



GANNAWARRA

Shire Council

Wednesday, 16 October 2024

6:00 PM

Cohuna Community Meeting Room

Cohuna

AGENDA

Council Meeting

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Geoff Rollinson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1 WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Playing of the Welcome to Country video clip.

2 OPENING DECLARATION

We, the Councillors of the Shire of Gannawarra, declare that we will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor, in the best interests of our community, and faithfully, and impartially, carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in us, to the best of our skill and judgement.

3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Ordinary Meeting - 16 September 2024

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

General conflict of interest

Unless exempt under Section 129 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) or regulation 7 of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020, a Councillor or member of Council staff has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests (as defined in Section 127(2) of the Act) could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty.

Material conflict of interest

Unless exempt under Section 129 of the *Local Government Act 2020* or regulation 7 of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020, a Councillor or member of Council staff has a material conflict of interest in respect of a matter if an affected person (as defined in Section 128(3) of the Act) would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.

Disclosure of a conflict of interest

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest and is attending a meeting of the Council must make a full disclosure of that interest by either advising:

- a) the Council at the meeting immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting; or
- b) the Chief Executive Officer in writing before the meeting –

whether the interest is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and the nature of the interest.

Note: If a Councillor advises the Chief Executive Officer of the details under b) above, the Councillor must make a disclosure of the class of interest only to the meeting immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting.

In accordance with Section 130 of the Act, a councillor who has a disclosed a conflict of interest in respect of a matter must exclude themselves from the decision making process in relation to the matter, including any discussion or vote on the matter at any Council meeting, and any action in relation to the matter.

Failure to comply with Section 130 of the Act may result in a penalty of 120 penalty units

6 BRIEFING SESSIONS

6.1 RECORDS OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS - 4 SEPTEMBER 2024 TO 8 OCTOBER 2024

Author: Jodie Basile, Executive Assistant to CEO

Authoriser: Geoff Rollinson, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: 1 Councillor Briefing Record - October 2024

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the records of Councillor Briefings 4 September 2024 to 8 October 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council written records of Councillor Briefings in accordance with Clause 31 of the Gannawarra Shire Council Governance Rules.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regard to this matter.

COUNCIL PLAN

Council Plan 2021-2025:

- Be a creative employer of choice through our adherence to good governance and our inclusive culture.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In accordance with Clause 32 of the Gannawarra Shire Council Governance Rules, a written record of a meeting held under the auspices of Council is, as soon as practicable, reported at a meeting of the Council and incorporated in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The record must include:

1. The names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending
2. The matters considered
3. Any conflict-of-interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending
4. Whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest left the meeting.

CONSULTATION

Consultation with Councillors and staff has occurred to ensure the accuracy of the Councillor Briefing records.


CONCLUSION

To ensure compliance with Clause 32 of the Gannawarra Shire Council Governance Rules, it is recommended that Council note the Councillor Briefing records as attached to this report.

RECORD OF A COUNCILLOR BRIEFING



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

Type of Meeting	Councillor Briefing Session	
Date:	Monday, 7 October 2024	
Time:	9:00am – 10.45am	
Location:	Council Chambers, Kerang	
In Attendance: (Councillors)	Cr Ross Stanton (Mayor) Cr Charlie Gillingham Cr Travis Collier Cr Jane Ogden Cr Keith Link Cr Garner Smith	
Apologies:	Cr Kelvin Burt, Roger Griffiths	
In Attendance: (Officers)	Geoff Rollinson, Jodie Basile, Wade Williams, Amanda Wilson, Paul Fernee, Scott Bourne.	
In Attendance: (Other)	Nil	
Matters Discussed:	<p>Councillor Briefing Updates</p> <p>2.1 2025 Australia Day Arrangements 2.2 Future Listing Report</p> <p>October Council Agenda</p> <p>7.1 Annual Report 2024 7.2 Audit and Risk Committee Meeting – 10 September 2024</p> <p>Councillor Issues</p> <p>3.1 Councillor Farewells 3.2 Councillor Issues raised for discussion with CEO and Directors</p> <p>CEO and Councillor Only Discussion</p>	
Conflict of Interest Disclosures		
Matter No.	Councillor/Officer making disclosure	Councillor/Officer left meeting Yes/No
Nil		
Completed By:	Geoff Rollinson – Chief Executive Officer 	



7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Author: Scott Bourne, Communications Coordinator

Authoriser: Paul Fernee, Director Community Wellbeing

Attachments: 1 DRAFT 2024 Annual Report

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Receives the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024, noting that the VAGO-approved Financial and Performance statements will be inserted once received.**
 - 2. Ensures a copy of the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024 is available to view on Council's website once the VAGO-approved Financial and Performance statements are inserted into the document.**
-

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024, covering the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). In accordance with section 98 of the Act, the Annual Report contains a report on the operations of Council, the audited Financial Statements, and audited Performance Statement.

At the time of preparing the agenda for this meeting, Council was still waiting for the 'in principle' 2024 Financial Statements, and 'in principle' 2024 Performance Statement, approved at the September 2024 Council meeting, to return from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office. These statements will be inserted into the document once received.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to receive and note the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024.

ATTACHMENTS

- Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024

DISCUSSION

Council is required under sections 98 and 99 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) to prepare an Annual Report. Section 100 of the Act highlights the requirement to present the Annual report at a Council Meeting open to the public by 31 October on any year without a general election or in the year of a general election, on a day not later than the day before election day.

Hard copies of the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024 will be available at Council's customer service centres. A digital version of the report will be available on Council's website within 24 hours of this meeting.

RELEVANT LAW

The Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024 was prepared as per the *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

OPTIONS

In order to comply with the requirements of the Act, Council must consider the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024 on a day not later than the day before election day.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications through receiving the Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Gannawarra Shire Council Annual Report 2024 is a report of Council's operations for the 2023/24 financial year.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Officers continue to revise the presentation of the Annual Report to further improve transparency and flow of information for readers, including rearranging certain sections and enhancing through visual appeal in alignment with the Act.

COLLABORATION

Not applicable.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

Not applicable.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

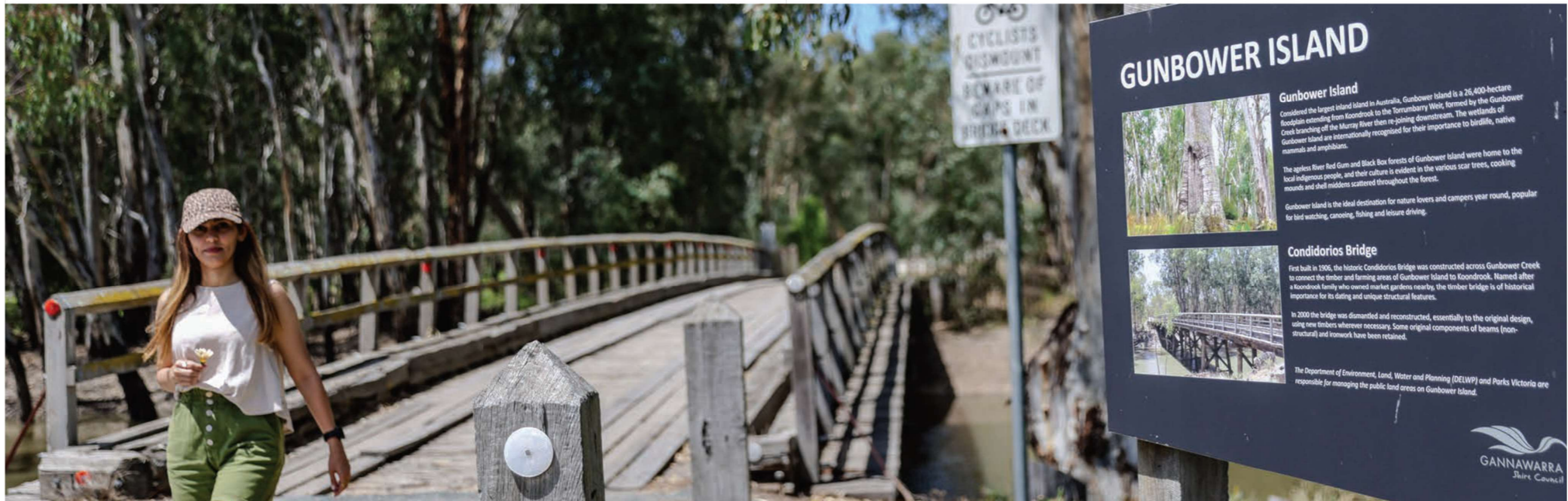
TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

Not applicable.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regard to this matter.





