can focus on the immediate clean up and repair activities following these events. Wellington Shire's capital program has focussed on the reconstruction and major maintenance of many of our poor condition sealed roads and the results can be seen in the Sealed Road Condition percentage figures. This focus on major renewal works will continue into the 2024/25 financial year. Wellington Shire Council is responsible for a road network of 3,112km, where 1,549km are sealed and 1,563km are unsealed.

6.0 Governance & Management

6.1 Governance

As a transparent and accountable local government, Wellington Shire Council places great emphasis on maintaining high standards of governance, ensuring ethical behaviour, and proactively managing risks. Wellington Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and local community.

Council has a number of roles including:

- taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making
- providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and levels of government
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that Council and its administration meet the community's priorities. The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes including community consultation activities, public forums such as community meetings and the ability to make submissions to Council.

Council places a strong emphasis on good governance and transparency of Council decisions, actions and information. Good governance principles are followed by making decisions based on proper processes and systems and supporting Council officers to carry out these decisions appropriately. Council is committed to ensuring that Council operates effectively, efficiently, impartially and with integrity.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through Council meetings and various Committees of Council. Council delegates the majority of its decision making to Council staff and these delegations are exercised in accordance with adopted Council policies and relevant legislation.

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 the following meetings during 2023/24:
- 22 Ordinary Council Meetings
- One Unscheduled Council Meeting.



Image: Wellington Room – Port of Sale

Councillor Meeting Attendance 2023/24

The following table provides a summary of councillor attendance at council meetings and unscheduled council meetings for the 2023/24 financial year.

Councillor (1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024)	Ordinary Council Meeting	Unscheduled Council Meeting	Total
Cr Bye (Mayor)	21	1	22
Cr Tatterson (Deputy Mayor from 1 July 2023 to 8 November 2023)	21	1	22
Cr Maher (Deputy Mayor from 8 November to present)	20	1	21
Cr Crossley	20	1	21
Cr McKenzie	19	1	20
Cr Ripper	21	1	22
Cr Rossetti	20	1	21
Cr Stephens	20	1	21
Cr Wood	21	1	22

Councillor Representation on Committees as of 30 June 2024

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.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Tatterson
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.	Cr Stephens Cr Maher (Mayor) Cr McKenzie (alternate)
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.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Maher (Deputy Mayor) Cr Stephens
Gippsland Art Gallery Advisory Group	To provide input to the Council on the operation, policy development and future planning of Gippsland Art Gallery.	Cr Crossley Cr Rossetti (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.	Cr Tatterson Cr Bye (Mayor) (alternate)
Place Names Committee	Make recommendations to Council on naming issues.	Cr Maher (Deputy Mayor) Cr Rossetti Cr Crossley

Advisory Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Port of Sale Masterplan Implementation Steering Committee	To facilitate the coordinated implementation of the key elements of the Port of Sale Masterplan.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Crossley Cr Wood
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.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Tatterson Cr McKenzie
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.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Tatterson (Deputy Mayor) Cr Maher
The Wedge Advisory Group	To provide input to the Council on the operation, policy development and future planning of The Wedge performing arts centre, with current focus on potential redevelopment of the centre.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Rossetti Cr Crossley Cr Tatterson (alternate)
Wellington Disability Advisory Committee	To provide advice to Wellington Shire Council on matters relating to access and inclusion for people living with a disability.	Cr Crossley Cr Wood (alternate)
Wellington Youth Service Network	To optimise the quality of life of all young people within the Wellington Shire.	Cr Wood
Wellington Shire Youth Council	To develop and deliver projects and campaigns, and advocate for young people in Wellington.	Cr Crossley Cr Wood (alternate)

Community Assets 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 Councillor representative nominated
Cameron Sporting Complex Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Cameron Sporting Complex, Maffra.	Cr Tatterson
Gordon Street Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Gordon Street Reserve.	Cr Ripper
Maffra Recreation Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Maffra Recreation Reserve.	Cr Ripper
Newry Recreation Reserve Committee	To protect, promote and develop the Newry Recreation Reserve.	Cr Ripper

Other Groups

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

Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Wellington Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	To develop, implement, maintain and monitor a Municipal Emergency Management Plan in accordance with the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018*.	Cr Wood Cr Crossley (alternate)
Business Boost Reference Group (Business Recovery Sub-committee)	To provide a forum for representatives of the business community and Council to provide feedback and input relating to economic development across Wellington Shire.	Cr Maher Cr Wood

Committee	Purpose	Councillors
Wellington Renewable Energy Forum	To demonstrate support and provide input to the Renewable Energy projects and proposals in Wellington Shire.	Cr Bye (Mayor) Cr Maher (Deputy Mayor) Cr Crossley Cr Stephens Cr McKenzie
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.	Cr Crossley

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.	Cr Crossley
Municipal Association of Victoria	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.	Cr Rossetti Cr Tatterson (alternate)
Southeast Australian Transport Strategy	Integrated transport strategy for Southeast Australia.	Cr Tatterson

Delegated Committees

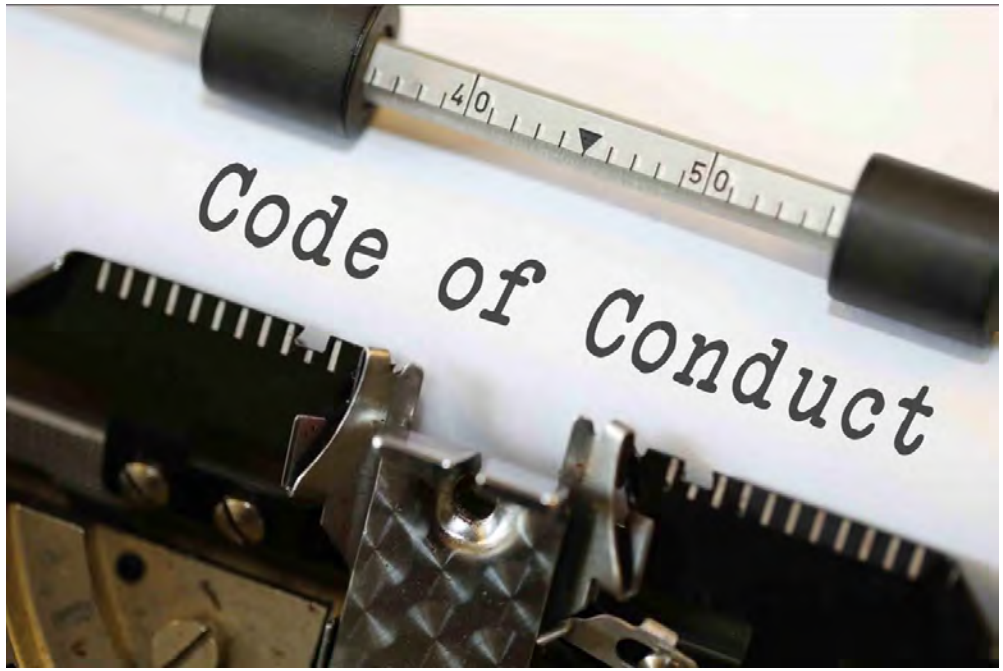
Delegated committees have the powers, duties and functions of Council as set out in the applicable Instrument of Delegation and Terms of Reference. Wellington Shire Council does not currently have any delegated committees.

Code of Conduct

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Councils develop and implement a Councillor Code of Conduct that specifies the standards of conduct to be followed. Wellington Shire Council last reviewed and approved its Councillor Code of Conduct on 7 May 2024 adding a section to reinforce the Council's commitment to a zero tolerance approach towards child abuse as detailed in the Council's Child Safe Policy.

The Code sets out the minimum standards of conduct required of Councillors and aims to foster good working relationships among them to work constructively together in the best interests of the municipality. It also mandates Councillor conduct that builds public confidence in the integrity of local government, outlines internal resolution procedures for dealing with misconduct and alleged contravention of the Councillor Code of Conduct, and sets out processes for resolving internal disputes involving Councillors. Additionally, the Code provides for the review of key strategic documents of the Council, including the Council Plan, to ensure that Councillors are fulfilling their duties in the most appropriate manner possible.

Council awaits the outcome of current work being completed by the state government on the development of regulations that will give effect to the June 2024 amendments to the *Local Government Act 2020*. These changes will establish a Model Councillor Code of Conduct applicable to all councils throughout Victoria.



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. It is the responsibility of Councillors to identify a conflict of interest or duty and disclose this when necessary. Failure to disclose any conflicts is a breach of the *Local Government Act 2020* and penalties may apply.

Council has a standard procedure for all Council and Committee meetings requiring the declaration of a conflict of interest and then stepping aside from the relevant decision-making process or from the exercise of public duty.

During 2023/24, the following conflicts of interest were declared at Ordinary Council meetings:

Date of declaration	Councillor	Meeting item that raised conflict of interest
21/05/2024	Cr Crossley	Meeting item 6.1 – Community Assistance Grants
21/05/2024	Cr Stephens	Meeting item 6.1 – Community Assistance Grants
05/12/2023	Cr Bye (Mayor)	Meeting item 13.1 – Community Assistance Grants
17/10/2023	Cr Bye (Mayor)	Meeting item 16.1 – Community Assistance Grants
17/10/2023	Cr Tatterson	Meeting item 16.1 – Community Assistance Grants
18/07/2023	Cr Maher	Meeting item 14.2 – Monthly Planning Decisions

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 and with the change of Councillors following the General Election.

VIRT determined a 2% increase to the values of the base allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors effective from 1 July 2023. A further 2% increase applied from 18 December 2023. 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.

Table 1 provides the allowance amounts set by the VIRT during the financial year.

Table 2 contains a summary of the allowances paid to each councillor during the 2023/24 year.

Table 1

Council Member	Amount 01/07/2023 – 17/12/2023	Amount 18/12/2023 – 30/06/2024
Mayor	$102,650	$105,424
Deputy Mayor	$51,325	$52,713
Councillor	$31,980	$32,877

Table 2

Councillor	Term of Office during the financial year	Allowance
Cr Ian Bye	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024 (Mayor)	$104,265
Cr Carolyn Crossley	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21
Cr Marcus McKenzie	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21
Cr Gayle Maher	01/07/2023 to 08/11/2023 (Councillor) 08/11/2023 to 30/06/2024 (Deputy Mayor)	$45,189.77
Cr Carmel Ripper	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21
Cr Scott Rossetti	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21
Cr Garry Stephens	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21
Cr John Tatterson	01/07/2023 to 02/11/2023 (Deputy Mayor) 02/11/2023 to 30/06/2024 (Councillor)	$39,444.21
Cr Jill Wood	01/07/2023 to 30/06/2024	$32,501.21

Councillor Expenses

In accordance with section 40 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, it is mandatory for Council to reimburse a Councillor for any expenses incurred while carrying out their duties as a Councillor. Additionally, the Council has to establish and uphold a policy concerning the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors. The Council Expense and Administration Policy outlines the procedures for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities, and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities.

The details of Councillor expenses for the 2023/24 year are shown below.

Councillor	Travel	Car Mileage	Child Care	Information & Communication	Conferences & Training	Total
	$	$	$	$	$	$
Cr Ian Bye	-	199	-	424	7,131	7,754
Cr Carolyn Crossley	92	4,835	-	436	4,328	9,690
Cr Marcus McKenzie	2,305	7,369	-	381	8,202	18,258
Cr Gayle Maher	810	5,781	-	424	2,168	9,183
Cr Carmel Ripper	46	3,070	-	381	1,200	4,697
Cr Scott Rossetti	-	-	-	381	-	381
Cr Garry Stephens	1,360	2,598	-	424	374	4,757
Cr John Tatterson	-	4,513	-	381	1,807	6,701
Cr Jill Wood	-	-	-	381	-	381

Notes: There were no expenses paid to delegated committee members as Council does not have any delegated committees.

The Mayor has minimal car mileage reimbursements during the financial year due to being provided with a Wellington Shire Council owned motor vehicle at a cost of $8,334.

