

# Agenda

**Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday 28 June 2023 at 7pm**  
**Gisborne Administration Centre**  
**40 Robertson Street, Gisborne**

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**1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, and present.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

**2 RECORDING OF LIVE STREAMING OF THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

This meeting is being recorded and streamed live on the internet, in accordance with Council's 'Live Streaming and Publishing Recordings of Meetings' policy, which can be viewed on Council's website.

**3 PRESENT****4 APOLOGIES****5 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST****6 PETITIONS**

Nil

**7 DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL****8 ADOPTION OF MINUTES****Recommendation**

**That Council confirms the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting of Macedon Ranges Shire Council held on 24 May 2023 and the minutes of the Submitters Delegated Meeting held on 31 May 2023, as circulated.**

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**9 MAYOR'S REPORT****9.1 MAYOR'S REPORT - MAY-JUNE 2023****Summary**

This report provides an update from the Mayor on recent Council activities and initiatives of a Shire wide nature.

**Recommendation**

**That Council receives and notes the Mayor's report.**

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**Mayor's report**

It has been another month of celebration for the Macedon Ranges. There have been many awards and nominations in recognition of the great work across our community.

Awards and Nominations

- **Park of the Year**

Romsey Ecotherapy Park has taken out the Park of the year title at Parks and Leisure Australia's 2023 VIC/TAS Regional Awards of Excellence. After 14 years, this community-led initiative delivered in collaboration with Council, has created an innovative nature-based space for passive recreation that enhances health and wellbeing for all ages and abilities. Congratulations to the Romsey Ecotherapy Park Inc for this fantastic achievement and good luck for the National Park of the Year awards to be held in October 2023.

- **2023 LGPro Awards**

This Romsey Storm Waste facility has won its second award, having taken out the Special Projects Initiative category. This award recognises innovative and sustainable projects with demonstrated outcomes that are cost-effective. The site has processed more than 65,000 tonnes of tree and storm debris from the Macedon Ranges and other storm-affected areas. Many products have been returned to impacted communities from fence posts, tree stakes, firewood and more totalling over \$35 million in market value. The award is testament to positive collaboration between Council officers and partner agencies. What a win for our Shire! Congratulations to the Council team and all those involved.

Council was also recognised as a finalist in the Community Planning category for our Cool Changes program. This impressive program facilitated the creation of seven localised Community Climate Action Plans by residents across the Shire, providing a customised, place-based approach to addressing climate change. Our Council officers and community should be very proud of what we have achieved.

- **Inaugural Telstra Macedon Ranges Community Choice Awards**

The first year for these awards has been well received. With 78 businesses nominated across the five excellence in customer service categories, it has been very pleasing to see so much support for local businesses in our Shire. I was excited to present awards to all the winners. Congratulations to Riddells Creek Nursery (Agribusiness and Primary Producers), Complete Recovery of Health (Health and Wellbeing), Fook Shing (Hospitality and Accommodation), Laser Blanks (Retail and Service) and Magnum Signs (Trades and Manufacturing).

It was great to visit each business, chat with the owners and learn about the great work that they do. We are fortunate to have talented and committed business owners that care about their clients, customers and the broader community. Businesses range from those supporting local producers and wholesalers, setting up workspaces that accommodate working parents, promoting local employment and women in business. The list goes on. These awards are being run in alternate years to the more formal business excellence awards. Congratulations again to the winners and to all the nominated businesses.

- **Hanging Rock Single-use Plastics Art Competition**

Early learning, kindergarten, primary and secondary school-aged students were invited to enter this competition. Entrants were asked to create an artwork that included some piece of single use plastics to show the impact plastic has on our environment. It was a difficult decision for the judging panel; Cr Bill West, Cr Jennifer Anderson and Cr Anne Moore to decide on the winners of this competition. A high volume of entries were received, and the content was very diverse, so multiple winners were decided for each category. Congratulations to the winners and well done to everyone that participated. All winners will have their original artwork displayed at 'the Impacts of Single-Use Plastics' exhibition at the Discovery Centre at Hanging Rock Reserve, launching at the end of June.

- **2023 TAC Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards**

I am sure many residents and visitors joined me in voting Woodend as Victoria's most liveable regional town in the 2023 TAC Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards. The awards recognise and reward Victorian towns that demonstrate a strong commitment to tourism, offer an excellent visitor experience, and show strong collaboration with tourism operators, local businesses and the community. Earlier this year Woodend was also named the most liveable regional town in Victoria. We know it is a wonderful town so thanks to those that voted. Winners are to be announced on 26 July.

Many events were held across the Shire for Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June) and National Refugee Week (18 - 24 June). We recognise the importance of these events to building an inclusive and supportive community for everyone.

- **Finding Freedom: Real Stories of Human Survival**

Macedon Ranges Rural Australians for Refugees have worked over the years to build a better understanding of the refugee experience, and to provide social, material and financial support to refugees and refugee organisations. This event was testament to their hard work and commitment. The event featured well known comedian Tom Ballard as keynote speaker, along with special guest presenter Muzafar Ali, a Hazara refugee from Afghanistan. Muzafar is a photographer, human rights activist and winner of the 2022 Fred Hollows Humanitarian of the Year award. Through the power of storytelling, we were taken on personal journeys of trauma in the search to survive from four refugees: Ali Reza, Lizzy Kuoth, Dalal Sleiman and Innocent Karabagega. Remarkably, hope prevailed on their road to finding freedom. This was a very special event and I thank the guest speakers for sharing their stories.

- **Reconciliation Week**

Various events were held throughout Reconciliation Week. Events included: a keynote event with Yoorrook Justice Commission Truth Telling in the Kyneton Town Hall on 30 May, followed by Smoking Ceremonies and Yarning Circles in Malmsbury, Kyneton and Riddells Creek. This week celebrated the indigenous history and culture in Australia. It is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements. Macedon Ranges Shire Council wants to work meaningfully in partnership with our local community to progress Reconciliation and strive for better outcomes. These events provided the

opportunity to walk with First Nations peoples to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

Councillors were pleased to be invited to the following events/meetings since the last Council Meeting:

- Biggest Morning Tea at the Kyneton Aero Club on 27 May
  - Annual Poultry Show at the Kyneton Showgrounds on 11 June
  - Changeover dinner for the Rotary Club of Woodend on 17 June
  - Opening of a pedestrian bridge over Five Mile Creek by Woodend Landcare on 18 June
  - Workspace Australia Board meeting in Bendigo on 8 June
  - Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee meeting on 8 June
  - Macedon Ranges Local Safety Committee meetings in Gisborne on 5 and 26 June
  - Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meeting in Gisborne on 27 June
- **Listening Post**

West Ward Councillors attended the Woodend Farmers Market on 3 June and were available to chat to residents and visitors. Keep an eye on Council's website for all future listening post dates and locations.

- **2023 National General Assembly of Local Government**

The Chief Executive Officer and I attended the 2023 National General Assembly of Local Government in mid-June. Convened annually by the Australian Local Government Association, the assembly is the peak annual event for local government, attracting more than 800 attendees each year. The event provides a unique opportunity for local government to engage directly with the Federal Government to develop national policy and to influence the future direction of councils and our communities. We were able to advocate on behalf of our community on emergency management and disaster funding, key advocacy projects and to share learnings across local government areas.

Request for Award nominations

Nominations for the 2023 Macedon Ranges Shire Council Youth Awards are open until 30 June. If you know of a young person or group of young people aged between 12 and 25 doing great things in our community, we encourage you to nominate them and shine a light on the good work they are doing.

**Mayor Death**  
**Macedon Ranges Shire Council**

**10 RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF****10.1 RECORD OF MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF - MAY-JUNE 2023****Summary**

Rule 31(a) of Council's Governance Rules requires a written record of matters discussed at specified meetings of Councillors and Council staff to be reported to the next practicable scheduled Council Meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. This report provides a summary of meetings of Councillors and Council staff held since the last Council Meeting.

**Recommendation**

**That Council receives and notes the record of meetings of Councillors and Council staff, as outlined in this report.**

**Record of meetings**

Type of meeting	Council Briefing
Date and time	23 May 2023 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Annette Death (Mayor)</li> <li>• Cr Jennifer Anderson (Deputy Mayor)</li> <li>• Cr Dominic Bonanno</li> <li>• Cr Rob Guthrie</li> <li>• Cr Anne Moore - Zoom</li> <li>• Cr Geoff Neil</li> <li>• Cr Janet Pearce</li> <li>• Cr Mark Ridgeway</li> <li>• Cr Bill West</li> </ul>
Apologies - Councillors	NIL
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>• Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate</li> <li>• Maria Weiss, Director Community</li> <li>• Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing</li> <li>• Lauren Wall, Manager Communications and Engagement</li> <li>• Amy Holmes, Manager Community Strengthening</li> <li>• Julius Peiker, Coordinator Community Development</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance</li> <li>• Lucy Olson, Senior Officer Governance (Council Business)</li> <li>• Elaine Pulleine, Inclusive Communities Officer</li> </ul>
Apologies officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations</li> </ul>
Presenters	NIL
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor &amp; CEO Only Session</li> <li>• Draft Disability Action Plan</li> <li>• KPMG Strategy Framework &amp; PPSR</li> <li>• Community Complaints Process Workshop</li> <li>• First Nations Voice to Parliament</li> <li>• Planning Matters</li> <li>• Agenda Review for Council Meeting</li> <li>• Other Business</li> </ul>
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

Type of meeting	Council Briefing
Date and time	30 May 2023 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Annette Death (Mayor)</li> <li>• Cr Jennifer Anderson (Deputy Mayor)</li> <li>• Cr Dominic Bonanno</li> <li>• Cr Rob Guthrie</li> <li>• Cr Anne Moore</li> <li>• Cr Geoff Neil</li> <li>• Cr Janet Pearce</li> <li>• Cr Mark Ridgeway</li> <li>• Cr Bill West</li> </ul>
Apologies - Councillors	NIL
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate</li> <li>• Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations</li> <li>• Eng Lim, Manager Engineering and Resource Recovery</li> <li>• Simon Finlay, Manager Open Space and Recreation</li> <li>• Bob Elkington, Coordinator Economic Development</li> <li>• Krista Patterson-Majoor, Coordinator Environment</li> <li>• Benup Neupane, Coordinator Engineering Services</li> <li>• Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Louise Dewberry, Senior Strategic Planner</li> <li>• Isobel Maginn, Senior Strategic Planner</li> </ul>
Apologies officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maria Weiss, Director Community</li> </ul>
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liz Webster, SGS Economics and Planning</li> <li>• Jo Noesgaard, SGS Economics and Planning</li> <li>• Knowes Tivendale, Movement and Place Consulting</li> <li>• Gabby McMillan, Terralogic</li> <li>• Paul Shipp, Urban Enterprise</li> </ul>
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Only Session - Request to meet Councillors Banon Consultants</li> <li>• Councillor &amp; CEO Only session</li> <li>• Gisborne Futures Workshop</li> <li>• Other Business</li> </ul>
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

Type of meeting	Council Briefing
Date and time	6 June 2023 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Annette Death (Mayor)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Jennifer Anderson (Deputy Mayor) – Zoom</li> <li>• Cr Dominic Bonanno</li> <li>• Cr Rob Guthrie</li> <li>• Cr Geoff Neil</li> <li>• Cr Janet Pearce</li> <li>• Cr Mark Ridgeway</li> <li>• Cr Bill West</li> </ul>
Apologies - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Anne Moore</li> </ul>
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>• Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate</li> <li>• Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations</li> <li>• Maria Weiss, Director Community (Zoom)</li> <li>• Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting</li> <li>• Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing</li> <li>• Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Kylie Tatt, Manager People and Wellbeing</li> <li>• Simon Finlay, Manager Open Space and Recreation</li> <li>• Dean Frank, Coordinator Recreation</li> <li>• Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance</li> <li>• Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Setina Rockliff, Coordinator Risk and OHS</li> <li>• Rachel Urankar, Senior Risk and Insurance Advisor</li> <li>• Lucy Olson, Senior Governance Officer – Council Business</li> <li>• Jack Wiltshire, Strategic Planner</li> </ul>
Apologies officers	NIL
Presenters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter Matthews (Chair Audit and Risk Committee)</li> <li>• Vinitha Pinto (Audit and Risk Committee Member)</li> <li>• Maggie Williams (Audit and Risk Committee Member)</li> <li>• Craig Huntley (Marsh Consultants)</li> <li>• Aaron Wallis (PLAYCE)</li> </ul>
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor &amp; CEO Only Session</li> <li>• Draft Budget 2023/24 Consultation &amp; Submitters Outcome</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Only Budget discussions</li> <li>• Social &amp; Affordable Housing Policy</li> <li>• Final Draft Romsey Structure Plan</li> <li>• Risk Appetite Workshop</li> <li>• Macedon Ranges Shire-wide Skate Park &amp; BMX Master Plan for consultation</li> <li>• Planning Matters</li> <li>• Planning Delegated Committee Meeting Agenda Review</li> <li>• Other Business</li> </ul>
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>Cr West declared a material conflict of interest with the Romsey Structure Plan due to family owning property in the area.</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? Yes – left 11:06am and returned 11:46am.</p> <p>Cr Pearce declared a general conflict with PLN/2022/182 - 145 Spotiswood Road in Planning Matters.</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? Yes – left 4:05pm and returned 4:12pm.</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

Type of meeting	Council Briefing
Date and time	13 June 2023 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Jennifer Anderson (Deputy Mayor) – Zoom</li> <li>• Cr Dominic Bonanno</li> <li>• Cr Rob Guthrie</li> <li>• Cr Anne Moore</li> <li>• Cr Geoff Neil</li> <li>• Cr Janet Pearce – Zoom</li> <li>• Cr Mark Ridgeway</li> <li>• Cr Bill West</li> </ul>
Apologies - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Annette Death (Mayor)</li> </ul>
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate</li> <li>• Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maria Weiss, Director Community (Zoom)</li> <li>• Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting</li> <li>• Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Simon Finlay, Manager Open Space and Recreation</li> <li>• Dean Frank, Coordinator Recreation</li> <li>• Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance</li> <li>• Lucy Olson, Senior Governance Officer – Council Business</li> <li>• Eng Lim, Manager Engineering and Resource Recovery</li> <li>• Benup Neupane, Coordinator Engineering Services</li> <li>• Amy Holmes, Manager Community Strengthening</li> <li>• Wendy Le Brocq, Coordinator Customer Service</li> <li>• Eliza Tipping, Coordinator Emergency Management</li> <li>• Evert Grobbelaar, Manager Statutory Planning</li> <li>• John Perry, Statutory Planning Officer</li> <li>• Nicole Wadden, Senior Statutory Planning Officer</li> <li>• Awais Sadiq, Coordinator Statutory Planning</li> <li>• Christo Crafford, Coordinator Statutory Planning</li> </ul>
Apologies officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer</li> </ul>
Presenters	NIL
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor &amp; CEO Only Session</li> <li>• Draft Budget 2023/24 Consultation &amp; Submitters Outcome</li> <li>• Agenda Review for June Planning Delegated Committee (1 day prior)</li> <li>• Mobility &amp; Road Safety Strategy</li> <li>• Woodend Customer Service Centre</li> <li>• Municipal Emergency Management Plan Review</li> <li>• Romsey Skate Park – Discussion</li> <li>• Planning Matters</li> <li>• Agenda Review for June Council Meeting (2 weeks prior)</li> <li>• Other Business</li> </ul>
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	NIL Did they leave the meeting? N/A

Type of meeting	Council Briefing
Date and time	20 June 2023 9:00am
Venue	Gisborne Administration Centre
Present - Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cr Annette Death (Mayor)</li> <li>• Cr Jennifer Anderson (Deputy Mayor) – Zoom</li> <li>• Cr Dominic Bonanno</li> <li>• Cr Rob Guthrie</li> <li>• Cr Anne Moore</li> <li>• Cr Geoff Neil</li> <li>• Cr Janet Pearce</li> <li>• Cr Mark Ridgeway</li> <li>• Cr Bill West</li> </ul>
Apologies - Councillors	NIL
Present - officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernie O'Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>• Rebecca Stockfeld, Director Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Adele Drago-Stevens, Director Corporate</li> <li>• Shane Walden, Director Assets and Operations</li> <li>• Amy Holmes, Acting Director Community</li> <li>• Rob Ball, Manager Strategic Planning and Environment</li> <li>• Jeet Dahal, Manager Assets and Project Management</li> <li>• Eng Lim, Manager Engineering and Resource Recovery</li> <li>• Leanne Khan, Coordinator Strategic Planning</li> <li>• Patricia Clive, Coordinator Governance</li> <li>• Sean Morley, Coordinator Accounting</li> <li>• Krista Patterson-Majoor, Coordinator Environment</li> <li>• Lucy Olson, Senior Governance Officer – Council Business</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kimberley Cook, Environmental Programs and Engagement Officer</li> <li>• Jack Wiltshire, Strategic Planner</li> </ul>
Apologies officers	NIL
Presenters	NIL
Items discussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor &amp; CEO Only Session</li> <li>• Budget 2023/24</li> <li>• Monthly Capex Monitoring Report</li> <li>• Potential Establishment of Advisory Committees</li> <li>• Proposed Road Closure – Raglan Street, Lancefield</li> <li>• Landcare Support Grant Guidelines</li> <li>• Clarkefield Development Plan</li> <li>• Planning Matters</li> <li>• Other Business</li> </ul>
Conflicts of interest declared by Councillors and record of them leaving the meeting when the matter about which they declared the conflict of interest was discussed	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>
Conflicts of interest declared by officers	<p>NIL</p> <p>Did they leave the meeting? N/A</p>

## 11 DIRECTOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT REPORTS

<b>PE.1</b>	<b>SUBMISSION TO THE DRAFT VICTORIA'S MINERAL SPRINGS MASTER PLAN 2023–2032</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Stephen Pykett, Manager Economic Development and Visitor Economy</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>2. Healthy environment, healthy people</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Draft Submission - Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023 - 2032 Submission</b> <a href="#">↓</a></li> <li>2. <b>Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023-2032 (under separate cover)</b> <a href="#">⇒</a></li> </ol>

**Summary**

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) provides the policy and management oversight for mineral springs on public land. DEECA are currently seeking feedback on the new draft ten-year master plan that will direct the management and enhancement of Victoria's mineral springs. The plan will replace the previous Victorian Mineral Springs Strategic Master Plan 2015 – 2024.

**Recommendation****That Council:**

1. **Notes the Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023 – 2032; and**
2. **Requests the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Mineral Springs Master Plan submission be lodged with The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.**

**Background**

The majority of Mineral Springs in Victoria are in Hepburn Shire but significantly Kyneton Mineral Springs falls under the Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023 – 2032 (Attachment 1). To help inform the development of the new plan DEECA conducted a community survey in June/July 2022 to find out:

- what community value most about Victoria's Mineral Springs
- which springs are favourites and why
- how community know where they are located
- how community consume, collect and store mineral water to ensure the continuing safe consumption of mineral water.

In total, 132 people responded to the survey via Engage Victoria. What people told DEECA was considered in the preparation of the Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023 – 2032.

**Discussion**

The Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023 – 2032 is seeking public comments through Engage Victoria. The draft master plan generally seeks to support traditional owners (RAPs) to determine their level of involvement in site management, ensure water quality is maintained, sites are safe and accessible and mineral springs meet local and visitor needs.

Mineral Springs have been classified into one of five categories based on their significance (from National to Neighbourhood) which helps in setting service expectations and investment priorities. Kyneton Mineral Springs has been classified as one of only three Nationally Significant sites.

As one of the States most significant Mineral Spring sites the Draft Master Plan identifies recommended actions for Kyneton:

- Develop a reserve management plan
- Review purpose of exempting specific uses under Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme Schedule 3 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay
- Explore feasibility of establishing a walking / cycling path link between the mineral springs and Piper Street

The three recommended actions are reasonable, appropriate and would better enable Council to manage the Kyneton Mineral Springs, as follows:

- Council has successfully applied to DEECA for a grant to prepare the Kyneton Mineral Springs Management Plan as listed in the draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023- 2032.
- The review of the exemptions under the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme Schedule 3 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay would allow Council to consider the sorts of uses that are consistent with the protecting of the mineral springs and allow the planning scheme to reflect that in what uses are permitted.
- Exploring the feasibility of establishing a walking / cycling path link between the mineral springs and Piper St has strong alignment to the Macedon Ranges Council Plan 2021-2031. In recognition of the importance the community have placed on this it is suggested that the priority of this action should be raised from Medium to High.

**Consultation and engagement**

DEECA has undertaken community engagement to develop the draft and this submission process is part of further engagement before the Master Plan is finalised.

Internal consultation has included Strategic Planning, Heritage and Open Space and Recreation areas of council.

**Collaboration**

This submission is directly to DEECA, the relevant state body with responsibility for Mineral Springs on public land.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

Submitting to the development of the Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023-2032 ensures the plan considers the local community and actions reflect endorsed plans and strategies such as the Macedon Ranges Council Plan.

**Relevant law**

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) provides the policy and management oversight for mineral springs on public land. Council has responsibilities as the Land Manager for the Kyneton Mineral Springs Reserve.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Victorian Mineral Springs Strategic Master Plan 2015 – 2024

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

This proposal directly relates to the Macedon Ranges Council Plan 2021-2031 strategic objective of Healthy environment, healthy people.

Improving the visitor experience at the Kyneton Mineral Springs is an action in the Macedon Ranges Visitor Economy Strategy 2019 – 2029.

**Financial viability**

The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) delivers an annual capital grants program to benefit spring land managers amongst other things. Day to day management of the reserve is included in Councils operational budget.

**Sustainability implications**

The actions proposed in the Draft Master Plan will enhance the protection of the Kyneton Mineral Springs Reserve.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

Your Ref:  
Our Ref: D23-93839  
Pathway Ref:  
Contact: SPykett

28 June 2023

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action  
402 Mair Street  
Ballarat VIC 3350

Dear Ms Warmbrunn

**Re: Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023–2032**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council welcomes the recognition of the Kyneton Mineral Springs as a nationally significant site in the Draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023–2032.

The five classification levels from, National to Neighbourhood, and the associated service levels (outlined in table 5) are appropriate to the expectations for the variety of sites that come under the Master Plan.

The actions recommended in (table 8) of the draft are consistent with the expectations for the protection of the site, continued public enjoyment and recognition of its importance to traditional owners.

The three recommended actions are reasonable, appropriate and would better enable Council to manage the Kyneton Mineral Springs, as follows:

- Council has successfully applied to DEECA for a grant to prepare the Kyneton Mineral Springs Management Plan as listed in the draft Victoria's Mineral Springs Master Plan 2023- 2032.
- The review of the exemptions under the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme Schedule 3 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay would allow Council to consider the sorts of uses that are consistent with the protecting of the mineral springs and allow the planning scheme to reflect that in what uses are permitted.

- Exploring the feasibility of establishing a walking / cycling path link between the mineral springs and Piper St has strong alignment to the Macedon Ranges Council Plan 2021-2031. In recognition of the importance the community have placed on this it is suggested that the priority of this action should be raised from Medium to High.

Development of a Reserve Management Plan will ensure the site is maintained as a popular location for the community and visitors. Reflecting the use of the reserve as a recreational area for children and families, the environmental values of the site (notably Campaspe River), the walking and running tracks that pass through, and by overnighting RVs.

Mineral water is accessed by visitors and the community who prize it for its health benefits council recognises the need for adequate protections of the quality and environment at the reserve.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council will continue to work collaboratively with all parties towards these shared goals.

If you have any questions in relation to the above matter please do not hesitate to contact Stephen Pykett Manager Economic Development and Visitor Economy on [spykett@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:spykett@mrsc.vic.gov.au) or 03 5421 9620.

Yours sincerely

**Bernie O'Sullivan**  
Chief Executive Officer



**12 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS**

<b>CX.1</b>	<b>RECOGNITION OF KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOUR RECIPIENTS</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Lucy Olson, Senior Governance Officer - Council Business</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

**Summary**

The 2023 King's Birthday Honours Award included three people from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Community- Mr Alexander Forrest of Mt Macedon, Mr Leslie Binns of Kyneton and Mr John Ellis of Newham.

Mr Alexander Forrest is a recipient Medal (OAM) and was recognised for service to youth through Scouts.

Mr Leslie Binns is a recipient Medal (OAM) and was recognised for service to the performing arts through production roles.

Mr John Ellis is a recipient Medal (OAM) and was recognised for service to the oenology industry with his career spanning more than 50 years.

**Recommendation**

**That Council sends letters to Alexander Forrest OAM, Leslie Binns OAM and John Ellis OAM in recognition of their 2023 King's Birthday Honours Award.**

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**13 DIRECTOR CORPORATE REPORTS**

<b>COR.1</b>	<b>COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2031 (YEAR THREE ACTIONS 2023-24)</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities</b> <b>2. Healthy environment, healthy people</b> <b>3. Business and tourism</b> <b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions - 2023-24) (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇨</a></b>

**Summary**

The Council Plan forms part of the Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework, as outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA). The Council Plan must provide the strategic direction of Council, its objectives, the strategies to achieve these objectives and strategic indicators for monitoring the achievements.

At the Submitters Delegated Committee Meeting on 31 May 2023, Council received one (1) submission and no verbal submissions were received. A summary of the submission and an officer response has been included in this report.

The purpose of this report is to note the summary of the submissions received and adopt the Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24).

**Recommendation****That Council:**

- 1. Adopts the Council Plan 2021–2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24), prepared in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, and gives public notice of its decision to replace the previous Council Plan 2021-31 (Year Two Actions 2022-23) effective from 29 June 2023;**
- 2. Endorses the officer responses to submissions as contained in this report; and**
- 3. Responds to the submitter in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy.**

**Background**

The process to develop the Macedon Ranges Shire’s Council Plan 2021-2031 (the Plan) commenced in 2020 following the election of the new Council, and is a requirement of section 90 of the LGA. The Plan was developed using deliberative engagement and provides:

- The strategic direction of Council
- Strategic objectives for achieving that direction
- Strategies for achieving the objectives (for at least four years)

- Strategic indicators for monitoring achievement, and
- Description of initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity.

Adopted by Council at its Scheduled Meeting of October 2022, the Plan outlines Council strategies and actions to be implemented across four priority areas:

Connecting communities

We will maintain our built environment – including roads, paths, buildings, open space and other assets – in a fiscally, environmentally and socially sustainable way. This includes effective land-use planning, which has a direct impact on the liveability of our shire.

We will provide support for volunteers, community groups and organisations, in recognition of their work in contributing to social connections.

Healthy environment, healthy people

We will contribute to positive health and wellbeing in our community, by proactively supporting mental health, the prevention of violence against women, healthy lifestyles for all ages and abilities, social connection and inclusion, community safety, and arts and culture.

We will protect our natural environment through proactive environmental planning, advocacy, and policy to address climate change, support biodiversity and enhance water catchment quality. The Macedon Ranges Shire declared a Climate Emergency in 2021.

We will take action to reduce waste in order to protect public health and the environment.

Business and tourism

We will foster economic vitality in a way that promotes positive individual and community health outcomes, including business diversity, housing, transport, and employment options. Investment attracted to the shire will be consistent with Council’s vision.

Deliver strong and reliable government

We will demonstrate the qualities of good governance, including a clear vision and culture, transparency, respect, consistency, accountability and responsiveness.

At the Scheduled Council Meeting of 27 April 2023, Council resolved to endorse the draft Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24) for public consultation and undertake community engagement.

**Discussion**

Submissions

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council’s *Community Engagement Policy*, the draft Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24) was released for public display for a 21-day period.

A single submission was received as part of the community consultation process, below:

<b>Submission Number</b>	<b>Summary of Submission</b>	<b>Officer response and recommendation</b>
1	Request for funding of \$30,000 to develop and design and QS plans for a future refurbishment of the Gisborne Genealogical Group at the Gisborne Library to allow them to seek external funding in 2024/25.	The Central Goldfields Library Corporation has been engaging in discussions with Council Officers regarding this proposal for the past 6 months. As the genealogical society space is currently underutilised,

	<p>This will provide well-designed, fit-for-purpose, multi-use open spaces and infrastructure for the community to connect, engage and participate in a financially sustainable way.</p>	<p>reconfiguring this area should enhance the space for joint user activities.</p> <p><b>Officer Recommendation:</b> <b>Supportive</b></p> <p>Supportive of including funding in the budget and a Council plan action for this submission, noting that the library corporation has opportunities to explore external funding sources to complete works and improve the space.</p>
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Summary of proposed changes from Community Consultation process for the Council Plan

Officers have considered the community feedback received and provided officer responses and recommend the following action be included in the Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year 3 2023-24):

- Contribute financially to the Goldfields Library Corporation to undertake design and quantity surveyor plans for the Gisborne Library.

Summary of proposed changes – officer recommendations

In considering the submissions that were provided as part of the community consultation process for the draft 2023/24 Budget, officers have also recommended the following change:

Summary of Changes	Officer Response
<p><b>New Action</b> – Undertake a masterplan of the Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve</p>	<p>Support the inclusion of this action in the Council Plan.</p>

Several other projects now recommended for inclusion in the draft Budget 2023/24 will be delivered as part of existing actions in the Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24).

Finally, several minor typographical corrections were also made.

**Consultation and engagement**

Pursuant to Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Council Plan 2021-31 (Year Three Actions 2023-24) has been prepared in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy. This includes provision for public consultation and comment for 21 days during April-May 2023, in addition to an earlier period of public consultation for 28 days during September 2022.

This process included public notices, providing information about the budget and community engagement process on our website and through other communication channels, and notifying the public of the methods of engagement. Council sought written feedback from the community through formal submissions, emails, survey responses, and verbal contributions through the Submitters Delegated Committee.

Submitters to the 2023 process were invited to attend a Submitter’s Delegated Committee on Wednesday 31 May 2023.

**Collaboration**

The Council Plan (Year Three Actions 2023-24) has been prepared alongside the draft 2023/24 Budget by officers and Councillors including several Councillor Briefings and workshops. This updated plan had been developed from the Council Plan 2021-2031 framework, which was prepared via deliberative engagement methods as outlined in Council's *Community Engagement Policy*.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

The Council Plan is an important part of Council's integrated strategic planning, as outlined to Council on 16 December 2020. The Plan forms one of the key elements to Council's overall Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework.

An update in relation to the progress of items included in the Council Plan is provided as part of Council's quarterly report.

**Relevant law**

This report has been prepared in accordance the LGA and is compliant with the requirements.

Individual programs, projects and initiatives in the Council Plan will undertake Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* as part of their implementation during 2023-24, if not already completed.

Gender is a fundamental consideration for the Council Plan, as it:

- provides for Council operations that include services, assets, facilities, programs and activities; and
- incorporates the annual components of major initiatives identified by the Council as priorities in the Council Plan 2021-31, to be undertaken during the next financial year.

Routine completion of GIAs as part of Council's work highlights the importance of continued reflection on available data, and consultation processes.

For the implementation of the Council Plan 2021-31 (Year Three Actions 2023-24), Council undertook a GIA on the consultation and engagement processes proposed in line with our Community Engagement Policy. A range of consultation approaches and methods, including written, verbal and online were used to ensure that all community members had equal access to engage with and contribute to the development of the draft Council Plan 2021-31 (Year Three Actions 2023-24). Two consultation periods were undertaken during the preparation of this year's Council Plan and Budget to increase the time and methods available for contributions from the community. Submitters Delegated Committee meetings are also held online, and outside of work and school hours, to improve accessibility for people with work and caring responsibilities, particularly.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Nil

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The preparation of the Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three Actions 2023-24) supports Council's priority of strong and reliable government. This plan will align with funding provide in the draft 2023/24 Budget.

**Financial viability**

These documents support and align with Council's long-term financial resourcing requirements.