WELCOME TO GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL'S 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Gannawarra Shire Council's 2024 Annual Report provides our community with comprehensive and transparent information on Council's operational, financial, environmental and social performance during the 2023/24 year. All councils are required by the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) to prepare an Annual Report each financial year which is compliant with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF). This Annual Report documents Council's highlights, our achievements and our response to emerging challenges.

NEED AN EXTRA COPY?

Additional copies of the Annual Report can be obtained by:

- Visiting our website www.gsc.vic.gov.au
- Calling us on (03) 5450 9333
- Visiting one of our Customer Service Centres (See Contact Council section for locations)
- Emailing council@gsc.vic.gov.au
- Writing to Gannawarra Shire Council at PO Box 287, Kerang 3579

FEEDBACK

We welcome feedback regarding the production of our Annual Report. Feedback provides us with the opportunity to continuously improve our methods for communicating the information contained within this report. If you would like to provide feedback, please contact us via the details provided in the Contact Council section of this report.

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GLOSSARY	TBC
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	TBC
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COVER: Cohuna Beach and Gunbower Creek are popular locations for tourists to gather during the warmer months. ABOVE: Condidorios Bridge connects Koondrook and Gunbower Island.

About the Gannawarra



Located in northwestern Victoria, the Gannawarra is Victoria's nature based tourism destination, thanks to natural assets such as Gunbower National Park, the Murray River, Gunbower Creek and Kerang Lakes.

Bordered by Swan Hill to the north, Buloke to the west, Loddon and Campaspe to the south and the Murray River to the east, the Gannawarra contains two central towns – Kerang and Cohuna - and numerous smaller settlements, including Koondrook, Quambatook, Leitchville, Lalbert, Lake Charm, Macorna, Murrabit and Mystic Park (Kangaroo Lake).

Serviced by the Loddon Valley and Murray Valley highways, the Gannawarra is 1.25 hours by car from Bendigo, 40 minutes by car from Swan Hill and 3 hours' drive from Melbourne. Regular passenger rail services also exist from Kerang to Swan Hill and Bendigo, with connections to Melbourne.

Thanks to the Torrumbarry Irrigation System and its proximity to the eastern fringe of the Mallee cropping region, the Gannawarra boasts a diverse economy with representation across all sectors. This includes dairy, cropping, livestock, retail trade, manufacturing and government services such as healthcare and education. The Gannawarra also boasts emerging opportunities in areas such as nature based tourism and renewable energy.

The Gannawarra is renowned for its strong community pride, thanks to our communities' efforts to motivate and inspire each other to make the region a great place to live, visit and do business.

OUR PEOPLE

Our primary centres are Kerang and Cohuna. Smaller outlying communities include Koondrook, Leitchville, Quambatook, Murrabit, Lake Charm, Lalbert, Macorna and Mystic Park. Our small communities each have their own unique identity.

Our communities are



Population
10,683

*(2021 Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics)



49.7%
Male



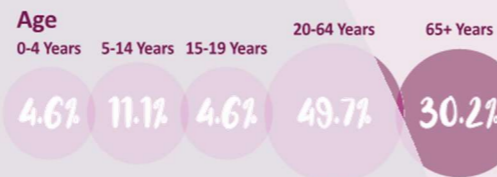
50.2%
Female



51
Median age



3,736 km²
Area



Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba people as the traditional owners of the land now known as Gannawarra.
We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country.

VISION STATEMENT

Our community will be proud, connected and inclusive as we actively seek opportunities that enhance lifestyle and liveability.

We will recognise and appreciate the value of the natural environment and how it connects our communities.

We will strive to be resilient to a changing environment through innovation and collaboration.

The Gannawarra will grow through encouraging economic diversity, creating unique tourism destinations, and embracing our cultural and natural assets.

KEY OBJECTIVES



STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Gannawarra will be renowned as an Australian destination and home of choice for its liveability and unique opportunities in innovative agriculture, renewable energy and nature-based tourism.

We focus on inclusive services and assets that enhance the health and wellbeing, cultural heritage, connectivity and productivity of our communities.

Values



ABOVE LEFT: Local elder, Uncle Lloyd Murray (left) and Mayor Ross Stanton joined residents and community leaders in the Kerang National Reconciliation Week Walk in May 2024.

Mayor's Message

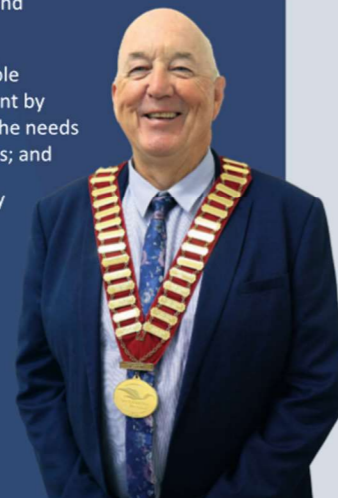
Welcome to Gannawarra Shire Council's 2024 Annual Report, which highlights Council's achievements during the 2023/24 financial year.

This Annual Report assesses Council's performance against the three goals outlined in the *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan*:



Council's role in achieving these goals involves:

- Acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making.
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement.
- Maintaining the viability of Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner.
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments.
- Acting as a responsible partner in government by taking into account the needs of other communities; and
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.



HIGHLIGHTS

The success of any local government is dependent on its relationship with its residents and other levels of government. For Gannawarra Shire Council, these relationships were pivotal as we managed various challenges and worked to achieve the strategic goals listed in the *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan*.

MANAGING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Like all levels of government, Council has not been immune to the cost-of-living crisis that has seen costs and services increase. However, for us and other rural municipalities, increases in freight and project costs have occurred alongside other mitigating factors such as environmental changes and a reduction in the availability of water for agricultural purposes.

Council has taken a lead on these issues, both as an individual municipality and as a member of the Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC), which Gannawarra is the chairing Council in 2024. The MRGC oversaw the #pushbackbuyback campaign during late 2023, which called for the Federal Government to halt plans to resume using buyback processes to seek additional water for environmental use across the Murray-Darling Basin.

A reduction on water availability and economic pressures can also impact on population numbers, resulting in a reduction of people able to provide services we rely on. As a Council, we have taken a lead in attracting projects that will create employment opportunities locally. These include renewable energy opportunities, which are forecast to expand following the approval and construction of the VNI West electricity transmission line, and attracting agriculturally diverse projects to the area, such as beef feed lotting, free range poultry, dairy feed barns and medicinal cannabis. These projects will drive demand for housing and worker accommodation, which in turn will boost employment opportunities and support our local economy.

RESPONDING TO NATURAL EMERGENCIES

For the second time in 15 months, Gannawarra residents endured a second Federal Government-declared emergency event when the municipality experienced three storms that dumped 70 per cent of



the area's annual rainfall total across numerous areas and resulted in flash flooding in urban areas. Kerang felt the brunt of these storms, with flash flooding occurring on Christmas Day 2023 and on two instances during the first week of January 2024. This rainfall inundated properties and left residents isolated for up to 24 hours.

As with the 2022 floods, it was the generosity of emergency service volunteers and the dedication of Council staff who worked 24/7 to protect properties and reduce the pressure on our urban stormwater network.

As rare as these events are, they highlight that more can be done to reduce the impact of future storms. Council staff have used data collected since the first flash flooding event to identify locations where high volumes of water pool when it cannot drain away, resulting in the identification of 42 projects at Cohuna, Kerang, Koondrook, Murrabit and Quambatook.

The proposed list of projects will be incorporated into Council's long-term financial planning, with a focus on sourcing external funding to complement Council investment to complete these works.

These efforts occurred alongside our continued recovery from the 2022 floods, which saw 44 per cent of the Gannawarra's landmass inundated and around more than 1,000 kilometres of our road network damaged.

Council spent the majority of 2023/2024 working with the State Government in relation to the approval and funding process for the remaining road repair

packages, as outlined in joint Commonwealth and State Government funded Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. By 30 June 2024, only three of 13 road repair packages had been approved to proceed. This is unfortunately not a Gannawarra Shire Council-specific issue, with other municipalities impacted by the 2022 floods managing similar funding arrangement concerns. Council looks forward to seeing the remaining ten packages approved and works completed by the end of the 2024/2025 financial year.