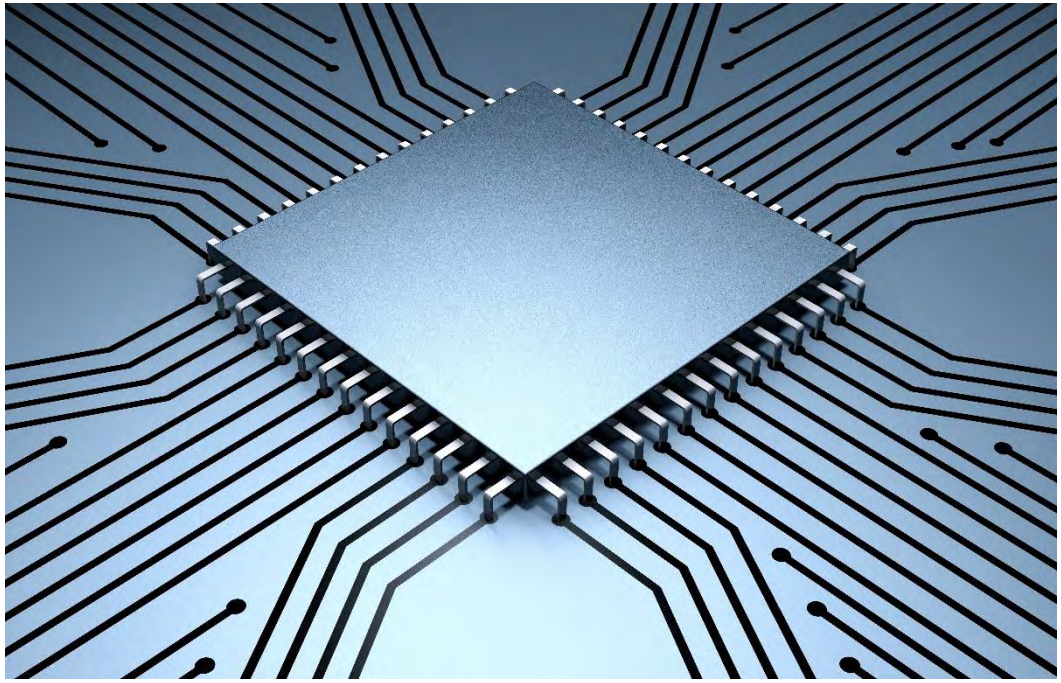
6.2 Management

Management

Council continues to implement statutory and better practice improvements to strengthen its management framework. Having strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by Council.

*The Local Government Act 202*0 requires Council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist and include this in its Report of Operations.

Council's Governance and Management Checklist results are set out in section 6.3.



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, which 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), Ms Sarah Heath and Mr Tony Smith and two Councillors. Independent members are appointed for a maximum term up to three years. The Chair is elected from 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 2023/24, 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 -
    - Fraud Control Policy
    - Corporate Credit Card Policy
    - Major Events Policy
    - Disposal of Surplus Council Equipment Policy
    - Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination & Harassment Policy
    - Respect in the Workplace (Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination) Policy
    - Accommodation and Meal Allowances Policy
    - Risk Management Policy
    - Mobile Phones (Communication and Mobile Devices) Policy
    - Rental and Leasing of Council Owned Properties Policy

    - Conflict of Interest Policy
-
- Occupational Health & Safety matters and
- information services and cyber security.

Other key outcomes for the 2023/24 year are summarised below.

In **August 2023** the Committee:

- Received and noted the internal audits on;
    - Payroll and Leave Management; and
    - Follow up review;
- Received an update on the Internal Audit contract;
- Considered the role of the Committee in relation to the Business Continuity Plan;
- Received the VAGO report: *Regulating Food Safety;*
- Evaluated the Audit & Risk Committee performance;
- Reviewed the Strategic Risk Report;
- 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 2023** the Committee:

- Reviewed the 2022/23 draft financial report and performance statement in accordance with legislative requirements;
- Received the final Management Letter for the year ending 30 June 2023; and
- Received the draft Annual Report 2022/23.

In **November 2023** the Committee:

- Received and noted the internal audit on Workforce Planning;
- Endorsed the Strategic Risk Report;
- 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 the Internal Audit contract;
- Received an update on the Business Continuity Plan exercise; and
- Received a summary of the Gifts Register.

In **February 2024** the Committee:

- Elected Chris Badger as Chair of the Committee;
- Reviewed strategic risks;
- Received a report on Related Party Transactions;
- Received a report on the Chief Executive Officer's credit card expenditure; and
- Received a report on Excess Staff Leave;

In **May 2024** 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 Security (Essential Eight); and
    - Rates Revenue (incl. data interrogation);
- Received a postmortem review of the Internal Audit tender;
- Received the VAGO report: *Results of 2022/23 Audits: Local Government*;
- Reviewed the Asset Revaluation Methodology Report;
- Reviewed and approved strategic risks;
- Received a report on the Business Continuity Plan exercise;
- Received an update on the Legislative Compliance Register;
- Reviewed the Artificial Intelligence User Policy;
- Received the Biannual Report to Council on Audit & Risk Committee Activities;
- Received a summary of the Gifts Register.
- Received an update on the draft 2024/25 Budget; and
- Reviewed the Audit & Risk Committee Annual Plan.

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 2023/24 was undertaken with the following reviews conducted:

- Payroll and Leave Management (inc. data analytics) - August 2023
- Follow Up Review - August 2023
- Workforce Planning - November 2023
- Cyber Security (Essential Eight) - February 2024
- Rates Revenue (incl. data interrogation) - May 2024

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 2023 and May 2024 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 consists of a policy, strategy, risk appetite statement, procedure, toolkit and risk register. Together these documents identify why Council undertakes risk management and how staff are expected to do so. The Framework is based on the International Risk Management standard, ISO 31000:2018 which supports the organisation to manage risks effectively and consistently.

The Risk Management Framework includes Council's risk register, which is reviewed periodically by the risk owners.

Insurance

Council worked with its insurance broker to renew our broad insurance portfolio ensuring consistency with Council's identified risk profile and requirements. Risk management services and learning opportunities are provided as part of Council's membership of the liability insurance scheme.

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 engaged risk consultants to facilitate a business continuity exercise in February 2024. Twenty-four staff were in attendance, including the CEO and General Managers.

Following the exercise, staff discussed learnings and agreed on further refinement of the Business Continuity Plan to be completed.

6.3 Governance and Management Checklist

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
1	**Community Engagement Policy** *(Policy under section 55 of the Act outlining council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)*	The Community Engagement Policy was adopted in accordance with Section 55 of the Act. Date of adoption of policy: 20 December 2022	✓
2	**Community Engagement Guidelines** *(Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)*	The Community Engagement Strategy provides the guidelines to assist staff with how and when to engage with the community. Date of commencement of current guidelines: 2 March 2021	✓
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 of plan: 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 of plan: 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)*	The Revenue and Rating Plan was adopted in accordance with Section 93 of the Act. Date of adoption of plan: 1 June 2021	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
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 2024/25 Annual Budget was adopted in accordance with Section 94 of the Act. Date Annual Budget adopted: 4 June 2024	✓
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: 20 June 2023	✓
8	**Fraud Policy** *(Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)*	Council has a Fraud Control Policy in operation. Review undertaken and approved by Council in December 2023. Date of commencement of current policy: 19 December 2023	✓
9	**Municipal Emergency Management Planning** *(Council's participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee MEMPC)*	From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 representatives of Wellington Shire Council attended 5 MEMPC meetings plus one extra multi-agency debrief following the storm event of 13 February 2024. Dates of meetings attended: 24 August 2023 27 October 2023 14 December 2023 29 February 2024 21 March 2024 - multi-agency debrief 16 May 2024	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
10	**Procurement Policy** *(Policy under section 108 of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to the purchase of goods and services by the Council)*	The Procurement Policy was adopted in accordance with Section 108 of the Act. Date of adoption of current policy: 21 December 2021	✓
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, plan review and scenario test undertaken in February 2024. Date of adoption of plan: 1 February 2024	✓
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 in December 2023 and scenario test undertaken in February 2024. Date of adoption of plan: January 2017	✓
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 policy: 19 December 2023	✓
14	**Workforce Plan** *(Plan outlining Council's commitment to 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	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
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 Debt Collection and Interest Charging - Rates, Charges and Fire Services Property Levy Policy in operation. Date of commencement of the current policy: 19 December 2023	✓
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: 20 June 2023	✓
17	**Audit & Risk Committee** *(Advisory committee of council under sections 53 and 54 of the Act)*	Council established the Audit & Risk Committee in accordance with section 53 of the Act. Date of establishment: 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: 29 June 2017	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
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 Act)*	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 2019	✓
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 6 months of the financial year)*	Council Plan Reporting provided as follows: Dates reports were presented to Council: 19 September 2023 (June 2023 Quarter) 19 December 2023 (September 2023 Quarter) 16 April 2024 (December 2023 Quarter) - which includes the results in relation to the strategic indicators for the first six months of the financial year 18 June 2024 (March 2024 Quarter)	✓
21	**Quarterly budget reports** *(Quarterly reports to the Council under section 97 of the Act, 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 presented: • 2023/24 First Quarter report presented: Council meeting - 15 August 2023 • 2023/24 Second Quarter report presented: Council meeting - 17 October 2023 • 2023/24 Third Quarter report presented: Council meeting - 6 February 2024 • 2023/24 Fourth Quarter report presented: Council meeting - 16 April 2024	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
22	**Risk Reporting** *(6-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: 30 November 2023 29 May 2024	✓
23	**Performance Reporting** *(6-monthly reports of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)*	Six-monthly performance reports prepared and presented to Council. Date reports presented: 10 October 2023 (1July 2022 - 30 June 2023) 4 June 2024 (1 July 2023 - 31 December 2023)	✓
24	**Annual Report** *(Annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)*	The 2022-23 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 to Council: 17 October 2023	✓
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)*	Council has a current Councillor Code of Conduct under section 139 of the Act. Adopted on 16 February 2021 and reviewed 7 May 2024	✓

Item No.	Governance and Management Items	Assessment	✓ Yes ✗ No
23	**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)*	Delegations maintained in accordance with the Act. S5 Instrument of Delegation to Chief Executive Officer was reviewed and authorised by a Resolution of Council passed on 19 October 2021, which is within 12 months of the 2020 General Election in accordance with Section 11(7). Date reviewed: 19 October 2021	✓
24	**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.



Chris Hastie
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 1 October 2024



Cr Ian Bye
Mayor
Dated: 1 October 2024

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 2023.

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

- 'Confidential Information' as defined under section 3(1) of the Act, 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 Act (and, in some cases, the *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 & Council Expense and Administration Policy
- Summary of Election Campaign Donation Returns
- Audit and Risk 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.



Image: 2024 Baby's Day Out - Sale

Community Engagement

Wellington Shire Council is committed to conducting genuine and effective community engagement. Council continues to embed, and is guided by, the current Community Engagement Strategy and Community Engagement Policy and remains committed to the objectives:

- Strengthen representation in decision making
- Ensure the community understands how, when, and why they can expect Council staff to engage with them on issues of importance to them.
- Ensure all staff understand and can deliver on the commitment by Council to involve the public in the decision-making process about issues that affect them.
- Ensure all staff operate under the same set of guiding principles thereby bringing consistency and understanding to any community engagement process.

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 2023/24, the Carer Friendly Places project, a collaborative effort involving Neighbourhood Houses Victoria, Carers Victoria, and the Municipal Association of Victoria, was supported by the Victorian Government. This initiative successfully trained Councils and Neighbourhood Houses to establish inclusive environments for individuals caring for those with chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, or addiction.

Carers Victoria continues to provide ongoing support and professional development opportunities to Wellington Shire Council.

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.

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 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.

At the end of 2022 Wellington Shire Council's 'Wellington Access and Inclusion Plan 2017 – 2022' concluded. Council has reviewed the plan with consultation from the Wellington Disability Advisory Committee (WDAC). In 2024, Council is preparing the next Disability Action Plan whilst still achieving residual actions from the Wellington Access and Inclusion Plan 2017 – 2022.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

An annual review of the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plans was conducted in December 2023.

Of note, a review of the effectiveness of the recently implemented cat curfew was undertaken. Since enforcement commenced in July 2023, Council has experienced a 20.8% reduction in the number of domesticated cats impounded. Complaints regarding wandering cats has also reduced, with 68 less complaints received compared to the same period the previous year.

In October 2023, Wellington Shire had back-to-back emergencies within days of each other. Major bushfires in Loch Sport and Briagolong, followed by major flooding in towns downstream of Lake Glenmaggie on the Macalister River. Local Laws team members were able to rapidly respond to emergency relief centres and provide support to evacuees and their pets by providing pet food, bowls, and bedding. Council's pound and animal shelter was placed on standby to receive any evacuated animals.