**Sustainability implications**

Nil

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

<b>COR.2</b>	<b>BUDGET 2023/24</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities 2. Healthy environment, healthy people 3. Business and tourism 4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### Summary

The draft 2023/24 Budget has been prepared consistent with the requirement of Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA) and forms part of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework developed as Part 4 of the LGA.

At the Scheduled Council Meeting of 27 April 2023, Council endorsed the draft Budget 2023/24 for community engagement and consultation in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's *Community Engagement Policy*. During this period, 41 submissions were received and considered, with a Submitters Delegated Committee Meeting held on 31 May 2023.

Therefore, the purpose of this report is to (1) make a determination on the community submissions, and (2) adopt the Budget, with or without amendment.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **Adopts the draft Budget 2023/24, prepared in accordance with section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020, with the following amendments:**
  - (a) **Increase grant income for the following areas:**
    - (i) **Victorian Local Government Grants Commission \$500,000**
    - (ii) **Safety System Pedestrian Program \$120,000**
    - (iii) **Romsey Skate Park \$550,000**
  - (b) **Increase revenue in the following areas:**
    - (i) **Interest income by \$300,000**
    - (ii) **Contributions by \$40,000**
  - (c) **Increase expenditure in the following areas:**
    - (i) **Capital Works**
      - (1) **Romsey Skate Park by \$570,000**
      - (2) **Willowbank Open Space by \$310,000**
      - (3) **Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct by \$300,000**
      - (4) **Kyneton Cricket Club Training Nets Upgrade by \$20,000**
      - (5) **South Gisborne Tennis Club Lighting design by \$15,000**



- (6) Goldfields Regional Library Gisborne by \$30,000
  - (7) Macedon Tennis Club Fencing Courts 1,2,3,4 by \$120,000
  - (8) Kyneton Tennis Club Footpath works by \$50,000
  - (ii) Operating expenses
    - (1) WorkCover premiums by \$200,000
    - (2) Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve Masterplan by \$50,000
  - (d) Include a \$310,000 transfer from the Open Space (South) Reserve to fund the purchase of open space in Willowbank Road, South Gisborne.
  - (e) Update the 2023/24 Budget document to ensure the required disclosures specifying the objectives of proposed differential rates are incorporated.
2. Approves new loan borrowings of up to \$2,300,000 in line with the proposed Budget, and authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
- i. negotiate the loan;
  - ii. approve the successful tender;
  - iii. execute the loan documentation; and
  - iv. delegate to the Director Corporate and/or Manager Finance and Reporting to undertake the required process as outlined in points 2 (i), (ii) and (iii)
3. Adopts the following rates, amended from those declared at its meeting of 27 April 2023:

	Cents/\$CIV
General Rate for rateable residential properties – 100%	0.00179840
Agricultural land rate – 80%	0.00143872
Commercial/Industrial rate – 120%	0.00215808
Recreational land rate – 50%	0.00089920
Not-for-profit housing rate – 50%	0.00089920

- 4. Approves the carry forward of funds budgeted for acquiring open space in central Gisborne, and their reallocation and use for acquiring open space in Willowbank Road, South Gisborne.
- 5. Approves a new reduced fee and charge relating to Domestic Animal Business (DAB) Registration for Veterinary Practice Puppy Training Schools (1 DAB registration type at premises) of \$100.
- 6. Gives public notice of its decision to adopt the Budget 2023/24 and the availability of the Budget 2023/24 to the public on Council's website and at Council offices and service centres.
- 7. Endorses the officer responses to submissions in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 8. Responds to all submitters in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

**Background**

Council’s budget forms part of Council’s Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting framework that includes Council’s Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Disability Action Plan, Workforce Plan and an Asset Plan.

This Budget supports the delivery of the four strategic objectives outlined in the existing Council Plan 2021-2031, taking into account the longer-term strategic objectives in the plans listed above.

At the Scheduled Council Meeting on 27 April 2023, Council resolved to endorse the draft 2022/23 Budget be made available to the public and undertake a Community Consultation process in accordance with Council’s Community Engagement Policy.

**Discussion**

The 2023/24 Budget represents a sustainable and strategic plan, building upon the strategic objectives in Years One and Two of the Council Plan 2021-2031. It also includes several long-term infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing the liveability of our community.

Allocating resources to deliver essential community services is vitally important for Council. These services play a crucial role in meeting the needs and enhancing the wellbeing of our community. Whether it's maintaining infrastructure, ensuring public safety, or promoting cultural and recreational activities, Council services contribute to creating a thriving and inclusive community.

Continuing to support the community while ‘living with’ COVID-19 and recovering from the significant disruption of the extended lockdown periods is also of great importance. The pandemic had far-reaching impacts on individuals and businesses, leaving many facing economic, social, and emotional challenges. Many of these challenges are shared by Council, including the impacts of subsequent economic and inflationary pressures. This means that it is particularly important for Council to prudently allocate resources and implement initiatives that demonstrate their continuing impact on the recovery and rebuilding process.

The key features of the 2023/24 Budget are:

**Rates and Charges**

General rates and service charges will raise \$62,845,000 as follows:

General Rates	\$44,466,000
Municipal Charge	\$5,123,000
Service Charges	\$12,438,000
Supplementary Rates	*\$818,000

*\* Supplementary rates are the result of Supplementary Valuations. A Supplementary Valuation occurs when there is a significant change to a property that affects the valuation such as construction of a dwelling or shed, installation of a swimming pool, or a demolition.*

This is an increase in budgeted income from General Rates revenue of \$2,970,000 compared with the 2022/23 adopted budget. This is consistent with an increase of 3.5 per cent, aligned with the rate of the Fair Go Rates System cap.

The Budget includes a General Rate and four (4) differential rates to be declared as detailed in the following table:

	<b>Cents/\$CIV</b>
General Rate for rateable residential properties -100%	0.00179840
Agricultural land rate -80%	0.00143872
Commercial/Industrial rate – 120%	0.00215808
Recreational land rate – 50%	0.00089920
Not-for-profit housing rate – 50%	0.00089920

### Operating initiatives

Included in the 2023/24 Budget are several new operating initiatives that will enable Council to deliver annual actions from the Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year Three). New initiatives included in 2023/24 are:

- Master plan development of the Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve.
- Botanic Gardens Master Plan actions at Kyneton, Gisborne and Malmsbury botanical gardens.
- Reintroduction of the sealed roads shoulder lip removal program.
- Development of a new Reconciliation Action Plan.
- An operating budget for the Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct to commence operations.
- Continued support for the Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival.
- Flood modelling in partnership with Melbourne Water Corporation.

### Capital Works of \$28,300,000

During 2023/2024, Council will continue to deliver on commitments to undertake significant capital projects which improve liveability across the Shire. Some of these projects have been the subject of extensive planning, community engagement and investment over many years. Projects include continuing design work for the Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct project (Stage 2), sealing of Kettlewells Road Romsey, renewal works at the Gisborne Aquatics Centre, design work for Ross Street Malmsbury, new lighting at the New Gisborne Tennis Courts, work on the Malmsbury Town Hall and the kitchen refurbishment at the Baynton Hall. Other infrastructure categories continue to be renewed and expanded. This includes \$10,265,000 on roads; \$1,440,000 on bridges and \$3,194,000 on buildings.

### Loan Borrowings:

New loan borrowings are budgeted to be drawn down to fund the Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct project (Stage 2) totalling \$1,500,000 and the purchase of a Bio-Filter at the Kyneton Landfill site being \$800,000. Loan repayments for the 12-month period are budgeted to be \$844,000, estimating the borrowings balance to be \$20,394,000 at 30 June 2024.

### Submissions

A total of 41 submissions were made to the draft Budget 2023/24 (including late submissions, also provided to Councillors).

Budget submissions received were grouped in the following main themes:

- A number of thank you submissions, recognising projects already included
- Higher levels of investment in the Shire's Botanical Gardens
- Requests for works on Council owned buildings occupied by community groups
- Requests for works on Council owned infrastructure that is utilised by the community.

Officers have considered the community feedback received and provided responses, together with identifying other material operational financial changes since the draft budget was adopted for consultation.

Please see Appendix 1 for the list of submissions, officer responses and recommendations.

#### Summary of proposed budget changes (financial)

The draft Budget 2023/24 approved for public consultation balanced the environmental, infrastructure and social needs of the community within the rate income available under the State Government of Victoria rate cap. When resources are limited, it is essential that those resources are carefully allocated so Council can achieve the strategic objectives of its Plan and deliver needed services to the community. The draft Budget 2023/24 achieved this, and so subsequent adjustments to the budget must be carefully considered.

The following table provides a summary of changes officers have recommended be included in the 2023/24 Budget.

*NB: The figures included in the following tables represented as negative values "-", indicate either additional expenditure or reduced revenue. Positive values are either avoided expenditure or increased revenue.*

Budget Area	Reference	Amount \$
<b>Additional inclusions proposed in the Budget arising from Public Submissions</b>		
<b>Income:</b>		
Macedon Tennis Club – Contribution	1	\$40,000
<b>Expenditure:</b>		
Macedon Tennis Clubs courts 1,2,3,4 fencing replacement	1	-\$120,000
Kyneton Cricket Club Training net upgrade	2	-\$20,000
South Gisborne Tennis Club Lighting Design	3	-\$15,000
Goldfields Library Corporation Gisborne Library	4	-\$30,000
Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve Master Plan	5	-\$50,000
Kyneton Tennis Club Footpath works	6	-\$50,000
		<b>-\$245,000</b>

Budget Area	Reference	Amount \$
<b>Additional inclusions proposed in the Budget arising from Officer recommendations</b>		
<b>Income:</b>		
State Government Funding – Romsey Skate Park	7	\$550,000
Safety System Pedestrian Program	8	\$120,000
Interest income	9	\$300,000
Victorian Local Government Grants Commission	10	\$500,000
Open Space Reserve (South) Transfer	11	\$310,000
<b>Expenditure:</b>		
Romsey Skate Park construction	7	-\$570,000
Safety System Pedestrian Program	8	-\$120,000
WorkCover Premiums	12	-\$200,000
Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct	13	-\$300,000
Open Space land purchase	11	-\$310,000
		<b>\$280,000</b>
<b>Net Impact</b>		<b>\$35,000</b>
<b>Additional funds available after adjustments</b>		

The reference notes below provide further detail on each item, using the reference numbers provided.

Reference Notes:

- (1) Macedon Tennis Club works will include replacing the perimeter fencing of courts 1, 2, 3 and 4. Included in the submission by the Macedon Tennis Club is a commitment to make a financial contribution to the project.
- (2) Kyneton Cricket Club works will include training net upgrades to enclose the roof to reduce the risk of balls being hit out of the nets. Works will improve the safety of the facilities.
- (3) South Gisborne Tennis Club works include the development of a detailed lighting design and plan. Once completed, the detailed plan will inform costings of this project and a future budget submission.
- (4) Goldfields Library Corporation are seeking a contribution to enable the development of designs and Quantity Surveyors plan for the Gisborne Library and adjoining Genealogical Group area.
- (5) Lancefield Park Recreational Reserve Undertake a Masterplan which will identify future improvements for the Reserve. Having the Masterplan is important in securing funding for the development and enhancement of the park.

- (6) Kyneton Tennis Club works to undertake footpath and drainage works.
- (7) Romsey Skate Park upgrade works will commence on this project in 2023/24 and be finalised in 2024/25. The State Government have contributed \$550,000 to this project.
- (8) The Safety System Pedestrian Infrastructure program aims to reduce the number of serious pedestrian injuries and fatalities on Victorian roads. Year one funding is to undertake detailed design on eight approved projects.
- (9) Due to higher interest rates and the early payment confirmation of several larger grants, the estimates for interest income have been increased.
- (10) Federal Assistance Grant Funding increased in line with updated information in the Federal Budget.
- (11) The Open Space Reserve will see an increase in the reserve transfer from the Open Space Reserve (South), which will facilitate the acquisition of significant open space land in Willowbank Rd, South Gisborne.
- (12) WorkCover premiums were forecast to increase, and this adjustment captures further increases confirmed by the received estimate. This increase is attributed to changes to WorkCover premium rates included in the State Government's recent Budget.
- (13) Macedon Ranges Regional Sports Precinct costs have increased due to the novation of the current construction contract for Stage 1 of the project following the appointment of a new builder.

### **Consultation and engagement**

Pursuant to Section 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Draft Council Plan 2021-31 (Year Three Actions 2023-224) in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. This includes provision for public consultation and comment for 21 days during April-May 2023, in addition to an earlier period of public consultation for 28 days during September 2022.

This process included public notices, providing information about the budget and community engagement process on our website and through other communication channels, and notifying the public of the methods of engagement. Council sought written feedback from the community through formal submissions, emails, survey responses, and verbal contributions through the Submitters Delegated Committee.

Submitters to the 2023 process were invited to attend a Submitter's Delegated Committee on Wednesday 31 May 2023.

### **Collaboration**

The draft Budget 2023/24 has been prepared by officers and Councillors through a series of Councillor Briefings and Workshops. Two opportunities were also provided to the community during April-May 2023 and September 2022 to provide input into the 2023/24 Budget process.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

The Budget is an important part of Council's integrated strategic planning reporting framework, as outlined to Council on 16 December 2020. The Budget forms one of the key elements to Council's overall Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework.

**Relevant law**

Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils in Victoria to prepare a budget for each financial year. *The Local Government (Performance Reporting and Accountability) Act 2014* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* specify the requirement for a budget to include major initiatives, and the Regulations prescribe the relevant information disclosure requirements.

Individual programs, projects and initiatives will undertake Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* as part of their implementation during 2023-24, if not already completed.

Gender is a fundamental consideration for the Budget, as it:

- provides for Council operations that include services, assets, facilities, programs and activities.
- incorporates the major initiatives identified by the Council as priorities in the Council Plan, to be undertaken during the next financial year.

Completion of these GIAs highlights the importance of continued reflection on available data, and consultation processes.

For the implementation of the Draft Budget, Council undertook a GIA on the consultation and engagement processes proposed in line with our Community Engagement Policy. A range of consultation approaches and methods, including written, verbal and online were used to ensure that all community members had equal access to engage with and contribute to the development of the Draft Budget. Two consultation periods were undertaken during the preparation of this year's Council Plan and Budget to increase the time and methods available for contributions from the community. Submitters Delegated Committee meetings were also held online, and outside of work and school hours, to improve accessibility for people with work and caring responsibilities, particularly.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Nil

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The preparation of the budget supports Council's priority of strong and reliable government. The Budget 2023/24 includes funding for the services outlined in the *Council Plan*.

**Financial viability**

The draft Budget 2023/24 includes all currently known financial and resourcing requirements for Council in 2023/24.

**Sustainability implications**

Council funding of services continues at similar levels to previous years

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any director or indirect conflict of interest in this matter.

It should be noted that a number of Council officers are ratepayers of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

Appendix 1 – List of draft Budget 2023/24 Submissions and Officer Responses

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
1	Woodend Community Centre	Support for inclusion of advocacy for Stage 2 of project and request for Council to consider a contribution to Stage 2 schematic design.	Noted.	No Change
2	Riddells Creek Landcare	<p>Request for inclusion of:</p> <p>a) Establish a Public Acquisition Overlay over Barrm Birrm that sets out the planning goals and a process for land settlement and transfer to Council or the Crown. Private lots continue to be sold, at escalating prices. The Public Acquisition Overlay will make it clear to prospective buyers that land values in Barrm Birrm may be affected by the process of acquisition. Without this, higher prices will make it more difficult to find the funds to buy back the private lots. Investment now reduces costs later.</p> <p>b) Plan for and secure multi-year funding for a staged weed control program across all Council owned properties at Barrm Birrm. Riddells Creek Landcare has invested in controlling weed species in Barrm Birrm, by contractors and through regular working bees. We have cleared the dominant weeds from 75% of the area. But the presence of heavy infestations of exotic acacia species in the southernmost 25 % of Barrm Birrm is degrading the understorey and threatens those areas that are now weed-free. Weeds wait for no-one - investment now reduces costs later.</p>	<p>1. Council continues to advocate for the future protection of Barrm Birrm and continues to be a priority project. The Public Acquisition Overlay process requires a firm commitment to the purchase of the land including having available funds to enable the acquisition process. Council continues to support and fund the voluntary gift back scheme.</p> <p>2. Council has commissioned an ecological report that will guide ongoing environment action in Barrm Birrm. Council will continue to utilise operational funds to control noxious weeds on Council owned land. The management of the exotic acacia species will require external funding and potentially partnerships with Landcare, Melbourne Water and CFA. Note that Council is not able to undertake works on private property limiting our ability to achieve full eradication of weeds species.</p>	No Change
3	Romsey	Why isn't there anything in the budget for Romsey? As a town that is supposed to be a large district town by 2036, it doesn't seem to be given the same level of budget for upgrades like regular district towns in the Macedon ranges (Riddells Creek and Woodend). It would be helpful for the council to clarify why this is the case.	<p>We appreciate your enquiry and understand your concern about the budget allocation for Romsey compared with other district towns in the Macedon Ranges such as Riddells Creek and Woodend. We want to assure you that the allocation of funds is a result of a careful assessment of various factors, including community needs, infrastructure requirements, population growth projections, and available resources.</p> <p>As a town that is projected to become a large district town by 2036, Romsey's development and improvement are of great</p>	No Change



No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
			<p>importance to Council.. A structure plan is being developed to help guide and manage the sustainable development of the town.</p> <p>A structure plan is required to provide direction to manage sustainable development of the township., and will define Romsey’s unique character, facilitate orderly growth, enliven the town centre, strengthen the local economy, protect its environmental qualities and build community resilience.</p> <p>A new structure plan for Romsey will set a vision for the town and provide certainty to landowners, community, business, referral authorities and other regulators and stakeholders. It will also help to guide future investment by Council.</p> <p>Budgets are dynamic and subject to regular review and adjustment based on evolving priorities, community feedback, and funding availability. We are committed to ensuring equitable distribution of resources and addressing the needs of all communities within the Macedon Ranges Shire, including Romsey.</p> <p>We value your input and encourage you to continue engaging with Council as we work together to shape the future of Romsey and the Macedon Ranges region.</p> <p>If you have any specific concerns or suggestions for Romsey's development, we invite you to share them, as community input is invaluable in Council’s decision-making processes.</p>	
4	Lighting Towers	Support for inclusion of project to install new lighting towers for Courts 1 and 2.	Noted.	No Change
5	Blank Submission			No Change
6	Kyneton Pony Club & Rollinson Reserve	<p>New fencing for Rollinson Reserve.</p> <p>Additional toilet facilities onsite.</p>	The Equestrian Facilities Plan (EFP) will provide ‘mini-masterplans’ for this site. Following the adoption of this EFP by Council, actions and improvements at these sites will be referred to future budget deliberations.	No Change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
7	Kyneton Little Athletics	Support for inclusion of allocation to Kyneton Little Athletics Group dependant on funding for perimeter fencing, new storage shed, permanent jumping run ups and pits and also permanent throwing rings and cages.	In accordance with the Kyneton Showgrounds Master Plan, the immediate priority is to relocate the permanent facilities (jumping run-ups and pits) and storage shed from Oval No. 1. The construction of a fence along Victoria Street is considered complementary to support the activities of Little Athletics, but not essential. The construction of the fencing works and other permanent Little Athletics infrastructure will be considered in accordance with the available budget allocation, as well as in future budget considerations.	No Change
8	Kyneton Pony Club & Rollinson Reserve	Fund to be allocated toward Kyneton Pony Club and Adult Riders to help upgrade facilities, including canteen, upgrade of fencing and addition of sand arena.	The Equestrian Facilities Plan (EFP) will provide 'mini-masterplans' for this site. Following the adoption of this EFP by Council, actions and improvements at these sites will be referred to future budget deliberations.	No Change
9	Signage	Signage in Kyneton to be updated, including heritage dual signage.	The development of a shire-wide tourism signage plan is included as an action in the Visitor Economy Strategy 2019-2029. A signage audit has been completed, and priority actions have been identified. Further investigations are ongoing into the effort and steps required to update and enhance all relevant signage in townships across the Shire as a dedicated program of work.  Some funding has already been allocated, and additional funding is being sought through external sources. There is allocated budget in the 2022/23 financial year to enhance various prominent highway signs.	No Change
10	Gisborne Library	Request for funding of \$30,000 to develop and design and QS plans for a future refurbishment of the Gisborne Genealogical Group at the Gisborne Library to allow them to seek external funding in 2024/25.	This submission is supported by officers. The Central Goldfields Library Corporation has been engaging in discussions with Council Officers for the past 6 months regarding the proposal. The genealogical society space is currently underutilised and reconfiguring this area will result in an enhanced space for joint user activities.	An allocation of \$30,000 has been recommended to be included to support this project.
11	New Gisborne Tennis Club	Support for New Gisborne Tennis Club Light Project	Noted.	No Change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
12	Waste Education	Not supportive of broader community paying for training in use of cloth nappies and using funds for prize money for waste competitions.	The entire community reaps the reward of reduced waste sent to landfills, which in turn results in lower waste charges passed on to residents. The use of reusable nappies, sanitary products, and incontinence aids contributes to waste reduction and less landfill. Implementing incentives, such as prizes, to encourage improved resource recovery practices aligns with best practice and helps to reduce waste costs for Council and the community.	No Change
13	Purchase of Land	Purchase flood plain area on High Street Woodend (North Side of Five-Mile Creek) for nature reserve.	The site is privately owned and has an existing planning permit for development. There is no existing strategic plan or document to provide justification for acquiring this land for public open space.	No Change
14	Rates Increase Tendering	Request cheaper and better contract rates, opposed to increase in contract prices. Opposed to increase of rate rise of 3.5% and supportive of fee for green waste at transfer station.	The CPI (Consumer Price Index) is a standard factor in waste contracts and remains consistent regardless of the contractor. When tendering for kerbside services, our goal is to secure the most favourable contracted rate, which often requires longer-term contracts of six years or more. We appreciate your input regarding the green waste charge at the resource recovery facilities.	No Change
15	Kyneton Dog Obedience Club Rooms	The submission provides background back to 2017 in regards to the Club Rooms, when the club's committee was informed by the council in early 2021 that their club rooms were deteriorating and would be replaced. They were presented with a concept plan in October 2021, and the budget for demolishing and replacing the rooms was approved. However, the project was cancelled in January 2022 due to cost. The club has highlighted frustrations stemming from the lack of communication, delays, and costly consultations, culminating in no facility upgrade included in the draft Budget 2023/24.	During 2021/22 it was identified that the planned replacement of the Obedience Dog Club rooms could not be funded with the budget available. It was subsequently identified that the site masterplan called for a shared facility on site which included the Club. Council has provided funding for the development of design works aimed at informing the creation of a potential new shared-use facility in line with the site's masterplan. This project began in June 2023 and will extend into the new financial year. The primary objective of this design is to gather information for the future development and cost estimation of consolidating existing buildings that are approaching the end of their useful life. The ultimate goal is to construct facilities that effectively cater to the requirements of the users involved.	No Change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
16	Gisborne Botanic Gardens	<p>The Friends note and welcome the inclusion of a review of the Master Plan for the Gisborne Botanic Gardens in the Draft Budget 2023-24. They would also urge that there is sufficient budget allocated for a Masterplan revision of this scale.</p> <p>Further, the Friends recommend the Master Plan be revised to better reflect (a) the purpose of this botanic gardens and (b) its place in Country. As currently written, the Masterplan lacks meaning and vision.</p>	<p>Council is fully supportive of this initiative, and adequate funding has been included in the Draft Budget 2023-24 to facilitate the review process. Council acknowledges the Friends' recommendation to revise the Master Plan in order to better reflect the purpose of the botanic gardens and its place in Country. Council is committed to ensuring that the revised Master Plan sets out a clear meaning and vision for clarity in the community.</p>	No Change
17	Lancefield Court House	<p>Seek urgent support for and serious consideration of an item under the Macedon Ranges Shire Council's CAPITAL RECURRING PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS. The item – listed under Design Projects 2023-2024, - is for an Investigation into best option for the Lancefield Courthouse site. The old Lancefield Courthouse is an important marker into the Lancefield township and is of historical importance in the history of the area.</p> <p>Understanding that, we need to emphasise that while the Courthouse is much loved and well used by and for the community it is in a very poor state. We are delighted that the issues around our site are open to discussion, and we want to emphasise that we have a level of architectural and planning expertise to assist and to be involved in either (i) the appointment of professional services or (ii) working with Council to investigate all possibilities around both the site and the Courthouse.</p>	<p>Council acknowledges and values the offer to assist with the necessary design work for this project. We will ensure that the Historical Society is kept informed of developments and progress regarding the project. Thank you for your support.</p>	No Change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
18	Malmsbury Mechanics Institute	<p>Support that Malmsbury will be receiving funding for the cricket ground, Ross St bridge, Malmsbury Town Hall's subsidence issues, public toilets upgrade and the improvement to our beautiful botanic gardens.</p> <p>Request for future funding possibilities for the Malmsbury Historical Society, including seeking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be formally advised as to why the MMI was not included in this year's budget and we would like to be assured that the MMI will be included in a future budget, hopefully next year.</li> <li>• what undertakings or inclusions for this proposal to be added to 2024/2025 budget considerations?</li> <li>• to be advised where we go from here.</li> <li>• To be advised that should there be no further considerations by MRSC that we be duly, formally advised that our proposal is no longer being considered.</li> <li>• Council to advise what do they plan for the future of the MMI if not planning to proceed with the MMI repairs.</li> </ul>	<p>The Historical Society is aware that the Malmsbury Mechanics Institute (MMI) requires significant renewal works to address ongoing maintenance issues commonly found in buildings of its age across the Shire.</p> <p>Council remains committed to collaborating with the Historical Society and implementing ongoing maintenance programs in the upcoming financial year. The aim is to reassess the proposed renewal works and explore heritage grants and other funding sources as part of future budget processes. By doing so, Council can better allocate resources and prioritise the preservation of historical buildings within the community.</p>	No change
19	Macedon Tennis Club	Request a budget allocation of \$110,000 in the 2023/24 Macedon Ranges Shire Council Budget to complete the fencing project at the Macedon Tennis Club (MTC).	Officers are supportive of allocating funding in the 2023/24 budget to address urgent safety concerns. This allocation, combined with the club's contribution of \$20,000 and additional support from Bendigo Bank of \$20,000 will provide adequate funding to replace the fencing surrounding the courts, which has deteriorated over time.	An allocation of \$80,000 of Council funding has been recommended to be included to support this project, with a contribution of \$40,000 from the club and external grants
20	Drainage	<p>Request for Capital Works funding as follows:</p> <p>a) Reimbursement of our costs to remove gravel from the easement which runs through 47 Smith Street and 46 Margaret Street, Macedon – this sedimentation emanates from Council's roads. Council has directed stormwater, without landowner approval, into this easement from their street drainage system across adjoining private property again without Owner approval. The claim amounts to \$2,770.00 + GST and we contend</p>	<p>a) The request for reimbursement of costs can be discussed separately through the Risk and Insurance review process.</p> <p>b) This request for a retarding basin will require further investigation in the new financial year.</p> <p>c) This request for a box culvert basin will require further investigation in the new financial year.</p> <p>d) Responsibility to upgrade any drainage at the property</p>	No Change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
		<p>that this work should be undertaken at least every 2-3 years with an appropriate biennial budget allocation. It is noted that Council has previously undertaken clearing works and the construction of a berm to separate the stormwater flow from a private dam used as a fire-fighting water resource.</p> <p>b) The creation of some type of retardation system within Ash Wednesday Park that would control surge stormwater during abnormal weather events whilst allowing normal flows to be un-impeded. We understand from recent discussions with Council's engineering staff that this would be relatively simple process of reducing the inlet diameter of the pipe that runs under Smith Street and into a Council pit that has been partially constructed on private property at the rear of 44 Margaret Street, Macedon – we defer to Council's Engineering department on probable costs</p> <p>c) provision of a box culvert which has a capacity greater than the present 3x300Ø pipes laid under the Margaret Street footpath at our property boundary to ensure water flow is unrestricted into the street drain and minimise (if not eliminate) backflow problems – again we defer to Council's expertise on this matter.</p> <p>d) Increase the capacity of the pipework under the Council approved cross-over at the rear of 51 Smith Street, Macedon to minimise backflow across the footpath and street thereby reducing the hazards to pedestrians, particularly the Primary school children that regularly use this pathway. This work would also improve the longevity of the asphalt footpath which is in a poor state of repair as a consequence of poor initial construction and continual inundation from stormwater.</p> <p>e) Grading of road verges to ensure that the flow of rainwater is unrestricted into open street drains – the current situation has rainwater collecting between the edge of the bitumen and grass verges and as a consequence creates scouring, erosion and a deterioration of the road surface.</p>	<p>crossover falls to the property owner. The engineering team can discuss with the resident on the specifics.</p> <p>e) The 2023/24 budget has recommended funding for Shoulder Lip Removal which is expected to address this issue.</p>	

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
21	Romsey	Lack of funding to Romsey (and township), request to start investing in the infrastructure and facilities to become a large district town.	Please refer to Officer Response for Submission 3	No change
22	Kyneton Obedience Dog Club	We respectfully ask that council review our underfunded project, expand their scope of works in relation to this project, and give greater consideration to our needs by adjusting the budget to provide the extra funds required to provide a much loved well patronized club a suitable functional home.	During 2021/22 it was identified that the planned replacement of the Obedience Dog Club rooms could not be funded with the budget available. It was subsequently identified that the site masterplan called for a shared facility on site which included the Club. Council has provided funding for the development of design works aimed at informing the creation of a potential new shared-use facility in line with the site's masterplan. This project began in June 2023 and will extend into the new financial year. The primary objective of this design is to gather information for the future development and cost estimation of consolidating existing buildings that are approaching the end of their useful life. The ultimate goal is to construct facilities that effectively cater to the requirements of the users involved.	No change
23	Kyneton Little Athletic	Support for inclusion in the draft Budget for proposed redevelopment.	Noted.	No change
24	Ross Street Bridge Malmsbury	Supportive for funding allocated in the Draft Budget 2023/24 for repairs to the bridge and looking forward to the tender process & repairs being undertaken early in the new financial year.	Noted.	No change
25	Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve	Request for funding to maintain and fund existing park track and provide recreational infrastructure at Lancefield Park.	The Lancefield Park Committee of Management holds the responsibility for the maintenance, renewal, and establishment of new infrastructure at Lancefield Park. Council is actively supporting the development of a Master Plan for Lancefield Park in the 2023/24 budget. This Master Plan will play a crucial role in guiding the allocation of funds and funding applications for future projects in the parks.	No change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
26	Daly Nature Reserve	<p>Request for sufficient funding to repair ecological damage caused by repair of drainage at Gisborne Scout Hall.</p> <p>Request for funding for a review of the Daly Nature Reserve Environmental Management Plan.</p>	<p>Officers agree that some remediation efforts are needed in response to the drainage works around the Scout Hall. The scope of work needs to be determined and agreed before budget is allocated to complete works.</p> <p>An audit of the Daly Nature Reserve Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has also been completed and an update to the EMP will be undertaken with existing resources in consultation with the Friends Group.</p>	No change
27	Botanic Gardens	<p>Inadequate funding for Open Spaces (Botanic Gardens). Request for 'Botanic' Carden curator to oversee development of the Botanic Gardens.</p>	<p>Officers recognise the need for resources to support the botanical gardens and significant parks, and work has been completed to estimate this resource requirement. Further data and an options analysis are ongoing to determine the best level of qualifications to fulfil community needs, and this may be considered in future budget years. Council acknowledges the need to maintain high standards at the Shire's prominent public parks and open spaces.</p>	No change.
28	Romsey	<p>Supportive of the following: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progression of the Romsey Town Structure Plan process and looks forward to a reviewed timeline for this being soon determined.</li> <li>2. Commitment to road improvements in the eastern corridor and notes Murphy Street Romsey being part of this. Is there an opportunity to incorporate the small unsealed section of William Street between Murphy Street and the Ecotherapy Park in these works?</li> <li>3. Upgrade of the Five Mile Creek footbridge but, with the cost at \$27,000, is interested to understand whether this is both footbridges, or only that on the western side of Main Street?</li> </ol> <p>Request for inclusion of: Implementation of the 2019 Five Mile Creek Master Plan (Stage 2)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Noted.</li> <li>2. The sealed section of Murphy Street is currently in very poor condition and the scope of its improvement works includes pavement reconstruction, drainage upgrades, kerb and channel and footpath upgrades as required. However, the unsealed section is not considered under the Murphy St project. Sealing an unsealed road will be reviewed through a separate process.</li> <li>3. This is funding for design of a new bridge as part of the endorsed Five Mile Creek Masterplan. Previously there was a small timber structure (non-Council asset) over the Creek between Wrixon Street and Robb Drive in Romsey, which was removed due to it being structurally non-compliant and unsafe. Funding for the bridge design and investigation for a new crossing at Wrixon Street is allocated in the budget for FY23/24.</li> </ol>	No change



No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
29	Romsey Ecotherapy Park	Request for inclusion of: 1. Specialist maintenance services for Botanic and high profile gardens  2. Romsey Five Mile Creek Master Plan Implementation (Stage 2)	1. Officers recognise the need for resources to support the botanical gardens and Romsey Ecotherapy Park, and work has been completed to estimate this resource requirement. Further data and an options analysis are ongoing to determine the best level of qualifications to fulfil community needs, and this may be considered in future budget years. Council acknowledges the need to maintain high standards at the Shire’s prominent public parks and open spaces.  2. Implementation of Stage 2 of the Romsey Five Mile Creek Master Plan remains an identified Council priority. Funding has been included in the budget for the design of a new bridge in Wrixon Street over the creek as identified in the Master Plan.	No change -.
30	Lancefield Park Recreation Reserve	Request for the funding of an updated Masterplan for consideration and inclusion in the MRSC 2023/24 draft Budget.	While Council is not the landowner or manager of Lancefield Park, it recognises that the residents of Lancefield are the primary beneficiaries of any improvements made to the park. Having a current Masterplan is essential in securing funding for the development and enhancement of the park. Therefore, officers are supportive of an allocation of \$50,000 to develop a Masterplan.	An allocation of \$50,000 has been recommended to be included to support this project.