A DEDICATED TEAM

Many of the achievements that feature in the 2024 Annual Report would not have been possible without the leadership of my fellow Councillors and our working relationship with Council's Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson. Together we are committed to making the Gannawarra a great place to live and work, which is achieved by representing all of our communities.

We look forward to continuing this proactive approach during 2024/25 as we work to achieve the goals listed in the *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan*.

Cr Ross Stanton
MAYOR

ABOVE: Mayor Ross Stanton presented Beatriz Friez with her Australian citizenship certificate during a ceremony held at Kerang on Australia Day 2024. Picture - TRACY ROBERTS

CEO's Message

On behalf of Gannawarra Shire Council, it is a great pleasure to present Council's Annual Report for 2023/24.

I am proud of this organisation and its achievements in instilling hope and confidence throughout the Gannawarra.

I am also proud to be part of the Gannawarra Shire community – one that continues to excel and achieve the objectives outlined in the *Growing Gannawarra Council Plan 2021-2025*.

As Chief Executive Officer, I am responsible for:

- Establishing and maintaining an appropriate organisational structure for Council;
- Ensuring that the decisions of Council are implemented without undue delay;
- The day-to-day management of the Council's operations in accordance with the *Growing Gannawarra Council Plan 2021-2025*;
- Developing, adopting and disseminating a Code of Conduct for Council staff; and
- Providing timely advice to Council.



HIGHLIGHTS

Gannawarra Shire Council has endured many challenges during the past 12 months, however we are committed to strive to support our communities and make the Gannawarra a great place to live and work.

FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS

Council strives to provide various services and maintain assets residents and visitors rely on. However, during the past 12 months the ability to achieve these goals has become tougher thanks to inflation and increases in costs to deliver core services.

Unlike other sectors, Victorian local governments are limited in how they can increase income to alleviate these costs. The State Government's Fair Go Rates System limits the total revenue councils can raise through municipal rates. In 2023/24, the amount raised through this process could not be higher than 3.5 per cent compared to the previous financial year.

Council spent considerable time during 2023/24 identifying savings to ensure we can continue to provide services and maintain assets whilst being economically responsible, with this work assisting in the preparation of the 2024/25 Budget.

Another major income stream is the Federal Government's Federal Assistance Grants (FAG), which assist councils in providing services and maintaining assets, such as roads. The total amount the Federal Government provided nationally to this program was as high as 1.2 per cent of Commonwealth revenue 30 years ago but has fallen to 0.55 per cent during the past few years.

Providing councils with reassurance about what funding it will receive thanks to an increase in Federal Assistance Grants will enable councils such as Gannawarra to plan for this assistance and, more importantly, use the local road component of these grants to maintain our roads that our residents rely on to travel to and from work or to access local services.

SUPPORTING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

The Gannawarra is a unique place, thanks to it boasting two central towns – Kerang and Cohuna - and numerous smaller settlements.

Being able to support all communities is a challenge, but one that we are pleased to be working to mitigate using a united approach.

Council has positive relationships with the health providers that support residents within the Gannawarra, including Cohuna District Hospital, Kerang District Health and Northern District Community



Health, with all organisations working together to make our communities liveable.

These organisations have also worked together to navigate the Federal Government's reforms to aged care services, which has resulted in numerous councils relinquishing providing in-home Community Care services to residents - including Gannawarra Shire.

Council made the difficult decision in June 2023 to transition out of providing its suite of Community Care services – which included support via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), with the transition completed by October 2023. This decision impacted more than 80 Council staff members and hundreds of residents. Thanks to the dedication of our Community Wellbeing Team management group, these staff have found new employment and impacted residents are continuing to receive the services they were receiving from Council.

PLANNING AND RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

The 2022 floods and flash flooding that impacted the Gannawarra on Christmas Day 2023 and early January 2024 has reiterated the importance of keeping our communities connected, especially via transport infrastructure.

It does not matter whether it is a road damaged by floodwater or one that is temporarily impassable, limiting the ability to travel can affect people's social wellbeing and the ability to access services.

Advocating for our rural communities to remain connected during times of natural emergencies has been a long, protracted and challenging process. Our submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee's Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event identified the need for improvements to the region's highway network, which will improve connectivity with the Gannawarra. Although the inquiry's

interim report did not include any recommendations specific to the Gannawarra Shire, we continue to advocate for these much-needed improvements.

GROWING OUR TOURISM PRESENCE

The Gannawarra continues to be recognised as Victoria's nature-based tourism destination – a reputation that grew during the COVID-19 pandemic as tourists rediscovered prime locations within a few hours' drive from home.

Council continues to work to promote Cohuna and Koondrook as tourist destinations and our rivers, lakes and waterways as attractions to explore.

Council was pleased to partner with the Koondrook community in its nomination as a Top Tiny Tourist Town in the 2024 Victorian Tourism Industry Council Top Tourism Town Awards, with the town a finalist in this category.

No matter the result, this exposure will entice new visitors to Koondrook and the Gannawarra, which will boost our local economy.

AN ADAPTIVE TEAM

Council's performance during 2023/24 would not have been possible without the professionalism and flexibility displayed by all staff.

We were fortunate in late 2023 to formalise Council's new executive team, which boasts extensive experience gained from working with small rural municipalities.

This team and their relevant departments are dedicated to serving our community and making the Gannawarra a great place for all.

Geoff Rollinson
Chief Executive Officer

ABOVE: Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson speaking at the 2024 LGPro Annual Conference, held in May 2024.

2023/24 Highlights



- JULY**
- Community Care Services Information Roadshow held, which educated clients and residents regarding Council's transition out of the Aged and Disability Services sector
 - The State Government announced that a new kindergarten would be built at Kerang South Primary School as part of the rollout of the Pre-Prep program
 - Investigations occurred regarding the failure of the Apex Park Road bridge at Reedy Lake
 - Councillors decided to move Council Meetings to after business hours, as of August 2023**
 - Kangaroo Lake north end jetty project completed



- AUGUST**
- Council presented to the Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee's Inquiry into the 2022 Flood Event in Victoria Public Hearing in Echuca**
 - Improvements to play spaces at the Cohuna and District Preschool Centre and Gannawarra Shire Children's Centre, Kerang were completed
 - Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy* was adopted
 - Koondrook Maternal and Child Health appointments moved from the Barook Senior Citizens Centre to the Koondrook Kindergarten



- SEPTEMBER**
- Celebrations occurred to mark the Sir John Gorton Library's 20th birthday**
 - Council launched the *Zero Tolerance, Be Kind* campaign, which promoted positive behaviours between customers and staff
 - Tenders to repair Council-managed roads damaged by the October-December 2022 floods, totaling \$3.1 million, approved
 - Updated *Governance Rules* adopted



- JANUARY**
- Jacqueline Hibbert (above) was named the 2024 Gannawarra Shire Council Citizen of the Year, with Fifi White the 2024 Gannawarra Shire Council Young Citizen of the Year**
 - Council responded to rain events on 2 January and 7 January, which produced between 50-100 millimetres of rain throughout the municipality and led to flash flooding throughout Kerang
 - Council addressed residents' concerns regarding stormwater drainage during a public meeting held in Kerang



- FEBRUARY**
- Council reaffirmed its commitment to the Women's Health Loddon Mallee Collective Action for Respect and Equality partnership
 - The Minister for Local Government adopted an Electoral Representation Advisory Panel's recommendation for Gannawarra Shire's electoral structure to change to seven elected representatives operating under an unsubdivided electoral structure
 - Council launched a refreshed website, developed to make it easier for visitors to access information
 - Council identified 42 projects that would help improve its urban stormwater network during future urban flooding events**



- MARCH**
- Council awarded the tender for the \$3.07 million *The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra* project to RTM Construction Pty Ltd
 - The Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition was officially opened
 - Fourteen events planned during the upcoming Easter and April holiday periods shared in over \$40,000 of Gannawarra flood recovery funding thanks to the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee
 - Community plans developed as part of the Connecting Gannawarra project were launched**



- OCTOBER**
- Six community events shared in \$14,220 of funding from the 2023 Community Grants Program Community Event stream
 - Leitchville Preschool was recognised for being fully awarded under the Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program**
 - Council ceased providing Aged and Disability Services, with events held to mark contributions staff and volunteers made to these programs
 - Mayor Charlie Gillingham presented with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Mayor Emeritus Award