The annual review also highlighted the following actions throughout the past twelve months:

- 1,294 Domestic animal requests received, with an initial response time of 1.3 days.
- 696 Domestic animals received at Council's pound and animal shelter. 551 (79%) were either reunited with their owners or rehomed
- All registered domestic animal businesses inspected to ensure compliance with relevant codes of practice
- A slight reduction in the number of dog attacks reported (46, down from 50 the previous year).
- 178 Barking/nuisance dog complaints received over the past twelve months, with an initial resolution rate of 87%.



Image: Wellington Shire Council – Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021 - 2025

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 ($31.80 - 2023/2024), 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.

Ms Denise Teo, 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 2023 to 30 June 2024, Wellington Shire Council received twenty (20) Freedom of Information requests.

Summary of FOI requests	
New requests	20
Access granted in full	0
Access granted in part	6
Requests not finalised at the end of the reporting period	1
Withdrawn	0
Requests processed outside of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*	2
Requests – no documents existed	1
Others: not processed, not proceeded with (request never clarified)	10
Application fees collected	$222.60
Access charges collected	$387.56
Access charges not paid (processed documents not collected)	Nil
Freedom of Information requests transferred to another agency to whom the requested documents relate	Nil
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 the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.	0
Outcomes of requests outstanding from previous reporting period	2 requests released; access granted in part

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.

Wellington Shire 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 agency 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 the meeting of December 2023. 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 availably publicly on our website at https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/council/public-interest-disclosures-process.

During the 2023/24 year, no disclosures were made to the Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC).

Food Act Ministerial Directions

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 2023/24.

7.0 Other Organisational Information

Citizenship

During 2023/24 Wellington Shire Council conducted four Citizenship ceremonies, which included July 2023, September 2023, Australia Day (26 January) 2024 and April 2024.

A grand total of 103 individuals were welcomed into our community as new Australian citizens. They came from 23 different countries around the globe including the Philippines, New Zealand, Poland, Taiwan, Canada, Cambodia, Bermuda, Malta, Brazil, Ethiopia, Fiji, Zimbabwe, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and United States of America and numerous other locations.



Image: Australia Day Citizenship Ceremony 26 January 2024 - Sale

Civic Receptions

Over recent years the Australia Day Awards event has been postponed due to either Covid or, as was the case in 2024, a lack of Nominees for the awards. Instead, Council once again celebrated our many volunteers across the Shire during National Volunteers Week from 20-26 May 2024.

This year the "Thank You" events were held in Heyfield and Golden Beach, together with a Volunteer Expo event in Sale. The feedback from these events is that they are greatly appreciated by the huge number of volunteers, and they would like to see more of this type of event.

Approximately 180 volunteers attended the 3 events, which is an increase on the numbers from the previous years.



Image: National Volunteer Week - Heyfield



Image: National Volunteer Week – Golden Beach



Image: National Volunteer Week - Heyfield



Image: National Volunteer Week - Sale

Arts & Culture Services

Gippsland Art Gallery

Gippsland Art Gallery welcomed 57,337 visitors during 2023/24, which is the highest attendance figure ever since the Gallery opened in 1965, and much higher than the 48,475 visitors who attended in 2021/22, the year that the Gallery hosted the Archibald Prize.

Our 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, all with 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 39 exhibitions presented, including five community access exhibitions and 10 children's exhibitions.

The highlight of the program was the major 'blockbuster' exhibition *Annemieke Mein: A Life's Work*, which drew 28,351 visitors from all parts of Australia, and an estimated 250 from overseas. The exhibition included over 200 original artworks from a total of 37 different lenders and was the largest exhibition that the Gallery has ever presented.

Furthermore, 73% of visitors to Annemieke's exhibition came from outside Wellington Shire, and the total economic benefit for Wellington Shire was an estimated $10 million. Visitor satisfaction was extremely high, with 829 survey respondents rating the exhibition 9.9 out of 10.

First Nations engagement in 2023/24 has also been significant, with *Gwandidj Djiriban–They Are Us* presented in the Borun & Tuk Gallery from 19 August until 11 February - an exhibition that spanned four generations of the Mullett and Paton families. In June, and remaining current for NAIDOC week in 2024, the Gallery presented *Layers of Blak*, an exhibition of First Nations jewellery on tour from the Koorie Heritage Trust in Melbourne.

Climate Change themes have also been prevalent throughout the Gallery's exhibition program, with Rohan Hutchinson's exhibition *Polar Convergence*, John Wolseley's exhibition *The Quiet Conservationist*, the exhibition of Gippsland protest posters from the 1970s, *Power to the*

People!, Wona Bae and Charlie Lawler's exhibition *Park Dream*, and the second *Fragile Earth* exhibition, *Breathe*, all carrying strong environmental messages.

In all, the Gallery presented 172 public programs in 2023/24, which attracted a total of 4,294 participants, while 8,439 students and 866 teachers (9,305 total) engaged with the Gippsland Art Gallery Education Program. Highlights included the Gunaikurnai Language Workshop with Dr Aunty Doris Paton, the VCE 'Accessing Art' Symposium, a well-attended Christmas craft market, regular school holiday programs, and the weekly 'Baby on Board' and 'Origami Friday' sessions.

Philanthropic support for the Gallery continued to increase, with 191 artworks being received as donations during the year (or purchased with donated funds), with a total value of $895,700. Further, the Gallery received nine cash donations during the year, totalling $131,106, with the majority coming from the Gippsland Art Gallery Foundation and the John Leslie Foundation. 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.

Our 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. Our collection also continues to inform education programs and provides the foundation for exhibition programs.



Image: Annemieke Mein – The Blue Skimmer (Dragonfly Triptych), 2022

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre

The Wedge Performing Arts Centre is a contemporary hub for performing arts and entertainment complete with The John Leslie Theatre seating 396, a 50 seat studio space known as The Wedge Studio and the newly renovated Shirley's Café and Bar where you can enjoy a coffee or a bite to eat.

This multi-award winning venue hosted 122 performances over 81 events attracting 21,324 patrons during 2023/24.



Image: The Wedge Performing Arts Centre - Sale



Image: Ben Lee Concert
The Wedge Performing Arts Centre - Sale

Grants Received for Projects

Wellington Shire Council were successful in securing over 30 grants through various State and Commonwealth funding streams including:

- Local Government Victoria
- Department of Government Services
- Department of Education – Victorian School Building Authority
- Department Justice and Community Safety
- Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
- Department of Education and Training
- Vic Health (Victorian Health Promotion Foundation)
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (Local Government Emergencies)
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (Creative Victoria)
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Grants Distributed

Wellington Shire Council distributed in excess of $450,000 in grants to various organisations and individuals throughout the community in 2023/24 as follows:

- 46 organisations received Community Assistance Grants totalling $247,087
- 59 organisations received Quick Response Grants totalling $124,658
- 44 Community Facility Committees of Management received Reactivating Community Facility Volunteers grants totalling 81,323

Comprehensive details are available by visiting the Wellington Shire Council website www.wellington.vic.gov.au

Glossary

Act	means the *Local Government Act 2020*
Annual Report	means a report of the council's operations of the previous financial year and contains a report of operations, audited financial statements and an audited performance statement
Budget	means a plan setting out the services and initiatives to be funded for the financial year and how they will contribute to achieving the strategic objectives specified in the council plan
Council Plan	means a plan setting out the medium-term strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and resources reflecting vision and aspirations of the community for the next four year
Financial performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators and measures that assess the effectiveness of financial management in a council covering operating position, liquidity, obligations, stability and efficiency
Financial statements	means the financial statements and notes prepared in accordance with the Local Government Model Financial Report, Australian Accounting Standards and other applicable standards as they apply to the general purpose financial reports and a statement of capital works and included in the annual report
Financial year	means the period of 12 months ending on 30 June each year
Governance and management checklist	means a prescribed checklist of policies, plans and documents that councils must report the status of in the report of operations, covering engagement, planning, monitoring, reporting and decision making
Indicator	means what will be measured to assess performance
Initiatives	means actions that are one-off in nature and/or lead to improvements in service
Major initiative	means significant initiatives that will directly contribute to the achievement of the council plan during the current year and have a major focus in the budget

Measure	means how an indicator will be measured and takes the form of a computation, typically including a numerator and denominator
Minister	means the Minister for Local Government
Performance statement	means a statement including the results of the prescribed service outcome indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and included in the annual report
Integrated strategic planning and reporting framework	means the key statutory planning and reporting documents that are required to be prepared by councils to ensure accountability to local communities in the performance of functions and exercise of powers under the Act
Report of operations	means a report containing a description of the operations of the council during the financial year and included in the annual report
Services	means assistance, support, advice and other actions undertaken by a council for the benefit of the local community
Service outcome indicators	means the prescribed service performance indicators to be included in the performance statement which measure whether the stated service objective has been achieved
Service performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of council services covering appropriateness, quality, cost and service outcomes
Strategic objectives	means the outcomes a council is seeking to achieve over the next four years and included in the council plan
Financial plan	means a plan of the financial and non-financial resources for at least the next ten years required to achieve the strategic objectives in the council plan. It is also referred to as a long term financial plan
Strategies	means high level actions directed at achieving the strategic objectives in the council plan
Sustainable capacity indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators measuring whether councils have the capacity to meet the agreed service and infrastructure needs of the local community and absorb foreseeable changes and unexpected shocks into the future covering financial performance, capacity and governance and management

WELLINGTON
SHIRE COUNCIL
The Heart of Gippsland

Section: Two

Performance Statement

For the period ending 30 June 2024

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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: 8 October 2024

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the Wellington Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 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.



Cr Garry Stephens
Councillor
Dated: 8 October 2024



Cr Gayle Maher
Councillor
Dated: 8 October 2024



Chris Hastie
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 8 October 2024

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

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 2024 • service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024 • 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 2024 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. 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 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (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.
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 *Local Government Act 2020* 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.

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, 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
11 October 2024

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Section 1: Description of municipality

Wellington Shire is the third largest municipality in Victoria, covering an area of over 11,000 square kilometres and has a population of over 46,000 people. It is situated in Central Gippsland, known as The Middle of Everywhere, between the Latrobe Valley and East Gippsland. Wellington Shire is located on the traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai people. The Shire 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. The majority 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 is 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.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

SERVICE / ***indicator*** / *measure* / [formula]	**Results** 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	**Comment**
AQUATIC FACILITIES						
Utilisation *Utilisation of aquatic facilities* [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	3.57	3.70	5.15	N/A	3.69	Aqua Energy located in Sale is currently being redeveloped which requires the temporary closure of the indoor pools while work is undertaken. The redevelopment has contributed to a significant reduction in memberships and facility attendance which has decreased utilisation.
ANIMAL MANAGEMENT						
Health and safety *Animal management prosecutions* [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	N/A	100.00%	11 successful animal management prosecutions were finalised during the 2023/24 financial year. Prosecutions included serious dog attacks, unregistered breeders and prevention of cruelty to animal matters.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

SERVICE / ***indicator*** /*measure* / [formula]	**Results** 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	**Comment**
FOOD SAFETY						
Health and safety						
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	96.15%	100.00%	100.00%	N/A	100.00%	For the 2023 calendar year, there were 18 non-compliance notifications. All 18 food premises received one or more follow up inspections to ensure compliance with the Food Act 1984.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

SERVICE / ***indicator*** /*measure* / [formula]	**Results** 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	**Comment**
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]	58	55	53	56	53	Councils' participation in the 2024 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey resulted in the community satisfaction rating being five points higher than the large rural average and two points higher compared to state-wide average, for the category of community consultation and engagement processes.
LIBRARIES						
Participation *Library membership* [Number of registered library members/population] x100	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	N/A	21.32%	Library Membership in Wellington Shire Council falls comfortably within the expected range. Data shows a minor drop in membership throughout the year, with a return to initial levels at the conclusion of the year.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

SERVICE / ***indicator*** /*measure* / [formula]	**Results** 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	**Comment**
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH)						
Participation *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] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.
Participation *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] x100	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	The Wellington Shire Council is not directly responsible for the delivery of Maternal and Child Health Services, so there is no performance data available for these indicators.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Service/*indicator*/*measure* [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	Comment
ROADS						
Condition *Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards* [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	99.97%	99.68%	97.84%	98.50%	99.23%	The percentage of roads below the set intervention level is 99.23%, which is an improvement of the previous year's results of 97.84%. Over the last few years, Wellington Shire's road network has been impacted by a number of emergency storm and rain events causing a number of land slips, as well as damage across our low lying road network. Wellington Shire focused on emergency repair works and the renewal of its poor condition assets as part of its 2023/24 capital works program, which has resulted in the improved figure. This investment will continue in 2024/25 and will begin to include roads which are approaching our set condition level.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Service/*indicator*/*measure* [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	Comment
STATUTORY PLANNING						
Service standard						
Planning applications decided within required time frames						The statutory timeframe for issuing planning permits is 60 days for standard applications and 10 days for VicSmart applications.
[(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] x100	96.69%	90.95%	86.23%	85.77%	90.57%	Council has achieved good results with 90.1% of standard applications and 91.89% of VicSmart applications being decided within specified time frames, compared to the State result of 62.98% and 79.9% respectively.