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
31	Sporting Facilities and the Natural Environment	<p>Concern for spending on sporting and recreation, but almost nothing on the natural environment.</p> <p>Request for plans for Botanic Gardens as a result of Climate changes (noting recent studies that children prefer the outdoors rather than sports).</p> <p>No inclusion of items for people with sensory issues, who do not cope with large crowds.</p> <p>Disability in sport catered for, but not for those children who like to attend shows or art displays (and Seniors' Week)</p> <p>Doing little for volunteers (celebrate Council volunteers, not all volunteers in the shire)</p>	<p>Council has a strong commitment to the natural environment through ongoing investment in the management of its roadsides, waterways, and conservation reserves. Council also provides a significant annual program of environment events and programs that focus on promoting the natural environment. Council also works closely with and supports the Shire's extensive network of environmental groups that help to manage and enhance the Shire's biodiversity on both public and private land.</p> <p>Council has recently revised the Preferred Species List for street tree planting, which is also relevant to the Botanic Gardens. This revision involved reviewing the Central Greenhouse Alliance Cool It project, which assessed species suitable for the changing climate in Central Victoria. The draft budget includes funding to review the masterplan for Gisborne Botanic Gardens, ensuring appropriate consideration of species selection. Furthermore, the recently completed Romsey Ecotherapy Park incorporates a sensory garden, and nature play elements are integrated into numerous park upgrades.</p>	No change
32	Bullengarook Pony Club Sand Arena	Request for inclusion of sand arena rebuild	The Equestrian Facilities Plan (EFP) will include "mini-masterplans" for the site, outlining specific actions and improvements. Once the EFP is adopted by Council, these actions and improvements at the sites will be considered during future budget deliberations.	No change
33	Romsey Skate Park	Replace existing skate park to provide a safe usable space with a newer, bigger, safer and innovative skate park.	Council is collaborating with the Romsey Lancefield Lions Club on a Romsey Skate Park project. Around \$20,000 is needed to make this project "shovel ready" during the 2023/24 fiscal year, with the intention of raising additional funds for construction in 2024/25.	Support \$20,000 submission to further develop this project.

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
34	Tourism	Request for inclusion of: 1. Shire-wide signage plan 2. Request development of a strategic plan for the Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival, that also considers the Autumn Leaves Management Plan, with a view to evolving the festival for the long-term benefit of the community 3. Vibrant villages - Funding for a project led by Council to undertake/scope a strategic 'Vibrant Villages Plan' for the Macedon Ranges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The development of a shire-wide tourism signage plan is included as an action in the Visitor Economy Strategy 2019-2029. A signage audit has been completed, and priority actions have been identified. Further investigations are ongoing into the effort and steps required to update and enhance all relevant signage in townships across the Shire as a dedicated program of work. Some funding has already been allocated, and additional funding is being sought through external sources. There is allocated budget in the 2022/23 financial year to enhance various prominent highway signs</li> <li>2. The Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival aims to distribute visitors across the shire during a peak visitation period and aligns with the Autumn Leaves Management Plan, which focuses on community safety and amenity in Macedon and Mount Macedon during this time. In light of the high visitation experienced during April 2023 in Macedon and Mount Macedon, a comprehensive review is being conducted to gather input on alternative options for managing the impact of this natural seasonal occurrence. Following this review, various options will be presented to Council for consideration.</li> <li>3. The Vibrant Villages project is acknowledged and aligns with the objectives outlined in both the Economic Development and Visitor Economy strategies.</li> </ol>	No change
35	Kyneton Tennis Courts	Request for funding in the 2023-34 council budget, so that the club can progress forward with its mission to offer a safe, inclusive, and accessible sporting facility by way of concrete path from Victoria Street into and around the facility, supported by appropriate drainage.	Officers are supportive of this funding request and will collaborate with the Kyneton and District Tennis Club to identify priority areas to fund interventions.	Submission supported with a funding allocation of \$50,000

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
36	Ash Wednesday Park	<p>1. This submission requests Council commits to allocating all funds needed, to complete all works of the AWP, in the 2023/2024 Budget in order that we can facilitate the completion of the balance of works that are defined in the Masterplan. These funds could be sourced from the South Ward Public Open Space Fund Reserve which was specifically established to pay for projects such as Ash Wednesday Park. Funding could also be sourced from other Budget reserves for 'MRSC Asset Improvements' for existing infrastructure and/or included in any infrastructure funding grants that MRSC puts forward to the State or Federal Government.</p> <p>2. Request for information to ascertain the full Scope of Works that have been completed because we have requested a reconciliation of works done and previously allocated budget monies which is yet to be advised to our group.</p>	<p>Recent works completed under the Masterplan include the construction of a stage with power and seating, a new playground, enhancements to the pathway network (including the addition of a new pedestrian bridge), installation of new park furniture, drainage improvements, and the provision of a flying fox, generously provided by the Mount Macedon and Macedon Business and Tourism Association Inc. However, additional works in line with the Masterplan are not yet supported and future proposals for specific Master Plan elements to be implemented should be referred to future budget processes for consideration.</p>	No change
37	Autumn Leaves Festival	<p>Object to the continuing to waste rate payers rates on the Autumn Leaves Festival. Specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Close down Autumn Leaves at Macedon &amp; Mount Macedon including the Avenue of Honour.</li> <li>2. Close the gardens, call an amnesty until there is a credible management plan that residents are happy with, that is not intrusive, not biased and one that they agree to.</li> <li>3. Review as to whether these gardens can operate as commercial businesses as they do now and without a planning permits.</li> <li>4. Employ an independent investigator to speak to residents, listen to them about their concerns and views</li> <li>5. Actively inform the greater public that these events are closed until further notice, put in infrastructure to keep visitors moving not stopping, they can come to visit the pub or the Trading Post or the Regional Park, stop the bad behaviour.</li> <li>6. Use some of the money allocated for Autumn Leaves for an investigation, a correctly convened community consultation (not just feedback or event planning meetings that we have had previously, this has shown to</li> </ol>	<p>The suggestions are noted. In light of the significant increase in visitation to Macedon and Mount Macedon during April 2023, a comprehensive review of the Autumn Leaves Management Plan is currently underway. This plan specifically addresses community safety and amenity in the mentioned areas. Council is actively seeking input from both the community and professionals to explore alternative options for managing the situation effectively. Once this review is complete, a range of options will be presented for further consideration.</p>	No change

<b>No</b>	<b>Project Name/ Building</b>	<b>Summary of Submission</b>	<b>Officer Response</b>	<b>Officer Recommendation</b>
		be useless) and a correct plan for our two towns that has the approval of residents, not just what people with vested interests that have had the Councils ear since 2015 and not for toxic over tourism.		

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
38	Romsey	<p>Budget lacks investment, cohesion between departments, and a vision for future growth. Needs of the rapidly growing community are not being understood, and there is inequity in the allocation of funds compared to the wider shire budget. Social connectivity, particularly for children and those with mobility challenges, is given little consideration. Questions the allocation of funds for specific projects such as the Kettlewells Road upgrade, Murphy Street upgrade, and the design of a bridge over Five Mile Creek. They urge reconsideration of fund allocation based on the listed reasons. Highlight the need for improved safety measures for pedestrians crossing busy streets, investment in vacant commercial land, infrastructure improvements, and truck parking. Additionally, they express dissatisfaction with the appearance of the town entry roundabout and request information on the cost of legal proceedings related to the Romsey Hotel.</p>	<p>As a town that is projected to become a large district town by 2036, Romsey's development and improvement are of great importance to Council. A structure plan is being developed to help guide and manage the sustainable development of the town.</p> <p>A structure plan is required to provide direction to manage sustainable development of the township., and will define Romsey's unique character, facilitate orderly growth, enliven the town centre, strengthen the local economy, protect its environmental qualities and build community resilience.</p> <p>A new structure plan for Romsey will set a vision for the town and provide certainty to landowners, community, business, referral authorities and other regulators and stakeholders. It will also help to guide future investment by Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Kettlewells Road upgrade is partly (50%) funded by Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) as part of the regional emergency management improvements for the state.</li> <li>2. Murphy St has been identified as requiring full road reconstruction.</li> <li>3. The design of a pedestrian footbridge over Five Mile Creek is in response to the expressed need of the local community to cross this creek.</li> <li>4. The safety improvements (pedestrian crossings) and truck parking are being considered as part of the Romsey Structure Plan and future assessments through the capital works program.</li> <li>5. The Romsey roundabout was transferred to the Council from Regional Roads Victoria in November 2022 for future maintenance. Since then, Council has included and placed the roundabout on a regular maintenance program. Careful consideration has also been given to the selection of plant species to avoid any sightline issues and ensure staff safety during maintenance activities.</li> <li>6. Requests for information on Council costs can be made through customer service and/or through the Freedom of Information (FOI) process. Council supports public transparency on our operations and expenditure.</li> </ol>	No change

No	Project Name/ Building	Summary of Submission	Officer Response	Officer Recommendation
39	Woodend Community Centre	Congratulate on Council on a balanced 23/24 Budget. Thankful for the inclusion under Capital Works of a Grant Submission for \$500k for our project to inject into a Stage 2 design for the precinct.	Noted.	No Change
40	Various	Front cover not representative of the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. Supportive on inclusion of Waterway Conversation Works Program. Opposed to funding for Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival Advocate for the return to the community of Gisborne, the pine plantation (120 Aitken Street, Gisborne). Support inclusion of Gardens for Wildlife Program and request that it is promoted. Review and Update Street Tree Planning Preferred Species List.	This submission is noted, with specific mention of the Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival funding, which aims to distribute visitors across the shire during a peak visitation period and aligns with the Autumn Leaves Management Plan, which focuses on community safety and amenity in Macedon and Mount Macedon, and also specifically noting that a review of the Preferred Species List is complete, and available on Council's website, at <a href="https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/policies/street-tree-planting-preferred-species-list-2023.pdf">https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/policies/street-tree-planting-preferred-species-list-2023.pdf</a>	No Change
41	IR Robertson Reserve	Replacement of the underground power supply to the IR Robertson Reserve in Gisborne South to be considered for inclusion.	Council recently engaged an electrical contractor to review the current power supply arrangements at IR Robertson reserve and we have now been supplied with a recommendation.  Council has addressed immediate safety concerns and is now reviewing the club's operational power needs.  Council has been quoted approximately \$11k to upgrade the existing supply to two-phase 63 amp. This will be funded through Council's operational budget.  Council's Recreation team will keep the IR Robertson Reserve Advisory Committee informed regarding the plan to address outstanding power supply issues.	No change; no additional funding required. \$11,000 allocation of existing operational budget will be directed towards completing quoted works.

<b>COR.3</b>	<b>CONTRACTS TO BE AWARDED AS AT JUNE 2023</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Corinne Farley, Coordinator Contracts</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### Summary

This report provides details of contracts proposed to be awarded under a delegation from Council, from the date of the last report. Although this report recommends noting the power delegated to Council officers, Council has the power to:

- a) direct that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) award the contract under the direct delegation from Council; or
- b) specifically delegate the power to the CEO.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **Notes that the following contracts will be awarded by Council officers under delegated authority:**
  - (a) **C2023-38 Street Sweeping Waste Processing**
2. **Grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to award the following contracts:**
  - (a) **C2023-37 Supply Panel Aquatic Services**

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### Background information

Council's delegated authority to its officers to award a contract is controlled by the financial value of the contract. The various financial limits of the authority are specified in Appendix 6 of the Procurement Policy.

### Opportunity to review delegated authority

This report provides Council with a brief summary of proposed contracts, which are being advertised and also indicates whether or not delegated authority to award the contract exists.

### C2023-38 Street Sweeping Waste Process

This contract is a schedule of rates contract for the appointment of a number of suppliers to a panel for the disposal and processing of material collected by Councils Street Sweepers. Each supplier's facility will be required to accept the materials collected and create reuse options for the material so as to minimise the amount that is diverted to landfill.

The CEO has delegated authority to award this contract.



**C2023-37 Supply Panel Aquatic Services**

This contract is a schedule of rates contract for the appointment of a number of suppliers to a panel for the provision of maintenance services and upgrade works to Councils swimming pools. This contract replaces a contract which expired 31 December 2023.

The potential five-year contract may exceed the \$1 million financial delegation of the CEO.

**Consultation and engagement**

The nature of this report does not require any consultation or community engagement.

**Collaboration**

The nature of this report does not require collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

Council reviews its Procurement Policy regularly, in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. These reviews consider options for innovation and are part of continuous improvement processes.

**Relevant Law**

The *Local Government Act 2020* provides for Council to delegate powers to staff, including the power to award contracts.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

There are no regional, state or national plans and policies that are relevant to the subject matter of this report.

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The awarding of contracts is undertaken in accordance with the provisions of Council's Procurement Policy.

**Financial viability**

Funds for all contracts to be awarded, as listed above, have been provided in the operational and capital works budget and future annual budgets.

**Sustainability implications**

Council's Procurement Policy requires staff to procure goods, services and works from suppliers who actively employ sustainable practices in their operations.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

<b>COR.4</b>	<b>AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE BIENNIAL REPORT - JUNE 2023</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Travis Harling, Manager Finance and Reporting</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - June 2023</b> <a href="#">↓</a>

### Summary

This report ensures Council transparently discloses a summary of the key matters discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee meetings for the first six months of 2023.

The report also ensures the requirements of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter are met by providing a biannual report to Council that summarises the work of the Committee performed, to fully discharge its responsibilities.

The Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - June 2023 is attached and the Chairperson, Mr Peter Matthews, will attend the Council Meeting to present the report.

### Recommendation

**That Council notes the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - June 2023 and thanks the committee for the report.**

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### Background

The Audit and Risk Committee was formally appointed under section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA) as an advisory committee to Council.

### Discussion

The biannual report of the Audit and Risk Committee has been prepared and tabled for Council to consider. The provision of this report to Council is in line with the requirement in the Audit and Risk Committee Charter to, on a biannual basis, provide an audit and risk report that describes the activities of the committee. It also ensures Council is compliant with section 54 (5) (a) of the LGA.

A summary of the work performed by the committee during quarters 3 and 4 of the 2022/23 financial year is as follows:

- Internal Audit:
  - Professional Advice and Controls Review
  - Procurement Review
  - Internal Audit Plan 2022-23 progress update
  - Internal Audit Program 2023-24
  - Recent reports and publications (other states and sectors)
- External Audit:
  - Confirmation that the Victorian Auditor General's Office will be undertaking the audit at 30 June 2023
  - Audit Strategy for the 30 June 2023 audit

- Internal / Management Reports:
  - Risk Management:
    - Draft Risk Management Policy
    - Draft Risk Management Procedure
    - Draft Risk Management Guidelines
    - Draft Risk Management Strategy 2021-2025
    - Emergency Relief and Recovery report
    - Climate Risk Management Plan
  - Information Services:
    - Information Services Steering Committee updates
    - Various system upgrade progress reports
    - Cyber security risks and penetration testing updates
    - Information Services strategic and operational risks
  - Finance and Reporting
    - Finance report
    - Quarterly report
    - Fraud and Corruption report
    - Draft 2022/23 Budget and Draft Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year 2 Actions 2022/23)
    - Management progress outstanding responses – audit actions
  - Other Reports
    - Compliance with governance principles
    - Councillor reimbursement of expenses (included in Quarterly Report)
    - Sponsorship Policy
    - Plans and Policies strategic review

### **Consultation and engagement**

The Audit and Risk Committee received a draft version of the attached report at its June 2023 meeting and were encouraged to provide feedback.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration with other councils, governments and/or statutory bodies was not required in relation to this report.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

The operation of the Audit and Risk Committee provides a structured, systematic oversight of Council's governance, risk management and internal control practices.

The committee reviews those practices and provides Council with independent advice and guidance regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of management's practices and potential improvements to those practices.

The Audit and Risk Committee is an important communication forum between the external auditor, internal auditor, management and Councillors.

### **Relevant law**

The Audit and Risk Committee is established in line with the LGA.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Nil

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The operation of the Audit and Risk Committee is a legislative requirement, which assists Council to deliver on its priority of strong and reliable government, and achieve its vision by following good governance processes. Council has an adopted charter for the Committee.

**Financial viability**

There are no financial implications relating to the subject matter of this report that are over and above the current cost of resourcing the Audit and Risk Committee.

**Sustainability implications**

There are no sustainability implications relating to the subject matter of this report.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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



**Audit and Risk Committee**

**Biannual Report June 2023**

## **MACEDON RANGES SHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Audit and Risk Committee**

#### **Biannual Report June 2023**

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1. Introduction
2. External Audit
3. Internal Audit
4. Summary of Work Performed

**Peter Matthews**  
Chairperson  
Audit and Risk Committee  
28 June 2023

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## 1. Introduction

As part of its governance obligations to its community, Council has established an Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee is an Advisory Committee to Council, acting in accordance with Sections 53 and 54 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The Local Government Act under section 5(a) requires the Audit and Risk Committee to produce a biannual audit and risk report describing the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee, including its findings and recommendations. The biannual audit and risk report must be provided to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

This is the first biannual Report of 2023, prepared by the Audit and Risk Committee and presented to Council.

The Committee members through January 2023 to June 2023 were:

- Prof. Peter Matthews, Independent Member and Chairperson (Appointed 2018 to 2024)
- Ms Magdalena Williams, Independent Member (Appointed 2021 to 2023)
- Ms Vinitha Pinto, Independent Member (Appointed 2021 to 2025)
- Mr Jonathan Kyvelidis, Independent Member (Appointed 2021 to 2024)
- Cr. Geoff Neil, Councillor Delegate from 30 November 2022 to 22 November 2023
- Cr. Mark Ridgeway, Councillor Delegate from 30 November 2022 to 22 November 2023

The following Councillors attended meetings as observers:

- Cr. Annette Death (Mayor) (March and June meeting)
- Cr. Jennifer Anderson (March and June meeting)
- Cr. Janet Pearce (June meeting)

During the first six months of 2023, the Committee has discharged its duties at the following meetings:

- 1 March 2023
- 7 June 2023

Meetings were in person at the Gisborne Council Chambers from 8:30am – 12:00pm.

### Committee Actions

The Committee continues to work in a constructive and collaborative manner with Councillors, both delegates and observers, and with Officers.

The Committee, in consultation with Officers, is streamlining its procedures to ensure its members have adequate time to digest the considerable volume of papers. Reading obligations have increased significantly over the last two to three years for all committee members. While this preparation is important to ensure the Committee meets the requirements of its Charter, the workload should be noted.

Independent Committee members participation in a Risk Appetite Workshop with Councillors and Executive underscores the importance the Committee attaches to a thorough examination of risk.

The Committee thanks Officers who consistently provide comprehensive and timely reports and who are responsive to Committee requests for additional information or clarifications.



## 2. Internal Audit

The Internal Auditor is a consultant to Council. HLB Mann Judd were appointed the internal auditors in 2019 and are fulfilling the role of the internal auditor for the 2022-23 financial year. Mr Mark Holloway is the Audit Partner.

The purpose of an internal audit is to provide assurance to the Executive, Audit and Risk Committee, and Council by reviewing and testing the existence and effectiveness of policies, procedures and practices of an area of operation. An internal audit is aimed at reviewing operational risks and implementing controls to eradicate or minimise the risk. The Internal Auditor will both offer an opinion on the existing policies and procedures and provide recommendations to improve the policies and procedures to mitigate systemic risk.

### 2.1 Internal Audit Reports

The Internal Auditor prepares a Memorandum of Audit Plan prior to each Review, which is considered by the relevant Director. The Internal Auditor, in consultation with the relevant Department Manager and other key staff, conduct an entry meeting and discuss the scope and objectives of the review. Following the site interviews, the Internal Auditor prepares a report and recommendations. The report also includes the Department Manager's responses.

The following reports were presented to the Committee in the first half of 2023:

- Professional Advice and Controls – presented at the 1 March 2023 meeting
- Procurement – presented at the 7 June 2023 meeting
- Review of Cyber (focus on awareness) – presented at the 7 June 2023 meeting

The following internal audits are scheduled in the remainder of 2023:

- Finalisation of Review of Cyber – for discussion at September meeting
- Review of Statutory Planning Enforcement – in progress
- Environment Management (incl. strategies and practices in response to climate change)
- Customer Service Enquiries and Complaints

### 2.2 Council Progress on Internal Audit Action Items

The Committee regularly reviewed Council's progress on open action items from prior year internal audits. The reporting provided the Committee with insights into the risk profile, aging and status updates on the progress of finalising the internal audit action items.

### 3. External Audit

#### 3.1 Financial Statements

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) will undertake the financial audit for the year ended 30 June 2023. VAGO were represented at relevant Committee meetings by Travis Derricott and Jung Yau.

At the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 1 March 2023, VAGO presented their Audit Strategy for the financial year ending 30 June 2023. The final Audit Strategy was received by Officers on 30 May 2023. This strategy addressed the key risks and areas of audit focus for both the financial report and performance report and outlined the audit approach and timetable.

The Financial Audit protects the interests of Councillors and Ratepayers and enables the Auditor-General to form an opinion on whether Council's financial report and performance statement meet the requirements of the *Audit Act 1994*. The Financial Audit focuses on the accuracy of recording income and expenditure, the existence and measurement of assets and liabilities, and compliance with Accounting Standards.

#### 3.2 Performance Statement

The Performance Statement Audit enables the Auditor-General to form an opinion on whether Council's Performance Statement meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Performance Statement Audit focuses on a range of measures, including roads, planning, animal management and waste and reports to the community on how well Council has performed against the Victorian Government's performance indicators.

The Performance Statement includes the results for:

- Nine prescribed service performance indicators;
- Seven sustainable capacity indicators; and
- Eleven financial performance indicators.

#### 3.3 External Audit Report

The Committee received regular updates from VAGO on external audit matters and activities including:

- VAGO Annual Work Plan
- Financial Audit matters for 2022-23
- Current or planned Performance Audits undertaken by VAGO

- Parliamentary Reports tabled by VAGO
- Operations undertaken by the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission
- Local Government Reports
- Active governance matters across Victorian Municipal Councils
- Performance Audits within local government sector undertaken by other Australian audit offices

## 4. Summary of Work Performed

This section provides a summary and update on the work performed by the Committee during the first six months of 2023 (Quarters 3 and 4 of the 2022-23 financial year).

### 4.1 Financial Reports

Council financial reports to 31 January 2023 and 30 April 2023 were presented to the Committee at the meetings of March and June, respectively.

### 4.2 Risk Management Reports

The Committee received briefings at each meeting from the Chief Executive Officer addressing key highlights and emerging risks that had impacted Council since the preceding Committee meeting.

Council's Risk Management Report provided the Committee with an update on Council's risk management practices including strategic and operational matters, Business Continuity Planning and Insurance Claims, and the minutes of meetings of Council's Risk Management Committee (RMC). At the March meeting, the Committee reviewed Council's Climate Risk Management Plan.

### 4.3 Risk Management Framework

At the June meeting, Council's Risk Management Framework was presented, providing the Committee with an opportunity to review the Council's draft Risk Management Policy, Procedure and Guidelines.

Committee members also attended a separate facilitated session on 6 June, together with Councillors, to contribute to the development of Council's Risk Appetite Statement that informs the management of Council's risks.

### 4.4 Council Fraud Control Report

At the March and June 2023 meetings, the Committee was briefed on Council's Fraud Controls.

### 4.5 Council Compliance Report

At the March and June meetings, the Committee was provided with Council's Governance Schedule noting compliance with statutory obligations as at 31 December 2022 and 31 March 2023 respectively. The report provided the Committee with the assurance that Council is complying with the statutory obligations under the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

#### **4.6 Emergency Relief and Recovery Biannual Report**

At the meeting of March 2023, the Committee received an update to the August 2022 briefing regarding the Inspector General for Emergency Management's Inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian Fire Season – Phase 2 (IGEM Report).

#### **4.7 Reimbursement of Expenditure for Councillors and Delegated Committees**

Under S40 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Audit and Risk Committee must be provided with details of all reimbursements of expenses of Councillors and members of delegated committees. The Committee was provided with a report on this expenditure, included within the Quarterly Report, at the March 2023 meeting, and in an out of session paper during May.

#### **4.8 Council Response to Local Government Reports and Publications**

The Committee reviewed Council's response to the recent reports and publications that have an impact on the Local Government Sector on the matters of:

- Fraud Control over Local Government Grants – March 2023 meeting
- Local Government Rate Capping Mechanism Review – March 2023 meeting
- Local Government 2021/22 Audit – June 2023 meeting
- Regulating Private Pool and Spa safety – June 2023 meeting

#### **4.9 Information Services Update**

The Committee continued to receive Information Services updates after this was highlighted as an area of interest at the beginning of 2021. An Information Services update was provided at the March meeting, with particular focus placed upon the status of software and technology, posture of Council's ICT Disaster Recovery and Information and Cyber Security position, updates on KPIs and Information Services' strategic and operational risks. The reports included the minutes of recent Information Services Steering Committee meetings.

#### **4.10 MRSC Strategy Framework**

At the June 2023 meeting, the Committee was provided with an update on the progress of work to redevelop the Macedon Ranges Shire Council Strategy Development and Review process, including the proposed hierarchy and framework, and next steps to implement and embed the framework, including its translation to a policy development and review.

#### **4.11 Council Policy**

The Committee reviewed the following Council policy documents and provided feedback:

- Sponsorship Policy – June 2023 meeting
- Risk Management Policy – June 2023 meeting, included within the Risk Management Framework Annual Assessment

#### **4.12 Draft Budget 2023-24 and draft Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year 3 Actions 2023-24)**

The Committee were provided with Council's draft Budget 2023-24 and draft Council Plan 2021-2031 (Year 3 Actions 2023-24) out of session during May 2023, due to the timing of the consultation period for these documents.

#### **4.13 Review of changes to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) and Local Government Model Financial Report (LGMFR)**

A summary of changes to the LGRPF and LGMFR, provided by the Local Government Victoria Better Practice Guide 2021-22 and 2022-23, was provided to the Committee out-of-session during May 2023, which noted no significant reporting changes. These changes inform the process and preparation of Council's Annual Report.

## 14 DIRECTOR COMMUNITY REPORTS

<b>COM.1</b>	<b>SMALL PROJECT GRANTS</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Melissa Telford, Community Project Officer</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities 2. Healthy environment, healthy people</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

**Summary**

The Small Project Grants program supports projects and initiatives that:

- support local needs;
- are unlikely to be funded by other Council funding programs; and
- align with Council Plan priorities.

Council's Small Project Grants budget for 2022/23 is \$30,000 and not-for-profit groups can apply for a maximum of \$1,500 per application.

Applications are assessed against set criteria outlined in the Small Project Grants guidelines. Funding recommendations are presented monthly at a Scheduled Council meeting for review and/or approval.

One application has been received, seeking a total of \$1,045.00 in funding. The application has been evaluated against the eligibility criteria and is deemed to be eligible.

Should this project be approved for funding, it is proposed to carry forward the \$1,045.00 to the 2023/24 *Small Project Grants* budget to fund this project in the new financial year.

Additionally, it is proposed that unspent funds from the 2022/23 Small Project Grants budget, along with returned monies from past Community Funding Scheme funded projects that were not undertaken, be carried forward to increase the funding pool for the *Community Funding Scheme* grants program in the 2023/24 financial year.

**Recommendation****That Council:**

1. Approves the awarding of a \$1,045 Small Project Grant to Kyneton District Soccer Club, for their Soccer BBQ and Livestream of Women's World Cup project, to be funded in the 2023/24 financial year;
2. Carries forward \$1,045 from the Small Projects Grants 2022/23 budget to the Small Projects Grants 2023/24 budget, to fund the Kyneton District Soccer Club's Women's World Cup project, as per item 1; and
3. Carries forward \$32,400 (includes \$9,002 unspent from the Small Projects Grants 2022/23 budget and \$23,398 returned monies from Community Funding Scheme funded projects not completed) to the Community Funding Scheme 2023/24 budget, to increase the funding pool for this grants program, noting this increase is for the 2023/24 financial year only.

**Background**

The Small Projects Grants program has been operating since 2018. Unlike other funding schemes, the program is open for applications year round, except during the caretaker period leading up to a Council election.

Eligibility criteria

The Small Project Grants program provides incorporated, community-based not-for-profit groups operating or established within the shire the opportunity to submit one application per year for funding. The program is also available to non-government and government schools for projects that are outside of the accepted responsibilities of the school and the Victorian Government.

The Small Project Grants guidelines, available on Council’s website, outline the eligibility requirements of applicants and the assessment methodology. The document also provides guidance on the projects or activities that will/will not be funded through the program.

Assessment Process

Applications are initially reviewed to determine eligibility. Eligible applications are assessed and scored against the program criteria, based on the responses provided in the online application form. However, eligibility does not guarantee funding.

Where applications are deemed ineligible, they are not assessed and scored.

The assessment criteria and scoring matrix are outlined in the guidelines, to assist applicants with the preparation of their applications. Eligible applications are assessed according to six criteria as detailed below:

<b>Score</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Details</b>
Pass/Fail	Demonstrating eligibility	Compliance with Section 6 of the guidelines
20%	Describing your project	A brief description of the project aim
10%	Unlikely to be funded by other funding programs	The project timing/scale/amount of funding sought is not compatible with other funding programs
30%	Demonstrating community need and benefit	Why the group needs to do the project? How the community will benefit from the project/activity?
20%	Supporting Council Plan priorities	Promotes or contributes to the achievement of one or more Council Plan priorities
20%	Demonstrating good project planning	The project group practices good governance, considers risks, complies with regulations or similar and has an appropriate budget

Application summaries and funding recommendations are presented to Council at a Scheduled Meeting for consideration.