- NOVEMBER**
- Cr Ross Stanton was elected Mayor, with Cr Charlie Gillingham elected Deputy Mayor
 - Gannawarra Goes Orange campaign began, with events held to educate residents to call out gender-based violence**
 - Council released its Cohuna Childcare Advocacy paper, which supported the development of an Integrated Early Childhood Centre in Cohuna
 - Nineteen local projects shared in more than \$65,000 of funding from the 2023 Community Grants Program Community Support stream



- DECEMBER**
- The State Government announced it would establish a government-owned early childhood learning and childcare centre in Cohuna, to be open in 2027 or 2028
 - Council approved a Kig Energy proposal to construct small-scale renewable energy facilities at the Kerang Aerodrome and Kerang Transfer Station
 - Council responded to the Christmas Day 2023 storm, with 100 millimetres of rainfall resulting in flash flooding throughout Kerang**



- APRIL**
- Council sought community feedback regarding a Northern District Community Health (NDCH) request to fly the Rainbow Flag on Council's community flagpoles annually on May 17 for the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex Discrimination and Transphobia.**
 - Kerang All Abilities Play Space and the region's first Changing Places facility were announced as finalists in the Regional/Rural Industry Contribution category in the 2024 Parks and Leisure Australia Victoria/Tasmania Regional Awards
 - Council announced it would permanently cease providing the service of issuing building permits, which are required for all major projects, including new homes, home extensions, garages and commercial projects



- MAY**
- National Reconciliation Week walk held through the streets of Kerang**
 - 2023 Annual Report* received Australasian Reporting Award Silver Award
 - Preliminary work associated with *The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra* began
 - Kerang Active Recreation Corridor Masterplan adopted



- JUNE**
- Koondrook announced as a finalist in the Top Tiny Tourist Town category at the 2024 TAC Victorian Top Tourism Town Awards
 - 2024/2025 Budget* adopted
 - Council agreed for the Rainbow Flag to fly on Council's community flagpoles annually on May 17 for the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex Discrimination and Transphobia
 - Senator Deborah O'Neill visited Koondrook to open the \$16 million Australian Government investment into the Our Region Our Rivers Project along the Murray River**

2023/24 Services Snapshot

CHILDREN'S SERVICES



- 112 children attended Long Day Care a week
- 105 children attended 4-year-old kindergarten a week
- 90 children attended 3-year-old kindergarten a week
- 61 children attended Family Day Care a week

CUSTOMER SERVICE



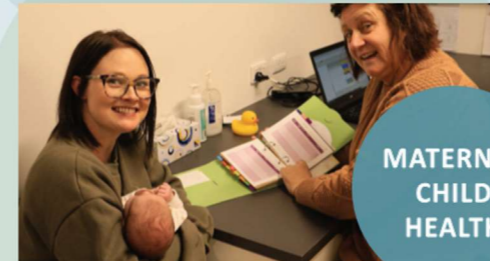
- 3,621 incoming calls received, of these 66% were solved at first point of contact
- 3.3-second average to answer telephone
- 2,206 V/Line tickets sold via the Kerang Customer Service Centre since service commenced in November 2023
- 409 VicRoads enquiries handled via the Cohuna Customer Service Centre

LOCAL LAWS



- 52 dogs and 22 cats released back to their owners
- 48 dogs and 80 cats re-housed
- 84 wild cats seized

MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH



- 100 babies born
- 25 families experienced the birth of their first baby
- 833 Key Ages and Stages consultations completed
- 3 Sleep and Settling Information sessions offered to families and 19.45 hours of outreach support
- 16 First-time Parent Group sessions
- 598 hours of Enhanced Maternal Child Health, supporting 58 families

SOCIAL MEDIA



Gannawarra Shire Council
6.2K followers • 146 following

- 5% increase in Gannawarra Shire Council Facebook page followers
- 13% increase in Gannawarra Shire Council LinkedIn page followers
- 7% increase in Creative Gannawarra Facebook page likes
- 9% increase in Gannawarra Library Service Facebook page likes
- 13% increase in Gannawarra Shire Children's Centre Facebook page likes
- 6% increase in the Gannawarra Instagram page followers

IMMUNISATION



- 1039 vaccinations were administered to 631 people through Council's immunisation program
- 40 immunisation sessions held
- 216 influenza shots administered as part of the 2024 influenza program

SWIMMING POOLS



- 20,074 visitors to Kerang Outdoor Pool
- 10,298 visitors to Cohuna Outdoor Pool
- 9,651 visitors to Kerang Exercise Pool

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES



- 14 new Australian citizens welcomed across 4 ceremonies

LIBRARY



- 316 new members
- 40,481 library collection item loans
- 7,389 eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines borrowed via BorrowBox and hoopla
- 164 movies, television shows and songs streamed via hoopla, Story Box Library and Beamafilm
- 28,894 electronic resources accessed
- 10,259 items added to Council's library collection in the past five years
- 1,228 computer bookings
- 1,326 tourism enquiries answered
- 3,341 people attended Gannawarra Library Service-organised programs

ROADS



- 32 kilometres of unsealed roads resheeted
- 7.2 kilometres of sealed road rehabilitation undertaken
- 723 square metres of footpath replaced
- 586 lineal metres of kerb and channel replaced
- 1,264 kilometres of roads graded
- 152 hours of work completed to maintain signs across the municipality
- 410 kilometres of sealed roadside shoulders slashed
- 201,213 square metres of sealed roads resealed

COUNCIL WEBSITE



- 59,424 users across 100,812 sessions
- Average session duration of 1 minute, 9 seconds
- 54% of visits made on mobile phone/tablet, with 46% of visits made via a desktop device
- Most popular pages were Home (33,744), Situations Vacant (9,165) and Search Results (8,664)

TOURISM



- 7,800 visitors to Gannawarra Shire Council-managed visitor centres (1,406 people from interstate, 80 people from international locations)
- Approximately 343 volunteer hours provided at the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre

Finance Message

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT	2023/24
Total revenue	\$28.75 million
Total expenditure	\$32.5 million
Deficit	(\$3.75) million
Total assets	\$312.17 million
Total liabilities	\$13.76 million
Equity	\$298.42 million
Net cash from operating activities	\$2.49 million

OPERATING POSITION

Council has a deficit of \$3.75 million in 2023/24 as Council did not receive an equivalent of an annual allocation of Federal Assistance Grant in 2023/24. In prior years, Council received advance payments of Federal Assistance Grants.

In 2023/24, flood assistance grants received (and recognised as income) in 2022/23 were expended (\$1 million). Council received a further \$474,000 in flood assistance grants during 2023/24. As of 30 June 2024, \$2.97 million was yet to be spent (Refer to Note 5 of the Financial Statements).

CAPITAL WORKS

Council aims to maintain its infrastructure assets at the expected levels while at the same time Council invested a total of \$8.99 million on renewing, expanding and upgrading existing infrastructure during 2023/24.

Capital works included \$3.5 million on roads, \$1.7 million for footpaths and kerbs, \$257,000 on drainage works, and \$649,000 for various recreation and leisure, parks and streetscapes projects across the municipality.

The 2023/24 financial year was also the final year of the current five-year Roads to Recovery Program. Works to claim the full life of program allocation was completed.

Restoration works resulting from the 2022 floods have been delayed and deferred to 2024/25.

SURPLUS

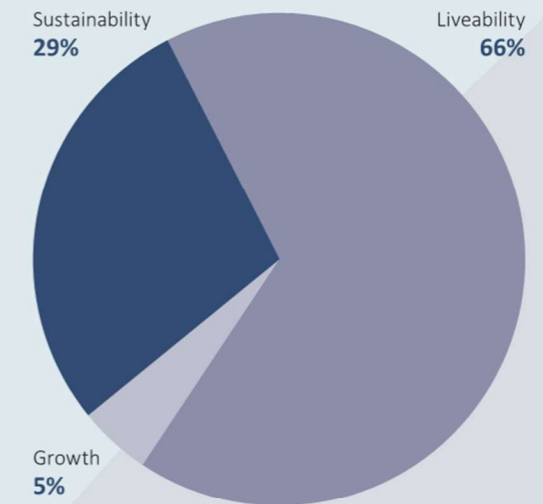


COUNCIL EXPENDITURE

There are a variety of community services that Council operates alongside its capital work projects. During 2023/24, total council expenditure was \$32.5 million, with 66 per cent being spent on enhancing wellbeing and liveability. Programs undertaken to achieve this strategic activity include roads and bridges infrastructure, community facilities, recreation reserves, community care services and children's services.