Section 2: Service Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Service/*indicator*/*measure* [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	Comment
WASTE COLLECTION						
Waste diversion *Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill* [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	31.45%	33.51%	32.17%	32.50%	30.02%	More than 3,300 tonnes of recyclable material were diverted from landfill in 2023/24. This does not include food organics and garden organics as there is no current service provided, nor does it include the diverted material through the introduction of the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). With an average of 160kg of recyclables per kerbside collection household in Wellington Shire, a reduction of 18kg per household has been achieved when compared to 22/23 figures this could be a direct result of the introduction of the CDS. Council is working towards the future implementation of a Food and Garden Organics collection which will divert additional waste from landfill.

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / *indicator* /measure	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
EFFICIENCY									
Expenditure level									
Expenses per property assessment	$3,084.18	$3,183.89	$3,312.18	$3,216.79	$3,742.47	$3,523.83	$3,564.79	$3,633.79	$3,760.12
[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]									
Material Variations and Comments	Expenses are greater than the previous financial year due to a significant spend on emergency recovery for Storm and Flood events. Heavy rainfall also caused Council to control Leachate overflow with a cost of $1.6M. These expenses are contained to the 2023/24 year and therefore we are budgeting for reduced expenditure over the forecast years to bring the ratio closer to prior year rates. Depreciation continues to increase due to the annual Capital Works program and the revaluation cycle.								
Revenue level									
Average rate per property assessment	$1,720.33	$1,793.18	$1,792.55	N/A	$1,862.89	$1,948.25	$2,025.15	$2,085.09	$2,146.51
[Total rate revenue (general rates and municipal charges) / Number of property assessments]									
Material Variations and Comments	Rates have increased in line with the Fair Go Rate Cap. Waste Charges have increased in line with cost recovery models. The number of Property Assessments has increased slightly.								

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / *indicator* /measure	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
LIQUIDITY									
Working capital									
Current assets compared to current liabilities	290.53%	324.89%	470.82%	349.91%	454.20%	410.47%	397.46%	364.78%	381.41%
[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	Working capital is budgeted to be maintained at a high level in order to fully fund our immediate expenses.								
Unrestricted cash									
Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities	14.40%	56.16%	21.01%	N/A	38.09%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
[Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	In 2023/24 unrestricted cash increased due to the receipt of a $7M loan. Unrestricted Cash is budgeted to decrease as there is a higher percentage of cash held in financial assets instead of maintaining a high cash and cash equivalents balance. This allows Council to increase interest earning capacity.								

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / *indicator* /measure	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
OBLIGATIONS									
Loans and borrowings									
Loans and borrowings compared to rates [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	1.62%	1.13%	0.67%	N/A	10.21%	12.99%	14.23%	14.81%	15.34%
Material Variations and Comments	Council has recently established a $7 million loan which will be used to fund the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale.								
Loans and borrowings									
Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x 100	0.60%	0.55%	0.50%	N/A	0.45%	1.42%	1.15%	1.22%	1.28%
Material Variations and Comments	Council has recently established a $7 million loan which will be used to fund the redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre in Sale.								

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / *indicator* /measure	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
OBLIGATIONS									
Indebtedness									
Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue	19.34%	22.00%	21.03%	N/A	21.43%	25.97%	24.76%	21.32%	24.25%
[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	Debt has steadily decreased as current loans are repaid. Debt is budgeted to increase over the next few years as Council plans to fund major infrastructure projects. Rates are expected to maintain a steady increase in line with the Rate Cap percentage.								
Asset renewal and upgrade									
Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation	134.72%	111.67%	97.10%	111.20%	107.81%	162.65%	101.08%	109.09%	100.26%
[Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	The redevelopment of the Aqua Energy Leisure Centre Project has meant a larger than normal percentage of the capital works program has been spent on expansion. Forecast spending returns to placing a greater emphasis on renewal spending.								

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / *indicator* /measure	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
OPERATING POSITION									
Adjusted underlying result									
Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	0.33%	6.10%	8.66%	N/A	-16.85%	-1.07%	0.27%	0.67%	0.74%
Material Variations and Comments	The adjusted underlying deficit has been affected by a shortfall in operational grant funding. The main reason for this shortfall is because the first instalment of the 2024/25 Victoria Grants Commission funding, expected in 2023/24, was paid from the Victorian Government to all individual councils on 5 July 2024. The $17.8M will now be recorded in the 2024/25 financial year in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities. If the Victorian Grants Commission continues with a consistent timing of payments this will not affect future years.								

Section 3: Financial Performance Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Dimension / ***indicator*** /*measure*	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Target as per budget	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast	2027 Forecast	2028 Forecast
STABILITY									
Rates concentration									
Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue	62.16%	59.25%	55.91%	64.00%	65.92%	63.50%	64.32%	64.71%	64.22%
[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	The adjusted underlying revenue has been affected by a shortfall in operational grant funding for the 2023/24 year. Rates are expected to continue to grow in line with Rate Capping.								
Rates effort									
Rates compared to property values	0.52%	0.40%	0.41%	N/A	0.37%	0.38%	0.38%	0.38%	0.38%
[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100									
Material Variations and Comments	While rate increases are limited to the rate capping we are also expecting a similar increase to property values. Therefore this ratio has been budgeted for at a consistent rate going forward.								

Section 4: Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

INDICATOR / *measure* / [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	Comment
POPULATION	**44,770**	**45,092**	**45,754**	**46,124**	
Expenses per head of municipal population [Total expenses / Municipal population]	$2,273.35	$2,287.72	$2,388.91	$2,693.83	Expenses are greater than the previous financial year due to a significant spend on emergency recovery for Storm and Flood events. Heavy rainfall also caused Council to control Leachate overflow with a cost of $1.6M. These expenses are contained to the 2023/24 year and therefore we are budgeting for reduced expenditure over the forecast years to bring the ratio closer to prior year rates. Depreciation continues to increase due to the annual Capital Works program and the revaluation cycle.
Infrastructure per head of municipal population [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]	$19,847.60	$21,028.52	$25,883.27	$25,950.94	Infrastructure per head is steadily increasing with the annual Capital Works program and the revaluation cycle, which included Roads and Footpaths in 2023/24.

Section 4: Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

INDICATOR / *measure* / [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	Comment
POPULATION	**44,770**	**45,092**	**45,754**	**46,124**	
Population density per length of road [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	14.37	14.48	14.69	14.82	There are 3,112km of sealed and unsealed local roads for an estimated municipal population of 46,124 within Wellington Shire.
OWN-SOURCE REVENUE					
Own-source revenue per head of municipal population [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	$1,673.20	$1,742.26	$1,860.82	$1,963.88	Rates have increased in line with the Fair Go Rate Cap. Waste Charges have increased in line with cost recovery models.

Section 4: Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

INDICATOR / *measure* / [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	Comment
POPULATION	**44,770**	**45,092**	**45,754**	**46,124**	
RECURRENT GRANTS					
Recurrent grants per head of municipal population [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	$467.99	$525.50	$519.80	$167.79	Recurrent grants have been affected by the timing of the receipt of the Victorian Grants Commission. In 2023/24 it was received in advance (allocated to the 2022/23 year) and the 2024/25 allocation was not received in advance. The $17.8M (for the 2024/25 year) will now be accounted for in the 2024/25 financial year in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities. If the Victorian Grants Commission continues with a consistent timing of payments this will not affect future years.
DISADVANTAGE					
Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) index of relative socio-economic disadvantage indicates that one is the most disadvantaged and ten is the least disadvantaged. Wellington Shire's level of socio-economic disadvantage is indexed as three within Victoria, with ten being the highest.

Section 4: Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2024

INDICATOR / *measure* / [formula]	Results 2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	Comment
POPULATION	**44,770**	**45,092**	**45,754**	**46,124**	
WORKFORCE TURNOVER					
Percentage of staff turnover [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	8.9%	15.1%	14.3%	13.0%	Staff turnover reflects regular levels of staff finding new challenges and opportunities elsewhere. These movements continue to create opportunities across the business for both new talent and further building our internal staffing capabilities.

Section 5: Notes to the accounts

For the year ended 30 June 2024

5.1 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 2024-25 to 2027-28 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.

The 2023/24 Council Budget and Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 can be obtained by visiting the Wellington Shire Council website www.wellington.vic.gov.au

5.2 Definitions

Key term	Definition
Aboriginal children	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
Aboriginal person	has the same meaning as in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
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 *Food Act 1984* , or advice given to council by an authorized 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 *Food Act 1984*
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 *Road Management Act 2004*
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the *Food Act 1984*, or advice given to council by an authorized 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

Key term	Definition
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
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
The Heart of Gippsland

Wellington Shire Council
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Wellington Shire Council
Financial Report
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Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

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 2024 • 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 2024 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, 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 *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. 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 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (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 of the council are responsible for the Other Information, which comprises the information in the council's annual report for the period ended 30 June 2024, 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 of the council are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Local Government Act 2020* 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 *Audit Act 1994*, 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.



MELBOURNE
11 October 2024

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

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 : *8 October 2024*
Sale

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the Wellington Shire Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 and the financial position of the Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that 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.

Garry Stephens
Councillor
Dated : *8 October 2024*
Sale

Gayle Maher
Councillor
Dated : *8 October 2024*
Sale

Chris Hastie
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated : 8 October 2024
Sale

Comprehensive Income Statement
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Income / Revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	70,090	67,133
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	927	1,003
User fees	3.3	10,913	9,106
Grants - operating	3.4	9,432	33,526
Grants - capital	3.4	15,313	9,131
Contributions - monetary	3.5	1,048	841
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	3,258	2,949
Other income	3.6	8,652	7,898
Total income / revenue		**119,633**	**131,587**
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	35,361	32,385
Materials and services	4.2	48,621	44,455
Depreciation	4.3	32,195	27,391
Amortisation - intangible assets		860	837
Depreciation - right of use assets		414	410
Allowance for impairment losses		94	62
Borrowing costs		26	48
Finance costs - leases		8	8
Other expenses	4.4	1,933	2,372
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	4.5	4,738	1,334
Total expenses		**124,250**	**109,302**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		**(4,617)**	**22,285**
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	9.1	54,211	202,021
Total other comprehensive income		**54,211**	**202,021**
Total comprehensive result		**49,594**	**224,306**

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

Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		$'000	$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	32,345	30,860
Trade and other receivables	5.1	13,674	9,637
Other financial assets	5.1	87,330	105,976
Inventories		270	70
Prepayments		1,060	809
Total current assets		**134,679**	**147,352**
Non-current assets			
Trade and other receivables	5.1	3,287	2,853
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	1,406,700	1,337,105
Right-of-use assets		92	57
Intangible assets		1,435	2,154
Total non-current assets		**1,411,514**	**1,342,169**
Total assets		**1,546,193**	**1,489,521**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.2	7,627	9,790
Trust funds and deposits	5.2	4,979	4,024
Contract and other liabilities	5.2	4,730	10,037
Provisions	5.4	11,705	7,115
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.3	577	289
Lease liabilities		34	42
Total current liabilities		**29,652**	**31,297**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.4	12,750	17,712
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.3	6,583	160
Lease liabilities		78	29
Total non-current liabilities		**19,411**	**17,901**
Total liabilities		**49,063**	**49,198**
Net assets		**1,497,130**	**1,440,323**
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		475,500	471,077
Asset Revaluation Reserve	9.1	1,010,620	956,409
Other Reserves		11,010	12,837
Total Equity		**1,497,130**	**1,440,323**

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

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

2024	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
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)	6.1	61,393	-	61,393	-
Found Assets Adjustment directly to equity	6.1	149	149	-	-
Other Adjustment directly to equity	6.1 & 9.1	(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
		56,807	4,423	54,211	(1,827)
Balance at end of the financial year		**1,497,130**	**475,500**	**1,010,620**	**11,010**