**Discussion**

One application has been received, seeking a total of \$1,045 in funding. The application has been evaluated against eligibility criteria and meets program requirements.

Applicant	Project description	Amount requested	Recommendation
Kyneton District Soccer Club	To support the Kyneton District Soccer Club to hold a BBQ and Livestream event for the Women’s World Cup friendly game between Australia and France in Kyneton. This will support the group to cover the costs of venue and equipment hire, catering and promotion for the event. The aim of this is to increase local engagement/interest in Women’s soccer at the professional level and to promote and strengthen community connections to the club and increase participation in local sport. The group are collaborating with other local groups including U3A Kyneton to deliver the event.	\$1,045	\$1,045

**Consultation and engagement**

Information regarding the Small Project Grants program is publicly accessible on Council’s website. Officers consult with applicants regarding their applications and seek internal advice as necessary. In particular, Council’s Sport and Recreation team was consulted with for this project, who provided in principle support to the application.

**Collaboration**

Council has not undertaken collaboration with other councils, governments and/or statutory bodies in relation to these applications.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

Council is committed to innovation and continuous improvement in relation to the Small Project Grants. Officers regularly review the promotion of the program and seek out new ways to encourage new and diverse community groups to access this small grants program. The Small Project Grants program has recently undergone a review, with recommendations presented at this Scheduled Council Meeting in a separate report.

**Relevant law**

A Gender Impact Assessment was conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report to ensure Council meets obligations under the *Gender Equity Act 2020*. It was determined that this application could be defined as gender sensitive. The applicant has considered the impact gender norms, roles and relations has had on community engagement in Women’s Soccer, and the event represents a targeted action to make engagement and participation easier. The project is intended to support a range of community members and groups that does not include or exclude on the basis of gender or ability. However, no specific steps have been identified by the applicant to explore potential barriers to participation based on

gender, targeted promotion to address gender inequity or to actively challenge under-lying causes of inequities.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Not applicable.

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The Small Project Grants program supports Council’s priorities of connecting communities, promoting healthy environments and healthy people and delivering strong and reliable government.

**Financial viability**

Council’s Small Project Grants budget for 2022/23 is \$30,000. Grants of up to \$1,500 are available for eligible projects. A total of 12 Small Project Grants have been allocated to-date in 2022/23, totalling \$17,365.50 prior to the review of the application contained within this report. Additionally, two projects with a total value of \$2,587.50 endorsed in June 2022 were funded from the 2022/23 budget. This leaves an amount of \$10,047.00 remaining in the budget for this financial year.

Given the timing of Council’s decision on this Small Project Grants application for the Women’s World Cup project, any funding endorsed will be administered and paid in the 2023/24 financial year. As such, **Officer recommendation 2** proposes that, should this Women’s World Cup project be approved for funding, \$1,045 be carried forward to the 2023/24 Small Projects Grants Budget to fund this. This would increase the 2023/24 Small Projects Grants Budget from \$30,000 to \$31,045, and would leave a total of \$9,002 unspent in the Small Projects Grants budget for 2022/23.

**Officer recommendation 3** proposes to carry forward the unspent \$9,002 from the Small Projects Grants budget for 2022/23, along with an additional \$23,398 of monies returned to Council for Community Funding Scheme funded projects unable to be completed in previous years. This combined total of \$32,400 is proposed to be added to the funding pool of Council’s annual grants program, the Community Funding Scheme, for the 2023/24 financial year only. This would increase the 2023/24 Community Funding Scheme funding pool from \$160,000 to \$192,400.

Both recommended carry forwards are summarised in the table below:

	<b>Small Project Grants program</b>	<b>Community Funding Scheme grant program</b>
<b>2023/24 budget</b>	\$30,000	\$160,000
<b>Proposed carry forward amount</b>	\$1045 (per recommendation 2)	\$32,400 (per recommendation 3)
<b>Total 2023/24 budget after proposed carry forward</b>	\$31,045	\$192,400

Note – these proposed carry forwards are for the 2023/24 financial year only and not an ongoing increase to the Small Project Grants and Community Funding Scheme budgets.

**Sustainability implications**

This project has been submitted by a group that undertakes activities to support the health and wellbeing of the local community through active participation in sport. As such, this

project has the potential to contribute positively to the wellbeing and connectedness of the community.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

<b>COM.2</b>	<b>SMALL PROJECT GRANTS REVIEW</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Julius Peiker, Coordinator Community Development</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities 2. Healthy environment, healthy people</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Small Project Grants 2023/24 Guidelines <a href="#">↓</a></b>

**Summary**

Following Council’s adoption of a new Community Grants Policy in April 2023, it was necessary to undertake a review of the Small Project Grants (SPG) program guidelines, to ensure these are compliant with the new policy. As part of this review, a number of changes to the SPG program are recommended.

**Recommendation**

**That Council adopts the Small Project Grants 2023/24 Guidelines.**

**Background**

Council first delivered the SPG (previously known as Councillor Grants) program in 2013. In 2018, officers reviewed the program, with Council endorsing new guidelines and a new name. The guidelines that were endorsed in 2018 and the \$30,000 annual budget have remained unchanged. The funding cap of \$1,500 for each grant has not changed since 2013.

With Council, endorsing the new Community Grants Policy in April 2023, a review of the SPG was required to ensure it was compliant with the policy. This review provides an opportunity to consider other enhancements to the guidelines that will better meet the needs of the Macedon Ranges community.

**Discussion**

The following changes to the SPG guidelines are being recommended:

Funding cap per application

With costs significantly increasing over the previous 10 years, a funding cap of \$1,500 no longer meets the needs of the community. Anecdotal feedback from community groups supports this view.

Additionally, the program has been under-subscribed over the last five years with the full \$30,000 budget for the program not being fully spent as demonstrated in the table below.

<b>Round/year</b>	<b>Applications approved</b>	<b>Total \$ funded</b>
2018/19	14	\$16,060
2019/20	11	\$14,117
2020/21	4	\$5,900
2021/22	10	\$13,445
2022/23	12	\$17,366

An increase in the funding cap from \$1,500 to \$3,000 has the potential for more community groups to engage with the program. Once the \$30,000 budget has been expended, the grant program will close until the next financial year.

It is recommended that the funding cap for the SPG program be increased from \$1,500 to \$3,000 per grant.

#### Projects not funded

The previous SPG guidelines did not preclude Council from funding infrastructure projects (small capital projects). Even with the cap increased to \$3,000, the SPG program is not the best vehicle to fund any infrastructure. Infrastructure projects are funded through the Community Funding Scheme's category Small Community Infrastructure Grants, where the funding cap is \$12,000.

It should be noted the SPG program in each of 2021/22 and 2022 /23 financial years, funded one small capital/infrastructure project.

It is recommended that infrastructure/capital projects no longer be funded through the SPG program.

#### Turn-around time for applications

The current SPG guidelines state that *Applications are assessed three weeks prior to an Ordinary Council meeting*. This is not actually possible due to the Council reporting cycle and the range of tasks required to be undertaken prior to a report being submitted for inclusion at a Scheduled Council Meeting. To allow for the convening of an assessment panel (including facilitating panel member's availability), undertaking an assessment, follow up with applicants, report preparation and authorisation requirements, additional time is required.

Consequently, it is recommended that the advice in the guidelines that refer to applications being assessed three weeks prior to a Council meeting be changed to:

*Depending on when an application is received during Council's reporting cycle, the entire process may take up to a maximum of eight weeks.*

#### Assessment of applications

Currently, the SPG guidelines do not specify the score required for an application to progress to Council for consideration. Best practice requires that a minimum standard be achieved by all applications to be considered for funding.

To clarify this situation, it is recommended that the following be included in the guidelines.

*All applications are scored based on the weighted assessment criteria. An application that scores 50 (out of 100) and below will not be recommended for funding and will not be forwarded to Council. Officers will work with the applicant to explore the possibility of strengthening their application.*

#### **Consultation and engagement**

The SPG program review involved consultation with internal stakeholders, resulting in the recommended updates above.

#### **Collaboration**

No collaboration with other councils or organisations was undertaken in preparing this report.

#### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

This review of the SPG program and guidelines was conducted utilising a continuous improvement framework. Consequently, this report is recommending improvements and enhancements to this grant program, in line with industry best practice.

**Relevant law**

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* a Gender Impact Assessment was completed for Council's Community Grants Policy resulting in a number of requirements for all Council grants programs. The updated SPG guidelines are now compliant with Council's Community Grants Policy with respect to gender equity.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

There are no relevant

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

The SPG program aligns with Council Plan strategic objectives Connecting Communities and Healthy Environment, Healthy People. Additionally, the attached SPG guidelines are compliant with Council's Community Grants Policy.

**Financial viability**

The SPG program is delivered within endorsed budget parameters.

**Sustainability implications**

There are no social and/or environmental issues impacted by the outcome of this report.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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



# Small Project Grants Guidelines 2023/24



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**Acknowledgment of Country**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.



**Macedon Ranges**  
Shire Council

3

Small Project Grants 2023/24 Guidelines

## 1. Small Project Grants

Small Project Grants fund public money to not-for-profit community groups and non-government and government schools for programs and initiatives that benefit residents of the Macedon Ranges and help achieve Council Plan goals.

The aim of the Small Project Grants program is to support initiatives which:

- a) support local needs
- b) are unlikely to be funded by other Council funding programs
- c) align with the Council plan priorities of:
  - Connecting Communities
  - Healthy Environment, Healthy People.

## 2. Opening and closing dates

Applications can be submitted online at any time, except during the caretaker period during a Council election year. Please note that from the point at which you submit your application, the assessment/approval process (including endorsement at a Scheduled Council Meeting) may take up to a maximum of eight weeks. Please refer to [Council's website](#) for submission dates for each Council meeting.

## 3. How much is available?

The Small Project Grants budget for 2023/24 is \$30,000.

The program provides grants of up to \$3,000 per project to eligible groups for community programs and initiatives.

## 4. Who can apply?

Incorporated, community-based not-for-profit groups operating or being established in the Macedon Ranges can submit one application per year. Schools and churches can apply if they can show a demonstrated need and a broad community benefit beyond the school community or congregation respectively.

Groups that are not incorporated can also apply, if another incorporated group auspices them. Please refer to [Section 6 - Legal Requirements](#).

## 5. Eligibility

Applicants are advised to read the guidelines thoroughly before submitting their application.

### a. Who will not be funded?

The following are ineligible to apply to the Small Project Grant program:

- Individuals
- Political organisations
- For profit/commercial organisations
- Government agencies/organisations
- Groups that are in debt to Council
- Groups that have not completed the reporting requirements of previous Council grants.

### b. What will not be funded?

Projects or activities which:

- have already commenced, are recurrent or have been completed
- are commercial, religious, political, discriminatory, sexist, racist or disrespectful
- are considered fundraising/asking for donations<sup>1</sup>
- intend to raise funds beyond what is needed to deliver the project and aim to boost general operating profits
- are the funding responsibility of state or federal government
- promote or involve gambling-related activities
- do not support responsible drinking
- involve capital and/or infrastructure works
- are defined as facility maintenance on community and Council-owned buildings<sup>2</sup>
- fund capital expenditure (the purchase of land, buildings, vehicles)
- award monetary prizes
- are recreational excursions (camps, holidays, tours)
- duplicate services already operating or planned for in a targeted community
- have been previously funded by Council
- are not well supported by evidence of need and where alternative solutions have not been adequately considered
- do not have broad support amongst the community
- do not have appropriate heritage sign-off, including Aboriginal cultural management (where required)

Core business/operational costs such as:

- salaries for ongoing positions
- rent, insurance, utility costs, debts
- conducting an annual general meeting.

## 6. Legal requirements

### a. Incorporation status

Applicants must be registered as an incorporated body or arrange for a legally constituted not-for-profit organisation to manage (auspice) the funds.

Council does not auspice applicants.

For more information on auspice arrangements visit the [Not-for-profit Law Information Hub](#).

### b. Child safe standards

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, through actively promoting child safety and ensuring compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Victorian organisations that provide services to children are required, under the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005*, to ensure that they implement compulsory child safe standards to protect children from harm.

<sup>1</sup> An application for donations/fundraising activities is regarded as a request for sponsorship and therefore ineligible for a Small Project Grant.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to the terms of your maintenance schedule in your lease/licence agreement.

As a Child Safe organisation, Council requires that all grant applicants demonstrate their compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and read/understand Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct, available from [Council's website](#). Within the application form, applicants will be required to identify whether their project involves direct or incidental contact with children and young people, and complete either a Child Safe Statement of Commitment or submit their Child Safe Policy and a Child Safe Direct Contact Checklist. These questions are contained within the eligibility section of the application form and must be completed by all applicants.

Please note: If your organisation is being auspiced for the purpose of this grant, the auspicng organisation will also need to meet the Child Safe Standards.

More details on the Child Safe Standards can be found on the [Commission for Children and Young People website](#).

c. Public liability insurance

Public liability insurance covers incidents that occur during an activity being conducted by a group. All groups must be covered by public liability insurance and be able to provide a valid certificate of currency if they are involved in any events or activities in public open space, using Council facilities or sporting events. Other activities may also require public liability insurance.

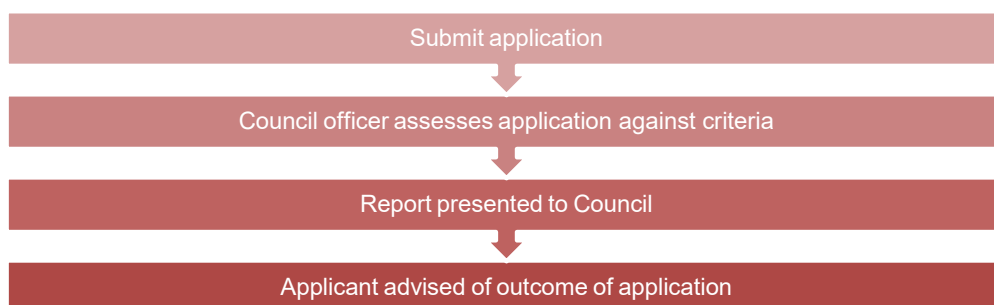
It is the responsibility of the applicant or recipient to arrange appropriate insurance. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their insurance requirements with their insurance company or a professional advisor.

Groups without public liability insurance can contact [localcommunityinsurance.com.au](http://localcommunityinsurance.com.au) which offers an affordable public liability scheme for not-for-profit community groups.

**7. What is the application process?**

The application process involves a panel assessment with recommendations sent to a Scheduled Council Meeting for endorsement. Depending on when an application is received during Council's reporting cycle, the entire process may take up to a maximum of eight weeks.

All applicants receive an email of acknowledgement through Council's online grants management system (SmartyGrants) once their application is submitted.



**8. How are applications assessed?**

Eligible applications are assessed by a panel of staff across the organisation, based on responses provided in the application form. Eligibility does not guarantee funding.

All applications are scored based on the weighted assessment criteria. An application that scores 50 (out of 100) and below will not be recommended for funding and will not be forwarded to Council for consideration. Officers will work with the applicant to explore the possibility of strengthening their application which may result in re-submitting the application.

Funding recommendations are presented to Council for approval.

Council reserves the right to exercise judgement on the appropriateness of funding eligibility criteria in respect to contentious, topical or contemporary issues, or where the project may be perceived to be in conflict with Council objectives, plans, or the wider wellbeing of its residents.

Council decisions are final. Applicants who wish to discuss the outcome of their application are encouraged to contact Council’s Coordinator Community Development.

**9. Unsuccessful applications**

The assessment process is rigorous and objective - the scoring matrix is used to assess applications to a consistent and fair standard.

Your activity/project may not receive funding for a variety of reasons. These are some common reasons for an application not being recommended for funding:

- the project is ineligible (refer to Section 5)
- the application scored 50 or below out of 100 (refer to Section 14).

**10. What we are looking for in the applications**

The table below outlines the scoring for each criteria. Referring to this and the details contained in the scoring matrix at the end of these guidelines will help you develop a strong application.

**Assessment criteria**

Weighting	Criteria	What we are looking for
30%	Evidence of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of need</li> <li>• Letters of support</li> <li>• Unlikely to be funded by other funding programs</li> </ul>
20%	Alignment to Council priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated relationship to Council priorities</li> <li>• Alignment to Council’s wellbeing, environment or reconciliation priorities</li> </ul>
30%	Community benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people participating in project</li> <li>• Number of people benefiting from project</li> <li>• Impact of the community benefit</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving gender equity outcomes</li> </ul>
20%	Ability to deliver project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate sound budget</li> <li>Demonstrate good project planning</li> <li>Demonstrate good risk management</li> </ul>

**What will strengthen my application?**

- Applications that address Council’s wellbeing and environmental priorities will score more highly than those that do not. Please refer to page 12 of the [Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025](#) and page 3 of the [Environment Strategy](#). Your application should clearly state how your project or initiative will support/contribute to this priority.
- Applications that consider gender equity and accessibility for diverse community groups and those that advance reconciliation and/or celebrate First Nations Peoples will score more highly than those that do not.

**Summary of Council priority areas**

Priority area	Council priorities
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>climate emergency</li> <li>sustainable transport</li> <li>waterway health</li> <li>biolinks and habitat links</li> <li>waste minimisation</li> <li>community engagement and partnerships</li> </ul>
Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>promoting mental health</li> <li>social connection and inclusion</li> <li>encouraging gender equity and respectful relationships free from violence</li> <li>promoting healthy eating and active living</li> <li>preventing harm from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs</li> <li>tackling climate change and its impact on health,</li> <li>supporting the community to respond to and recover from emergencies</li> <li>preventing harm from gambling</li> <li>supporting a dementia friendly community</li> <li>increasing access to affordable housing</li> </ul>
Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initiatives that advance reconciliation and/or celebrate First Nations Peoples will also be highly regarded</li> </ul>

- Your application will be strengthened and will score higher if you can refer to specific actions from at least one of these strategic documents.
  - [Council Plan 2021-2031](#)



- [Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Environment Strategy](#)
- [Disability Action Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2028](#)
- [Macedon Ranges Heritage Strategy 2014-2018](#)
- [ELEVATE: Youth Strategy 2018-2028](#)
- [CREATE: Municipal Early Years Plan 2021-2025](#)
- [PARTICIPATE: Positive Ageing Plan 2020-2025](#)
- [Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-2023](#)
- [2019 Healthy Heart of Victoria Active Living Census](#)

## 11. Budget

Your budget needs to include all income and expenditure related to the activity/project for which you are requesting funding. See a sample budget below:

### Income

Grant from Council (this application)	\$ 3,000
Cash contribution from group	\$ 500
<b>Total income (please calculate)</b>	<b>\$ 3,500</b>

### Expenditure

Venue Hire	\$500
Guest speaker	\$1,000
Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony	\$1,000
Marketing and Promotion	\$500
Printing	\$500
<b>Total expenditure (please calculate)</b>	<b>\$ 3,500</b>

For groups who are registered for GST, GST will be added to the amount requested.

Grants to recipients not registered for GST will be made exclusive of GST.

For information about GST and ABNs contact the [Australian Taxation Office](#).

## 12. Conditions

### a. Funding agreement

Successful applicants will abide by the terms and conditions of a funding agreement.

Activities/projects must be completed within twelve months of receiving funding.

Funds must be spent on the activity/project described in the application.

### b. Project variation

Applicants must contact the Grants Team to discuss and then complete a variation/extension request form via Smarty Grants. Recipients should not undertake any changes until they have written approval following this request.

c. Reporting

Successful applicants are required to submit a report (acquittal) on grant monies spent upon completion of their activity/project by the date set out in the funding agreement.

Groups who do not submit an acquittal will not be eligible to apply for further funding from Council until the activity/project has been acquitted.

d. Incomplete activities/projects and unspent funds

If an activity/project can no longer be completed, please contact Council. Any unspent funds are to be returned to Council.

e. Permits, insurance and authorisations

The applicant is responsible for any regulatory and statutory requirements associated with the activity/project, such as planning and building permits and public liability insurance.

### 13. Privacy

The collection and handling of personal information is in accordance with Council's Privacy Policy which is displayed on [Council's website](#) and available for inspection at, or collection from, Council's customer service centres.



14. Scoring matrix

Categories	Low (0-3)	Medium (4-6)	High (7-10)
<b>Evidence of need (30%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No community support or endorsement from local community provided</li> <li>No engagement or collaboration with local community detailed</li> <li>No statement of need included</li> <li>Other funding sources very possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some degree of community support and/or endorsement included</li> <li>Some engagement or collaboration with local community planned</li> <li>Other funding sources slightly possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statement of need included as evidence</li> <li>Multiple letters of support/endorsement from community</li> <li>Strong engagement/collaboration with other community groups demonstrated</li> <li>Other funding sources very unlikely</li> </ul>
<b>Alignment to Council Priorities (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little to no detail explaining alignment to Council priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some alignment to Council priority provided, however little detail given</li> <li>Some evidence of understanding of relevant Council plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear alignment to Council priority with reasons strongly articulated</li> <li>Supports initiatives that advance reconciliation and/or celebrate First Nations Peoples</li> <li>Supports one or more of Council's environmental/wellbeing priorities</li> </ul>
<b>Community Benefit (30%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community benefits are not clear or appear unachievable</li> <li>Low benefit for target group/unlikely to impact others in community</li> <li>Minor increase in community activity likely</li> <li>Gender has not been considered</li> <li>Accessibility for diverse groups not considered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community benefits appear clear and achievable</li> <li>Moderate benefit for target group/ impact is likely to include other groups in shire</li> <li>Moderate increase in community activity likely</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community benefits appear clear, achievable and well considered</li> <li>Significant benefit for target group/ impact will benefit shire broadly</li> <li>Impact of project on all gender identities has been considered</li> <li>Accessibility for diverse community groups has been addressed</li> </ul>
<b>Ability to deliver project (20%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate project planning - aims are unclear or appear unachievable, project description lacks clarity and tasks list incomplete or has little attention to detail</li> <li>Inadequate budget - unclear/incomplete, no funds or in-kind contribution, no additional funding sources sought, project costs exceed project value or will require ongoing funding</li> <li>Potential risks or strategies to mitigate these not adequately considered</li> <li>No supporting documentation provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate project planning - clear and achievable aims and project timeline</li> <li>Adequate budget - most costs or income sources identified, some funds or in-kind contribution included, additional funding sources may have been sought and project costs equal project value</li> <li>Some relevant risks considered with strategies to mitigate these</li> <li>Some supporting documentation provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent project planning - clear articulation of all tasks in a logical order with realistic timelines</li> <li>Sound budget - all costs and income sources clearly identified, significant funds or in-kind contribution included, additional funding sources may have been confirmed and project value exceeds project cost</li> <li>Relevant risks carefully considered with strategies to mitigate these</li> <li>All supporting documentation provided</li> </ul>

<b>COM.3</b>	<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE REVIEW</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Wendy Le Brocq, Coordinator Customer Service</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### Summary

Community consultation was undertaken from 27 April to 24 May inclusive, on a proposal to close Council's Woodend Customer Service Centre and the opportunities to deliver and promote services to residents through other means. The results from this consultation are presented for Council's consideration in making a decision on this matter.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

- 1. Notes community feedback received on the proposal to close the Woodend Customer Service Centre, as summarised within this report; and**
- 2. Approves a reduction in operating hours at the Woodend Customer Service Centre. With this change, the centre will operate from 12pm to 5pm two days per week, effective from 1 August 2023.**

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### Background

Council has four customer service centres across the shire, located in Gisborne, Kyneton, Romsey and Woodend. The Gisborne Administration Centre is in the South Ward. In the East Ward, a customer service centre is operated from the Romsey Hub. The Kyneton Administration Centre is in the West Ward, with a second West Ward customer service site located at the Woodend Community Centre. The Woodend site is situated 15km from the Kyneton Administration Centre and 18km from the Gisborne Administration Centre and operates five days a week.

The Macedon Ranges Shire estimated resident population for 2022 is 52,132. Woodend district has a population of 8,804 (<https://profile.id.com.au/macedon-ranges>).

### Discussion

At a Councillor Briefing held on 6 September 2022, an update was provided on customer service centre opening hours across all sites. The Woodend Customer Service Centre underwent a six month analysis from May to November 2022, with data collected on foot traffic, enquiry types and the number of transactions processed, to help inform the future operations of the site. Data was also collected at the Gisborne, Kyneton and Romsey customer service sites from August to November 2022, to provide a comparison.

This collection of data from all centres showed significant contrasts in attendance and activities performed, which prompted further investigation to assess the viability and feasibility of the Woodend Customer Service Centre.

At its Scheduled Council Meeting on 26 April 2023, Council resolved to endorse the Customer Service Centre review to be released for community consultation. Consultation was undertaken for a four week period from April to May 2023.

During the community consultation period, 27 submissions were received. Of these, 25 were from Woodend residents; one did not provide an address and one was anonymous.

### Feedback received

A total of 24 submissions disagreed with the recommendation to cease Council services at the Woodend Customer Service Centre.

The submissions provided the following feedback that:

- face-to-face interactions are preferred and are more effective;
- the dissolution of personal customer service will cause distrust of Council to increase;
- with the closure of financial institutions and lack of police presence in Woodend, this proposal to close another service would be of some detriment to the community;
- residents who do not drive or do not possess a computer/smartphone will be impacted;
- travel/transport between towns and location of train stations in Kyneton and Gisborne is not convenient and will result in loss of time;
- consideration should be given to a reduction in rates if the closure proceeds, as there would be no Council service;
- the proposal would impact on elderly residents' ability to pay rates, access home care services and process animal registrations/renewals; and
- the expected population increase means that Woodend needs a Council service.

Two submissions neither agreed nor disagreed with the recommendation to cease Council services at the Woodend customer service site. These submissions provided feedback that:

- most interactions with council are online – no affect; and
- a complaints/suggestion box be available and actioned daily.

One submission agreed with the recommendation to cease Council services at the Woodend Customer Service Centre. This submission provided the feedback that:

- it's a saving worth making, however, direct the savings to road maintenance and infrastructure.

### Consideration of feedback

Council officers have considered all feedback and have been able to mitigate the issues raised and provide solutions addressing residents' concerns.

It is important to note that residents residing in the shire's smaller settlements have not had the convenience of a service centre within their own towns.

Council offers a range of options to make payments of its fees and charges. For example, in addition to in-person, Council rates payments can be made online (credit card only), through BPAY, BPAY View or Billpay, at any Australia Post Office, over the phone, by mail, by direct debit or through Centrepay (via Centrelink).

Data collected showed the most common payments / purchases made at Woodend included rates payments, animal registrations, home care support service payments and FOGO caddy bin liner purchases. Some feedback suggested that these payments / purchases would be impacted, however it's important to note:

- FOGO bin liners are now available for purchase at the Woodend and Kyneton Visitor Information Centres.

- The analysis of data showed a total of 98 home care payments were made in-person at the Woodend Customer Service Centre for the period May to November 2022 and 82 in-person payments for the period 3 January to 31 May 2023. Council’s provision of home care support services will cease on 30 June 2023, after which payments will no longer be required, further reducing the need for in-person interactions at the site.
- Rate instalments are due and payable quarterly or annually during a rateable year, and animal registration renewals are due and payable annually. It is difficult to justify continuing and operating the service at its current level (five days a week) for five peak periods over the course of the year.
- The redevelopment of the Woodend Community Centre would incorporate the Visitor information centre, library and space for other community based services.

The table below provides an approximate total of payment transactions made in-person across all sites since 3 January 2023 to 1 June 2023 inclusive. The period captures three of the five annual peak payment periods - two rate instalments, due 28 February and 31 May 2023 and animal renewals, due 9 April 2023.

<b>Approximate total of payment transactions across all sites</b>	
Gisborne	1998
Kyneton	1753
Romsey	943
Woodend	462

The statistics further demonstrate that there are significant contrasts between the Woodend Customer Service Centre and other service centres.

Continued services from Woodend Community Centre

Should this proposal be supported, the following services will be made available from the Woodend Community Centre:

- Council’s Customer Service will operate onsite for in-person interactions, from 12pm to 5pm, two days per week.
- Officers will continue to monitor in-person transactions at Woodend, and may make future recommendations for consideration.
- Council will support, educate and provide assistance to customers to enable better usage of telephone and online payments.
- The notice board will display Council information, similar to the other service centres, and will be regularly maintained.
- A courtesy telephone has been reinstated at Woodend for customers to make direct contact with Council, if needed. The courtesy telephone was removed during the COVID-19 pandemic, to eliminate risk of cross infection transmission. Sanitising aides have been made available for customers’ use.
- All e-waste, office stationery and face mask disposal bins will remain on site, to allow customers to utilise this service.
- Hirers and regular user groups of the Community Centre will continue to receive Council support and will be encouraged to use the available communication channels for support with any enquiries.

**Consultation and engagement**

Community consultation was undertaken from 27 April to 24 May inclusive. As part of the consultation process, Council:

- published a notice on Council's website – 'Have your Say'
- displayed posters in reception areas and provided hard copy feedback forms
- published a notice in the Midland Express
- promoted on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn social media channels

**Collaboration**

The nature of this review did not require collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies.

**Innovation and continuous improvement**

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that councils give effect to innovation and continuous improvement in all that they do.

**Relevant law**

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the subject matter of this report, and has found no data that would suggest an impact of this decision is higher with any particular gender.

Should the recommendation to reduce the Customer Service operating hours at the site be supported by Council, communications will be required, to ensure that people with a disability, seniors or other cohorts who may not have easy access to drive or take public transport are aware of and understand the various alternative ways that bills, such as rates, can be paid. Customer service team members will provide support and assistance to customers to enable increased access to alternative payment arrangements.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Not applicable.

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

Customer Service Charter

**Financial viability**

There are financial and resourcing implications to be considered in relation to this report, including staffing, rostering and the financial cost implications of continuing operations.

**Sustainability implications**

Council is confident that the customer service supports described in this report will be maintained and regularly reviewed to ensure that the service continues to meet the community's needs socially, economically and environmentally, therefore, there will be no sustainability implications.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

<b>COM.4</b>	<b>DRAFT DISABILITY ACTION PLAN</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities</b> <b>2. Healthy environment, healthy people</b> <b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b> <b>3. Business and tourism</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2024 Actions</b> <a href="#">↓</a>

### Summary

Officers are undertaking the development of a revised Draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2024. This report seeks Council's endorsement for the draft plan to be placed on public exhibition.

### Recommendation

**That Council endorses the draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2024 to be placed on public exhibition for a minimum period of four weeks.**

### Background

The *Disability Act 2006* (Vic) requires that Councils in Victoria plan for the purpose of:

- (a) reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- (b) reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- (c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability;
- (d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

This planning is required to be included in either a Disability Action Plan (DAP) or Council Plan, and reporting on implementation must be included in the council's annual report.

Council adopted the Disability Action Plan 2021-2025 at its Scheduled Meeting in October 2021. At this time, the DAP was written in an easy English format and actions placed within the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

The DAP 2023-2024 will be drafted as a standalone plan and will also be supplemented with an easy English version. The actions for the plan are to be independent of the MPHWP.

### Discussion

The DAP will guide Council activities to cultivate an inclusive community where people with disability feel valued, safe and connected.

Council has an ongoing involvement in a wide range of activities, events, initiatives and projects that impact and support people with disability in our community.

In line with Council's Community Vision Statement of *a collaborative commitment to inclusivity for all*, the draft DAP actions 2023-2024 incorporate an inclusive approach across Council, with responsibilities and actions aligned to the four strategic objectives within our Council Plan:

- Connecting Communities
- Healthy Environments, Healthy People
- Business and Tourism
- Deliver Strong and reliable government

### **Consultation and engagement**

The 2021-2025 DAP was made available for community consultation from 26 August 2021 to 28 September 2021. Engagement focused on consulting the wider community, Council staff, service providers, groups and organisations, with the outcomes of this consultation shaping the adopted DAP.