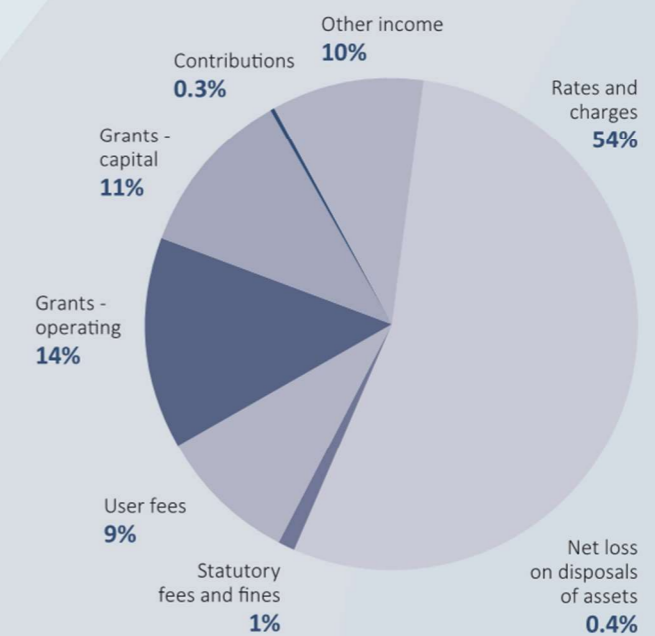
Council expended \$3.84 million on Children's Services such as Kindergarten, Long Day Care, Family Day Care and Maternal and Childcare services.

Essential waste management services are a big part of Council's priority in creating sustainable living environments for the community, with \$2.32 million utilised in collection of kerbside and public bin waste in addition to the management of the local landfill.



STABILITY AND EFFICIENCY

Council receives income from a number of sources including rates, grants, user fees, fines and contributions. Rates and charges are one of Council's main sources of income, representing 54 per cent of total income. Rates proportion is higher than prior years because Council had not received an equivalent of an annual Federal Assistance Grant allocation in 2023/24.





Kerang CBD Redevelopment – Stages 3 and 4: \$2.136 million (funded by Federal Government’s Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program)

Efforts to improve Kerang’s central business district (CBD) occurred throughout 2023/24, made possible thanks to the Federal Government’s Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

Developed to improve accessibility and foster future business growth, the project included replacing existing paved surfaces along Victoria and Wellington streets, creating a cohesive and attractive look that ties in with previous improvements along Scoresby Street. The kerb along the eastern section of Victoria Street between Scoresby Street and Victoria Square was remodeled, removing the steep gradient and eliminating the need for steps to access some businesses along this section of footpath.

Kangaroo Lake North End – Stage 2: \$304,000 (fully funded by the Victorian Fisheries Authority)

Completed in July 2023, this project involved installing a new fixed jetty structure at the northern end of Kangaroo Lake. This new structure replaced the previous jetty that was removed in April 2020 due to public safety concerns.

The project also upgraded pedestrian access between the jetty and nearby amenities through the installation of a footpath and lighting.



New street furniture and trees were installed, providing pleasant areas for people to relax and gather, while feature lighting around the Karlie McDonald Memorial Clock at the intersection of Wellington and Victoria streets creates a vibrant environment at night. These enhancements not only beautify the area but also aim to attract more foot traffic, benefiting shop retailers along the streets by creating a more inviting and engaging environment for customers.

Similar improvements are planned for the CBD section of Fitzroy Street and Victoria Street outside Walkers IGA, with completion scheduled for August 2024. These ongoing efforts are set to further support the growth of the community and the success of local businesses.



The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra: \$3.07 million (supported by \$1.5 million from the State Government’s Living Libraries Infrastructure Program 2021 – Major Works Program and \$718,000 from the Federal Government’s Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program)

The transformational *The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra* project is set to enrich the Kerang community.

Awarded to RTM Construction Pty Ltd in March 2024, *The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra* will be seamlessly integrated into Kerang’s Sir John Gorton Library, creating a dynamic hub for community events, gatherings, and workshops. This innovative space will surpass the limitations of existing community meeting venues, providing advanced technology for modern meetings, conferences, and training sessions.

To ensure the completion of this vital community asset, Council is allocating \$842,000 from its 2024/2025 capital works budget, supplementing the significant grant funding received. This strategic investment reflects Council’s dedication to overcoming the challenges posed by escalating infrastructure costs due to high inflation.

Preliminary work commenced in May 2024, starting

with the removal of solar arrays from the project site. Construction will continue throughout 2024/25, bringing us closer to unveiling a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a cornerstone for community engagement and development.

The Glasshouse @ The Gannawarra promises to be a beacon of progress, fostering community spirit, facilitating knowledge exchange, and supporting a diverse range of activities. This project underscores our commitment to creating a vibrant, well-connected, and forward-thinking community.



Cohuna and District Preschool Centre play space improvements: \$195,523 (fully funded by the State Government’s Early Childhood Refurbishment and Minor Works Program)

Completed in August 2023, the rejuvenation of the Cohuna and District Preschool Centre play space ensured the site complies with the Disability Discrimination Act and Child Safe standards. Key features include the installation of new shade sails, improving access to raised areas, creating new gathering spaces and incorporating nature play elements.



Gannawarra Shire Children’s Centre, Kerang play space improvements: \$199,690 (fully funded by the State Government’s Early Childhood Building Blocks Inclusion Grant Stream)

Completed in August 2023, the rejuvenation of the Gannawarra Shire Children’s Centre play space ensured the site complies with the Disability Discrimination Act and Child Safe standards. Key features include a new waterplay element, sensory path, edible garden and balance beams.



Engagement with the Gannawarra community is important, as it ensures Council continues to respond to community needs and expectations. Council's *Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025* and *Community Engagement Policy* guides how Council engages with the community on projects and services.

Council engaged with the community regarding the following projects, policies, programs and strategies during 2023/24:

TOPIC AND/OR DOCUMENT	Engagement period
Draft Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy	May 2023 – July 2023
Proposed Governance Rules changes	August 2023
Gannawarra Municipal Emergency Management Plan rewrite	September 2023
Gannawarra Shire Roadside Weeds and Pest Program Control Plan	November 2023
Draft Kerang Active Recreation Corridor Masterplan	November 2023 – December 2023
Gannawarra Library Service Story Time program arrangements	January 2024 – March 2024
Reviewed Flags policy, Community Flag Schedule and Rainbow Flag request	April 2024 – May 2024
Draft Gannawarra Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029	April 2024 – May 2024
2024/2025 Proposed Council Budget	April 2024 – May 2024
Draft Public Street Lighting policy and procedure	May 2024 – June 2024
Unnamed Kerang road naming	June 2024
Draft Fair Access policy and action plan	June 2024

ABOVE: Residents engaged with Council staff during a draft Kerang Active Recreation Corridor engagement pop-up session held in November 2023.

Community Satisfaction

2024 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY

Each year Local Government Victoria coordinates a State-wide Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey. Held annually, this survey asks the opinions of local people about the place they live, work and play and provides confidence for councils in their efforts and abilities.

A total of 400 Gannawarra Shire residents over the age of 18 were interviewed by telephone in February and March 2024, with results provided as indexed scores out of 100.

The survey found that perceptions of Gannawarra Shire Council's overall performance remains in line

with the 2022 and 2023 Community Satisfaction Surveys, with Council's 2024 result higher than the Small Rural group average.

On many individual service areas, Council is rated in line with both the Small Rural and State-wide group averages. Positively, council performance in the Appearance of Public Areas (score of 75), Customer Service (score of 68) and Overall Council Direction (score of 48) are significantly higher than the State wide and Small Rural group averages. However, Lobbying (score of 48), Making Decisions in the Interest of the Community (score of 48) and Sealed Local Roads (score of 41) are all rated lower for Council than the group averages.