2023	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Revaluation Reserve $'000	Other Reserves $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year		1,213,316	445,967	754,388	12,961
Surplus for the year		22,285	22,285	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	9.1	204,012	-	204,012	-
Found Assets Adjustment directly to equity		354	354	-	-
Other Adjustment directly to equity		356	2,347	(1,991)	-
Transfers to other reserves	9.1	-	(3,720)	-	3,720
Transfers from other reserves	9.1	-	3,844	-	(3,844)
		227,007	25,110	202,021	(124)
Balance at end of the financial year		**1,440,323**	**471,077**	**956,409**	**12,837**

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 2024

	Note	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2023 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		68,414	67,048
Statutory fees and fines		927	1,003
User fees		8,002	7,645
Grants - operating		9,262	31,878
Grants - capital		10,862	-
Contributions - monetary		1,033	647
Interest received		6,171	3,812
Trust funds and deposits taken		5,587	4,018
Other receipts		985	1,066
Goods and Services Tax Collected		1,366	1,451
Goods and Services Tax Refunds from the Australian Tax Office		6,784	4,072
Employee costs		(34,761)	(32,076)
Materials and services		(51,465)	(43,380)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(4,632)	(3,475)
Other payments		(1,240)	(913)
Goods and Services Tax Paid to Suppliers		(8,817)	(5,076)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		**18,478**	**37,720**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		(50,313)	(32,163)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		1,189	1,150
Payments for investments		(225,462)	(191,711)
Proceeds from sale of investments		251,324	158,155
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		**(23,262)**	**(64,569)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(26)	(48)
Proceeds from borrowings		7,000	-
Repayment of borrowings		(289)	(289)
Interest paid - lease liability		(8)	(8)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(408)	(406)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		**6,269**	**(751)**
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		1,485	(27,600)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		30,860	58,460
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		**32,345**	**30,860**

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 2024

	Note	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Property			
Land		664	362
Land improvements		-	24
Total land		**664**	**386**
Buildings		7,909	2,241
Total buildings		**7,909**	**2,241**
Total property		**8,573**	**2,627**
Plant and equipment			
Plant, machinery and equipment		4,590	3,275
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		403	153
Computers and telecommunications		74	300
Library books		258	235
Total plant and equipment		**5,325**	**3,963**
Infrastructure			
Roads		19,274	13,411
Bridges		861	1,215
Footpaths and cycleways		4,875	6,625
Drainage		324	165
Recreational, leisure and community facilities		350	434
Waste management		309	215
Parks, open space and streetscapes		605	2,056
Aerodromes		163	166
Off street car parks		128	313
Other infrastructure		1,744	1,066
Total infrastructure		**28,633**	**25,666**
Total capital works expenditure		**42,530**	**32,256**
Represented by:			
Asset renewal expenditure		29,731	19,138
Asset upgrade expenditure		4,977	7,458
Asset expansion expenditure		7,608	5,428
New asset expenditure		214	232
Total capital works expenditure		**42,530**	**32,256**

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

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 1 OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Wellington Shire Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 2 December 1994. 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 the 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. Specific 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 1 OVERVIEW cont…

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.

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 COVID-19

During 2023-24 the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact on Council's operations. Council has noted the following significant impacts on its financial operations:

• Additional revenue – $135,000 in additional grant funding for the Council Rapid Antigen Test Program.
• Additional costs – $120,000 in additional expenditure for the Council Rapid Antigen Test Program.
• Revenue foregone – $85,000 revenue forgone in Caravan Lease income as part of the COVID relief package.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS

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 2024 $'000	Actual 2024 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Income / Revenue					
Rates and charges	69,638	70,090	**452**	**1**	
Statutory fees and fines	982	927	**(55)**	**(6)**	
User fees	9,617	10,913	**1,296**	**13**	**1**
Grants - operating	21,545	9,432	**(12,113)**	**(56)**	**2**
Grants - capital	11,098	15,313	**4,215**	**38**	**3**
Contributions - monetary	380	1,048	**668**	**176**	**4**
Contributions - non monetary	-	3,258	**3,258**	**100**	**5**
Other income	4,839	8,652	**3,813**	**79**	**6**
Total income / revenue	118,099	119,633	1,534	**1**	
Expenses					
Employee costs	35,197	35,361	**(164)**	**(0)**	
Materials and services	41,690	48,621	**(6,931)**	**(17)**	**7**
Depreciation	30,319	32,195	**(1,876)**	**(6)**	**8**
Amortisation - intangible assets	858	860	**(2)**	**(0)**	
Depreciation - right of use assets	395	414	**(19)**	**(5)**	
Allowance for impairment losses	15	94	**(79)**	**(527)**	**9**
Borrowing costs	42	26	**16**	**38**	**10**
Finance costs - leases	18	8	**10**	**56**	**11**
Other expenses	740	1,933	**(1,193)**	**(161)**	**12**
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	997	4,738	**(3,741)**	**(375)**	**13**
Total expenses	110,271	124,250	(13,979)	**(13)**	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	7,828	(4,617)	(12,445)	**(159)**	

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS cont…

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	User fees	Income raised from reimbursements for the year is higher than anticipated mainly for East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) shared services arrangements of $925k. Fees raised from leisure facilities for Aqua Energy and Gippsland Regional Sports Complex (GRSC) were higher than budgeted $147k. This is due to the utilisation of the West Sale Pool for swim school programs and increased participation of school programs, social sports and new inflatable activities at the GRSC.
2	Grants - operating	The 2024/25 Victorian Grants Commission funding was budgeted to be received in 2023/24, but was received in July 2024. The $17.8M will be recognised as part of the 2024/25 financial year. Natural disaster funding received during the year for past emergency events total $1.4M. Additional grants recognised during 2023/24 for community infrastructure projects $1.0M. Great Southern Rail Trail Extension and York Street Works multi year projects were originally budgeted to be recognised in 2022/23 however this income was recognised in 2023/24 to align with the completion of the project $2.7M.
3	Grants - capital	The funding for the Aqua Energy Redevelopment multi year project has been recognised and allocated in 2023/24 for $2.8M above initial budget. Roads to recovery projects works carried forward from 2022/23 financial year were completed in 2023/24 of $1.6M, offset by unsuccessful funding of ($1.4M).
4	Contributions - monetary	This represents external contributions yet to be received for Great Southern Rail Trail Extension project, EGSC datacentre and developer contributions to public open space.
5	Contributions - non monetary	Contributions - capital (non monetary) - Gifted assets recognised during the year mainly for drainage, land, roads and footpaths.
6	Other income	$2.3M interest earned on investments was greater than anticipated due to higher interest rates received from financial institutions over the past 12 months. New assets recognised during the year represents $1.2M. The favourable variance is slightly offset by lower rental earned from caravan parks and commercial properties ($0.2M).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS cont…

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
7	Materials and services	Majority of the overspends in contractors and materials includes: • ($4.4M) - Major community infrastructure projects such as York Street works, Great Southern Rail Trail Extension and Stratford Recreation Reserve Social Room works were multi year projects and completed in 2023/24. The York Street works are completed and the Southern Rail Trail works will be finalised by December 2024 to account for the initial budget allocated in 2022/23. • ($3.0M) - Contractor expenses associated with recovery and reconstruction work for recent storm and flood emergencies. The majority of the expenses will be claimable once the works are fully completed and lodged with Department of Treasury. • ($0.35M) - Insurance premiums incurred for the year 2023/24 were higher than expected due to industry factors. • $0.9M - Underspends in consultant payments on shared services, planning projects and parks initiatives.
8	Depreciation	Overall higher than expected depreciation (non cash) mainly in buildings ($2.6M), aerodromes ($0.4M) drainage ($0.3M), Footpaths ($0.2M), and combined other infastructure ($0.4M) is offset by lower than expected depreciation for open space $0.8M, roads $0.7M, recreation and leisure $0.4M, other plant and equipment $0.1M and landfill improvements $0.1M.
9	Allowance for impairment losses	Bad debts written off during 2023/24 were mainly statutory planning and commercial facility outstanding debtors.
10	Borrowing costs	This represents interest paid on loan borrowings which were not repaid as the new loan facility was not drawn down as early as budgeted.
11	Finance costs -leases	Interest recognised on lease payments was slightly lower than projected.
12	Other expenses	This represents assets written off during the year for parks open space (York Street Central) and landfill rehabilitation non cash accounting adjustment for discount rate and CPI increase for the year ending 30 June 2024. Refer to note 5.4 (b) for further explanation about landfill provisions.
13	Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	The written down value for assets replaced was greater mainly for the partial disposal of Aqua Energy indoor complex redevelopment $2.8M, other written down assets replaced valued a combined total of $1.4M. This is offset by a greater number of assets sold increasing the proceeds from plant and vehicle sales ($0.6M).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS cont…

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget 2024 $'000	Actual 2024 $'000	Variance $'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	570	664	94	16	**1**
Land improvements	60	-	(60)	(100)	**2**
Total land	**630**	**664**	**34**	**5**	
Buildings	6,130	7,909	1,779	29	**3**
Total buildings	**6,130**	**7,909**	**1,779**	**29**	
Total property	**6,760**	**8,573**	**1,813**	**27**	
Plant, machinery and equipment	3,603	4,590	987	27	**4**
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	169	403	234	139	**5**
Computers and telecommunications	222	74	(148)	(66)	**6**
Library books	271	258	(13)	(5)	
Total plant and equipment	**4,264**	**5,325**	**1,060**	**25**	
Infrastructure					
Roads	17,353	19,274	1,921	11	**7**
Bridges	1,130	861	(269)	(24)	**8**
Footpaths and cycleways	3,833	4,875	1,042	27	**9**
Drainage	2,996	324	(2,671)	(89)	**10**
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,328	350	(978)	(74)	**11**
Waste management	1,050	309	(741)	(71)	**12**
Parks, open space and streetscapes	885	605	(280)	(32)	**13**
Aerodromes	570	163	(407)	(71)	**14**
Off street car parks	100	128	28	28	**15**
Other infrastructure	2,000	1,744	(256)	(13)	**16**
Total infrastructure	**31,245**	**28,633**	**(2,612)**	**(8)**	
Total capital works expenditure	**42,268**	**42,530**	**260**	**1**	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	365	214	(151)	(41)	
Asset renewal expenditure	25,224	29,731	4,505	18	
Asset expansion expenditure	8,616	7,608	(1,008)	(12)	
Asset upgrade expenditure	8,063	4,977	(3,087)	(38)	
Total capital works expenditure	**42,268**	**42,530**	**260**	**1**	

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS cont…

(i) Explanation of material variations for Capital Works

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Land	Delays in negotiations for the purchase of the land for Maffra Drainage Strategy Purchase ($440k), Department of Education Land ($10k) and Former Police Station ($10k). This was offset by Aqua Energy Land Redevelopment purchase $383k and Maffra Transfer Station Resource Recovery Land Purchase $17k.
2	Landfill Improvements	Design awaiting on Environmental Protection Agency approval before the works approval ($60k).
3	Buildings	Sale Early Years Gibsons Road Design are underway and is expected to be completed in October 2024 ($577k). The Wedge Redevelopment Design works have been delayed due to priority being given to other projects ($444k). Yarram Early Years Expansion works have been completed with savings ($300k). Yarram Court House Roof works have been delayed awaiting advice from consultants on the heritage implications ($195k). Solar PV installation works (95k), Rosedale Prince Street Reserve Old School ($82k), Dargo Public Toilet Septic Upgrade ($53k) and the Wellington Centre improvement ($53k) works will be completed in the 2024/25 financial year. The Yarram Depot Renewal works were completed with savings of ($63k). Aqua Energy Redevelopment is a multiyear project, works have commenced with an additional $2.5M works being completed this year. The project is on schedule to be completed by June 2025. Local Roads Community Infrastructure (LRCI) funding was used to complete the Gumnuts Roof Replacement $231k, Yarram Regent Theatre Sound System $59k and Maffra Operable Wall $37k. Stratford Caravan Park Office $204k and Sale Caravan Park Office $156k were purchased from Reserve. Unbudgeted or over budget works were completed on the following projects; Port Albert Mechanics Institute Hall $141k, Port Albert Boat Ramp Toilet Block $95k, Kilmany Office & Amenities Building $61k, Yarram Regent Theatre Stairs $50k, Stratford Memorial Park Toilet $31k, Stephenson Park Pavilion & Changerooms $22k and WEDGE Kitchen Equipment Replacement $19k.
4	Plant, machinery and equipment	The Wedge Elevated Platform ($33k) project was put on hold. There was $880k in Fleet and Plant Renewal carried forward from the 2022/23 financial year after previous year supply issues. The Wedge Dock Hoist $128k was purchased due to Occupational Health and Safety concerns and a new Arbovirus vehicle $65k was purchased after receiving Government funding.
5	Fixtures, fittings and furniture	There were unbudgeted furniture and fittings purchases of $109k. The Libraries Circulation Desk Replacement program required additional budget $55k due to additional fit out work being required. There was additional art work $30k purchased after donations were received.
6	Computers and telecommunications	Road Maintenance Services ICT has continued with additional testing before completing the project and rollout in 2024/25 financial year ($148k).
7	Roads	Lansdowne Street and Macarthur Street Roundabout project was deferred due to being unsuccessful in receiving grant funding ($1.1M). Residential Street Construction works delayed due to the extensive Community Consultation ($525k). These are offset by Emergency Works on Dargo High Plains Road $3M and Jamieson Licola Road $300k and sealed road emergency repairs $280k.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