The revised draft Disability Action Plan 2023-2024 will be placed on public exhibition for a four week period, with outcomes to be brought back to a Scheduled Council Meeting at a later date.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration was not required with other councils, government and/or statutory bodies in relation to this report.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

The draft DAP 2023-2024 incorporates actions that aim to encourage innovation and continuous improvement of inclusion strategies across Council departments. The draft also prioritises building capacity for Council to engage meaningfully with the community in matters relating to people with disability.

The DAP 2023-2024 will also be available in an easy English version, making it accessible to all.

### **Relevant law**

This report is directly relevant to requirements under the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the Victorian *Disability Discrimination Act 2006*. The report is indirectly relevant to requirements under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this plan. There are complex intersections between inequalities related to gender, disability and the determinants of health and actions within the DAP 2023-2024 will be implemented with these intersections in focus.

### **Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

The draft DAP 2023-2024 aligns with the Inclusive Victoria – State Disability Plan (2022-2026) and Australia’s Disability Strategy 2021-2031.

### **Relevant Council plans and policies**

The DAP 2023-2024 aligns with Council’s key strategic planning documents:

- Community Vision 2021-2031
- Council Plan 2021-2031 and its four strategic objectives; Actions in the DAP 2023-2024 are linked to these strategic objectives and to relevant strategic priorities under these.

- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Council's health and wellbeing goals:
  - Our community is inclusive and celebrates diversity
  - Our community is safe and healthy
  - Our community is adaptable and resilient

**Financial viability**

The actions to be delivered and reported on under the draft DAP 2023-2024 are aligned with existing endorsed Council strategies and plans, and are achievable within operational budgets.

**Sustainability implications**

The implementation of the DAP will have positive impacts on both social and economic sustainability. The DAP actions look to increase accessibility for people with disabilities to increase their participation with in the Macedon Ranges, which benefits the community as a whole.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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





# Disability Action Plan 2023-2024



<b>Date of Adoption</b>	TBC	
<b>Adoption Method</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive
<b>CEO Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Manager</b>	Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing	
<b>Department</b>	Community Wellbeing	
<b>Term</b>	July 2023 to June 2024	
<b>Last Endorsement Date</b>	27 October 2021 (Easy English format)	
<b>Nominated Review Period</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Biennially
<b>Next Endorsement Date</b>	TBC	

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.

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### **Purpose and aims of this Disability Action Plan**

This Disability Action Plan (DAP) recognises the right of all people with disability to live an included and respected life in our community and acknowledges the important roles played by carers, families, volunteers and service-providers.

We developed this DAP with input from people with disability, disabled people's organisations, families, carers and supporters of people with disability.

The DAP will guide Council decision-making and aims to promote

- A whole-of-council approach to disability inclusion
- Accessible and inclusive Council services, programs and events
- Partnership approaches
- Positive community attitudes and disability-inclusive community activities

## Legislative and policy context

Our DAP aligns with our responsibilities under the following legislation

### International

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

### National/Australian

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- Disability (Standards for Accessible Public Transport) 2002
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031

### State/Victorian

- Disability Act 2006
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Local Government Act 2020
- Carers Recognition Act 2012
- State Disability Plan – Inclusive Victoria: state disability plan (2022-2026)

**The DAP addresses the four key areas of action legislated in the Victorian Disability Act 2006. These are:**

- Reducing barriers to people with a disability in accessing goods, services and facilities
- Reducing barriers to people with a disability in obtaining and maintaining employment
- Promoting inclusion and participation of people with a disability in the community
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability

### Local policy context and relevant Council Plan priorities

The DAP aligns with Council's key strategic planning documents:

- Community Vision 2021-2031
- Council Plan 2021-2031 and the four (4) Strategic Objectives in this Plan
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 and Council's health and wellbeing goals:
  - Our community is inclusive and celebrates diversity
  - Our community is safe and healthy
  - Our community is adaptable and resilient

## Executive Summary

The Disability Act 2006 (Vic) requires that Councils in Victoria either prepare an annual DAP or include disability planning in their Council Plan. Reporting on implementation must be included in Council's annual report.

Council's Disability Action Plan (2021-2025) is written in an Easy English format, with 2022-2023 actions being part of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP). For 2023-2024 the DAP is a standalone plan, which is aligned to other Council plans and strategies. It will also be supplemented with an Easy English version.

The Council Plan 2021-2031 (draft 23/24 actions) commits to "Continue to deliver the actions for the Disability Action Plan 2021-2025". Therefore to meet this all areas of Council have been invited to nominate relevant new actions for 2023-2024 or to carry forward actions that were not able to be met in in 2022-2023.

Council has an ongoing involvement in a wide range of activities, events, initiatives and projects that impact and support people with disabilities in our community. In line with Council's Community Vision Statement of "a collaborative commitment to inclusivity for all", the draft DAP 2023-2024 incorporates an inclusive approach across Council responsibilities, where all areas take direct responsibility for ensuring they conduct their roles in ways that promote access and inclusion across the community.

Feedback from relevant stakeholders across Council has been received and actions have been collated to form the draft plan. Public consultation in July will enable the community to provide feedback for consideration in the final plan.

## Disability in the Macedon Ranges Shire

In 2021, 2,614 people (or 5.1% of the population) in Macedon Ranges Shire reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This was a percentage increase from 2016 and compares to 6.9% for Regional Victoria.

In Macedon Ranges Shire in 2021, 5,878 carers were providing unpaid assistance to a person with disability, long term illness or old age in 2021, an increase of 1.9% since 2016. This represents 14.3% of the population aged 15+ compared to 14.1% for Regional Victoria.

From [profile.id.com.au/Macedon-ranges/assistance](https://profile.id.com.au/Macedon-ranges/assistance)

The 2021 Census also indicated that 29.6% of people with disability in the Macedon Ranges Shire have mental health conditions – this is significantly higher than for any of the other identified groups.

## Council's role

Council has a number of roles that are important in improving access and inclusion for people with disability, their carers and families. Key examples are:

- Planning, managing and maintaining community resources and infrastructure including footpaths and roads, community buildings, parks, playgrounds and sporting and leisure facilities.
- Planning and delivering health and community services including Maternal Child Health Services, immunisations, playgroups, youth services, libraries, cultural events and entertainment.
- Providing connection and reliable information to the community through our customer service centres, websites, social media accounts and print publications and through supporting local groups, events and initiatives.
- Working in partnerships with other Government, the not for profit sector and businesses to benefit the community and residents
- As an employer.



## Developing the DAP

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their ideas and views on the direction they would like us to take in relation to disability and inclusion. We know that a strong plan should reflect the community's needs, concerns, priorities and aspirations.

To develop our Disability Action Plan, we consider:

- the views of external stakeholders
- population data from many sources
- Commonwealth and Victorian Government priorities
- evidence about what works
- our current actions, resources and other relevant council plans and strategies

## Monitoring and Reporting

We are committed to reviewing and reporting on progress of the DAP aims and actions.

The Community Wellbeing Department will be responsible for monitoring the implementation and reporting of this Plan, however the actions will be the responsibility of the relevant department across Council.

We will include people with disability in review and evaluation processes and will incorporate their input in reports.

Twice-yearly reports will be published on Council's website, distributed to people who provided comment and available to the community.

**Actions for 2023-2024**

**A Actions linked to Council Plan Strategic Objective - Connecting communities**

Council Plan Strategic Priorities	Disability element/action
Improve connectivity and movement, and provide transport choices to the community, including walking trails and bike paths	Continue to deliver improvements in car parking accessibility, based on community input, information about current situation, and future needs.
Provide well-designed, fit-for-purpose, multi-use open spaces and infrastructure for the community to connect, engage and participate in a financially sustainable way	Continue to improve continuous accessible paths of travel to key destinations, such as recreation and community facilities, through the funding of the Footpath Construction Program.
Target community needs through development programs and grants	<p>Direct some Council community grant funding to initiatives that emphasise inclusiveness.</p> <p>Seek funding to provide accessibility guides for large Council-managed venues.</p>
Promote a more inclusive community by supporting community groups and vulnerable groups	<p>Continue to recognise International Day of Persons with Disability (IDPWD).</p> <p>Research the most effective ways for council, working within our agreed role and resourced capacity, to support carers in our community.</p> <p>Continue to review programs and work with young people to identify and implement options for increasing social connections among children and families who are at risk of experiencing social isolation, and who may not engage in traditional community programs.</p>
Explore opportunities for affordable and social housing in the shire	<p>Work with the Victorian Government to increase supply of affordable housing, including social housing, in the shire.</p> <p>Advocate for specialist disability housing in the region.</p>

**B Actions linked to Council Plan Strategic Objective - Healthy environment, healthy people**

Council Plan Strategic Priorities	Disability element/action
Provide opportunities to experience open space and bushland reserves	<p>Ensure that inclusion and needs of people with disability are reflected in the development of a new Open Space Strategy.</p> <p>Maintain open spaces and parks that can be used by all members of the community.</p>
Maintain systems and capacity to manage and respond to emergency events	<p>Work with stakeholders to provide community education sessions for people with disability about how to keep safe during emergencies.</p> <p>Advocate for funding for specific recovery activities for people with disability who may experience emergencies differently.</p> <p>Move towards person-centred emergency preparation.</p>
Encourage active and healthy lifestyles for people of all ages and abilities	<p>Work with partner agencies to encourage people with disability to increase physical activity levels.</p> <p>Help sporting groups and clubs to be accessible and inclusive for people with disability.</p>
Engage families to promote the importance of early childhood education and health	<p>Access School Readiness Funding to assist children with communication, wellbeing, access and inclusion outcomes prior to attending school.</p> <p>Embed use of communication support tools in kindergartens, including Auslan or Key Word Sign.</p>
Support our community to ensure better access and connection for facilities and services	<p>Prepare for and take advantage of funding opportunities for provision and renewal of accessible public toilets, including Changing Places.</p> <p>Review disability access and inclusion learning needs within our organisation.</p> <p>Develop and implement a disability awareness training strategy that is integrated in Council's Learning and Development Strategy.</p>

**C. Actions linked to Council Plan Strategic Objective – Business and Tourism**

Council Plan Strategic Priorities	Disability element/action
Encourage economic vitality (including tourism, agribusiness and local employment options)	Promote diverse and flexible opportunities for volunteering with Council.  Plan ways for MRSC to offer employment opportunities to people with disability.  Complete the review of our workplace Equal Opportunity Policy.
Support small business and the local economy	Support external organisations to increase capacity for diverse volunteering opportunities.  Profile the diverse experience and contribution of people with disability in the workforce in Council's Economic Development e-news and other communication channels.  Promote Australian Government grant opportunities to assist businesses to modify physical work environments.

**D. Actions linked to Council Plan Strategic Objective – Deliver strong and reliable government**

Council Plan Strategic Priorities	Disability element/action
Enhance strategy, policy and plan development, and identify alignment to allow for prioritisation of services that are efficient, well planned, accessible and meet community needs	Establish internal disability inclusion champions group from across council, to strengthen focus on an inclusive approach by council
Lead advocacy engagement and enhance relationships with all tiers of government and key stakeholders	Build effective networks of people with disability, carers, service-providers and government agencies – to enable two-way information exchange.  Establish ongoing inclusive consultation mechanisms - to hear the views and ideas of people with disability of all ages in MRS, to inform council policy, planning and service-provision.
Enhance customer experience through the transformation of our services, to ensure they are easy to access, and provide seamless transactional and interactional experiences	Investigate strategies to confirm that the commitments in the Customer Service Charter are met for people with disability.



<b>COM.5</b>	<b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Naomi Scrivener, Manager Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>2. Healthy environment, healthy people 4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Affordable Housing Policy</b> <a href="#">↓</a></li> <li>2. <b>Background paper - Overview of Affordable Housing</b> <a href="#">↓</a></li> <li>3. <b>Background paper - Affordable Housing Policy and Legislation</b> <a href="#">↓</a></li> <li>4. <b>Background paper - Macedon Ranges Shire - Affordable Housing Profile</b> <a href="#">↓</a></li> </ol>

### Summary

Across Australia, there is a significant shortage of affordable dwellings, and this is an important issue in the Macedon Ranges. Council has undertaken the development of an Affordable Housing Policy, which was recently made available for community consultation, and officers now present an updated copy for Council's consideration to adopt.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **Adopts the Affordable Housing Policy and notes its supplementary background papers; Overview of affordable housing; Affordable Housing Policy and Legislation; and Macedon Ranges – Affordable Housing Profile; and**
2. **Revokes the Affordable Housing Interim Policy, adopted in December 2021 effective from 29 June 2023.**

### Background

#### Affordable housing

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act) defines affordable housing as '*...housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following:*

- *very low-income households*
- *low-income households*
- *moderate-income households.'*

In 2022, the annual income ranges for regional Victoria were:

	<b>Very low-income</b>	<b>Low-income</b>	<b>Moderate-income</b>
Single	Up to \$19,090	\$19,091 to \$30,500	\$30,551 to \$45,820
Couple (no dependent)	Up to \$28,640	\$28,641 to \$45,820	\$45,821-\$68,730

Family (Single/couple with dependent children)	Up to \$40,090	\$40,091 to \$64,150	\$64,151 to \$96,220
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*Table 1 – Annual income ranges defined under the PE Act.*

Types of affordable housing

Affordable housing refers to both non-private housing (rental) and private market housing (ownership and rental) and includes the following:

- Affordable housing for rental or ownership
 

Private market housing may be affordable where the rent or mortgage repayments are no more than 30 per cent of the household’s income.
- Social housing
 

Social housing is short- and long-term rental housing that is generally owned and run by government or not-for-profit agencies. Social housing includes:

  - Public housing
 

Public housing is rental housing, which is owned, controlled and managed by the Victorian Government’s Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). Public housing tenants must be on very low- to low-household incomes. Rents are usually limited to 25 per cent of household income.
  - Community housing
 

Community housing is rental housing owned, managed and controlled by registered community housing agencies. The housing is generally targeted towards very low- to moderate-incomes or special need households. Rents are generally limited to 30 per cent of household income.

Council’s current Affordable Housing Interim Policy

At its Scheduled Meeting held in December 2021, Council endorsed the Affordable Housing Interim Policy. This interim policy was to form the basis of an Affordable Housing Policy, to be drafted and endorsed by July 2023. The purpose of an interim policy was to give Council time to consider the actions of the Victorian Government’s 10-year social and affordable housing strategy, to align with future Council policy. The strategy was due in late 2021, however this has not yet been released, with no firm indication of when the release date may be.

The objective of the interim policy was also to put affordable and social housing on Council’s agenda and to convey Council’s intent to engage with the Victorian Government (Homes Victoria) and our community on this important issue. It allowed work to be initiated with Homes Victoria to advocate for investment in affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges. It was announced by the Victorian Government in November 2020 that Victoria’s Big Housing Build (to be delivered by Homes Victoria) would invest \$5.3 billion to increase the supply of social and affordable housing across the state, with \$30 million identified as the minimum investment in the Macedon Ranges Shire.

Given the lack of updated state-wide policy direction, and very little change since the interim policy was established – the review determined that the content of the interim policy at a high level was still valid. As such, the draft Affordable Housing Policy was endorsed for public consultation at Council’s Scheduled Meeting in April 2023.

**Discussion**

The draft affordable housing policy's purpose is to provide Council a position to guide and facilitate the provision of affordable housing on public and private land through appropriate and effective advocacy, facilitation and decision-making.

This policy, if endorsed, will guide and inform all Council decisions and actions pertaining to affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges.

The draft policy is supported by background papers that give an overview on the following:

- Affordable housing policy and legislation
- Overview of affordable housing
- Macedon Ranges – affordable housing profile

Once adopted, it is proposed that the policy be reviewed by June 2025, to consider both the commonwealth and state government's strategic vision for affordable housing, which has not yet been released.

**Consultation and engagement**

The policy and background documents were placed on public exhibition from 27 April to 25 May 2023. The community was given the opportunity to provide feedback via:

- Written submissions by email (27 April to 25 May)
- Online survey on Council's 'Have Your Say' web page (27 April to 25 May)
- Drop-in sessions at Romsey Hub (2 May) and Gisborne Village Shopping Centre (18 May)
- Online community conversation by Zoom (10 May).

The community consultation was promoted via:

- Media release (27 April)
- Email invitation to approximately 150 stakeholders.
- Newspaper advertisements in the Midland Express (2 May and 16 May)
- Social media posts (4 May and 11 May).

Council received the following feedback from the community:

- 4 written submissions
- 38 online surveys
- 2 responses at online community conversations.

**Summary of findings**

- Four written submissions were received from two individual community members and two landholding organisations;
- Overall, most respondents to the consultation (20) were supportive of the draft Affordable Housing Policy with some of these respondents suggesting amendments or additions. Four respondents opposed the draft Policy and 10 respondents were neutral (indicating that they neither support or oppose the draft Policy, or responded 'not sure', or provided general feedback).



- The majority of respondents reported they were moderately or extremely concerned about the availability of affordable housing (including social housing) in Macedon Ranges Shire. One respondent reported that they were not concerned.
- A small number of respondents were from key community cohorts such as, people with a disability, those who do not speak English as their first language, those currently experiencing housing insecurity, those identifying as LGBTQIA+. However, the response rate was not representative of these population groups. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples were not represented in the consultation outcomes.
- Respondents were from a range of different areas across the Shire, mostly Woodend and surrounds and Kyneton and surrounds. Most respondents were property owners/ratepayers in Macedon Ranges Shire. Younger people under the age of 24 were not represented in the consultation.
- The main points of feedback were around strengthening the Policy on Council's role in land-use planning to facilitate more affordable housing. This included options to set an affordable housing target and seeking planning scheme amendments to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing, particularly for growth areas like Gisborne and Kyneton. The opportunity to facilitate affordable housing using land-swaps was also highlighted.
- The importance of engaging and partnering with landholders such as private developers and churches to facilitate affordable housing outcomes was raised. This included a statement about facilitating contributions to social and affordable housing through rezoning land.
- A submission from a planning consultancy on behalf of a landowner and developer in Kyneton was supportive of the policy but highlighted the opportunity to *"strengthen the policy in regards to ensuring a supply of land is available to deliver affordable housing. This includes ensuring new subdivisions allow for a range of lot sizes to cater for diverse housing needs."*
- One submission highlighted the opportunity for Council to work with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) in securing appropriate specialist disability accommodation, particularly in Kyneton and Woodend.
- Most respondents to the survey and participants at the online consultation session agreed that Council should consider broadening the eligibility of affordable housing on land that it owns to other cohorts of people who need affordable housing, as well as seniors, for example; essential workers, younger single people or families.

Officers have considered all points in the feedback received and amended the draft policy as noted in Appendix 1 below.

### **Collaboration**

The nature of this report did not require collaboration with other councils, governments or statutory bodies.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

Council's regular review of its strategic and policy documents is reflective of a commitment to innovation and continuous improvement.

### **Relevant law**

- The *Local Government Act 2020* provides the legal framework under which Victorian councils operate. The Act controls the sale and leasing of council-owned land,

procurement of goods and services by a council, the administration of public open space, and governance and probity requirements for councils.

- The *Housing Act 1983* has the broad objective of ensuring every person in Victoria has adequate and appropriate housing at a price within their means. The Housing Act, together with the Office of the Housing Registrar, provides the framework for the establishment, compliance and recognition of registered housing agencies.
- The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* provides a framework for the administration of the use and development of land, and includes objectives relevant to affordable housing supply.
- In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted in relation to the subject matter of this report.

Housing instability and homelessness is becoming critically worse for women, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (who are overrepresented in the social housing population), older single women, women with a disability and women with experiences of domestic or intimate partner violence. Domestic and family violence is one of the main drivers of homelessness, made worse by the pandemic.

Taking a gender approach to housing and homelessness raises a range of economic and social inequities, which accumulate over the life course to exacerbate levels of housing crisis for older women. Older single women aged 55 and over are the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia.

This is noted particularly when women are typically living on lower fixed income, have not had the opportunity to buy a home, or have lost their home in a property settlement. Some of these women have had significant breaks from paid employment or have worked below capacity in part-time or casual roles to accommodate unpaid care work to children or parents (or both), or as a result of disability limiting their engagement in the workforce.

Ageing and single status are compounding factors which place non-home owning women at higher risk of homelessness or inappropriate housing. This group of older women also includes women who have experienced domestic violence. Given Australia's ageing population, the continued problem with gendered wage gaps, a lack of workplace accommodations for women with disabilities, the undervaluing of work done in women-dominated sectors and a failure to shift the dial on the unequal gender distribution of unpaid care work, the level of homelessness among single older women is projected to continually increase.

The draft policy has been developed with the findings of this assessment, where Council recognises it has a role to play in advocating for women to have access to safe and affordable housing.

### **Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

- The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement 2018 (NHHA) recognises the commonwealth and state governments' mutual interest in improving housing outcomes across the housing spectrum, including outcomes for Australians who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Under the NHHA, around \$1.6 billion is provided to states and territories each year to improve Australians' access to secure and affordable housing, targeting social housing investment and provision of homelessness support services.

- Homes for Victorians (2017) is the Victorian Government's current housing strategy. The Victorian Government is developing a ten-year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy, which was due for release in late 2021, but this has not yet occurred.
- The Victorian Government has provided funding for the development of a Loddon Mallee Housing Action Plan, which addresses issues relating to the provision of additional housing across the Loddon Mallee Region, and identifies strategies. This plan will guide Council's work in relation to affordable housing.

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

- Council Plan 2021-2031
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Affordable Housing Interim Policy
- Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme - includes objectives and provisions relating to affordable housing

**Financial viability**

The endorsement of the Affordable Housing Policy can be achieved within the adopted 2023/24 Council Budget.

**Sustainability implications**

The Affordable Housing Policy will guide work throughout Council in response to advocacy, facilitation and decision-making in relation to affordable housing. This work will raise awareness of the need of affordable housing and actions to move towards meeting the need in our region, leading to positive social, health and economic outcomes for those that require affordable housing.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

**Appendix 1**

*Summary of feedback, response and recommendations*

Feedback	Response and Recommendation
<p>Expressed concerned about what would happen to the current seniors residing in Councils Seniors housing. “If Councils opens its housing to more vulnerable people in the community, which I agree with, I not want this to impact the housing of those already in the Seniors Units. I would also support Council upgrading these units.”</p>	<p>Council has a long history of providing and supporting social housing for seniors. It is the intention of Council that its seniors housing stock will continue to be used for this purpose, while at the same time advocating for other cohorts of vulnerable people to be considered.</p>
<p>Suggestion to amend planning controls to allow second dwellings on rural properties / larger properties.</p>	<p>Will consider working with the State Government on planning scheme controls.</p>
<p>An abbreviated, easy to understand version of final policy would recognise that these people also have an interest.</p>	<p>Noted and will take into consideration for consultation on further policy development.</p>
<p>Requested addition to the policy: “Council as a facilitator and investor will: ... - work to ensure there is a supply of land for developers to deliver affordable and diverse options as part of their housing and lot mix”.</p>	<p>The scope of this policy is focused on affordable housing that is appropriate for the needs of households with very-low to moderate incomes and that is allocated to those households. The broader issues of land supply, housing diversity and ‘lot-mix’ are addressed through township plans and are outside the scope of this policy.</p> <p>These options will be considered as part of township plans and future Planning Scheme amendments.</p>
<p>Strengthen the policy in regards to ensuring a supply of land is available to deliver affordable housing. This includes ensuring new subdivisions allow for a range of lot sizes to cater for diverse housing needs.</p>	
<p>The policy principles do not include reference to those who live with disability or how the council could work with the NDIA in securing appropriate specialist disability accommodation, particularly in Kyneton and Woodend.</p>	<p>Council staff, including the Inclusive Communities Officer, is actively advocating to housing organisations that provide housing support for people with disabilities highlighting the need for investment in this region.</p> <p>The policy principles under Council role as ‘decision maker’ and ‘advocate’ includes to:</p> <p>“share information about the needs of priority housing cohorts, including people with disability, across Council endorsed strategies and plans;”</p> <p>And</p>

	<p>“advocate for all demographics that require affordable housing and foster partnerships with the registered community housing providers that work with specific cohorts;”</p> <p>A statement will be included under the role of ‘advocate’ to:</p> <p>“Actively engage State Government, Community Housing Sector, Specialist Disability Housing Sector and philanthropic organisations to fund Affordable Housing projects.”</p>
<p>Recommend ensuring Council’s planning officers are upskilled and have the tools/resources to negotiate affordable housing outcomes.</p>	<p>Noted and will be passed on to Council’s planning department who manage, lead and develop our planners.</p>
<p>Recommended Council work in partnership with the private sector to help address the scale of need for affordable housing, ensuring Council is clear about expectations for developers to contribute to affordable housing before the land is purchased by a developer.</p>	<p>This is included in the draft Policy under ‘facilitator investor’.</p>
<p>Highlighted the opportunity for Council to undertake a property/land audit on both public and private land and to maintain a register of opportunities to develop/facilitate affordable housing.</p>	<p>Council works with Homes Victoria and have suggested possible Council land that could be utilised for affordable housing. Council will continue to work with Homes Victoria in identifying and advocating for opportunities.</p>
<p>Recommended the policy highlight the opportunity for Council to facilitate affordable housing through land swaps or for Council to purchase land or use of vacant land.</p>	<p>Under Council’s role as ‘facilitator and investor’ include an action to investigate opportunities to facilitate affordable housing through land swaps or for Council to purchase land or use of vacant land.</p>
<p>The need to recognise the problem with affordability across the housing continuum, particularly the lack of affordable private rentals was highlighted.</p>	<p>The scope of this policy is to focus on affordable housing, not housing affordability more broadly. Affordability and supply is a consideration in township plans.</p>
<p>“Land Planner” should be one of the Roles of Council in this policy.</p> <p>As a Responsible Authority Council, Council can strengthen its Local Planning Scheme to highlight objectives and policies to facilitate affordable housing. Council can also establish a framework to negotiate affordable housing provision at</p>	<p>Add a Council role for Land-Use Planning and consider including the points in the comment below.</p>

<p>the rezoning and/or permit application stage.</p>	
<p>Under the “Land Planner” role add:                  Ensure any Planning Scheme Amendments include the Affordable Housing Target of 2% with a guaranteed commitment through a s173.                  Update the Local Planning Policies to include Affordable Housing targets and commitments generally, but equally to Gisborne and Kyneton townships.                  Negotiations with developers and applicants wanting to rezone and uplift their land commit 2% of their dwellings to Affordable Housing.                  Conduct a land audit on all council-owned land to test which assets could be used for Affordable Housing or could potentially be used as a land swap for a more appropriate location with another landowner.</p>	<p>All sections are noted and are aligned with points in the decision making section of the policy. Council will work to applying the policy and exploring the suggested changes. The Affordable Housing Policy will be reviewed within two years if not before if required and at this time these recommendations will be considered, aligned with state and federal strategic direction.                  Council has been actively working with Homes Victoria and will continue to do so to identify appropriate Council and State owned land that could be utilised for affordable housing.</p>
<p>Suggestion to enforce any new developments contain a portion of the lots available are solely for affordable housing and that the houses built on those plots do not stand out as different from those around.</p>	
<p>Recommend Council be clear about expectations for developers to contribute to affordable housing before the land is purchased by a developer.</p>	
<p>Under Council role as a ‘Decision Maker’, set an Affordable Housing Target. Currently MRSC has 1.7% social housing (as stated in the Background Paper). Consider setting a sliding target from 1.7% now and by the end of the Policy up to 2%. This is modest as the current percentage of social housing for the state is 3.5%.</p>	
<p>The policy should host an affordable housing forum to help educate the community.</p>	<p>Council will look at opportunities to raise awareness of and educate the community through partnership with relevant agencies to raise the profile of affordable housing and homelessness across the ranges within their advocacy role.</p>

<p>MRSC should be become a member of CHIA Vic and actively participate in the Municipal Association of Victoria's Inter-Council Affordable Housing Forum.</p>	<p>Council is a member of CHIA and actively participates in the MAV Inter Council Affordable Housing Forum and will continue to do so. Reference to this will be added to 'facilitator investor'.</p>
<p>Include a reference to the Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework from the state government when talking about housing ATSI <a href="https://www.vahhf.org.au/">https://www.vahhf.org.au/</a></p>	<p>Suggestion noted and added in the policy objectives. Add new text under advocacy to recognise the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework.</p>
<p>Under Advocacy, include "Actively engage State and philanthropic organisations to fund Affordable Housing projects."</p>	<p>Note that the draft Policy expresses a commitment to respond to affordable housing opportunities - this would include philanthropy.</p>
<p>Strengthen the advocacy to State and Federal governments for "Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning" for Affordable Housing.</p>	<p>Under Council's role as advocate, include a statement to advocate to the state government for state-wide mandatory inclusionary zoning measures for affordable housing.</p>
<p>Under 'Facilitator', include partnering with not-for-profits and charities more broadly, including Churches that have a lot of land in the town centres.</p>	<p>Included under Council's role as 'facilitator investor' in the draft policy.</p>

# Policy



## Affordable Housing Policy

<b>Date of Adoption</b>	TBC 2023		
<b>Adoption Method</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council	<input type="checkbox"/> CEO	<input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <i>please specify</i> )
<b>CEO Signature</b>			<b>Date</b>
<b>Responsible Officer and Unit</b>	Manager Community Wellbeing		
<b>Nominated Review Period</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Every 4 years	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other – 2 years
<b>Last Endorsement Date</b>	December 2021		
<b>Next Endorsement Date</b>	TBC 2025		

Macedon Ranges Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and waterways. Council recognises their living cultures and ongoing connection to Country and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. Council also acknowledges local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander residents of Macedon Ranges for their ongoing contribution to the diverse culture of our community.





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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a Council position to guide and facilitate the provision of affordable housing on public and private land through appropriate and effective advocacy, facilitation and decision-making. This policy will guide and inform all Council decisions and actions relating to affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges.

## Objective

The objectives of this policy are to:

- recognise that housing is a human right for every person and ensure our most vulnerable people and communities have access to safe, secure and affordable housing;
- increase the supply of affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire to support a diverse and inclusive community;
- promote the value of social and affordable housing to the Macedon Ranges community;
- encourage affordable housing outcomes that are appropriate and accessible for very low, low and moderate income households;
- support policy and statutory change to increase and improve the quality and supply of affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges.

## Role of Council

Council's policy directions focus on three key roles in relation to affordable housing:

- Advocate – representing the local community and advocating for increased funding for social and affordable housing;
- Decision maker – Council can use regulatory powers to influence, leverage and negotiate affordable housing outcomes;
- Facilitator and investor – building relationships and brokering partnerships between registered housing agencies, developers, government agencies and other key stakeholders.

## Policy

### Council, as an advocate, will:

- build community understanding of the benefits that flow to individuals, families and communities from social and affordable housing;
- advocate for all demographics that require affordable housing and foster partnerships with the registered housing agencies that work with specific cohorts;
- advocate to State Government, Community Housing Sector, Specialist Disability Housing Sector and philanthropic organisations to fund Affordable Housing projects to support people with a disability.
- advocate for the local government sector to be effectively engaged by federal and state government in the development of new initiatives for affordable housing;
- advocate to the federal and state governments for increased ongoing and equitable investment in suitable and well-maintained social and affordable housing;
- work with neighbouring councils to address the provision of affordable housing within the Loddon Mallee region;
- advocate to the federal and state governments for the inclusion of social and affordable housing on suitable government-owned land and within significant government-led infrastructure and urban renewal projects;
- recognise the Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework and the National Housing and Homeless plan to guide advocacy work across the Macedon Ranges.