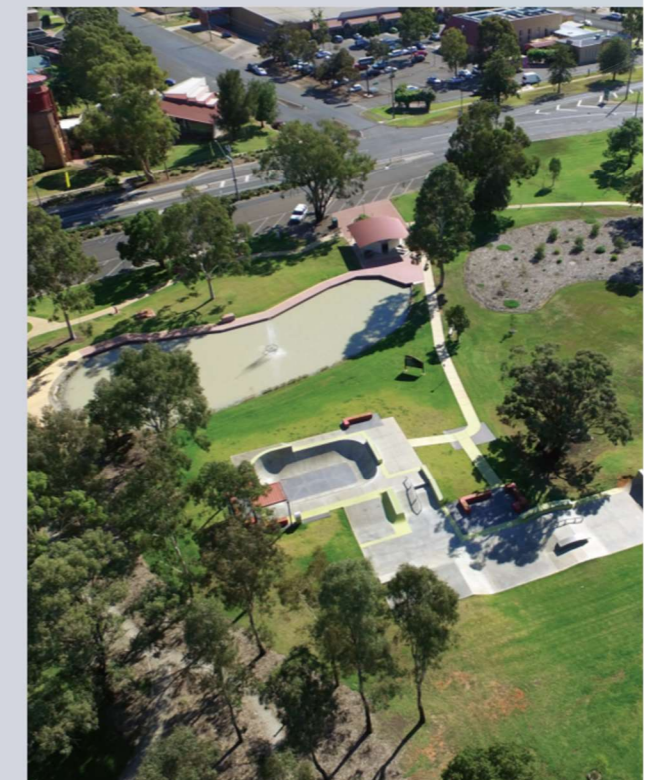
OVERALL COUNCIL PERFORMANCE

Results shown are index scores out of 100



COUNCIL PERFORMANCE COMPARED TO GROUP AVERAGE

Top performing areas		
	Appearance of public areas	▲ higher
	Art centres & libraries	▬ on par
	Recreational facilities	▬ on par
Lowest performing areas		
	Sealed local roads	▬ on par
	Community decisions	▬ on par
	Lobbying	▬ on par
	Customer service	▬ on par



Major Community Project Fund

In 2022/23 as part of its Major Community Project Fund, five community groups shared in \$256,850.50 to complete projects on land not owned by Council.

Council worked with these community groups during 2023/24 to ensure these projects were completed.



MAJOR COMMUNITY PROJECT FUND – 2022 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Cohuna Pistol Club – Fencing	\$11,603.00
Kerang Turf Club – Additional shade	\$100,000.00
Mallee Eagles Football Netball Club – Netball court refurbishment	\$100,000.00
Wandella Cricket Club – New cricket training nets	\$30,247.50
Wandella Football Netball Club – Electricity upgrade	\$15,000.00
TOTAL	\$256,850.50

Council Contributions and Donations

During 2023/24 Council distributed \$452,924.99 to community groups, organisations and service providers across the municipality.

This funding ranged from community flood recovery events – which made up more than one-third of the annual contributions and donations figure – to Council’s annual Community Grants program.

Contributions were also provided to support Australia Day celebrations, school awards and to assist communities maintain community-managed recreational facilities.

MAJOR COMMUNITY PROJECT FUND – 2021 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Cohuna Neighbourhood House – Kitchen renovations	\$100,000.00
TOTAL	\$100,000.00

ANNUAL RECREATION RESERVE MAINTENANCE CONTRIBUTION

Alexandra Park Trustees, Kerang	\$11,500.00
Koondrook Recreation Reserve Committee	\$5,600.00
Lalbert Recreation Reserve and Community Group	\$5,600.00
Leitchville Sporting Complex Committee	\$5,114.41
Macorna Public Park and Recreation Reserve Committee	\$5,000.00
Murrabit Recreation Reserve Committee	\$5,600.00
Riverside Park Committee of Management, Kerang	\$24,800.00
Wandella Football/Netball Club	\$5,000.00
TOTAL	\$68,214.41

COMMUNITY FLOOD RECOVERY EVENTS

Benjeroop Public Hall Committee	\$3,000.00
Campaspe Cohuna Local Learning and Employment Network	\$3,500.00
Cohuna and District Progress Association	\$5,500.00
Cohuna Lions Club	\$600.00
Cohuna Market	\$5,000.00
Cohuna Neighbourhood House	\$9,300.00
Dingwall Hall and Sports Association	\$3,000.00
Exchange Hotel, Kerang	\$3,700.00
Golden Rivers Artists	\$3,000.00
Kerang and District Agricultural Society	\$2,500.00
Kerang District Health	\$2,350.00
Kerang District Uniting Church	\$3,000.00
Kerang Football Netball Club	\$3,000.00
Kerang Group of Legacy	\$1,080.00
Kerang Lakes Community Development Committee	\$1,365.00
Kerang Lawn Tennis Club	\$3,000.00
Kerang Neighbourhood House	\$11,300.00
Kerang Progress Association	\$6,000.00
Kerang Technical High School	\$5,500.00
Kerang Traders	\$5,850.00
Kerang Turf Club	\$2,000.00
Koondrook Development Committee	\$2,340.00
Koondrook Primary School	\$3,000.00
The Lakes Chatter Group	\$1,000.00
Leitchville and District Progress Association	\$1,000.00
Leitchville Gunbower Football Netball Club	\$3,000.00
Leitchville Memorial Hall Committee	\$3,760.00
Mallee Family Care	\$2,800.00
Murrabit Advancement Association	\$5,000.00
Murrabit Group School	\$2,888.00
Murrabit Lions Club	\$3,600.00
Murrabit Men’s Shed	\$2,000.00
Murrabit Netball Club	\$4,000.00
Murrabit Playgroup	\$3,000.00
Murrabit Public Hall Committee	\$500.00
Mystic Park Hotel	\$3,700.00
Northern District Community Health Playgroup Victoria	\$2,460.00
Quambatook Community Resource Centre	\$9,000.00
Quambatook District Share Shop	\$2,400.00
Quambatook Tractor Pull Association	\$4,000.00
TOTAL	\$167,793.00

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANTS – 2023 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Cohuna-Leitchville RSL sub-branch	\$2,499.00
Cohuna Pistol Club	\$5,000.00
Kerang Amateur Basketball Association	\$4,000.00
Kerang Cemetery Trust	\$5,000.00
Kerang Fire Brigade	\$2,242.00
Kerang Girl Guides Support Group	\$1,911.50
Kerang Neighbourhood House	\$3,000.00
Kerang Probus Club	\$2,395.00
Kerang Progress Association	\$8,545.00
Kerang Soccer Club	\$3,050.00
Lake Meran Public Purposes Reserve Committee	\$3,000.00
Leitchville and District Progress Association	\$5,000.00
Murrabit Playgroup	\$5,000.00
Nondies Cohuna Cricket Club	\$4,765.00
Northern District Dance Association	\$5,000.00
Quambatook Community Development Association	\$3,046.55
Rotary Club of Kerang	\$500.00
U3A Kerang and District	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$65,454.05

SWIMMING POOL CONTRIBUTIONS

Koondrook Swimming Pool Committee	\$15,528.35
Quambatook Swimming Pool Committee	\$2,900.00
TOTAL	\$18,428.35

COMMUNITY EVENT GRANTS - 2023 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

Federation Vintage Veteran and Classic Vehicle Club	\$1,200.00
Kerang Golf Club	\$2,500.00
Kerang Lakes Community Development Committee	\$1,100.00
Koondrook Development Committee	\$5,000.00
Quambatook Community Resource Centre	\$4,080.00
Quambatook Memorial Swimming Pool	\$340.00
TOTAL	\$14,220.00

DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIP

Cohuna Bowls Club	\$181.82
Cohuna Golf Club	\$590.91
Cohuna Lawn Tennis Club	\$150.00
Cohuna/Leitchville Returned and Services League	\$500.00
Kerang and District Agricultural Society	\$2,500.00
Kerang Turf Club	\$2,000.00
Riverdaze Music Festival	\$1,000.00
Rotary Club of Kerang Art Show	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$8,422.73

AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS

Barham Koondrook Lions Club	\$400.00
Cohuna Lions Club	\$700.00
Lalbert Recreation and Community Group	\$400.00
Lions Club of Kerang	\$600.00
Murrabit and District Lions Club	\$400.00
Quambatook Lions Club	\$400.00
Rotary Club of Kerang	\$600.00
TOTAL	\$3,500.00

RATES SUBSIDY

Barham Koondrook Historical Society	\$390.98
Cohuna and District Historical Society	\$813.60
Cohuna Masonic Lodge	\$517.54
Cohuna Squash Club	\$607.94
Leitchville Bowls Club	\$251.99
Leitchville Bunyips Sporting Club	\$90.40
TOTAL	\$2,672.45

GANNAWARRA GOES ORANGE

Northern District Community Health	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$1,500.00

VICTORIAN SENIORS FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS

Cohuna Neighbourhood House	\$500.00
Kerang Neighbourhood House	\$500.00
Quambatook Community Resource Centre	\$500.00
TOTAL	\$1,500.00

HIGH SCHOOL/SECONDARY COLLEGE BURSARY

Cohuna Secondary College	\$600.00
Kerang Technical High School	\$600.00
TOTAL	\$1,200.00

TOTAL DONATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2023/24 \$452,924.99



Council organised or supported 189 community events during 2023/24. These events occurred throughout the municipality and catered for all ages and interests.