8	Bridges	Delta Bridge Strengthening - Briagolong did not receive government funding ($330k). There were savings in the Major Culvert Renewals programme of $25k.
9	Footpaths and cycleways	Golden Beach Shoreline drive works were delayed due to consultation with other authorities ($272k) this work will be completed in the 2024/25 Financial year. The Great Southern Rail Trail works were carried over from 2022/23 $1.2M.
10	Drainage	North Sale Drainage Development works ($1.7M) and George Street Drainage Works ($975k) have been delayed due to Community Consultation.
11	Recreational, leisure and community facilities	Stephenson Park North Carpark was unsuccessful in receiving Government Funding ($675k). Yarram Pool Water Treatment Plant design works are continuing ($332k) and expect to be completed in 2024/25. Gordon Street Heyfield Netball Court had unbudgeted works of $79k.
12	Waste Management	The Kilmany Landfill Leachate Pond Evaporation ($480k) project is on hold, waiting on approval of the design. There were savings on Kilmany Landfill - Flare Installation ($152k). Maffra Resource Recovery Facility design is underway with completion of the design expected in 2024/25 financial year ($93k). This has been offset by unbudgeted Minor Capital Works purchases of $45k.
13	Parks, open space and streetscapes	Blind Joes Creek Rosedale did not receive Government funding ($260k).
14	Aerodromes	Yarram Aerodrome Landside Facilities project was delayed due to Councillor and Community Engagement ($215k), Yarram Aerodrome Reprofiling ($100k) works have been delayed and will be completed when the weather warms up in 2024 and the WSA Electrical Distribution Cabinet ($34k) will be finalised in the 2024/25 financial year. The Aerodromes Minor Capital Works and WSA Runway and Taxiway Repainting had combined savings of ($50k).
15	Off street car parks	Raglan Street Carpark Reconstruction was completed with an additional $28k unbudgeted works.
16	Other infrastructure	Port of Sale Mooring Access Project was delayed due to flooding and will be completed by August 2024 ($445k). Boisdale Common Effluent system works are part of a multi year project and are expected to be completed in June 2025 ($140k). This was offset by Seaspray Levee Upgrade works $177k, completion of Heyfield EV Charger Project $59k and Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange - Facility Improvements works of $41k which was completed with additional Government Grant being received.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 2 ANALYSIS OF OUR RESULTS cont…

2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

2.2.1

Built & Natural Environment

Built & Natural Environment division promotes, plans and implements a range of strategies that make a significant contribution to the responsible care and sustainable management of our municipality's diverse natural environment and built environment. Services delivered by this division include Capital Works, Asset Management, Infrastructure Development, Road Planning and Maintenance, Built Environment Facilities, Parks Services, Open Space Planning and Waste & Sustainability.

Chief Executive Officer

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

Community and Culture

Community and Culture division promotes, supports and advocates for the social and cultural wellbeing of our community by providing essential and innovative amenities, services and facilities through the creation of beneficial partnerships with key stakeholders. The division is comprised of service areas including Social Planning & Policy, Community Engagement, Youth Services, Rural Access, Emergency Management, Community Facilities Planning and Community Committees. This division also manages our Art Gallery, Library Services, 'The Wedge' Entertainment Centre and Leisure Services which includes our pools and Gippsland Regional Sports Complex in Sale.

Corporate Services

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 Heath & Safety, Risk Management, Corporate Planning, Accounting & Payroll, Rates & Valuations, Fleet, Procurement, Records Management, Information Technology and Business Systems. This division also ensures legislative compliance by conducting our affairs openly and with integrity, reflecting the highest level of good management and governance.

Development

Development division supports sustainable growth and development in appropriate locations supported by levels of infrastructure in keeping with the needs of the community while retaining the amenity valued by the community. This includes services such as Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, Economic Development, Tourism and Visitor Economy. The division is responsible for managing a number of customer focussed, responsive services such as Local Laws, Environmental Health, Municipal Building Services and Customer Service. It also manages a range of commercial property portfolios including the Gippsland Regional Livestock Exchange.

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

2024	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
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	-
	119,633	**124,250**	**(4,617)**	**24,745**	**1,546,193**

2023	Income / Revenue	Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Grants included in income / revenue	Total assets
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Built & Natural Environment	39,043	71,440	(32,397)	24,559	1,324,225
Chief Executive Officer	3	1,543	(1,540)	-	-
Community and Culture	5,897	15,470	(9,573)	2,719	13,014
Corporate Services	81,767	11,644	70,123	14,249	152,282
Development	4,877	9,205	(4,328)	1,130	-
	131,587	**109,302**	**22,285**	**42,657**	**1,489,521**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES	**2024**	**2023**
3.1 Rates and charges	**$'000**	**$'000**

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 2023/24 was $18,917 million (2022/23 $16,250 million).

General rates	61,233	58,791
Waste management charge	5,707	5,270
Service rates and charges	2,167	2,090
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	615	432
Interest on rates and charges	373	325
Special rates and charges	(5)	225
Total rates and charges	**70,090**	**67,133**

The date of the general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2023 and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2023.

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	538	594
Land information certificates	155	175
Permits	149	167
Infringements and costs	85	67
Total statutory fees and fines	**927**	**1,003**

Statutory fees and fines (including parking 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	3,578	3,119
Leisure centre and recreation	2,023	2,253
Other fees and charges	3,200	1,774
Registration and other permits	1,045	1,048
Entertainment centre	471	392
Saleyards	458	372
Emergency management works	90	89
Animal services	48	59
Total user fees	**10,913**	**9,106**
User fees by timing of revenue recognition		
User fees recognised at a point in time	10,913	9,106
Total user fees	**10,913**	**9,106**

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 Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES cont…

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
3.4 Funding from other levels of government		
Grants were received in respect of the following :		
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	12,396	33,680
State funded grants	12,349	8,977
Total grants received	**24,745**	**42,657**
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Financial Assistance Grants	766	21,703
Recurrent - State Government		
Libraries	359	354
Rural Access and Transport connection	19	265
Cultural Services	233	259
Municipal emergency	238	228
School crossing supervisors	167	155
Parks and Environmental services	126	116
Environmental health	67	110
Community support programs	69	55
Other	6	40
Fire Service Property Levy	131	-
Total recurrent operating grants	**2,181**	**23,285**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Parks and Environmental services	766	3,266
Environmental planning	-	1,784
Street Lights	13	549
Community and Recreation facilities upgrade	1,374	357
Municipal Emergency	200	122
Economic Development and Tourism	-	7
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Natural disaster funding	1,386	2,214
Economic Development and Tourism	516	641
Community and Recreation facilities upgrade	50	450
Parks and Environmental services	2,033	337
Community support programs	402	183
Other	380	166
Wellington Coastal Subdivision Strategy	55	115
Vegetation Management	-	50
Cultural Services	22	-
Municipal emergency	54	-
Total non-recurrent operating grants	**7,251**	**10,241**
Total operating grants	**9,432**	**33,526**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES cont…

	2024	2023
(b) Capital Grants	**$'000**	**$'000**
Recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	5,558	498
Total recurrent capital grants	**5,558**	**498**
Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government		
Footpaths and cycleways	313	2,513
Roads	759	1,266
Parks, open space and streetscapes	386	240
Buildings	2,208	676
Plant, Machinery, and Equipment	-	90
Recreation and leisure community facilities	23	42
Bridges	-	452
Aerodrome	30	115
Non-recurrent - State Government		
Footpaths and cycleways	1,952	1,950
Other Infrastructure	181	700
Drainage	11	299
Buildings	2,206	209
Waste management	-	47
Roads	1,349	25
Library books	5	9
Parks, open space and streetscapes	12	-
Intangibles	258	-
Plant	62	-
Total non-recurrent capital grants	**9,755**	**8,633**
Total capital grants	**15,313**	**9,131**

(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	765	21,703
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	15,313	9,131
Other specific purpose grants	359	354
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*		
Specific purpose grants	8,308	11,469
	24,745	**42,657**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 3 FUNDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICES cont…

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner		
Operating		
Balance at start of year	3,732	4,199
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	894	1,444
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(1,753)	(1,911)
Balance at year end	**2,873**	**3,732**
Capital		
Balance at start of year	5,925	15,508
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	1,720	413
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(5,791)	(9,996)
Balance at year end	**1,854**	**5,925**

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

3.5 Contributions

Monetary	1,048	841
Non-monetary	3,258	2,949
Total contributions	**4,306**	**3,790**
Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.		
Infrastructure	2,444	2,868
Property	814	81
Total non-monetary contributions	**3,258**	**2,949**

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

3.6 Other income

Interest on investments	6,171	3,812
Changes to net present value due to interest rate movements	291	2,721
Other rent	521	569
Volunteer Income	244	255
Donations	151	170
Recognition of assets	1,205	146
Insurance	24	33
Miscellaneous income	18	25
Interest on debtors	27	14
Bad and doubtful debts recovered	-	153
Total other income	**8,652**	**7,898**

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 Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 4 THE COST OF DELIVERING SERVICES	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
4.1 (a) Employee costs		
Wages and salaries	27,960	25,745
Superannuation	3,358	3,010
Casual staff	2,674	2,632
Other	710	525
WorkCover	423	237
Fringe benefits tax	236	236
Total employee costs	**35,361**	**32,385**
(b) Superannuation		
Council made contributions to the following funds:		
Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	168	123
	168	**123**
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	1,532	1,415
Employer contributions to Australian Super	393	281
Employer contributions to Aware-Vicsuper Scheme	191	103
Employer contributions to REST Superannuation	173	147
Employer contributions to Hostplus	161	-
Employer contributions to Cbus	160	132
Employer contributions - other funds	780	896
	3,390	**2,974**

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	14,143	13,580
Infrastructure & parks maintenance	9,173	9,348
Materials	8,982	6,488
Waste management services	4,826	3,614
Contributions	2,508	2,823
Utility payments	2,555	2,567
Insurances	2,193	1,597
Environmental Authority fees	1,808	2,228
Building maintenance	1,490	1,395
Consultants	943	815
Total materials and services	**48,621**	**44,455**

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

4.3 Depreciation

Infrastructure	20,988	19,410
Property	8,775	5,723
Plant and equipment	2,432	2,258
Total depreciation	**32,195**	**27,391**

Refer to note 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

4.4 Other expenses

Unused grant funding	55	11
Derecognition of assets	297	1,043
Work in progress assets written off	847	611
Councillors' allowances	366	364
Volunteer Expenses	244	255
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	61	58
Auditors' remuneration - Internal	63	30
Rate Relief payments	-	1
Operating lease rentals	-	(1)
Total other expenses	**1,933**	**2,372**

4.5 Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	(1,189)	(1,150)
Written down value of assets disposed/replaced	5,927	2,484
Total net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	**4,738**	**1,334**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 5 INVESTING IN AND FINANCING OUR OPERATIONS	**2024**	**2023**
5.1 Financial assets	**$'000**	**$'000**
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	7	6
Cash at bank	1,678	1,113
Term deposits	30,660	29,741
Total cash and cash equivalents	**32,345**	**30,860**
(b) Other financial assets		
Current		
Term deposits	87,330	105,976
Total current other financial assets	**87,330**	**105,976**
Total other financial assets	**87,330**	**105,976**
Total cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets	**119,675**	**136,836**

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 three 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 Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION cont…

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
(c) Trade and other receivables		
Current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	4,722	3,573
Special rate schemes	31	281
Infringement debtors	77	76
Net GST receivable	1,508	841
Non statutory receivables		
Government grants	474	1,163
Other debtors	6,388	3,408
Allowances for expected credit loss - other debtors	(25)	(2)
Waste management	499	297
Total current trade and other receivables	**13,674**	**9,637**
Non-current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	3,656	2,767
Allowance for expected credit loss - rates	(991)	(942)
Special rate schemes	511	941
Allowance for expected credit loss - special charge scheme	-	(2)
Infringements and fire hazards	114	93
Allowance for expected credit loss - infringements	(3)	(4)
Total non-current trade and other receivables	**3,287**	**2,853**
Total trade and other receivables	**16,961**	**12,490**

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)	7,032	4,102
Past due by up to 30 days	66	285
Past due between 31 and 180 days	51	118
Past due between 181 and 365 days	3	13
Past due by more than 1 year	209	350
Total trade and other receivables	**7,361**	**4,868**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION cont…

5.2 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities	2024	2023
	$'000	$'000
(a) Trade and other payables		
Current		
Non-statutory payables		
Trade payables	6,849	9,075
Accrued expenses	778	715
Total current trade and other payables	**7,627**	**9,790**

	2024	2023
(b) Trust funds and deposits	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current		
Overpaid rates	1,605	1,450
Refundable deposits	954	1,022
Fire services levy	1,530	441
Retention amounts	692	944
Other trust funds and deposits	198	167
Total current trust funds and deposits	**4,979**	**4,024**

(c) Contract and other liabilities		
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance - operating	2,873	3,732
Grants received in advance - capital	1,854	5,925
Other	3	380
Total contract and other liabilities	**4,730**	**10,037**

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.