### Council, as a decision maker, will:

- ensure that structure plans consider diverse housing options to reflect demographic change, including smaller dwellings for older people in well-serviced locations;
- share information about the needs of priority housing cohorts, including people with disability, across Council endorsed strategies and plans;

- where legislation exists, consider matters prescribed by the Victorian Government for affordable housing provision, including need, location, type, and longevity;
- where legislation exists, ensure that affordable housing developments are:
  - indistinguishable from surrounding dwellings;
  - designed to respect the townships' character;
  - designed to maximise environmentally sustainable design (ESD) principles;
  - designed to minimise energy costs to the resident;
  - designed to minimise future maintenance costs to the owner;
  - established to minimise the future costs of communal services and body corporate fees;
  - convenient to public transport;
  - convenient to services, employment, schools, and shops;
  - designed to contain dwellings suitable for a range of tenants of all ages and abilities, and from individuals to families;
  - designed to incorporate the principles of universal design.

**Council, as a facilitator and investor, will:**

- seek out and engage with registered housing agencies, landowners, developers, service providers and other key stakeholders to build relationships, broker partnerships, and encourage funding applications that increase local affordable housing supply and improve support for households living in social and affordable housing;
- share information, data analysis and best practice with the Victorian Government, developers and registered housing agencies to strengthen the shared understanding of housing needs in the Macedon Ranges;
- ensure, where Council land is sold or leased to a registered housing agency, they will be required to demonstrate:

- an ongoing commitment to provide affordable housing within the Macedon Ranges;
- an understanding of the specific needs and expectations of households in the municipality;
- a proven record of providing and managing housing for very low-, low- and moderate- income households;
- demonstrated ability to secure on going funding; and
- demonstrated good governance;
- collaborate with the Loddon Mallee councils to implement the Loddon Mallee Housing Action Plan in the Macedon Ranges;
- actively participate in inter-council forums and work with peak bodies, such as the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) or collectively contribute towards addressing common affordable housing related matters across the region/metropolitan area or across the state as they arise;
- investigate planning policy controls to leverage affordable housing outcomes including:
  - requiring an affordable housing report as part of any rezoning proposal or significant application;
  - pursuing voluntarily negotiated agreements for the inclusion of affordable housing on appropriate development sites as part of planning scheme amendment rezoning and planning permit applications;
- apply the existing Asset Management Framework to seniors' housing that are Council owned or managed, to assess future investment and work with registered housing agencies and stakeholders to assess the need to renew or rebuild existing low-cost housing in the shire;
- partner with registered housing agencies to seek Victorian Government funding to renew and, where appropriate, expand Council-owned or managed housing stock;
- work with the Victorian Government to identify, assess, plan and develop underused land owned by the Victorian Government or Council, where this land can be used to deliver additional affordable housing in shire.

## Background for Policy

Macedon Ranges Shire Council recognises that housing is a human right for every person. Being able to access affordable and appropriate housing assists people to secure and maintain a job, keep families safe, raise happy and healthy children, enjoy a better standard of living and contribute to their community. Locating homes close to services, transport options, parks and open space, civic infrastructure and retail areas increases quality of life, and encourages and facilitates residents to age in place and help to reduce the environmental footprint.

There is a clear relationship between housing and wellbeing, and access to appropriate housing has a multitude of broader benefits, from better health and wellbeing outcomes to improved learning outcomes for children attending school. It also delivers significant economic benefits, including greater competitiveness through more efficient local labour markets.

Housing looks different for individuals, couples and families. As people move through life stages their needs change – health, relationships and employment can influence the type of housing people need, their living arrangements and what they can afford. Providing a diverse set of housing types and sizes helps to accommodate the many different household demographics and their individual housing needs.

People on very low- to moderate-incomes, including students, artists, childcare workers, nurses, teachers, police officers, hospitality and service workers, are critical to our shire's prosperity and diversity. However, in Macedon Ranges, housing costs have risen significantly relative to incomes, with affordable rental and homeownership options increasingly out of reach for current residents as well as for those seeking a new life in the community. Construction costs are rising, and there is a limited supply of new land. The share of 'market affordable' housing is declining and there is a need for policies and interventions to increase the supply of other types of affordable housing.

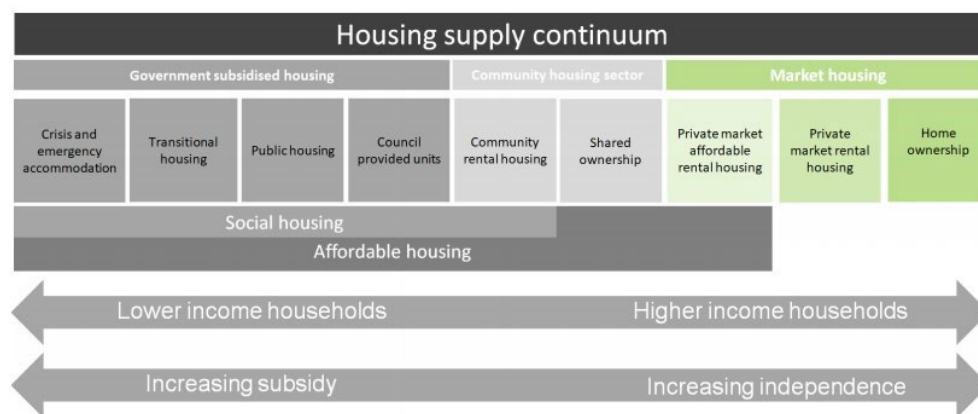
Within the Macedon Ranges, the primary segment of the community that require access to affordable housing options are those that fall within the low- and very-low-income households. This often comprises young people and first-time buyers, people in lone person or single parent households, key workers, persons with a disability or mental illness, Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islanders, people born in non-English or English as a second language-speaking families, older people, those experiencing homelessness and people outside of paid employment. Gendered experiences of economic insecurity, such as the gendered pay, wealth and superannuation gaps also make access to affordable housing particularly difficult for women.

### What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing is defined in Section 3AA of the Victorian *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following –

- a) Very low-income households;
- b) Low income households;
- c) Moderate income households.

Within the Macedon Ranges Affordable Housing Policy, affordable housing is seen as existing along a continuum, where the level of assistance or subsidy required is highest at one end of the continuum, progressively decreasing to the other end.



This includes affordable homes for purchase (including higher density and more diverse housing); affordable private rental; and social housing. Our community requires a range of housing types to cater for the needs of all households.

Private market affordable rental housing; Private market rental housing; and Home ownership are in the 'Market Housing' category, furthest to the right of the spectrum. This is housing provided on the open market.

Social housing is a subset of affordable housing. This term typically refers to housing that is owned by government or a not-for-profit organisation (Housing Associations or Housing Providers which are collectively referred to as 'Registered Housing Agencies') and made available at affordable rents for eligible households.

Public housing owned by the Victorian Government is generally made available to the lowest income groups and households with the highest needs, who are homeless, escaping or have

escaped family violence, with a disability or significant support needs or with special housing needs. Government also funds crisis and emergency housing.

Council-provided units are housing that is owned or managed by Council, and made available at affordable rents to eligible households.

**Why is affordable housing important?**

The long-term costs of underproviding public, social and affordable housing for those who cannot access safe, secure and affordable housing can include:

- poor health outcomes, leading to increased costs incurred by public health institutions and greater personal expenditure on health-related issues;
- greater incidence of criminal and anti-social behaviours leading to increased costs for law enforcement, courts and incarceration, as well as in the case of victims of domestic violence, the costs of crisis care, specialist homelessness services, and child-protection;
- reduced human capital and employment outcomes;
- lost productivity due to less efficient labour markets; and
- reduced community diversity, inclusion and equity.

**Definitions**

Term	Definition
Affordable housing	In line with the Planning and Environment Act 1987, “ <i>affordable housing is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following: very low-income households; low income households; and moderate-income households</i> ”.
Social Housing	In line with the Housing Act 1983, social housing means public housing and housing owned, controlled or managed by a participating registered housing agency



<p>Annual income ranges for very low-, low- and moderate-income households</p>	<p>Annual income ranges defining very low-, low- and moderate-income households are updated every 12 months and reflect the income ranges for affordable housing (but not social housing) for the very low-, low- and moderate-income ranges. Each range is related to the median household income in Regional Victoria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Very Low income is less than 50 percent of the median</li> <li>● Low is 50–80 percent of the median</li> <li>● Moderate is 80–120 percent of the median</li> <li>● High is more than 120 percent of the median</li> </ul> <p>The income ranges are adjusted annually in February, using the Housing Group of the Consumer Price Index for the December Quarter, published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in the Government Gazette.</p>
<p>Registered housing agencies</p>	<p>As identified on The Registrar of Housing Agencies, under the Housing Act 1983, and fall under two categories – housing associations and housing providers. The Housing Act 1983 provides for housing agencies to be registered as either housing providers or housing associations.</p>
<p>Registered Housing Associations</p>	<p>As at March 2023, there are ten registered housing associations in Victoria. The Public Register contains the details of all housing agencies, including Housing Associations, currently registered under the Housing Act 1983. Housing associations are larger, more complex businesses with the skills, expertise and resources to manage, maintain and grow a viable social housing portfolio. They expand new housing through construction, purchase or acquisition, using a mix of government funds and private sector investment. They also manage housing properties owned by them or leased from other parties, such as Homes Victoria.</p>
<p>Registered Housing Providers</p>	<p>As at March 2023, there are currently 30 registered housing providers in Victoria. Housing providers range in size and primarily manage rental housing portfolios for other parties, such as Homes Victoria.</p>

	<p>Some housing providers own properties, however their growth is small scale compared with housing associations. Housing providers often specialise in particular client groups which may include disability housing, aged tenants and youth housing.</p>
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### Related Legislation

- > *Local Government Act 2020*
- > *Housing Act 1983*
- > *Planning and Environment Act 1987*



## Overview of affordable housing

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act) defines affordable housing as:

‘...housing, including social housing that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following:

- very low-income households
- low-income households
- moderate-income households.’

The income ranges for households are defined under the PE Act and are indexed annually, using the Australian Bureau of Statistics housing category of the Consumer Price Index.

In 2022, the annual income ranges for regional Victoria were:

	Very low-income	Low-income	Moderate-income
Single	Up to \$19,090	\$19,091 to \$30,550	\$30,551 to \$45,820
Couple (no dependents)	Up to \$28,640	\$28,641 to \$45,820	\$45,821 to \$68,730
Family (Single/ couple with dependent children)	Up to \$40,090	\$40,091 to \$64,150	\$64,151 to \$96,220

Table 1. Annual income ranges defined under the PE Act

## Types of affordable housing<sup>1</sup>

Affordable housing refers to both non-private housing (rental) and private market housing (ownership and rental) for households that are on very low-, low-, or moderate-incomes and includes the following.

### Affordable housing for rental or ownership

Private market housing may be affordable for very low-, low- or moderate-income households where the rent or mortgage repayments are no more than 30 per cent of the household’s income. Generally, this type of housing includes housing that falls outside of the ownership of state and community sectors.

### Social housing

Social housing is short- and long-term rental housing that is owned and run by the government or not-for-profit agencies. It is for people on low incomes who need housing, especially those who have recently experienced homelessness, family violence or have other special needs.

Social housing includes public housing and community housing.

<sup>1</sup> [Community housing | Housing.vic.gov.au](#), accessed August 2021



**Public housing**

Public housing is rental housing that is owned, controlled and managed by the Victorian Government’s Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). Public housing tenants are on the Victorian Housing Register and must be on very low- to low-household incomes.

Public housing rents are usually limited to 25 per cent of the tenants’ income. Tenure is not time limited, but tenants are subject to meeting rental conditions as set by DFFH.

**Community housing**

Community housing is rental housing owned, managed or controlled by registered housing agencies. The housing is generally targeted towards very low to moderate incomes or special need households. Registered housing agencies are expected to take up to 50 per cent of new tenants for government funded properties from the Victorian Housing Register.<sup>2</sup>

The main providers in the community housing sector are:

- **registered housing associations** that develop, own and manage rental housing properties
- **registered housing providers** that primarily manage rental housing that is owned by other organisations.

Most of this housing is longer-term accommodation for families and individuals who are not able to afford or access the private rental market.

Many providers of community housing incorporate local services and tenant support services that are available for the tenants’ uses. Rents are generally limited to 30 per cent of the household income.

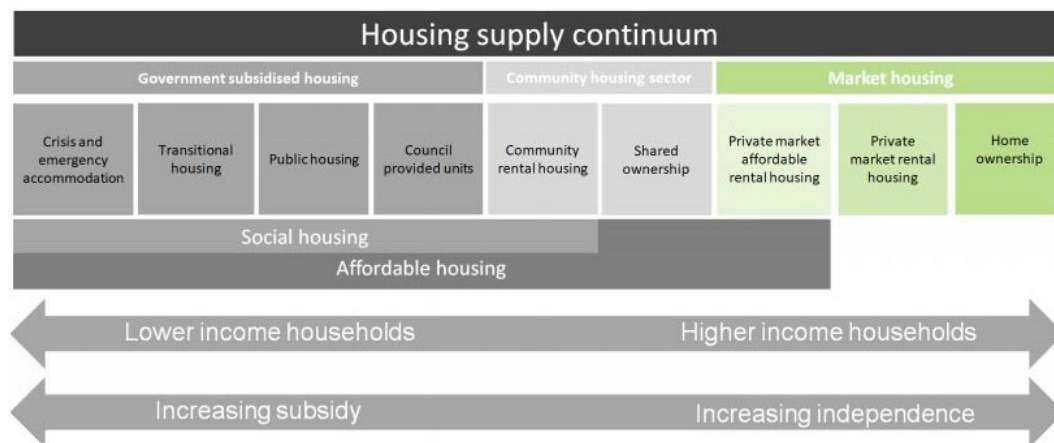


Figure 1. The housing supply continuum

<sup>2</sup> <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/community-housing> accessed March 2023



## Registered housing agencies<sup>3</sup>

As at March 2023, there are 10 registered housing associations and 30 registered housing providers (see Table 5 at page 8). Registered housing agencies own or manage 20,000 tenancy units in Victoria and deliver one-quarter of Victoria's social housing.<sup>4</sup>

**Registered housing associations** are not-for-profit organisations that develop, own and manage rental housing for people on lower incomes. As they typically own property, they are able to borrow against these assets, which allows for investment in new developments and partnerships.

Almost 9,000 properties are owned or leased by housing associations in a range of locations throughout Victoria. The majority of this housing is long-term accommodation for families and individuals who are not able to afford or access the private rental market.

Housing association properties can include stand-alone dwellings, rooming houses, medium and high-density developments or special accommodation with on-site support.

Housing associations also provide transitional and crisis accommodation.

**Registered housing providers** do not own their properties. They primarily manage rental properties while providing other support services including:

- short-term crisis support housing
- housing information and referral services for people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness
- outreach programs and support for people with complex needs and long histories of homelessness
- support and advocacy for people living in public and community housing, to help them successfully establish and sustain their tenancies
- housing cooperatives:
  - common equity rental cooperatives
  - rental housing cooperatives.

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<sup>3</sup> [Community housing | DHHS Service Providers \(dffh.vic.gov.au\)](#) accessed March 2023

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.vic.gov.au/who-the-housing-registrar-regulates> accessed March 2023



Registered housing agencies <sup>5</sup>	
Housing associations are:	Housing providers:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• larger, more complex businesses with the skills, expertise and resources to manage maintain and grow a viable social housing portfolio</li> <li>• organisations that expand new housing through construction, purchase or acquisition that is funded using a mix of government funds, borrowings and private sector investment</li> <li>• organisations that manage housing properties that they own or lease from other parties, such as the Director of Housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• range in size</li> <li>• primarily manage rental housing portfolios for other parties, such as the Director of Housing</li> <li>• some providers own properties, however, their growth is small in scale compared to that of housing associations</li> <li>• often specialise in client groups, for example, people with a disability, the aged or young people.</li> </ul>

Table 2. Registered housing agencies

## Regulation of the housing sector<sup>6</sup>

The *Housing Act 1983* establishes the regulatory framework under which the registered community housing sector operates. This includes:

- a clear process and set of criteria for agencies wishing to become registered
- a Registrar of Housing Agencies (which sits within the Department of Treasury and Finance)
- performance standards for regulated agencies that come with annual reporting requirements
- a complaints process for tenants (or prospective tenants)
- powers of investigation and intervention for the Registrar to deal with agencies in breach of the legislation or failing to meet performance standards.

Four key objectives drive the regulation of registered housing agencies:

- ensuring that all housing agencies are viable, well governed and properly managed
- protecting and ensuring accountable use of government assets managed by the affordable housing sector

<sup>5</sup> [Registered Housing Agencies – CHIA Vic](#), accessed August 2021

<sup>6</sup> Hornsby and Co. Affordable Housing Agreements: advice for local government and Community Housing Organisations - prepared for MAV and CHIA, March 2020



- building confidence in the public and private sector to invest in and grow affordable housing
- ensuring quality and continuous improvement in service delivery and outcomes for tenants.

The regulatory framework ensures registered agencies are held accountable to government and other investors, tenants and the community (Housing Registrar, 2016, Our Regulatory Framework), promotes best practice and gives government the tools to address poor performance by registered agencies.

## Access to social housing

To be eligible for social housing, primary applicants generally must live in Victoria and:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia
- meet the income and asset eligibility limits for their household
- have an independent income
- not own a property in which they could live.

Generally, an applicant should meet the income and asset limits and residential requirements to be eligible for the register. However, where a person and their household is experiencing family violence and need access to ongoing housing in order to be safe, they are also eligible to be on the register.

The Victorian Housing Register is used to manage and allocate social housing. Priority access is given to those who are homeless, escaping family violence and other special needs. A register of interest is provided for people who do not meet the priority access criteria.

All people applying to the register who meet the eligibility criteria are placed on the register according to their housing need (assessed in accordance with the eligibility criteria). The register consists of two application types:

- Priority access – for people most in need of housing. The priority access categories are:
  - emergency management housing
  - priority transfers
  - homeless with support
  - supported housing
  - special housing needs
  - special housing needs aged 55 years and over.
- Register of interest – for eligible applicants to register their interest for social housing.



### Victorian Housing Register categories

Table 3 outlines the categories of the register in more detail:

	Category	New applicants or transfer applicants
Priority Access	Emergency management housing – for people whose housing is no longer safe or habitable, due to an emergency, for example a house fire, bushfire, flood or storm.	New and transfer applicants
	Priority transfers – for people that require urgent relocation to another social housing property as their current property is unsafe; is to be sold; redeveloped or better used	Transfer applicants
	Homeless with support – for people who are homeless or experiencing family violence and need support to obtain and establish appropriate, long-term housing	New applicants
	Supported housing – for people who: live in unsuitable housing; have a disability or long-term health problem; require major structural modifications and/or personal support to live independently	New applicants
	Special housing needs – for people who are living in housing that has become unsuitable and who have no alternative housing options.	New and transfer applicants
	Special housing needs aged 55 years and over – for singles and couples who are aged 55 years and over, and who are not eligible for another priority category.	New applicants
	Register of interest – for people who do not have an urgent housing need but are interested in social housing to apply to the Register for consideration	New and transfer applicants

**Table 3. Victorian Housing Register categories Income and asset eligibility limits**

To be eligible to be on the register, the individual or household should typically earn less than the income and asset eligibility limits set out in the [social housing eligibility criteria](#). The income eligibility limits are the income limits gazetted by the Director of Housing and published on the department’s housing website ([housing.vic.gov.au](http://housing.vic.gov.au)). Asset limits are different for priority access and register of interest applications, and for people requiring full or major disability modifications to the property.





Table 4 outlines the income and asset eligibility limits effective from October 2022:<sup>7</sup>

Household type	Priority Access limits	Register of Interest limits
Income	Per week	Per week
Single person	\$612	\$1,095
Couple, no dependants	\$1,059	\$1,675
Family (one or two parents) with up to two dependent children	\$1,097	\$2,259
Each additional dependant	\$38	\$366
Assets		
Asset limit	\$14,028	\$35,488
Higher limit for households who need major or full disability modifications	\$118,295	\$118,295

Table 4. Income and asset limits for Victorian Housing Register

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/social-housing-eligibility> accessed March 2023



## List of registered housing agencies as at March 2023

	Category
Aboriginal Housing Victoria Limited	Baptcare Affordable Housing Ltd
Common Equity Housing Limited	BAYSA Ltd
Community Housing (Vic) Ltd	Building Communities (Vic) Limited
Housing Choices Australia Limited	Centacare Housing Services Ltd
HousingFirst Limited	EACH Housing Ltd
Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd	Eastcoast Housing
Rural Housing Network Limited	Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Co-operative Limited
Unison Housing Limited	Inner East Social Housing Group Limited
Wintringham Housing Ltd	Launch Housing Ltd
Women's Housing Ltd	Mallee Accommodation & Support Program Ltd
	Mission Australia Housing (Victoria)
	National Affordable Housing Consortium - Vic Ltd
	Northcote Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd.
	Northern Geelong Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
	Prahran/Malvern Community Housing Inc.
	Salvation Army Housing (Victoria)
	Servants Community Housing Limited
	South Port Community Housing Group Inc
	SouthEast Housing Cooperative Ltd
	St Kilda Community Housing Ltd
	Sunshine/St Albans Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
	The Haven Foundation Ltd
	United Housing Co-operative Ltd
	Uniting Housing (Victoria) Limited
	VincentCare Community Housing
	WAYSS Limited
	West Turk Housing and Elderly Services Co-operative Ltd
	Williamstown Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
	Women's Property Initiatives Ltd
	YWCA Housing

Table 5. List of registered housing agencies



## Affordable housing policy and legislation

Neither Australian nor Victorian government legislation sets out mandatory requirements for affordable housing. Instead, federal, state, and in some cases, local policy is used to influence investment and decision making around supply.

### Federal policy

The **National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation** (NHFIC) is an independent corporate Australian Government entity, established to improve affordable housing outcomes. The NHFIC is responsible for providing low-cost, longer-tenure loans for community housing providers, financing for new housing infrastructure projects and issuing government-guaranteed social bonds for investors. The NHFIC also administers the First Home Loan Deposit Scheme for first home buyers and undertakes independent research into housing demand, supply, and affordability.

The **National Housing and Homelessness Agreement**<sup>1</sup> (NHHA) commenced in July 2018 and provides around \$1.6 billion each year to states and territories to improve access to secure and affordable housing across the housing spectrum. The NHHA provided funding of \$129 million for homelessness services in 2020/21. States and territories match this funding.

To receive funding under the NHHA, state and territory governments must have publicly available housing and homelessness strategies and undertake data collection and reporting.

The housing strategies must address the NHHA housing priority policy areas relevant to the state or territory. The housing priority policy areas include:

- affordable housing
- social housing
- encouraging growth and supporting the viability of the community housing sector
- tenancy reform
- homeownership
- planning and zoning reform initiatives.

The NHHA identifies priority homelessness cohorts as:

- women and children affected by family and domestic violence
- children and young people
- Indigenous Australians

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<sup>1</sup> [National Housing and Homelessness Agreement | Department of Social Services, Australian Government \(dss.gov.au\)](https://www.dss.gov.au) accessed March 2023.



- people experiencing repeat homelessness
- people exiting from care or institutions into homelessness
- older people.

Affordable housing supply should reflect the differing needs of these priority cohorts.

The **Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) Bill** was introduced to parliament in February 2023. The HAFF Bill is intended to give effect to the Australian Government's commitment to establish a \$10 billion HAFF to fund the delivery of 30,000 social and affordable homes and allocate an additional \$330 million to acute housing needs over the HAFF's first five years. As at March 2023, the Bill has not been passed.<sup>2</sup>

## Victorian Government policy

### Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021–2051

In August 2021, *Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021–2051* was presented to the Victorian Parliament for tabling. This updated strategy builds on the work of the first cross-sectoral infrastructure strategy delivered in 2016.

Infrastructure Victoria, the infrastructure advisory group to the Victorian Government, included 'Develop regional Victoria' as one of four sections in the strategy<sup>3</sup>. Infrastructure Victoria recommend that the government expands social housing with good access into regional locations.

The strategy contains 94 recommendations for projects, policies and reforms, spanning many types of infrastructure. The strategy is divided into four themes focused on:

- confronting long-term challenges
- managing urban change
- harnessing infrastructure for productivity and growth
- developing regional Victoria.

The recommendations relevant to affordable housing include:

- **Recommendation 36:** Use value-capture mechanisms to deliver very low-income housing. Within the next two years, change and actively apply planning regulations to provide affordable rental housing for Victorians on very low incomes in places with good access to public transport and services, when they are re-zoned for more intensive residential use.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Bills\\_Legislation](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation) accessed March 2023

<sup>3</sup> [Infrastructure Victoria, Victoria's infrastructure strategy 2021-2051, 2021](#)



- **Recommendation 68:** Set targets to grow social housing. In the next year, set a transparent state-wide social housing growth target to reach and maintain at least the national average of 4.5 social housing dwellings for every 100 households by 2031.
- **Recommendation 93:** Expand social housing in regional centres, in locations with good access. Focus social housing investments in regional centres, near transport and services, for better access to health, social and economic support.
- **Recommendation 94:** Make social housing suitable for changing local climates. Continue to deliver a long-term program of modifying social housing to be climate resilient by improving the energy efficiency and energy affordability of residences.

## Homes for Victorians 2017

The Victorian Government has indicated that it is developing a 10-year social and affordable housing strategy that was to be released in late 2021. This has not yet been released, and there is no indication for when this will occur.

*Homes for Victorians (2017)* is the Victorian Government's response to the housing affordability crisis in Victoria and is the current housing strategy.

## Victoria's Big Housing Build

Announced in November 2020, the Big Housing Build program is a \$5.3 billion investment in social and affordable housing, and will deliver over 12,000 new dwellings, including 9,300 new social housing dwellings and replacing 1,100 existing dwellings. The investment, delivered throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria, will boost total social housing supply by 10 per cent.

The Big Housing Build will invest 25 per cent (\$1.25 billion) of the total \$5.3 billion program across regional Victoria.

Building social and affordable housing in regional Victoria responds to the increasing population in Victoria's growth areas and creates more rental housing to support employment growth in regional towns and cities.

The Big Housing Build provides a minimum investment commitment to regional local government areas (LGAs) that have a significant regional town or city, or have high population growth. Eighteen LGAs have been identified for the minimum investment guarantee, with \$765 million committed across these areas. Macedon Ranges Shire has been earmarked to receive a minimum investment of \$30 million.

Councils that identify opportunities – such as on underused council land – are encouraged to work with community housing providers to develop partnership proposals. Community housing providers are key delivery partners in this package and can work with councils to develop projects and seek funding for these through Big Housing Build funding streams.

Amendments VC187 and VC190 (gazetted December 2020) introduced changes to the Victorian Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to streamline the rapid delivery of social and affordable housing.



**Amendment VC187 (clause 53.20)**

This amendment introduces a new provision where the planning permit application process for housing by or on behalf of the Director of Housing is streamlined.

The Minister for Energy, Environment, and Climate Change is the responsible authority for assessing the development of 10 or more dwellings and apartments. Proposals for less than 10 dwellings will be assessed by the local council.

**Amendment VC190 (clause 52.20)**

This amendment introduces a new provision for projects delivered through the Big Housing Build program. The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change is the responsible authority for assessing all proposals made under this new provision.

### The Big Housing Build at a glance

Victoria's largest-ever investment in social and affordable housing.

<p>Investing <b>\$5.3 billion</b> in more homes for more Victorians</p>	<p><b>2,900 new</b> affordable and market homes for <b>first home buyers and renters</b></p>	<p>More than <b>9,300 new</b> social housing dwellings</p>
<p><b>2,000</b> more Victorians with mental health issues will have a home</p>	<p>All <b>new homes</b> will meet <b>7 star NatHERS</b> efficiency standards</p>	<p><b>10% increase</b> in social housing dwellings</p>
<p><b>25%</b> of investment will be in <b>rural and regional Victoria</b></p>	<p><b>12,000+</b> new homes across Victoria</p>	<p><b>10%</b> of all net new social dwellings will support <b>Aboriginal housing needs</b></p>
<p><b>25%</b></p>	<p><b>10%</b> of work on large projects to be done by <b>apprentices, cadets and trainees</b></p>	<p><b>Homes Victoria</b> established to make the Big Housing Build a reality</p>



## Social and Affordable Housing Compact<sup>4</sup>

In 2020 the Victorian Government called for the development of a Social and Affordable Housing Compact (Compact) with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The Compact is intended to establish a partnership with the state government to address the broad range of housing issues faced by councils and engage the broad range of state government agencies that influence social and affordable housing. As at March 2023, the Compact has not been completed.

## Regional plans

The Victorian Government provided funding for the development of a **Loddon-Mallee Housing Action Plan** (the action plan) that addresses issues relating to the provision of additional housing across the Loddon-Mallee Region, and identifies strategies to address the critical housing needs of the region. The action plan was completed in late 2022 and will be considered by the 10 councils in the region in due course. As at March 2023 the action plan has not been adopted by Council.

## Macedon Ranges Shire Council policy

Macedon Ranges Shire Council endorsed an **Affordable Housing Interim Policy** in December 2021. Beyond this, the Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme includes local policy that encourages the provision of responsive and affordable housing, and a diversity of lot sizes and styles to meet the requirements of all age groups, household types, lifestyles and preference within the shire's towns. It promotes a range of housing options to improve housing affordability in the larger towns, with a particular focus on Kyneton.

## Legislation

Several Acts are relevant to affordable housing in Victoria. The most relevant are the:

- *Local Government Act 2020* (LG Act)
- *Housing Act 1983* (Housing Act)
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act)

### Local Government Act 2020

The LG Act provides the legal framework in which Victorian councils operate. It controls the sale and leasing of council-owned land, procurement of goods and services by a council, the administration of public open space, and governance and probity requirements for councils.

### Housing Act 1983

The Housing Act has the broad objective of ensuring every person in Victoria has adequate and appropriate housing. The Housing Act, together with the Office of the Housing Registrar, provides the framework for the establishment, compliance, and recognition of registered housing agencies.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mav.asn.au/news-resources/campaigns/social-and-affordable-housing> accessed March 2023





## Planning and Environment Act 1987

The PE Act provides a framework for the administration of the use and development of land. It has an objective (Section 4):

1(fa) to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria.

The PE Act establishes a regulatory planning framework for planning the use, development, and protection of land in Victoria in the present and long-term interests of all Victorians.

Section 4 (1) of the PE Act sets out a series of objectives for planning in Victoria, the following of which are particularly relevant in the context of this interim policy statement:

- To provide for the fair, orderly, economic, and sustainable use, and development of land
- To secure a pleasant, efficient, and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria
- To protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and coordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community
- To balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.

Section 4 (2) of the PE Act sets out the objectives for the planning framework in Victoria. These objectives establish a system of planning schemes as a way of setting out policies and controls for regulating the use, development, and protection of land. The following objectives are specifically relevant in the context of this policy statement:

- To ensure that the effects on the environment are considered and provide for explicit consideration of social and economic effects when decisions are made about the use and development of land
- Encourages the achievement of planning objectives through positive actions by responsible authorities and planning authorities.

The **Planning Policy Framework** (PPF) contained within all Victorian planning schemes deals with affordable housing at clause 16 (Housing), which states:

*Planning for housing should include providing land for affordable housing.*

Clause 16.01-2 (Housing Affordability) provides further direction in relation to affordable housing, and includes delivering more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport, and services with a series of strategies to implement this objective.