JULY

- Vivid photographic exhibition, Kerang
- Gannawarra Library Service school holiday program
- Spike the Dog Author Talk session, Kerang
- Be Connected program webinar
- Community Care Services Information Roadshow
- Flood recovery-funded creative workshops
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Women in the Warra flood recovery luncheon

AUGUST

- Be Connected program webinar
- Knowing Your Teens workshop, Kerang
- Community mental health training

SEPTEMBER

- Vince Craig Author Talk session, Cohuna
- Sir John Gorton Library 20th birthday celebrations, Kerang
- Gannawarra Library Service school holiday program
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings

OCTOBER

- Be Connected program webinar
- Petit Circus presents *Bon Appetit*, Kerang
- Victorian Seniors Festival events
- Chris Hammer Author Talk session, Kerang
- Volunteers thank you lunch, Barham
- Leitchville Preschool Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program celebration
- Kerang and District Family History Group *Olly Said* book launch
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings

NOVEMBER

- Be Connected program webinar
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Flood recovery-funded creative workshops
- Women Rising exhibition, Cohuna
- Darryl Fraser Author Talk session, Kerang

DECEMBER

- Be Connected program webinar
- Flood recovery-funded creative workshops
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Women Rising exhibition, Cohuna

JANUARY

- Women Rising exhibition, Cohuna
- Gannawarra Library Service school holiday program
- Susea Spray Children's Author Talk sessions, Cohuna and Kerang
- 2024 Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year announcement
- Australia Day community celebrations

FEBRUARY

- Women Rising exhibition, Cohuna
- Around the Paddock flood recovery farmer dinner, Cohuna
- Gannawarra Sporting Club flood recovery dinner, Kerang
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings

MARCH

- HALT on Tour in Gannawarra flood recovery events
- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition, Kerang

APRIL

- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Gannawarra Library Service school holiday program
- Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition, Kerang
- Kerang and District Family History Group Kerang's History in our Houses exhibition, Kerang

MAY

- Flood recovery-funded gatherings
- Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition, Murrabit
- Volunteer Week morning teas
- Kerang Reconciliation Walk
- Kerang and District Family History Group Kerang's History in our Houses exhibition, Kerang



JUNE

- Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition, Cohuna
- Refugee Week - Guest speaker event
- Victorian State Concert Orchestra performance, Kerang
- Our Rivers Our Regions project opening, Koondrook

ONGOING

- Citizenship ceremonies
- Councillor representation at Progress Association/ Development Committee meetings
- Social Meal program (July-October 2023)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Youth and health promotion events were delivered in partnership with Northern District Community Health. Flood recovery events were funded by the State and Federal governments via Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

ABOVE: Council supported the Women in the Warra flood recovery luncheon, held at Tree Tops Scout Camp in July 2023.

LEFT: Council organised the Gannawarra Flood Reflections Exhibition, which premiered in March 2024 and spent the next three months travelling throughout the municipality.

TOP LEFT: The Gannawarra Library Service held various events during the school holiday breaks.



Major Grants Received

Grants from the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments enable local Councils, such as Gannawarra Shire, to provide key services and undertake major capital works projects.

Each financial year Gannawarra Shire Council receives the following grants to assist with its operations:

• **Commonwealth Government Financial Assistance Grants:** During 2023/24, Council received \$6,821,244 from the Commonwealth Government's Financial Assistance Grants program. This included \$4,354,989 from its General-Purpose Grants component and \$2,466,255 million from its Local Roads Grants component.

Council may also receive funding from other government programs to assist with the delivery of projects or programs. During 2023/24, Council received the following additional funding:

• **Council Flood Support Fund:** In March 2024, Council received \$250,000 from the Victorian Government to support clean up works that resulted from three storms that impacted the municipality during December 2023 and January 2024.

• **Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) Strengthening Rural Communities Program:** In February 2024 Council successfully applied for \$25,000 from the FRRR's Strengthening Rural Communities

Program to enhance community recovery and cultural connection in a flood impacted region through a First Nations theatre production.

• **Respect Victoria's 16 Days of Activism Grassroots Initiative:** In September 2023 Council successfully applied for \$1,500 from Respect Victoria's 16 Days of Activism Grassroots Initiative to support the Gannawarra Goes Orange campaign. Held from 25 November-10 December 2023, the campaign promotes the need to reduce gender-based violence in the Gannawarra.

• **Victorian Department of Education Children's Week grant:** In September 2023 Council received \$1,000 from the Victorian Department of Education to support Children's Week celebrations, which occurring during October 2023.

• **Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's Community Development Fund:** In June 2024 the Victoria Government announced that the Koondrook community would receive \$500,000 from its forestry transition program to develop a Local Development Strategy, which will support the community to transition away from the dependence on the native forest timber industry and towards new and sustainable industries. The funding will be used to employ a consultant over a two-year period to support community engagement activities, deliver a context analysis report and to prepare the final strategy.

Award Recognition 2023/24

* Kerang All Abilities Play Space and Changing Places facility was a finalist in the Best Regional/Rural Industry Contribution category in the 2024 Parks and Leisure Australia Victoria/Tasmania Regional Awards

* Kerang All Abilities Play Space and Changing Places facility was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Cohesive Communities category

* Council was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Waste Management category for its work to repurpose approximately 19,000 tonnes of discarded concrete

* Council was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Disaster Readiness category for its role in leading community flood recovery efforts following the 2022 floods

* Council was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Productivity Through Infrastructure category for its work in redeveloping central business districts and popular tourist locations at Cohuna, Kerang and Koondrook

* The annual Gannawarra Goes Orange campaign, which promotes the need to reduce gender-based violence in the Gannawarra, was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Addressing Violence Against Women and their Children category

* Council was a finalist in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government Regional Growth category for its efforts to diversify the municipality's agricultural sector by supporting key projects, including minerals sands mining, investment in renewables and intensive agricultural practices

* Koondrook was a finalist in the Top Tiny Town category at the 2024 TAC Victorian Tourism Awards

* Gannawarra Shire Council was awarded the Silver Award in the 2024 Australasian Reporting Awards for the 2023 Annual Report



Our Council

Gannawarra Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community. Section 8(1) of the Act states the role of Council is "to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community."

This is achieved by adhering to the following governance principles:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;
- The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;

- Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;
- The ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- Regional, State and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making; and
- The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Council is committed to effective and sustainable forms of democratic and corporate governance as the key to ensuring that Council and its administration meet the community's priorities.

The community has many opportunities to provide input into Council's decision-making processes including community consultation, public forums and the ability to make submissions to Council.

Council's formal decision-making processes are conducted through Council meetings. Council delegates most of its decision-making to Council staff. These delegations are exercised in accordance with the Act and a range of other acts and regulations.

Our Councillors

GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL IS DIVIDED INTO FOUR WARDS

AVOCA

including Lake Charm, Lalbert, Benjeroop, Mystic Park and Quambatook

MURRAY

including Koondrook, Myall and Murrabit

PATCHELL

including Kerang, Mead and Macorna

YARRAN

including Cohuna, Leitchville and Horfield



Murray Ward

CR ROSS STANTON Mayor

Phone: 0417 515 769
Email: ross.stanton@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Ross was born in Cohuna and spent most of his life living and working in the Gannawarra. Ross has recently retired after 31 years with Goulburn-Murray Water.

Ross classifies himself as a volunteer, always willing to step in when help is needed. He is a life member of the Murrabit Football Club, having served previously as president of the football and netball clubs. Ross likes to relax with a game of golf and fishing, neither successfully!

Ross believes the Gannawarra is a great place to raise a family and enjoy all the assets this area has available. He sees his role in Council as part of the wider "Gannawarra Council Team", with a focus on the strategic side of local government and looks for ways to enhance the opportunities for our youth and maintain our link to agriculture, renewable energy and environmental based tourism.