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 Services 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.

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

5.3 Interest-bearing liabilities	**2024**	**2023**
	$'000	**$'000**
Current		
Other borrowings - secured	577	289
Total current interest-bearing liabilities	**577**	**289**
Non-current		
Other borrowings - secured	6,583	160
Total non-current interest-bearing liabilities	6,583	160
Total	**7,160**	**449**

Borrowings are secured by Council Rate Income

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

Not later than one year	577	289
Later than one year and not later than five years	2,495	160
Later than five years	4,088	-
	7,160	**449**

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

5.4 Provisions

	Employee	Landfill restoration	Total
2024	**$ '000**	**$ '000**	**$ '000**
Balance at 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 - current	7,535	4,170	11,705
Provisions - non-current	299	12,451	12,750
2023			
Balance at beginning of the financial year	7,147	20,111	27,258
Additional provisions	3,427	-	3,427
Amounts used	(2,923)	(753)	(3,676)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(354)	(2,721)	(3,075)
Change in cost estimates	-	893	893
Balance at the end of the financial year	**7,297**	**17,530**	**24,827**
Provisions - current	7,031	84	7,115
Provisions - non-current	266	17,446	17,712

	2024	2023
(a) Employee provisions	**$'000**	**$'000**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	1,942	1,893
Long service leave	544	462
	2,486	**2,355**
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	725	739
Long service leave	4,324	3,937
	5,049	**4,676**
Total current employee provisions	**7,535**	**7,031**
Non-current		
Long service leave	298	265
Sick leave	1	1
Total non-current employee provisions	**299**	**266**
Aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions:		
Current	7,535	7,031
Non-current	299	266
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	**7,834**	**7,297**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION cont…

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:		
- discount rate	4.665%	4.063%
- index rate	3.500%	2.250%

(b) Landfill restoration	**2024 $'000**	**2023 $'000**
Current	4,170	84
Non-current	12,451	17,446
	16,621	**17,530**

Council is obligated to restore Kilmany, Longford, Maffra, Rosedale, Stratford and Yarram 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	4.011%	3.990%
- index rate (2023/24)	4.000%	6.000%
- index rate (2024/25 onwards)	3.000%	3.000%
- settlement rate	10 Years	10 Years
- estimates cost to rehabilitate	$17.6 million	$18.3 million

5.5 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2024		
Bank overdraft	200	200
Credit card facilities	130	130
Other facilities	7,160	449
Total facilities	***7,490***	***779***
Used facilities	7,160	449
Unused facilities	3,330	330

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 5 OUR FINANCIAL POSITION cont…

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

2024	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
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**

2023	Not later than 1 year	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years	Later than 5 years	Total
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Operating					
Waste management	839	626	1,993	704	4,162
Health Services	355	-	-	-	355
Animal pound and shelter service	398	413	863	-	1,674
Litter bins	361	-	-	-	361
Software maintenance	435	-	-	-	435
Recreational leisure and community facilities	1,522	-	-	-	1,522
Footpaths & Cycleways	530	-	-	-	530
Total	**4,440**	**1,039**	**2,856**	**704**	**9,039**
Capital					
Buildings	751	-	-	-	751
Plant, Machinery & Equipment	2,039	-	-	-	2,039
Bridges	192	-	-	-	192
Footpaths & Cycleways	3,275	-	-	-	3,275
Roads	3,701	-	-	-	3,701
Other	1,632	-	-	-	1,632
Drainage	196	-	-	-	196
Land	371	-	-	-	371
Total	**12,157**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**12,157**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 6 ASSETS WE MANAGE

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2023 $'000	Additions $'000	Recognised $'000	Found Assets $'000	Contributions $'000	Revaluation $'000	Depreciation $'000	Disposal $'000	Derecognise	Write-off $'000	Transfers $'000	Carrying amount 30 June 2024 $'000
Property	372,114	3,413	910	-	851	-	(8,774)	(3,090)	-	-	651	366,075
Plant and equipment	23,278	4,759	-	-	-	-	(2,433)	(364)	-	-	-	25,240
Infrastructure	932,967	26,072	295	149	2,405	61,393	(20,986)	(2,353)	(298)	-	5,297	1,004,941
Work in progress	8,746	8,726	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(847)	(6,181)	10,444
	1,337,105	**42,970**	**1,205**	**149**	**3,256**	**61,393**	**(32,193)**	**(5,807)**	**(298)**	**(847)**	**(233)**	**1,406,700**

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP $'000	Additions $'000	Write-off $'000	Transfers $'000	Closing WIP $'000
Property	1,070	5,683	-	(479)	6,274
Plant and equipment	25	684	-	-	709
Infrastructure	7,651	2,359	(847)	(5,702)	3,461
Total	**8,746**	**8,726**	**(847)**	**(6,181)**	**10,444**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

(a) Property

	Land - specialised	Land improvements	Land Under Roads	Total Land & Land Improvements	Buildings	Total Buildings	Work In Progress	Total Property
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2023	152,842	4,346	54,032	**211,220**	333,269	**333,269**	1,070	**545,559**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	-	(2,760)	-	**(2,760)**	(169,615)	**(169,615)**	-	**(172,375)**
	152,842	**1,586**	**54,032**	**208,460**	**163,654**	**163,654**	**1,070**	**373,184**
Movements in fair value								
Additions	658	198	-	**856**	2,557	**2,557**	5,683	**9,096**
Contributions	778	-	36	**814**	37	**37**	-	**851**
Newly recognised	-	-	-	**-**	910	**910**	-	**910**
Disposal	-	-	-	**-**	(6,650)	**(6,650)**	-	**(6,650)**
Transfers	162	43	-	**205**	446	**446**	(479)	**172**
	1,598	**241**	**36**	**1,875**	**(2,700)**	**(2,700)**	**5,204**	**4,379**
Movements in accumulated depreciation								
Depreciation and amortisation	-	(596)	-	**(596)**	(8,178)	**(8,178)**	-	**(8,774)**
Accumulated Depreciation of disposals	-	-	-	**-**	3,560	**3,560**	-	**3,560**
	-	**(596)**	**-**	**(596)**	**(4,618)**	**(4,618)**	**-**	**(5,214)**
At fair value 30 June 2024	154,440	4,587	54,068	**213,095**	330,569	**330,569**	6,274	**549,938**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	-	(3,356)	-	**(3,356)**	(174,233)	**(174,233)**	-	**(177,589)**
Carrying amount	**154,440**	**1,231**	**54,068**	**209,739**	**156,336**	**156,336**	**6,274**	**372,349**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant machinery and equipment	Fixtures fittings and furniture	Computers and telecomms	Library books	Art Works	Work In Progress	Total plant and equipment
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2023	15,012	3,340	1,711	2,909	11,440	25	**34,437**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	(6,990)	(2,075)	(664)	(1,405)	-	-	**(11,134)**
	8,022	**1,265**	**1,047**	**1,504**	**11,440**	**25**	**23,303**
Movements in fair value							
Additions	4,141	253	36	258	71	684	**5,443**
Disposal	(2,548)	(200)	(297)	(380)	-	-	**(3,425)**
Transfers	140	(140)	-	-	-	-	**-**
	1,733	**(87)**	**(261)**	**(122)**	**71**	**684**	**2,018**
Movements in accumulated depreciation							
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,613)	(317)	(267)	(236)	-	-	**(2,433)**
Accumulated Depreciation of disposals	2,184	200	297	380	-	-	**3,061**
Transfers	(58)	58	-	-	-	-	**-**
	513	**(59)**	**30**	**144**	**-**	**-**	**628**
At fair value 30 June 2024	16,745	3,253	1,450	2,787	11,511	709	**36,455**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	(6,477)	(2,134)	(634)	(1,261)	-	-	**(10,506)**
Carrying amount	**10,268**	**1,119**	**816**	**1,526**	**11,511**	**709**	**25,949**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads	Bridges	Footpaths and cycleways	Drainage	Recreational, leisure and community facilities	Waste Management	Parks open space and streetscapes	Aerodromes	Off street car parks	Other Infrastructure	Work In Progress	Total Infrastructure
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
At fair value 1 July 2023	892,886	126,695	59,568	135,130	53,918	9,065	70,559	58,002	7,862	53,679	7,651	**1,475,015**
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	(293,793)	(50,907)	(18,172)	(48,895)	(27,113)	(3,720)	(28,732)	(30,448)	(3,259)	(29,356)	-	**(534,395)**
	599,093	**75,788**	**41,396**	**86,235**	**26,805**	**5,345**	**41,827**	**27,554**	**4,603**	**24,323**	**7,651**	**940,620**
Movements in fair value												
Additions	18,399	4,263	1,948	556	320	68	392	67	-	59	2,359	**28,431**
Contributions	633	-	257	1,400	115	-	-	-	-	-	-	**2,405**
Newly Recognised	5	-	-	3	6	-	-	281	-	-	-	**295**
Found Assets	31	-	16	161	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**208**
Revaluation	98,052	(53)	1,492	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**99,491**
Disposal	(3,437)	(682)	(528)	(183)	(1,335)	(46)	(76)	-	-	-	-	**(6,287)**
Derecognise	(439)	-	(10)	-	-	(12)	-	-	-	-	-	**(461)**
Write-off	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(847)	**(847)**
Transfers	921	1,229	3,967	572	16,670	-	(17,603)	-	(1,680)	2,760	(5,702)	**1,134**
	114,165	**4,757**	**7,142**	**2,509**	**15,776**	**10**	**(17,287)**	**348**	**(1,680)**	**2,819**	**(4,190)**	**124,369**
Movements in accumulated depreciation												
Depreciation and amortisation	(11,313)	(1,288)	(1,275)	(1,335)	(1,647)	(301)	(1,505)	(946)	(133)	(1,243)	-	**(20,986)**
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	2,096	353	357	73	1,005	4	46	-	-	-	-	**3,934**
Accumulated Depreciation - Derecognise	149	-	5	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	**163**
Depreciation Prior Year Found	(10)	-	(3)	(46)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**(59)**
Accumulated Depreciation Revaluation	(37,012)	5	(1,091)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**(38,098)**
Transfers	-	-	(1,539)	-	(4,525)	-	5,169	-	478	(1,122)	-	**(1,539)**
	(46,090)	**(930)**	**(3,546)**	**(1,308)**	**(5,167)**	**(288)**	**3,710**	**(946)**	**345**	**(2,365)**	**-**	**(56,585)**
At fair value 30 June 2024	1,007,051	131,452	66,710	137,639	69,694	9,075	53,272	58,350	6,182	56,498	3,461	**1,599,384**
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	(339,883)	(51,837)	(21,718)	(50,203)	(32,280)	(4,008)	(25,022)	(31,394)	(2,914)	(31,721)	-	**(590,980)**
Carrying amount	**667,168**	**79,615**	**44,992**	**87,436**	**37,414**	**5,067**	**28,250**	**26,956**	**3,268**	**24,777**	**3,461**	**1,008,404**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

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	>$5,000
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

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. Refer also to Note 8.4 for further disclosure regarding fair value measurement.