## Appendix: The Big Housing Build explained

Homes Victoria manages four streams of funding, which are described on their website<sup>5</sup> as follows:

- \$532 million – constructing new homes on public land. Homes Victoria land across Melbourne is the ideal asset to convert to social and affordable housing. Work has commenced at six Homes Victoria sites, and they are now ready for regeneration. [NB: this funding is tagged for metropolitan projects]
- \$948 million – working with the private sector to spot-purchase homes, projects in progress or ready to build. To ensure Homes Victoria can add to the supply of social and affordable housing quickly, they will be working with developers and construction firms, to identify appropriate, existing housing developments it can acquire, provided they are up to a suitable standard and well located. This may also include working with the private sector to identify suitable developments that may be partially complete, or which may not otherwise progress.
- \$1.38 billion – funding for projects by the community housing sector. The community housing sector is uniquely placed to lend its expertise and experience to Victoria's Big Housing Build. The Social Housing Growth Fund will invite proposals from community housing providers for new social and affordable housing developments to add to the available supply and help provide more homes for more Victorians.
- \$2.14 billion – funding for new opportunities with private sector and community housing partners. As the Big Housing Build rolls out, Homes Victoria want to maximise opportunities for the best value and best outcomes for Victoria. Homes Victoria will explore building on Victorian Government land sites; as well as engaging with the market to identify new sites, new ideas, new opportunities and ways to build more homes. Homes Victoria will pursue opportunities to partner with industry, community housing providers, local government and institutional investors to identify new projects that deliver homes across the State.

The \$5.3 billion allocation for the Big Housing Build is split as follows. The Homes Victoria webpage also outlines additional spending:

- \$498 million – new construction, upgrades and maintenance to existing housing. We've committed a record amount of money to maintain, refurbish, repair, and build new public housing across Victoria. Work has already begun, and when we're finished, more than 23,000 social housing dwellings will be significantly improved.
- \$185 million – replacing old public housing with new dwellings. The Public Housing Renewal Program is underway with the task of replacing seven major public estates with completely new, modern, attractive and energy efficient dwellings. It will generate \$1.29 billion in construction and economic activity.

<sup>5</sup> [Homes Victoria | Big Housing Build, homes.vic.gov.au/big-housing-build](https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/big-housing-build), Accessed March 2023



## Macedon Ranges Shire affordable housing profile

The following data is drawn from the ABS 2021 Census of Population and Housing where available. Some housing data is not yet available and where this is the case 2016 data has been utilised.

### Mortgage profile in the Macedon Ranges Shire

In 2021, 43 per cent of the Macedon Ranges Shire's households were purchasing their dwelling, compared to 31.5 per cent in regional Victoria. While the Macedon Ranges Shire had a higher proportion of households with a mortgage, this varied with proportions ranging from 30 per cent in Kyneton to 51.3 per cent in the Romsey district. The five areas with the highest percentages of housing purchase were:

- Romsey district (51.3 per cent) and Romsey (51.1 per cent)
- Riddells Creek (48.8 per cent)
- Gisborne (47.6 per cent) and Gisborne district (46.4 per cent).

Comparison of the monthly housing loan repayments of households in the Macedon Ranges Shire and regional Victoria shows that in 2016 there was a larger proportion of households paying high mortgage repayments (\$2,600 per month or more), and a smaller proportion of households with low mortgage repayments (less than \$1,200 per month). Overall, 20.8 per cent of households were paying high mortgage repayments (in 2021 this was 26.8 per cent), and 23.3 per cent were paying low repayments (18.3 per cent in 2021). This compared with 9 per cent (11 per cent in 2021) and 38.8 per cent respectively in regional Victoria.

The major differences between the household loan repayments of the Macedon Ranges Shire and regional Victoria were in 2016:

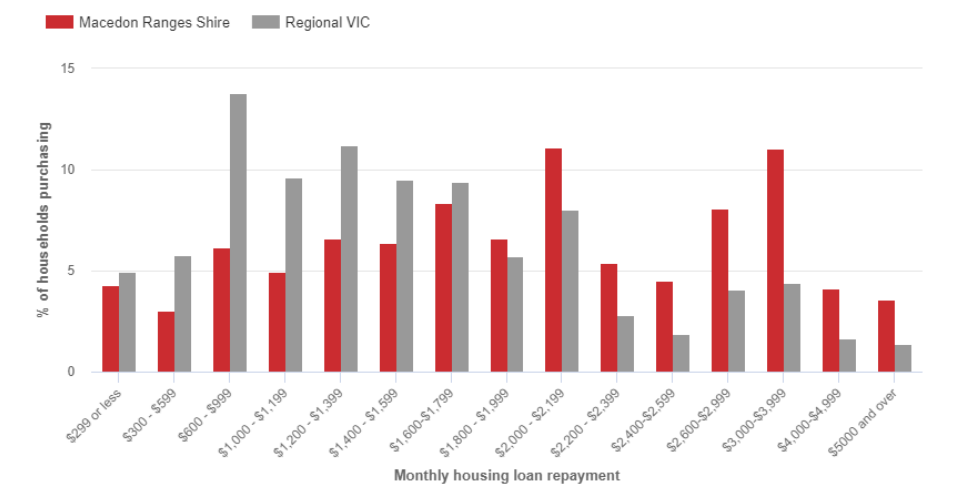
Household loan repayments	Macedon Ranges Shire	Regional Victoria
\$600–\$999	8.1 per cent	15.8 per cent
\$1,000–\$1,199	6.4 per cent	10.7 per cent
\$1,200–\$1,399	8.2 per cent	11.8 per cent
\$3,000–\$3,999	8.6 per cent	3.5 per cent

Table 1. Household loan repayments - Source: ABS 2016 Census

Data from the 2021 Census on weekly mortgage payments is shown in the chart below



Monthly housing loan repayments, 2021



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

Mortgage repayments are directly related to house prices, length of occupancy and the level of equity of homeowners. When viewed with household income data, mortgage repayment data may also indicate the level of housing stress. In mortgage belt areas, it is expected that households will be paying a higher proportion of their income on their housing compared to well-established areas. First home buyer areas are also likely to have larger mortgages than areas where households move in with equity from elsewhere.

Mortgage payment levels are not directly comparable over time, because of inflation.

**Mortgage stress in the Macedon Ranges Shire**

In 2021, households where mortgage costs were greater than 30 per cent of income ranged from 6.7 per cent in Woodend to 13.2 per cent in Romsey district. Overall, mortgage costs exceed 30 per cent of income in 11.2 per cent of households both in Macedon Ranges and in regional Victoria. The locations with the highest percentage of households with mortgage costs of 30 per cent of income were:

- Romsey district (13.2 per cent) and Romsey (13.0 per cent)
- Macedon and Mount Macedon district (12.3 per cent)
- Riddells Creek district (12.1 per cent)
- Kyneton (11.9 per cent)



**Rental profile in the Macedon Ranges Shire**

Macedon Ranges Shire has fewer renters, compared to regional Victoria. In 2016, 11.8 per cent of Macedon Ranges Shire households were renting their dwelling from a private landlord or estate agent (2021: 11.6 per cent) compared to 19.1 per cent in regional Victoria (2021: 19.5 per cent). While Macedon Ranges Shire had a lower proportion of households who were renting privately, this varied across the shire. Proportions ranged from 8.8 per cent in Mount Macedon to 20.7 per cent in Kyneton and 6.7 per cent in Mount Macedon to 21.6 per cent in Kyneton in 2021. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Kyneton (20.7 per cent) and Kyneton district (14.8 per cent)
- Woodend (15.6 per cent)
- Lancefield (16.0 per cent)
- Gisborne (15.0 per cent).

In 2021, the five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Kyneton (21.6 per cent) and Kyneton district (14.4 per cent)
- Woodend (15.8 per cent)
- Gisborne (14.7 per cent)
- Riddells Creek (12.3 per cent).

The major differences between the housing rental payments of the Macedon Ranges Shire and regional Victoria were:

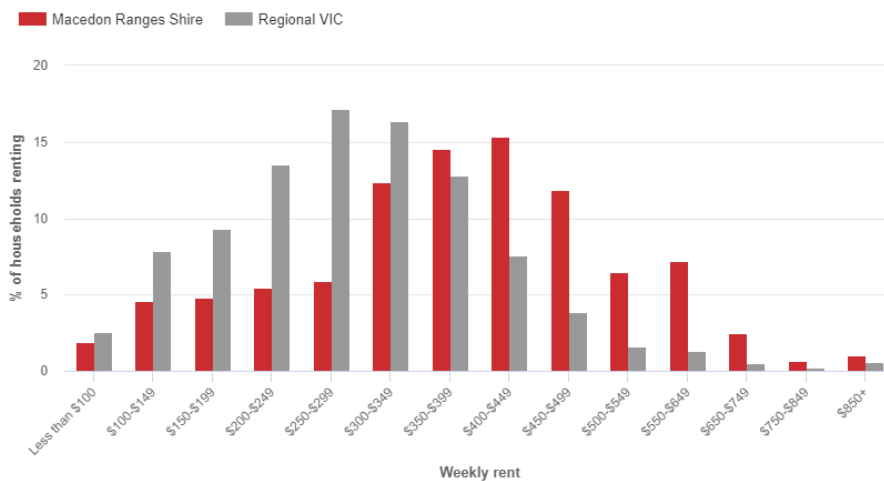
Weekly housing rental payments	Macedon Ranges Shire	Regional Victoria
\$150–\$199	4.7 per cent	14.6 per cent
\$200–\$249	8.8 per cent	18.5 per cent
\$250–\$299	12.3 per cent	19 per cent
\$350–\$399	16.5 per cent	6.7 per cent

*Table 2. Rental payments - Source: ABS 2016 Census*

Data from the 2021 Census on weekly rental payments is demonstrated in the chart below:



Weekly housing rental payments, 2021



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2021 (Enumerated data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id (informed decisions).

Profile of households experiencing rental stress

Households are commonly said to be in housing stress if they have moderate or lower incomes and spend 30 per cent of more of their income on housing (moderate stress) or 50 per cent or more of their income on housing (severe stress).

SGS Economics and Planning (SGS) has used a housing assistance demand (HAD) model to measure the number of renter households who are experiencing housing stress or would experience housing stress if they did not live in social and affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire. A proportion of these households are likely to need social or affordable housing.

The SGS HAD model uses Census statistics to quantify the number of households in rental stress (paying more than 30 per cent of their income on rent), and who are classified as having very low-, low- or moderate-incomes based on the income bands defined under S3AB of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

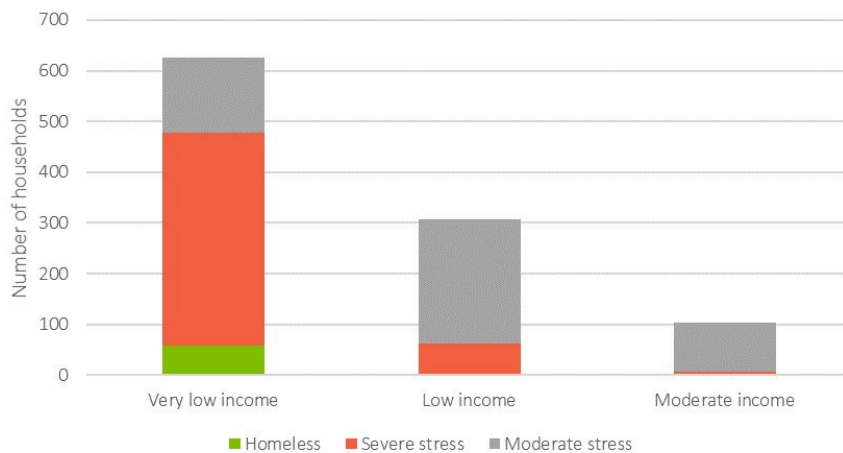
Households in rental stress are categorised by demographic and spatial variables. The number of households in need of assistance is then forecast, subject to factors such as population growth, demographic shifts, household incomes, and rental rates.

The data suggests that in the Macedon Ranges Shire in 2016 there were a total of 1,036 households in rental stress, with 487 households in moderate stress and 490 households in severe stress or homeless. This represents 5.9 per cent of all households in the Macedon Ranges Shire.

Figure 1 below shows the number of households at different income levels experiencing rental stress in 2016. The highest proportion fell into the very low-income band, with 429 of the 625 households in severe stress.



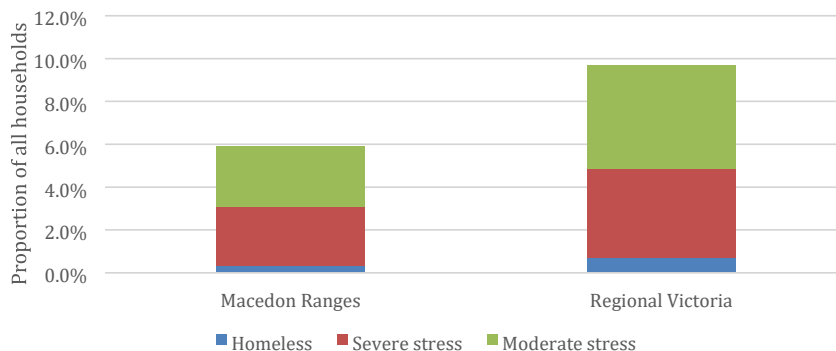
**Figure 1: Households in rental stress or homeless in the Macedon Ranges Shire (2016)**



Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census

In 2016, the proportion of households in the Macedon Ranges Shire experiencing rental stress was lower than that in regional Victoria (defined as all local government areas {LGAs} outside of metropolitan Melbourne). The Macedon Ranges Shire had 5.9 per cent of all households in rental stress or homeless, compared to 9.7 per cent in regional Victoria. Rates of severe stress and moderate stress were also both higher in regional Victoria (4.2 per cent vs 2.8 per cent, and 4.8 per cent vs 2.8 per cent respectively).

**Figure 2: Rental stress in the Macedon Ranges Shire compared to regional Victoria**



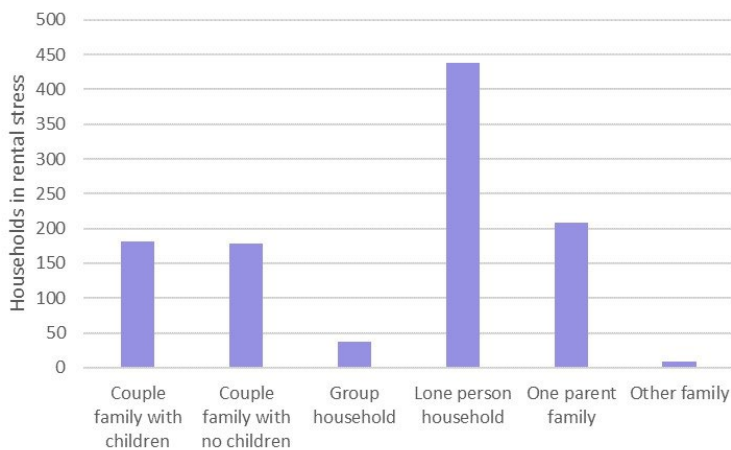
Source: SGS 2021 using 2016 ABS Census

Of households experiencing moderate and severe rental stress or homeless in 2016 in the Macedon Ranges Shire, lone person households were the dominant household type with 432 households in this category (see Figure 3). The second most dominant type was one parent families with 202



households in rental stress. There were also moderate numbers of couples with children (181 households) and couples without children (177 households) in rental stress. Relatively low numbers of group households (36) and other family (8) were in rental stress.

**Figure 3: Household type of households in rental stress in the Macedon Range Shire (2016)**



Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census

### Homeless persons

In 2021, it is estimated that there were 83 people in the Macedon Ranges Shire experiencing homelessness or overcrowding on Census night. The types of accommodation those people had on Census night were:

- 0% squats, tents or sleeping out
- 0% boarding houses
- 18.8% severely crowded dwellings
- 31.8% temporary with other households
- 49.4% supported accommodation.<sup>1</sup>

In Macedon Ranges Shire, 296 people received specialist homelessness services in 2021-22. This included 211 females and 85 males (noting that these people may be either homeless or at risk of being homeless). This is a decrease from 2019-20, where a total of 449 individuals were receiving support (277 females and 100 males).

<sup>1</sup> Estimates prepared by Australian Bureau of Statistics based on the 2021 Census. Source: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release>



This cohort includes people sleeping rough, living in emergency or temporary accommodation – including people staying with friends and relatives – and people living in severely overcrowded dwellings.

The ABS statistical definition of homelessness is ‘... when a person does not have suitable accommodation alternatives, they are considered homeless if their current living arrangement:

- is in a dwelling that is inadequate;
- has no tenure, or if their initial tenure is short and not extendable;
- does not allow them to have control of, and access to space for social relations’.

## Social Housing

There are 342 social housing dwellings in the Macedon Ranges, which is about 1.7 per cent of total dwellings.

While the Macedon Ranges Shire had a lower proportion of households who are renting from a government authority, this varied across the shire. Proportions ranged from zero per cent in Lancefield to 4.5 per cent in Kyneton. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Kyneton (4.5 per cent) and Kyneton district (2.5 per cent)
- Woodend (3.7 per cent) and Woodend district (2.0 per cent)
- Gisborne (1.3 per cent)

## Households on the Victorian Housing Register<sup>2</sup>

In Victoria, social housing allocations are managed via a waiting list for which people eligible for assistance can register their interest.

The Victorian Government has developed the Victorian Housing Register, which is a housing list where eligible people can register and nominate location preferences for housing assistance. Applicants cannot nominate a particular registered housing agency but can indicate their preference for public housing or community housing assistance.

The register is updated regularly and reporting on the transfer list by local area is generated every three months. The report provides the number of people waiting to move and transfer to a social housing property.<sup>3</sup>

In the Victorian Housing Register, the Macedon Ranges Shire data falls within the Loddon (Bendigo) area of the north division.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted with permission: SGS Economics and Planning *Social and Affordable Housing Issues Paper prepared for Mount Alexander Shire*, 2019

<sup>3</sup> <https://housing.vic.gov.au/victorian-housing-register>





As of June 2022 there were approximately 750 people on the Register within the Macedon Ranges. The proportion of household type awaiting is as follows:-

- Single households - 33.4 per cent
- Single Parent - 30.2 per cent
- Elderly Single - 25.6 per cent
- Group Households - 3.7 per cent
- Youth - 3.2 per cent
- Couple with Children - 1.9 per cent
- Elderly Couple - 1.4 per cent
- Couple no children - 0.6 per cent

### Estimating demand for social and affordable housing

Analysis of the 2021 rental stress estimates was carried out, to understand how the need for housing assistance in the Macedon Ranges Shire aligns with the number of people in housing stress.

Not all households estimated to be in rental stress will need access to social or affordable housing. Previous research indicates several reasons why households might choose housing that placed them within the technical definition of housing stress<sup>4</sup>.

Households may voluntarily enter a situation where they pay more than 30 per cent of their income on housing to live in:

- a better house
- a better neighbourhood
- a location where other households expenses such as transport costs are lower.

This research also notes that it is normal for some households to experience temporary periods of housing stress. This can be due to temporary changes in circumstances such as the birth of a child, short term unemployment, or adjusting to the breakdown of a relationship. Consideration of these factors would suggest that measured housing stress, using the 30 per cent of income threshold, could overestimate the actual number of households that are likely to be experiencing housing stress in the longer term.

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<sup>4</sup> Rowley and Ong 2014, *Do current measures of housing affordability reflect wellbeing?* Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Research and Policy Bulletin No 166



More recent research has been conducted, suggesting that there is likely to be additional demand for affordable housing from households unable to form under current market conditions<sup>5</sup>.

These 'unformed' households might include:

- younger family members that would prefer to leave the parental home but cannot afford to;
- elderly family members that must live with other family members to have affordable accommodation;
- multiple families occupying a single dwelling.

These research findings show that the prevalence of housing stress does not neatly align with the need for housing assistance. Some of the factors identified above would inflate the need and others would deflate it. On the balance of evidence, a small discount has been applied by SGS to derive an estimate of the actual need according to household income.

No discount was applied to people in social housing or those experiencing homelessness, since all those households require housing assistance.

Based on these calculations, the estimate for social and affordable housing requirements in 2016 was approximately 1,190 dwellings. This equates to 6.7 per cent of all households in the Macedon Ranges Shire (if homeless people are included in the household count).

A case may be made that that moderate-income households require 'affordable' dwellings rather than social housing. Excluding those who have moderate incomes, about 1,100 social housing dwellings were required to address social housing need in the shire. This includes the 277 households that were recorded as living in social housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire in the ABS 2016 Census.

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<sup>5</sup> Rowley, Leishman, Baker, Bentley and Lester 2017, *Modelling housing need in Australia to 2025*, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Final Report No 287



Household type	No of households	Minimum target	Need for housing assistance	Need as a per cent of all households
Homeless	59	100 per cent	59	0.3 per cent
Social housing households	277	100 per cent	277	1.6 per cent
Very low-income households	566	90 per cent	510	2.9 per cent
Low-income households	307	85 per cent	261	1.5 per cent
Moderate-income households	104	80 per cent	83	0.5 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,313</b>		<b>1,190</b>	<b>6.7 per cent</b>

*Table 3: Need for social and affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire (2016) - Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census*

## Forecast social and affordable housing needs

SGS has forecast demand for social and affordable housing to 2036 in the shire under two scenarios: a base case, and a pessimistic scenario.

### Base case

Under the base case, the incomes and rents of household are set to grow proportionally. Under this scenario, demand for social housing will increase mainly due to growth of population in the LGA.

In 2036, it is estimated that, under the base case, the minimum requirement to address the actual demand will be around 1,740 households or 6.8 per cent of all households. Excluding moderate income households, the need would be approximately 1,615 households.



Household type	No of households	Minimum target	Need for housing assistance	Need as a per cent of all households
Homeless	92	100 per cent	92	0.4 per cent
Social housing households	277	100 per cent	277	1.1 per cent
Very low-income households	964	90 per cent	867	3.4 per cent
Low-income households	446	85 per cent	379	1.5 per cent
Moderate-income households	154	80 per cent	123	0.5 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,933</b>		<b>1,740</b>	<b>6.8 per cent</b>

*Table 4: Base case forecast need for social and affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire in 2036 - Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census*

### Pessimistic case

Under the pessimistic scenario, the cost of rent outpaces income growth for five years. With rents increasing at a greater pace than incomes, financial stress increases amongst households. Demand for social and affordable housing increases due to growth in population and increasing financial stress in the LGA.

In 2036, it is estimated that under the base case the minimum requirement to address the actual demand under the pessimistic case would be around 1,789 households or 7 per cent of all households. Excluding moderate income households, the need would be around 1,647 households.



Household type	No of households	Minimum target	Need for housing assistance	Need as a per cent of all households
Homeless	92	100 per cent	92	0.4 per cent
Social housing households	277	100 per cent	277	1.1 per cent
Very low-income households	972	90 per cent	875	3.4 per cent
Low-income households	474	85 per cent	403	1.6 per cent
Moderate-income households	178	80 per cent	142	0.6 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,993</b>		<b>1,789</b>	<b>7.0 per cent</b>

*Table 5: Pessimistic case forecast need for social and affordable housing in the Macedon Ranges Shire in 2036 - Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census*



## Projected change

2016

Household type	No of households	Minimum target	Need for housing assistance	Need as a per cent of all households
Homeless	59	100 per cent	59	0.3 per cent
Social housing households*	277	100 per cent	277	1.6 per cent
Very low-income households	566	90 per cent	510	2.9 per cent
Low-income households	307	85 per cent	261	1.5 per cent
Moderate-income households	104	80 per cent	83	0.5 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,313</b>		<b>1,190</b>	<b>6.7 per cent</b>

Table 6: Changes in need for affordable housing assistance in 2016–2036 - Source: SGS 2021 using ABS 2016 Census

\*Without a confirmed increase in social housing dwellings, modelling allocates additional demand into very low-income households.

## Fast facts

The ABS 2021 Census data provides the most comprehensive overview of housing need. The following data includes highlight indicators that have been sourced from more recent publications.

### Rental profile December 2022

The December quarter 2022 rental report<sup>6</sup> indicates that over the previous quarter the median rent in metropolitan Melbourne reduced increased \$10 to \$450 per week but in regional Victoria it remained the same at \$400. In the Macedon Ranges it increased by \$30 to \$500.

<sup>6</sup> Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services Rental Report June Quarter 2021



Rent at a glance	Median Rent (per week)
Metropolitan Melbourne	\$450
Regional Victoria	\$400
Victoria	\$430
Macedon Ranges	\$500

Table 7. Rental profile - Source: Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services Rental Report June Quarter 2021

\* Percentage change figures are calculated from relevant rent index

The rental vacancy rate has stayed relatively stable in regional Victoria (2020–21), though it is understood that rental vacancy rates are lower in the Macedon Ranges Shire than in regional Victoria.

The following table compares metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria vacancy rates.

Rental vacancy rate	June 2020	March 2021	June 2021
Regional Victoria	1.5 per cent	1.2 per cent	1.2 per cent
Metropolitan Melbourne	3.9 per cent	6.4 per cent	5.2 per cent

Table 8. Rental vacancy profile - Source: Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services Rental Report June Quarter 2021



## Social housing stock baseline June 2020

Social housing demand, compared with the number of social housing dwellings, is higher in regional Victoria than in metropolitan Melbourne. This reflects, in part, the higher proportion of people experiencing disadvantage in regional areas<sup>7</sup>.

There are 342 social housing dwellings in the Macedon Ranges Shire<sup>8</sup>. The Campaspe Shire, with a comparable population to the Macedon Ranges Shire (37,675 and 46,100 respectively), has 802 social housing dwellings.

LGA	House	Medium density attached	Medium density detached	Low-rise flat	Movable unit	Other	Community owned	Total
Macedon Ranges Shire	124	59	6	0	14	1	138	342
Campaspe Shire	295	293	21	8	10	5	170	802
Central Goldfields Shire	114	116	3	0	11	1	30	275
City of Greater Bendigo	857	855	99	3	45	4	623	2,486
Loddon Shire	7	28	2	15	3	0	17	72

Table 9: Director of Housing-owned units (including leased and other director-managed units) and community-owned dwellings by LGA at July 2022 - Source: Victorian Government, Housing Assistance Additional Service Delivery Data 2019-2020 Updated June 2022

## Growth and building approvals

The population of the Macedon Ranges Shire is projected, based on 2021 data, to increase by 24.16 per cent over the next 15 years (2021–36)<sup>9</sup>. To meet this growth, a further 6,981 dwellings are needed<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Infrastructure Victoria Victorias-infrastructure-strategy-2021-2051-Vol 1

<sup>8</sup> Victorian Government, Housing Assistance Additional Service Delivery Data 2019-2020 Updated 12 July 2021

<sup>9</sup> [Home | Macedon Ranges Shire | Population forecast \(id.com.au\)](#), accessed August 2021

<sup>10</sup> [Dwellings and development map | Macedon Ranges Shire | Population forecast \(id.com.au\)](#)





The value of all building approvals (private development) in the Macedon Ranges Shire was \$241 million in the 2020–21 financial year, with \$166.48 million for residential development (328 residential buildings)<sup>11</sup>.

By comparison, the Victorian Government will invest a minimum \$35 million in the Macedon Ranges Shire for affordable housing development. The investment in affordable housing is relatively small compared to overall housing growth and projected demand.

## Population profile

Detailed demographic information about the Macedon Ranges population is available on Council's website at [mrc.vic.gov.au/See-Do/Our-Region/Population-Profile](https://mrc.vic.gov.au/See-Do/Our-Region/Population-Profile).

A brief summary of key statistics about the Macedon Ranges Shire population, from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021 Census is provided below:<sup>12</sup>

People	Number	%
Male	25,353	49.3
Female	26,111	50.7

Indigenous status	Number	%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	481	0.9
Non-Indigenous	48,565	94.4
Indigenous status not stated	2,412	4.7%

Seniors	Number	%
People aged 0-54	34,622	67.4
People aged over 55	16,832	32.6

<sup>11</sup> [Economic profile | Macedon Ranges | economy.id](#)

<sup>12</sup> <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA24130> accessed March 2023



Household composition	Number	%
Family households	14,147	78.3
Single (or lone) person households	3,610	20.0
Group households	302	1.7

In 2018, around 1 in 6 (18%) people in Australia – or about 4.4 million – had a disability. This is also known as 'disability prevalence'. Another 22% (or 5.5 million) of people in Australia had a long-term health condition but no disability, and the remaining 60% (or 14.8 million) had no disability or long-term health condition.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release> accessed March 2023.

15 DIRECTOR ASSETS AND OPERATIONS REPORTS

<b>AO.1</b>	<b>RIDDELLS CREEK MOVEMENT NETWORK STUDY (STAGE 2A) - UPDATE</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Eng Lim, Manager Engineering and Resource Recovery</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Riddells Creek Movement Network Study - Draft Recommendation Report (under separate cover) <a href="#">↗</a></b>

**Summary**

This report updates Council on the Stage 2A 'Draft Recommendation Report' outcome for the Riddells Creek Movement Network Study (RCMNS) (attachment 1). This report also highlights the next steps for Stage 2B activities in the new financial year.

**Recommendation**

**That Council notes this report on the outcome of Stage 2A of the Riddells Creek Movement Network Study and the next steps for Stage 2B in the next financial year 2023/2024.**

**Background**

Council initiated the Riddells Creek Movement Network Study (Study) in 2021 to guide the provision and upgrade of transport infrastructure in Riddells Creek. The community initially raised concerns regarding the township growth's impact on future infrastructure needs and traffic management through budget submissions.

This Study aims to create a strategic transport plan to address the local community's existing concerns and propose relevant supporting infrastructure to accommodate long-term population growth within the Riddells Creek township boundary.

The four objectives and related tasks to achieve this were:

Objectives	Tasks
Network aspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an ultimate movement network plan that outlines the vision for the transport network in Riddells Creek</li> <li>• Analyse all inputs to the ultimate movement network, including council documents, planning schemes and community feedback</li> </ul>
Gap Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify gaps between this plan and the existing infrastructure in Riddells Creek.</li> </ul>
Identify Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify projects that will close the identified gaps and upgrade existing transport infrastructure to meet the specifications of the ultimate movement network.</li> </ul>

Prioritise Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define criteria to rank the list of projects in order of priority.</li> <li>• Prioritise projects to assist Council with a multi-year capital works program</li> </ul>
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## Discussion

Officers completed Stage 1 of this Study in financial year FY21/22, presenting it to Council at the 24 August 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting. That report provided the initial consultation's outcome and detailed the community's concerns about traffic and transport Infrastructure.

The initial Stage 1 consultation feedback is summarised below:

- Congestion
- Lack of pedestrian crossings
- Parking issues at Station Street around Foodworks
- Lack of parking in the township and around schools
- Minimum consideration for cyclists
- Lack of accessible parking spaces
- Turning lanes on Main Road
- Safety concerns at Sutherlands Road, Amess Road and Riddell Road
- Speeding issues
- Safety around school
- Congestion within the township
- Poor quality and conditions of roads
- Lack of parking
- Geese holding the traffic on Main Road
- Missing links and lack of footpaths
- Poor traffic management on Main Road
- Increase in heavy vehicles.

This second stage update (Stage 2A) focuses on developing a strategic transport infrastructure plan, which includes the Township's ultimate transport network. In turn, this identifies future infrastructure projects in Riddells Creek to update the transport network within Riddells Creek.

The Victoria's Movement and Place Framework underpins the transport infrastructure plan and provides a broad framework to guide future infrastructure development of the Riddells Creek Township over the next 30 years. The plan will account for the current and future developments within the Township (e.g. Amess Road development) and any State infrastructure projects nearby.

This Study has produced a draft aspirational movement network plan for the Riddells Creek township based on these objectives, acknowledging the community concerns in Stage 1 and

recognising other relevant information. Refer to the attached Stage 2A 'Draft Recommendation Report' for the Study.