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

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.

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.

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.

	2024	2023
Reconciliation of specialised land	**$'000**	**$'000**
Land under roads	54,069	54,032
Parks, open space and streetscapes	84,192	83,310
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	48,716	48,521
Off-street car parks	8,424	8,424
Aerodromes	5,302	5,302
Waste management	3,877	3,358
Other infrastructure - Piers/Jetties/Caravan parks/Markets/Saleyards	3,026	3,026
Drainage	901	901
Total specialised land	**208,507**	**206,874**

Building and Structures

The replacement cost of buildings and 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

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.

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 and structures was $148.60M (102.12%).

Details of the Council's land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2024 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Land - Specialised	-	950	153,489	30/06/2023	Index
Land improvements	-	-	1,231	n/a	n/a
Land under roads	-	-	54,069	30/06/2023	Index
Buildings - Specialised	-	2,408	153,929	30/06/2023	Full
Total	**-**	**3,358**	**362,718**		

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%).

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
At 30 June 2023, Council reviewed the carrying amount of bridges, major culverts and floodways to determine whether any material movement in fair value had occurred during the year. The *ABS Index 3101 - Road and Bridge Construction Victoria* indicates an increase of 13-15% in the current replacement cost of bridges, major culverts and floodways since the last revaluation at 30 June 2021. It was thus determined that the movement was material in nature and a revaluation was required at 30 June 2023 to accurately reflect the value of this asset class. As a result of the revaluation, the total replacement value of bridges, major culverts and floodways has increased by $7.87M (11.58%).

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%).
As a result of the revaluation, the total replacement value of footpaths increased by almost $0.4M (1%).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

6.1 PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT cont…

Details of the Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2024 are as follows:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of Valuation	Type of Valuation
Roads	-	-	667,168	30/06/2024	Full
Bridges	-	-	79,615	30/06/2023	Index
Footpaths and cycleways	-	-	44,992	30/06/2024	Full
Drainage	-	-	87,438	30/06/2023	Full
Recreational, leisure and community	-	275	37,134	30/06/2023	Full
Waste management	-	10	5,057	30/06/2023	Full
Parks, open space and streetscapes	-	136	28,114	30/06/2023	Full
Aerodromes	-	172	26,783	30/06/2023	Full
Off street car parking	-	-	3,268	30/06/2023	Full
Other infrastructure	-	106	24,671	30/06/2023	Full
Total	**-**	**699**	**1,004,240**		

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.

ADJUSTMENTS DIRECTLY TO EQUITY

Reversal of revalued assets disposed or written off (transfer from asset revaluation reserve to accumulated surplus).

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Roads, Streets, Drainage, Bridges & Culverts	(1,946)	(2,228)
Buildings & Structures	(5,034)	359
Land	(84)	(478)
Accumulated Surplus adjustment	**(7,064)**	**(2,347)**
Assets held for sale and sold throughout the year	(118)	356
Revaluation Reserve Adjustment	**(7,182)**	**(1,991)**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) 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:

		2024 No.	2023 No.
Councillors	Mayor Ian Bye		
	Deputy Mayor Gayle Maher (Cr. 08/11/2023 - 30/06/2024)		
	Cr John Tatterson (Dep. 01/07/2023 - 08/11/2023)		
	Cr Garry Stephens		
	Cr Scott Rossetti		
	Cr Carolyn Crossley		
	Cr Marcus McKenzie		
	Cr Jill Wood		
	Cr Carmel Ripper		
Corporate Management Team	Chief Executive Officer - David Morcom		
	General Manager Built and Natural Environment - Chris Hastie		
	General Manager Community & Culture - Clemence Gillings		
	General Manager Development - Andrew Pomeroy		
	General Manager Corporate Services - Arthur Skipitaris		
Total Number of Councillors		9	9
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel		5	5
Total Number of Key Management Personnel		14	14

(b) 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.

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,627	1,559
Other long-term employee benefits	29	99
Post-employment benefits	126	112
Total	1,782	1,770

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
$30,000 - $39,999	7	7
$40,000 - $49,999	1	1
$90,000 - $99,999	-	1
$100,000 - $109,999	1	-
$240,000 - $249,999	1	1
$250,000 - $259,999	2	1
$260,000 - $269,999	-	1
$280,000 - $289,999	1	-
$290,000 - $299,999	-	1
$350,000 - $359,999	-	1
$360,000 - $369,999	1	-
	14	14

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 7 PEOPLE AND RELATIONSHIPS cont…

(c) 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.*

	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,145	1,395
Other long-term employee benefits	26	52
Post-employment benefits	122	134
Total	1,293	1,581

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range:	2024 No.	2023 No.
$160,000 - $169,999	-	3
$170,000 - $179,999	3	4
$180,000 - $189,999	3	1
$200,000 - $209,999	-	1
$210,000 - $219,999	1	-
	7	**9**

	$'000	$'000
Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:	1,293	1,581

* Due to a definitional change the comparative figures in this note may not align with the previous year's annual report, which included disclosure of senior officers as defined in the *Local Government Act 1989*.

7.2 Related party disclosure	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
(a) Transactions with related parties		
During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.	591	831

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 $83,056 of annual maintenance and risk subsidies, and $17,130 of community grants for various events and minor facilities improvements. Transactions with Central Gippsland Health Services included contributions towards health services of $355,469 (2023: $642,519), as well as $602 for linen services and emergency department costs. A $41,241 (2023: $100,040) contribution was made towards Destination Gippsland's Event Acquisition Fund. A further $82,025 (2023: $23,965) was spent on contractors for facilities maintenance, advertising, and signage, and $11,616 (2023: Nil) was spent on memberships.

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

The balance outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties was Nil (2022/23 Nil).

(c) Loans to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party was Nil (2022/23 Nil).

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council was Nil (2022/23 Nil).

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES

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:

	2024	2023
	$'000	$'000
Developer contributions	7,943	1,807
Total Contingent Assets	**7,943**	**1,807**

(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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES cont…

Council's estimated liability with respect to contingent items is as follows:

	2024	2023
	$'000	$'000
Bank Guarantees	935	971
Total Bank Guarantees	935	971

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2024 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards.

In December 2022 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued *AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities* to modify *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement*. AASB 2022-10 amends *AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement for fair value measurements of non-financial assets* of not-for-profit public sector entities not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows. The AASB 13 modifications:
- are applicable only to not-for-profit public sector entities;
- are limited to fair value measurements of non-financial assets not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows;
- are to be applied prospectively for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024;
- would not necessarily change practice for some not-for-profit public sector entities; and
-do not indicate that entities changing practice in how they measure relevant assets made an error in applying the existing requirements of AASB 13.

Council will assess any impact of the modifications to AASB 13 ahead of the 2024-25 reporting period.

In December 2022 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued *AASB 2022-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Non-current Liabilities with Covenants*. AASB 2022-6 amends AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements to improve the information an entity provides in its financial statements about long-term liabilities with covenants where the entity's right to defer settlement of those liabilities for at least twelve months after the reporting period is subject to the entity complying with conditions specified in the loan arrangement. The amendments in AASB 2022-6 are effective for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024. Council will assess any impact of the modifications to AASB 101 ahead of the 2024-25 reporting period.

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 bank 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 does not hold any interest bearing financial instruments that are measured at fair value, and therefore has no exposure 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES cont…

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.

(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 have 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES cont...

(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 5.5.

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 5.15%.

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.

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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES cont…

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.

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

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 8 MANAGING UNCERTAINTIES cont…

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 Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS

9.1 Reserves (a) Asset revaluation reserves	Balance at beginning of reporting period $'000	Adjustment directly to equity $'000	Increment (decrement) $'000	Balance at end of reporting period $'000
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
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
Other				
Art Gallery Stock	6,330	-	-	6,330
Total asset revaluation reserves	**956,409**	**(7,182)**	**61,393**	**1,010,620**

Reconciliation of net revaluation movement	**$'000**
Increment recognised in 2023/2024	61,393
Adjustment directly to equity	(7,182)
2024 Net revaluation increment	**54,211**

2023				
Property				
Land & land improvements	119,952	(213)	19,951	139,690
Land under roads	29,090	-	7,355	36,445
Buildings and Structures	59,775	451	148,601	208,827
	208,817	238	175,907	384,962
Infrastructure				
Roads	468,400	(1,486)	(1)	466,913
Bridges	24,947	-	7,867	32,814
Footpaths and cycleways	22,091	(337)	-	21,754
Drainage	23,803	(406)	20,239	43,636
	539,241	(2,229)	28,105	565,117
Other				
Art Gallery Stock	6,330	-	-	6,330
Total asset revaluation reserves	**754,388**	**(1,991)**	**204,012**	**956,409**

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council's assets over time.

Reconciliation of net revaluation movement	**$'000**
Increment recognised in 2022/2023	204,012
Adjustment directly to equity	(1,991)
2023 Net revaluation increment	**202,021**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS cont..

	Balance at beginning of reporting period	Transfer from accumulated surplus	Transfer to accumulated surplus	Balance at end of reporting period
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
(b) Other reserves				
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**
2023				
Discretionary reserves				
Asset improvement	1,247	-	(18)	1,229
Plant replacement	1,529	1,100	(1,161)	1,468
Waste management	6,499	1,619	(2,478)	5,640
Total discretionary reserves	**9,275**	**2,719**	**(3,657)**	**8,337**
Non discretionary reserves				
Recreational land	1,102	253	(129)	1,226
Infrastructure contributions	158	-	-	158
Art gallery acquisition	16	11	(19)	8
Art gallery contribution	44	-	(39)	5
Leased property improvements	2,366	737	-	3,103
Total Non Discretionary reserves	**3,686**	**1,001**	**(187)**	**4,500**
Total Other reserves	**12,961**	**3,720**	**(3,844)**	**12,837**

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS cont..

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.*

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS cont..

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(4,617)	22,285
Non-cash adjustments:		
Depreciation/amortisation	33,469	28,639
Loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	4,738	1,334
Other	(352)	(1,214)
Borrowing costs	26	48
Finance Cost - Leases	8	8
Bad and Doubtful Debts (net written off and expensed)	94	(91)
Contributions - monetary (non-operating)	(15)	(194)
Contributions - non-monetary	(3,258)	(2,948)
Change in assets and liabilities:		
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other receivables	(4,564)	(2,120)
(Decrease)/ Increase in trade and other payables	(2,164)	1,092
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	(200)	(26)
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	(81)	290
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(251)	(168)
(Decrease)/increase in trust funds and deposits	955	543
(Decrease)/increase in contract and other liabilities	(5,310)	(9,758)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	**18,478**	**37,720**

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Vision Super. 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 2024, this was 11.0% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2023: 10.5%)).

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 Wellington Shire 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS cont..

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.

A triennial actuarial investigation for the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2023 was conducted and completed by 31 December 2023. The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2023 was 104.1%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2023 VBI during August 2023.

The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2023 VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.7% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.8% pa

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2023 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 2023 triennial 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 2024, this rate was 11.0% of members' salaries (10.5% in 2022/23). 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 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 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.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 9 OTHER MATTERS cont..

The 2023 triennial 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. 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:

	2023 (Triennial) $m	2022 (Interim) $m
- A VBI Surplus	84.7	44.6
- A total service liability surplus	123.6	105.8
- A discounted accrued benefits surplus	141.9	111.9

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 2023.

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 2023.

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 2023.

The 2024 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2024 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by October 2024.

The VBI of the Defined Benefit category was 105.4% as at 30 June 2024. The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2024 VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.6% pa
Salary information 3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI) 2.7% pa

Council was notified of the 30 June 2024 VBI during August 2024.

Because the VBI was above 100%, the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position at 30 June 2024 and it is expected that the actuarial investigation will recommend that no change will be necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

The 2020 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 that investigation was:

	2020	**2023**
	Triennial investigation	Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.6% pa	5.7% pa
Salary inflation	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter	3.50% pa
Price inflation	2.0% pa	2.8% pa

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2024 $'000	2023 $'000
Vision super	Defined benefits	11.0% (2023:10.5%)	168	123
Vision super	Accumulation	11.0% (2023:10.5%)	1,532	1,415
Other Schemes	Accumulation	11.0% (2023:10.5%)	1,858	1,559

In addition to the above contributions, Council has paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super totalling $0 (2022/23 $0).
There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2024.
The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2025 is $176,000.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Note 10 CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING POLICY

There have been no changes to accounting policies in the 2023-24 year.

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