Many improvements are recommended, based on the Study's third objective (Identify Projects) and categorised as follows:

- Pedestrian facility upgrades
- Cycling facility upgrades
- Intersection upgrades
- Speed limit reduction
- Streetscape and Amenity Improvements

The following table provides key recommendations for each category:

Transport Category	Issues raised in Stage 1 by the community	Proposed Recommendations and Engineering Treatments in Stage 2A
<i>Pedestrian</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of pedestrian crossings</li> <li>• Missing links and lack of footpaths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wombat crossings at Station Street, Sutherlands Road and Whittakers Lane</li> <li>• Refuge Crossings at the Intersection of Kilmore Road/Amess Road and Kilmore/ Gap Road</li> <li>• Pedestrian Operated Signal Crossing at Sutherlands Road outside Property no:5</li> <li>• Bridge Crossing at Sutherlands Road near Racecourse Road</li> </ul>
<i>Cycling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum consideration and Infrastructure for cyclists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared path (within road reserve) on Kilmore Road, Sandy Creek Road, Gap Road and many more</li> <li>• Bike Sharrows at Parkview Drive, Whittakers Lane, Somerville Lane, Range View Drive and many more.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A sharrow is not a bike lane, it is a positioning tool that tells a bike rider where they won't be squeezed in a lane too narrow for cars and bikes together</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Extension of Regional Trails</li> </ul>

Transport Category	Issues raised in Stage 1 by the community	Proposed Recommendations and Engineering Treatments in Stage 2A
<i>Intersections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congestion</li> <li>• Safety concerns at Sutherlands Road, Amess Road and Riddell Road</li> <li>• Poor traffic management on Main Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic lights or new roundabout at Riddell Road / Kilmore Road</li> <li>• New roundabout at Kilmore Road / Sandy Creek Road</li> <li>• Traffic lights at Kilmore Road / Station Street to a signalised intersection</li> <li>• Reverse priority intersection at Sutherlands Road / Station Street</li> <li>• Intersection upgrade at Raws Lane, including turn lanes</li> <li>• New roundabout at Kilmore Road / Gyro Close intersection with future access into the northern part of Amess Road development</li> </ul>
<i>Speed Limit Reductions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speeding issues throughout the township</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the speed limit on Main Road between Walter J Smith Reserve at the southern entrance to the town to Sexton Street from 50 km/h to 40 km/h</li> <li>• Reduce the speed limit on Main Road between Sexton Street and the north of the Amess Road development to 60 km/h</li> <li>• Implement an area-wide 30 km/h speed zone within the Riddells Creek town centre</li> <li>• Implement an area-wide 40 km/h speed zone within the residential areas of the township</li> </ul>
<i>Amenity and Streetscape</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor quality of roads</li> <li>• Poor traffic management on Main Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-way traffic flow along Station Street between the Railway Station and Sutherlands Road</li> <li>• Kerb outstands, sharrow line marking and speed humps to slow traffic speeds</li> <li>• Potential to implement a 10 km/h shared zone, supported by landscaping, raising the road to footpath level and removing kerbs, and other interventions to enforce the slow environment</li> </ul>

**Note:** The detailed and comprehensive summary of all recommendations is in Appendix 2 on page 60 of the Stage 2A 'Draft Recommendation Report' for the Study (refer to the attachment).

### **Next Steps**

After receiving this feedback, officers will continue to complete the Stage 2A Riddells Creek Movement Network Study by defining appropriate criteria to rank the list of draft recommendations projects in order of priority.

In Stage 2B, in financial year FY23/24, officers will undertake detailed traffic and parking studies, traffic analysis and further investigations to refine the draft recommendations. As an outcome, an implementation plan will be developed based on established criteria to inform the prioritisation of projects and to assist Council in setting a multi-year program of future capital works.

Officers are planning for community consultation in February 2024. After consultation, officers may refine the Implementation Plan and recommendations. The implementation plan's project prioritisation will be based on immediate needs and then reference growth trigger points.

Officers will present the final Riddells Creek Movement Network Study at a Scheduled Council Meeting before the end of FY23/24.

### **Consultation and engagement**

Officers undertook two rounds of community consultation during the last financial year for Stage 1, with another round of community consultation planned during Stage 2B.

### **Collaboration**

This Study is a collaboration between Council and the community. Officers prepared this report with the assistance of external stakeholders (feedback obtained from the consultation and engagement process with the Riddells Creek community members and key selected stakeholders) and internal staff, including key contributions from the Strategic Planning team.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

The Riddells Creek Movement Network Study reflects Council's commitment to identify and address the community's concerns to guide the future of the Riddells Creek township and address growing concerns relating to transport, infrastructure development and population growth in Riddells Creek now and into the future.

### **Relevant law**

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted relating to the subject matter of this report. The gender impact assessment recommends that, as far as it is practical, the provision of services and upgrades shall be planned to provide equity of access for all current and future users. Any projects arising from this study will be subject to a Gender Impact Assessment.

The Study applies to all Riddells Creek residents and visitors. It also endeavours to provide equity of consideration of issues and opportunities to all, including gender considerations. Officers will seek gender-specific feedback as a part of the final consultation process.

**Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

- *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030*

**Relevant Council plans and policies**

Officers identified the following documents as important to the development of the Riddells Creek Movement Network Study; these include:

- *Council Plan 2021-2031*
- *Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme*
- *Community Engagement Policy 2021*
- *Engineering Requirements for Infrastructure Construction Policy 2010*
- *Open Space Strategy 2014*
- *Visitor Economy Strategy 2019*
- *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28;*
- *Pedestrian Access Strategy 2010;*
- *Macedon Ranges Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy 2014.*

**Financial viability**

The funding for Stage 2B is subject to final funding decisions for the FY23/24 budget process.

Regarding the final implementation plan, projects will be developed based on established criteria to inform the prioritisation of projects and to assist Council in setting a multi-year program of future capital works. Officers will rely on multiple funding sources, including council budget allocation for future financial years and tapping into State and Federal grants that are applicable based on the grant selection criteria specific to each funding source.

**Sustainability implications**

Any project arising from the Study's recommendations will consider any social and/or environmental impact specific to each project.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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



<b>AO.2</b>	<b>SHIREWIDE FOOTPATH PLAN REVIEW</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Eng Lim, Manager Engineering and Resource Recovery</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>1. Connecting communities</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>1. Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027) Revised 2023 (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>2. Priority Map Gisborne (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>3. Priority Map Kyneton (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>4. Priority Map Lancefield (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>5. Priority Map Macedon (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>6. Priority Map New Gisborne (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>7. Priority Map Newham (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>8. Priority Map Riddells Creek (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>9. Priority Map Romsey (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>10. Priority Map Tylden (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>11. Priority Map Woodend (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b> <b>12. Summary of submissions and feedback received (under separate cover) <a href="#">⇒</a></b>

### Summary

This report presents the revised *Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027)* (attachment 1) to Council for consideration and adoption. The revision focused on the type of paths for different locations and a methodology for assessing new footpath requests. This review did not include reviewing the municipality's footpath requirements; this work is scheduled for 2027 when a new Shire Wide Footpath Plan is required.

The revised *Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027)* (the Plan) has completed the community consultation stage and considered this feedback.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

- 1. Adopts the revised Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018 to 2027), and**
- 2. Delegates to the Director Asset and Operations the authority to add additional paths to the Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018 to 2027) as required from time to time, utilising the Plan's prioritisation process.**

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### Background

Reviewing the *Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027)* (Plan) is a Council Plan action for 2022/23. The original Plan identified community needs for walking and shared path infrastructure and outlined potential projects for the ten years between 2018 to 2027.

The review of the Plan updates the priorities and provides transparency regarding the methodology used in determining how the footpath design meets footpath engineering design standards and complements neighbourhood character.

This review sets out a multi-criteria assessment matrix to prioritise footpath delivery, engage with the community to identify and plan for their future needs. This will embed future strategic township growth in identifying the different hierarchies of the footpath network within the municipality. Specifically, the review establishes the following:

- (1) a transparent Evaluation Matrix and updates the current 2018-2027 priority list of footpaths;
- (2) sets Design Parameters - Width and Accessibility; and
- (3) sets Material Selection Criteria based on neighbourhood character and pedestrian activity.

The updated Plan incorporates changes after considering the feedback and input from the recently completed community consultation process.

### **Discussion**

In 2017, the creation of the Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027) included community drop-in sessions in Gisborne, Macedon, Riddells Creek, Woodend, Kyneton and Romsey. The community also had the opportunity to submit via the 'Have Your Say' page on Council's website, Facebook, Email or Post. A second round of consultation occurred in July 2018 to complete the draft plan. The adopted Plan identified approximately \$15 million of footpath projects; it is currently available on Council's website.

Occasionally, officers made minor adjustments to cost estimates and priority rankings. Priority ranking changes may occur as a result of the following:

- (1) council Resolutions;
- (2) significant changes to the built environment; and/or
- (3) consideration of customer/community requests.

However, officers sometimes received feedback/complaints regarding specific projects during a project's community consultation process, particularly regarding design parameters (e.g. community preferences for specific materials and width) and alignment of the footpath (including impact on existing bluestone assets).

Since adopting this Plan, Council has spent nearly \$4 million on delivering footpaths following the priorities described in the Plan.

The revised Plan provides improved clarity on the consultation processes for footpath projects. Improvements include sending initial letters to residents in the financial year before the Council plans to construct new footpaths on their street (pending budget approval) with the path's indicative alignment, proposed width and type of construction material.

This process will enable Council to respond and address community feedback (including from those who may be new residents) before proceeding with the concept design.

Once a footpath project is funded, further notification of the final design will be communicated to residents following the appointment of the contractor.

### **Consultation and engagement**

Council officers originally completed two rounds of community consultation in 2017 to develop the Shire Wide Footpath Plan. This consultation included the following:

- Community Drop-in sessions in Gisborne, Macedon, Riddells Creek, Woodend, Kyneton and Romsey; and
- The opportunity for people to "Have Their Say" through written submissions through Facebook, Email or Post.

During that consultation process in 2018, overall, the community was supportive of the footpath program and its priorities. Utilising this feedback, Council officers developed the Shire Wide Footpath Plan, which Council ultimately adopted.

The 2023 review of the Shire Wide Footpath Plan has expanded the discussions related to new criteria for how the Council prioritise footpath upgrades and determines the design/materials used for path upgrades.

It is worth noting that the 2023 review of this Plan provides a list of 177 footpath projects with the following breakdown.

<b>Township</b>	<b>No. of footpath projects remaining in the Plan</b>
Gisborne	31
Kyneton	41
Lancefield	10
Macedon	15
Malmsbury	0 (originally listed projects have been delivered)
New Gisborne	9
Newham	1
Riddells Creek	19
Romsey	21
Tylden	4
Woodend	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>

At the 22 March 2023 Scheduled Council Meeting, Council endorsed release of the draft revised Shire Wide Footpath Plan (2018-2027) for four weeks of community consultation between 28 March to 30 April 2023, seeking further feedback on the proposed revisions. This consultation was not seeking new footpaths requests.

Community feedback was available through the following methods:

- Online survey via Council Have Your Say webpage
- Email submission via [engineeringervices@mrsc.vic.gov.au](mailto:engineeringervices@mrsc.vic.gov.au)
- Phonecall via (03) 5422 0333
- Postal via a written submission to Macedon Ranges Shire Council, PO Box 151, Kyneton VIC 3444.

In addition, the consultation was also publicised through:

- A quarter-page advertisement in the Midland Express issue on 4 April 2023

- Council social media, inviting feedback on the revised Shire-wide Footpath Plan
- Notifications to schools, Kids News and Youth socials

### **Results of the Community Consultation**

In total, there were 119 submissions.

- 102 unique responses via an online survey
- 17 email submissions

The survey asked three specific questions and a fourth question seeking other general feedback.

*Question 1 - "Would like to proceed with the remaining priority footpaths identified as part of the Shire-wide Footpath Plan 2018?"*

82 responses were received to this question and 20 respondents skipped the question. Of the 82 respondents, 79% supported and 21% were against it. Generally, the community has a high level of support to proceed with the re-prioritisation of footpaths identified in the 2018 Plan.

*Question 2 - Residents were asked to provide feedback on the footpath priority evaluation criteria.*

40 responses to this question were received, whereas 62 respondents skipped the question. A mixed response was received regarding the priority criteria. Most of the respondents focussed on "where they would like to see a footpath" rather than focusing on the selection criteria. Key points from respondents included:

- Community consultation is a priority;
- Growth Areas need to be considered in the evaluation criteria;
- Kyneton South and Gisborne South should be included in the Plan; and
- The western end of Clowes Street in Tylden should be included in the Plan.

*Question 3 - Residents were asked to provide feedback on the material selection criteria.*

29 responses were received and 73 respondents skipped this question. One response was received via email on material selections. Generally, residents who responded are more focused on requesting footpaths than material selection. Key points from respondents included:

- Environmentally friendly materials should be considered, and
- Eight (8) responded via an online survey, preferring concrete.

*Question 4 - "Do you have any other feedback on the plan?"*

Most respondents requested a footpath where they live, or where children walk to school, and where they have safety issues. Key points from respondents included:

- Footpath request on Clowes Street in Tylden, which connects to the primary school
- Inclusion of Kyneton South and Gisborne South in the Plan

Attachment 12 summarises the feedback from the community survey and email submissions, including the Officers' responses and any recommended changes to the plan.

In general, residents in both urban and rural areas consider footpaths to be an integral part of the transport network and a supporting infrastructure to promote health and wellbeing. Except for a small percentage of respondents, there is a strong community preference for footpaths on all residential streets with a reduced focus on materials and widths.

### **Collaboration**

This study is a collaboration between Council and the community. Officers prepared this report with the assistance of external stakeholders (feedback obtained from the consultation and engagement process with the Macedon Ranges community members and key selected stakeholders) and internal staff, including key contributions from the Strategic Planning team.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

The Shire Wide Footpath Plan reflects Council's commitment to identify and address the community's concerns to guide the future of walking and shared path infrastructure within our municipality.

### **Relevant law**

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment has been conducted relating to the subject matter of this report.

Following the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment report was undertaken.

The assessment identified the following as key points for consideration:

- From a safety perspective, footpaths need clear lines of sight
- From an accessibility perspective
  - parents using strollers or those in mobility scooters or wheelchairs require wider footpaths to navigate (especially in high-traffic areas); therefore, they need space to pass without having to leave the constructed path
  - footpaths need to be flat and have ramps at intersections
  - From a comfort perspective, self-shaded footpaths by street planting is preferred.
- Path alignments will favour alignments in road reserves and adjacent to parks and reserves.
- Lighting is not specifically part of this Plan; however, it is noted that lighting provides higher levels in people's perceptions of safety and security.

### **Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

*Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030*

### **Relevant Council plans and policies**

Officers identified the following documents as important to the development of the Shire Wide Footpath Plan; these include:

- *Council Plan 2021-2031*

- *Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme*
- *Community Engagement Policy 2021*
- *Engineering Requirements for Infrastructure Construction Policy 2010*
- *Open Space Strategy 2014*
- *Visitor Economy Strategy 2019*
- *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28;*
- *Pedestrian Access Strategy 2010;*
- *Disability Action Plan 2023;*
- *Macedon Ranges Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy 2014.*

**Financial viability**

Officers develop and prioritise each footpath project based on the established Shire Wide Footpath Plan criteria. This will assist Council in setting a multi-year capital works program. Officers will submit business cases as part of the budget process each financial year. In addition, officers will investigate multiple funding sources, including State and Federal grants that are applicable based on the grant selection criteria specific to each source.

**Sustainability implications**

Any project to be developed from this study's recommendations will consider any social and/or environmental impact specific to each project and the affected community members will be consulted before its implementation

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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

<b>AO.3</b>	<b>CAPITAL WORKS REPORTING</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	<b>Jeetendra Dahal, Manager Assets and Project Management Office</b>
<b>Council Plan relationship:</b>	<b>4. Delivering strong and reliable government</b>
<b>Attachments:</b>	<b>Nil</b>

### Summary

This report provides transparency on cost escalations on infrastructure projects and seeks further funding, informs on project surplus budget, cancellation or the scope reduction of the projects to manage the projects within the allocated annual capital works program budget.

### Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **Adopts the following changes to the Financial Year 2022/23 budget relating to the following infrastructure projects:**
  - (a) **Sankey Reserve Public Toilet Design: Return \$6,640.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (b) **Kyneton Bowls Club: Return \$15,407.80 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (c) **Design – Riddells Creek Modular Tennis: Return \$21,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as funds were not required;**
  - (d) **Kyneton Sports and Aquatic Splash Pad: Return \$636.37 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (e) **Romsey Recreation Centre Box Gutters: Return \$7,620.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (f) **Kyneton Museum – Theaden Cottage: Return \$4,220.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (g) **Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre Floor and Seating: Return \$5,220.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (h) **Gisborne Dixon Field Bird Hide Demolition: Return \$3,240.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (i) **Kyneton Office Wall Drainage: Return \$174,858.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project did not proceed;**
  - (j) **Romsey Park Oval 2 Storage Shed: Increase budget by \$23,209.00 to cover the unforeseen variation and cost escalation;**

- (k) **Kyneton Airfield Toilets Demolition and Replacement: Increase budget by \$90,000.00 to cover the unforeseen variation and cost escalation;**
- (l) **Brooke Street and Templeton Street Local Area Traffic Management Works: Increase budget by \$174,000.00 to cover the unforeseen variation and cost escalation;**
- (m) **Road Reconstruction - Romsey Road, Romsey: Increase budget by \$115,648.97 for additional works required;**
- (n) **Road Renewal – Reseal Program: Return \$130,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (o) **Road Reconstruction - Mt Gisborne Rd, Gisborne: Return \$117,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (p) **Footpath Construction – Carrington Street, Macedon: Return \$9,761.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (q) **Edgecombe St, Kyneton: Return \$254.72 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (r) **Footpath Construction – Pohlman Street, Kyneton: Return \$26,962.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (s) **Road Reconstruction – Jennings Street, Kyneton: Return \$16,705.56 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (t) **Footpath Construction – Kyneton Aquatic Centre: Return \$24,965.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (u) **Road Reconstruction – Boundary Road: Return \$20,000 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (v) **Road Reconstruction – Romsey Road Hesket: Return \$150,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (w) **Gardiner Reserve Carpark and Landscaping: Return \$5,163.10 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (x) **Bennett Road Rehabilitation – Gisborne: Return \$13,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (y) **Footbridge – Waterfalls Road, Macedon: Return \$6,000.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
- (z) **Bridge – Whitebridge Road, Rochford: Return \$7,650.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**



- (aa) **Footpath – The Crescent, Lancefield: Return \$27,370.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
  - (bb) **Drainage Prince Street Gisborne: Return \$920.00 to the consolidated capital works program budget as the project has been completed leaving unspent contingency as surplus;**
2. **Notes that recommendation 1 (above) provides a surplus of \$217,395.69 to the financial year 2022-2023 Capital Works program budget.**
  3. **Notes the potential surplus of \$256,708.23 from eight (8) projects due for completion by 30 June 2023.**

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## Background

During Financial Year 2021/2022, there were significant price rises across many building materials. The Master Builders Association reports that between March 2020 and March 2022, steel products increased by over 40% and timber products by over 20%. In addition, labour increased significantly.

The Council budget build process begins in October of the previous year. This means pricing is already outdated by nine months before the budget year starts. Some infrastructure projects will not be tendered until over twelve months after the initial estimates were set. Officers allow a reasonable cost escalation on project costs; however, the cost increases experienced were outside this estimate.

Some tenders are coming as high as 30% over budget. This is not sustainable, and there is no budget to cover these unexpected increased costs.

The other impact of the current construction-led recovery is a shortage of contractors. Council has experienced tenders with either one response or zero responses and/or non-compliant tender responses.

The combination of cost increases and contractor availability require Council critically review all project impacted by these factors.

## Discussion

Each year, Council announces a commitment to expend a defined amount of money to deliver specific infrastructure projects through the budget. In real terms, our dollar purchases less than forecasted. This presents three potential actions to remain within budget:

- (1) value managing the project to deliver the expected outcome within the provided budget;
- (2) over-expending the budget; or
- (3) reducing the number of infrastructure projects delivered.

The second potential option is unacceptable within Council's legislative and moral responsibilities. The last is achievable by critically reviewing over-budget infrastructure projects and determining which must proceed and which must be cancelled.

The concept is that in critically reviewing which infrastructure projects are funded and which are not funded, the intent is to have the unfunded infrastructure projects cover the increase in costs for the project determined to continue.

In determining which project proceeds, even though over budget, the following items need to be considered:

- Associated grant funding with acquittal requirements
- Immediate asset reliability and functionality

Officers will attempt to 'value manage' the project to deliver the expected outcome within the provided budget – this will generally occur before going to tender or if a tender response is above budget. This will happen as part of normal council operations.

Any projects that are cancelled this year will be put forward to future budget processes for assessment of priority and potential inclusion in future budgets.

This month, officers have identified the following infrastructure projects requiring budget changes.

<b>Infrastructure Project</b>	<b>Progress with Construction</b>	<b>Original budget</b>	<b>Reason for Progression or Non-Progression</b>	<b>Change to the budget – () is an additional cost to the budget</b>
Financial position following previous decisions	N/A	N/A	Bring forward a (\$174,339.89) balance resulting from the resolution of the May 2023 Council meeting	(\$174,339.89)
100098 Sankey Reserve Public Toilet Design	Project complete	\$20,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$6,640.00
100585 Kyneton Bowls Club	Project complete	\$212,677.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$15,407.80
100591 Design - Riddells Creek Tennis Modular	N/A	\$21,000.00	This funding was for financial completion of a FY21/22 project, however was not required	\$21,000.00
100089 Kyneton Sports and Aquatic splash pad	Project complete	\$15,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$636.37
100096 Romsey Recreation Centre Box Gutters	Project complete	\$20,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$7,620.00
100130 Kyneton Museum Theaden Cottage	Project complete	\$30,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$4,220.00

<b>Infrastructure Project</b>	<b>Progress with Construction</b>	<b>Original budget</b>	<b>Reason for Progression or Non-Progression</b>	<b>Change to the budget – () is an additional cost to the budget</b>
100131 Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Floor and Seating Design	Project complete	\$20,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$5,220.00
100143 Gisborne Dixon Field Bird Hide Demolition	Project complete	\$20,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$3,240.00
100104 Kyneton Office Wall Drainage	N/A	\$174,858.00	Project did not proceed, alternate solution implemented	\$174,858.00
100333 Romsey Park Oval 2 Storage Shed	Pre-construction	\$45,000.00	The Romsey Park Oval 2 Storage Shed requires an additional \$23,209 to complete the project as the original budget for this was set in November 2021.	(\$23,209.00)
100255 Kyneton Airfield Toilets Demolition and Replacement	Pre-construction	\$101,560.00	The Kyneton Airfield Toilets demolition and replacement project requires additional funding to complete. The original budget was set in November 2021.	(\$90,000.00)
100354 Brooke Street and Templeton Street Local Area Traffic Management Works, Woodend	Yes	\$480,000.00	This is a high priority project approved for the 22/23 budget.  The tenders received were significantly higher than the initial budgeted amount  Officers still believe this provides value for money, given refinements in the design.	(\$174,000.00)

<b>Infrastructure Project</b>	<b>Progress with Construction</b>	<b>Original budget</b>	<b>Reason for Progression or Non-Progression</b>	<b>Change to the budget – () is an additional cost to the budget</b>
100158 Road Reconstruction - Romsey Road, Romsey	Works have reached Practical Completion	\$617,529.00	During construction extra rehabilitation and reseal areas and extra drainage works were required to prolong longevity of the rehabilitated pavement.	(\$115,648.97)
100398 Renewal – Reseal Program	Reseal Program Practical Completion	\$1,592,161.36	Projects under the reseal program are complete, returning unspent contingency	\$130,000.00
100270 Road Reconstruction - Mt Gisborne Rd, Gisborne	Project complete	\$617,719.90	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$117,000.00
100237 Footpath Construction - Carrington Street, Macedon	Project complete	\$159,650.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$9,761.00
100267 Edgecombe Street, Kyneton	Project complete	\$121,842.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency a	\$254.72
100164 Footpath Construction - Pohlman Street, Kyneton	Project complete	\$245,349.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$26,962.00
100268 Road Reconstruction - Jennings Street, Kyneton	Project complete	\$354,041.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$16,705.56
100172 Footpath Construction – Kyneton Aquatic Centre	Project complete	\$80,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$24,965.00
100152 Road Reconstruction – Boundary Road	Project complete	\$327,400.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$20,000.00

Infrastructure Project	Progress with Construction	Original budget	Reason for Progression or Non-Progression	Change to the budget – ( ) is an additional cost to the budget
100157 Road Reconstruction - Romsey Road, Heskett	Project complete	\$851,124.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$150,000.00
100275 Gardiner Reserve Carpark and Landscaping	Project complete	\$243,417.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$5,163.10
100973 Bennett Road Rehabilitation – Gisborne	Project complete	\$300,494.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$13,000.00
100149 Foot Bridge- Waterfalls road, Macedon	Project complete	\$38,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$6,000.00
100151 Bridge – Whitebridge Road, Rochford	Project complete	\$20,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$7,650.00
100166 Footpath – The Crescent, Lancefield	Project complete	\$202,150.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency	\$27,370.00
100883 Drainage Prince Street Gisborne	Project complete	\$10,000.00	Project complete returning unspent contingency and surplus	\$920.00
			<b>NET TOTAL</b>	<b>\$217,395.69</b>

This recommendation currently results in a budget **surplus of \$217,395.69**. This surplus will be consolidated within the finalisation of the FY2022/2023 results pending Council’s resolution as presented above.

Further, officers believe that there is potentially additional surplus on the projects listed in below table, which will be completed by the end of this financial year.

Infrastructure Project	Progress with Construction	Original budget	Reason for Progression or Non-progression	Change to the Budget - ( ) is an additional cost to the budget
100154 Road Reconstruction – Three Chain Road, Carlsruhe	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$730,000.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$69,497.23

Infrastructure Project	Progress with Construction	Original budget	Reason for Progression or Non-progression	Change to the Budget - ( ) is an additional cost to the budget
100263 Drainage Farrell Street Gisborne	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$143,140.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$35,000.00
100274 Bridge – Mission Hill Road, Baynton	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$60,015.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$10,715.00
100180 Drainage – Sutherlands Road, Riddells	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$25000.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$6,275.00
100179 Drainage – Sutherlands Road, Riddells	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$105,110.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$8,935.00
100402 Renewal – Kerb and Channel	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$178,000.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$100,000.00
100167 Footpath Construction –High Street, Lancefield	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$148,775.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$8,000.00
100884 Drainage – Calthorpe Street, Gisborne	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$49,700.00	The project is currently under construction and estimated saving is reported.	\$8,286.00
100252 Footbridge – Wood Street Woodend	Project completion by the end of f/y 2022/23	\$253,500.00	Project will be complete by end of June and estimated saving is reported.	\$10,000.00
			<b>Net Total - estimated surplus</b>	<b>\$256,708.23</b>

Based on the total of the two tables above, there is potential for the total surplus of the FY2022/23 capital program budget of \$474,103.92. This will be confirmed following the financial year-end processes. A few projects previously noted for carried forward may require additional funds once tenders are received.

There are also a few projects returning the unspent contingency and a surplus. Whilst some of these surpluses are sizable, they result from officers applying best value principles and either altering projects using value management processes or undertaking design processes resulting in construction savings. The projects reporting a large surplus are only a small percentage of the total number of projects. This is not unusual in a project program with over 200 projects.

### **Consultation and engagement**

Within individual infrastructure projects, there will be identified stakeholders. Project Sponsors will liaise with stakeholders of projects that are the subject of this report.

This report is an initiative to ensure transparency in decision-making for infrastructure projects. By publically providing this report in the Scheduled Council Meeting agenda, the community can understand the decisions being made promptly and without the need to await a quarterly, six monthly or annual report.

### **Collaboration**

Council officers share initiatives across many neighbouring Councils – all report similar challenges and impacts from current economic conditions.

### **Innovation and continuous improvement**

This is an innovative approach to the problem of unprecedented infrastructure project price increases. Council would typically address project budget issues via the mid-year budget review. An agile response is required in response to the current economic environment. Preparing a report such as this, for presentation to Scheduled Council Meetings throughout this financial year, provides resolutions with minimal lost time.

### **Relevant law**

There is not a specific law relating to the information provided within this report.

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report.

### **Relevant regional, state and national plans and policies**

Not Applicable

### **Relevant Council plans and policies**

The Council plan relevant to this report is delivering strong and reliable government. Transparently providing timely information for the community should provide confidence in how Council is adapting its infrastructure project delivery within budget.

### **Financial viability**

The processes described in this report detail how Council is adapting its infrastructure project delivery to ensure it is within budget.

### **Sustainability implications**

There are no direct sustainability impacts resulting from this report.

**Officer declaration of conflicts of interest**

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



**16 NOTICES OF MOTION AND RESCISSION****No. 58/2022-23: NOTICE OF MOTION - UPDATE ON BARRM BIRRM**

I, Councillor Annette Death, give notice that at the next Meeting of Council to be held on 28 June 2023, I intend to move the following motion:

**That Council request staff to prepare a report to be presented to Council at the September 2023 Scheduled Meeting of Council providing the following:**

- 1. A progress update on actions supported by Council at the 26 October 2022 Scheduled Council Meeting to address the ongoing land management challenges with Barrm Birrm in Riddells Creek; and**
- 2. Options for next steps, including a Public Acquisition Overlay and officer recommendations.**

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Discussion

Council considered a report on the future management of Barrm Birrm at its Scheduled Council Meeting held on 26 October 2022. This report outlined a range of actions to address some of the ongoing land management challenges associated with Barrm Birrm. At the meeting Council resolved the following:

*That Council:*

- (1) Supports the ongoing advocacy to the State Government, in the lead up to the State Election on 26 November 2022, for the purchase of the privately owned lots in Barrm Birrm for both community and environment benefit. This includes, but is not limited to, inclusion of the project in Council's Priority Projects Prospectus and on-going liaison with State Government representatives.*
- (2) Notes that detailed ecological and cultural heritage assessments are planned that will help demonstrate the significant ecological and heritage values of the site.*
- (3) Continues to offer the gift back program to all landholders and consider waiving outstanding rates to expedite this offer.*
- (4) Continues to explore possible options to protect the site including seeking probate for deceased estates and new planning provisions.*
- (5) Continues to liaise with real estate agents, new landholders or prospective buyers of the subdivision to ensure that they are aware of planning restrictions, native vegetation protection, access difficulties and promotion of natural values.*
- (6) Continues to work with community groups to build awareness of the site's importance and natural values.*

Given the eight months since Council's endorsement of these above actions it is considered timely to seek an update from officers on the progress of the above actions and an outline of the next steps and actions to address the ongoing management of Barrm Birrm.

<b>No. 59/2022-23: NOTICE OF MOTION - REVIEW OF THE KANGAROO HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>
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I, Councillor Jennifer Anderson, give notice that at the next Meeting of Council to be held on 28 June 2023, I intend to move the following motion:

**That Council:**

- 1. Writes to the State Government requesting a briefing on the current review of the Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan (KHMP), including any submissions that have come from the Macedon Ranges Shire Community and be provided an opportunity to provide feedback once this briefing has occurred;**
- 2. Request the State Government to publicly respond to the submissions from community members of Macedon Ranges Shire, or in relation to the inclusion of the Macedon Ranges in the KHMP quotas, about this program and to specifically address their concerns, particularly around the evidence behind harvest quotas and the need to expand the use of kangaroo products for commercial interests;**
- 3. Encourages residents to provide feedback to the current KHMP review via the Victorian Government website, open until 11 July 2023, and provide Council with a copy of their feedback; and**
- 4. Provides a copy of this resolution to Rural Councils Victoria, MAV and local member for Macedon, Mary Anne-Thomas**

**17 URGENT BUSINESS**

**18 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS**

Nil