Avoca Ward

CR CHARLIE GILLINGHAM Deputy Mayor

Phone: 0457 719 874
Email: charlie.gillingham@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2016

Charlie has lived in the area for more than 50 years and operates a family farm at Lake Charm.

Charlie has a keen interest in the local environment, agriculture, community health and local sporting groups.

With our numerous existing assets, Charlie believes that the area we live in is very dynamic and has huge potential for further innovative agricultural pursuits, nature-based tourism opportunities, new industry, renewable energy prospects and increased residential development around our major towns, lakes, and waterways.

With a proactive Council, Charlie is looking forward to working with his fellow Councillors and the community for the benefit of the whole Shire. He believes that with

a common-sense approach, these goals can be achieved, and we can continue to make the Gannawarra a fantastic place for all.



Yarran Ward

CR KEITH LINK

Phone: 0427 564 138
Email: keith.link@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Keith has been living in the Gannawarra Shire since 1976, spending the first 40 years farming.

Keith recently completed his Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Geography, which he is quite proud of considering his age and limited computer skills.

Keith believes Gannawarra residents are fortunate to live in a diverse region with exciting attractions, Mediterranean climate, and beautiful natural landscapes.

Whilst finding being on Council stimulating and challenging, Keith feels that collaboratively much can be achieved for our ratepayers into the future with seemingly unlimited possibilities.



CR GARNER SMITH

Phone: 0418 871 054
Email: garner.smith@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Garner was raised on a dairy farm in Leitchville and completed his High School Certificate (HSC) at Cohuna High School in 1989.

Garner undertook tertiary studies at Melbourne University, graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) and undertaking a postgraduate Honours year in Economics.

Garner has had significant experience in working in politics, as an Electorate Officer for Senator Julian McGauran and Ministerial Advisor to the Hon. Bill Baxter in the Roads and Ports portfolio. In addition, Garner was the Young Nationals State President for two years, the National Party Victoria Junior Vice President for a year, undertook a delegation to Shanghai, China as part of the Young Leaders Conference and completed a Political Exchange Tour of Japan. In 2021, Garner was elected to the Victorian Farmers Federation Water Committee.

Currently, Garner and his wife are busy running their business, Riverland Milk and Trading, as well as irrigated beef farms in Cohuna and Leitchville.



Patchell Ward



CR KELVIN BURT

Phone: 0407 319 414
Email: kelvin.burt@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Kelvin has lived and worked in the Gannawarra for most of his life.

After leaving school, the family farm was his first passion. This then led him to becoming a fencing and hay carting contractor. Many other jobs followed, including wood merchant,

barman, backhoe operator, Mawsons Concrete employee, and a management role with Lipps Bulk Super in Wakool.

Looking for a stable future, Kelvin returned to Mawsons, where he worked up until March 2022.

A love of the Gannawarra and a passion for the community led Kelvin to become President of the Kerang Progress Association for five years and, in 2020, a Councillor.



CR TRAVIS COLLIER

Phone: 0433 269 577
Email: travis.collier@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Since moving to Kerang in 2011, Travis has been an active member of the community in a variety of different roles.

Travis is currently on the committee of Kerang Technical High School, involved on the committee of the

Murrabit Netball Club and is involved with the Murrabit Tennis Club, Kerang-Swan Hill Rams AFL Masters football team, Rotary Club of Kerang, Murrabit Advancement Association, and the Kerang Soccer Club.

Travis is looking forward to working alongside his fellow Councillors to develop a strategic plan that makes our Shire a destination for tourists and businesses alike and looks forward to continuing to work with

community groups to create a safe and inclusive community for all.



CR JANE OGDEN

Phone: 0476 786 051
Email: jane.e.ogden@gsc.vic.gov.au
First elected: October 2020

Jane has lived in Kerang since 2006 and is a first-term Councillor for the Gannawarra Shire Council. She is not new to Local Government, having worked for the Shire in various roles, including as Coordinator Community Engagement and Community Development Officer.

Jane had the privilege of being Deputy Mayor for two consecutive years from November 2021 to November 2023. She is passionate about encouraging and supporting more rural women to run for Council as women's clear,

compassionate, intelligent, and strong voices are much needed in Local Government.

Jane represented six councils in the Rural North Central Region for three years, while on the Rural Councils Victoria committee. Rural Councils Victoria advocates to State and Federal governments on behalf of rural councils regarding the unique issues rural councils face (e.g. a small municipal rates base due to smaller populations, which means rural councils have very small budgets than city councils and they still need to provide the same services for our valued communities).

The Circular Economy and Climate Change are high on the list of areas of advocacy and passion for Jane. She has learned how important

just one person can be in making a difference to the care of our planet, by changing how we see "waste" and therefore learning to re-use, repair and recycle.

Jane is also a member of the Australian Local Government Women's Association – Victoria and she is focussed on having a positive voice for rural women.



Meetings of Council

Council conducts open public meetings on the third Wednesday of each month between February and December, except for June, when the meeting is held on the fourth Wednesday of the month to avoid a clash with the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly. Residents are welcome to attend these meetings and observe from the gallery or watch proceedings via a recording available the meeting on Council's website.

As part of Council's *Governance Rules*, there is capacity

to hold Council Meetings virtually, with proceedings filmed and available on Council's website.

Council meetings also provide the opportunity for residents to submit questions to Council or provide feedback on items in line with Council's *Community Engagement Policy*.

For the 2023/24 year, Council held 13 Council Meetings – 11 monthly meetings and two Unscheduled Meeting. One of the Unscheduled Meetings was to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

COUNCIL MEETING DATES

✓ – In attendance A – Apology L – Leave of absence

COUNCILLOR	19/7/23	16/8/23	20/9/23	18/10/23	6/11/23	15/11/23	20/12/23	21/2/24	20/3/24	25/03/24	17/4/24	15/5/23	26/6/24	TOTAL
Cr Kelvin Burt	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	12 of 13
Cr Travis Collier	✓	A	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	10 of 13
Cr Charlie Gillingham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	13 of 13
Cr Keith Link	✓	✓	A	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11 of 13
Cr Jane Ogden	A	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	L	✓	L	L	✓	8 of 13
Cr Garner Smith	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	12 of 13
Cr Ross Stanton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	13 of 13

Councillor Committee Membership

Councillor committee memberships as determined during 2023/24

COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR
Audit and Risk Committee	Cr Gillingham and Cr Smith
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	Cr Stanton (July-November 2023) Cr Ogden (December 2023-June 2024)
Community Halls Community Asset Committee	Cr Burt
Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils	Cr Gillingham (Mayor-July-November 2023) Cr Stanton (Mayor-November 2023-June 2024)
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Collier
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Link
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (FMFPC)	Cr Link
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC)	Cr Gillingham (Mayor-July-November 2023) Cr Stanton (Mayor-November 2023-June 2024)
Transport committee role, including Rail Freight Alliance and road transport	Cr Stanton (July-November 2023) Cr Link (December 2023-June 2024)
Rural Councils Victoria	Cr Smith
Timber Towns Victoria	Cr Smith

Councillor Allowances and Expenses

COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES

On 7 March 2022, in accordance with Section 23A of the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 (Vic)*, the Tribunal made the Allowance payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors (Victoria) Determination No. 01/2022.

For the purpose of these allowance limits, councils are divided into four categories based on the income and population of each council. Gannawarra Shire Council is classified as a Category 1 Council.

The Category 1 Councillor allowance from 1 July 2023 to 17 December 2023 was \$25,650 per annum, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution. This allowance increased to \$26,368 from 18 December 2023 to 30 June 2024, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution.

The Category 1 Deputy Mayoral allowance from 1 July 2023 to 17 December 2023 was \$39,746 per annum, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution. This allowance increased to \$40,819 from 18 December 2023 to 30 June 2024, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution.

The Category 1 Mayoral allowance from 1 July 2023 to 17 December 2023 was \$79,492 per annum, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution. This allowance increased to \$81,641 from 18 December 2023 to 30 June 2024, inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution.

The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors have the option to be provided with internet access, a mobile telephone and a laptop. All Councillors have access to a computer and printer at Council's offices. The Mayor is also provided with a vehicle.

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES

In accordance with the Act, a Council must:

- Reimburse a Councillor for out-of-pocket expenses the Council is satisfied are bona fide expenses; have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor; and are reasonably necessary for the Councillor to perform that role.
- Provide details of all such reimbursements to the Audit and Risk Committee.

- Adopt and maintain an expenses policy in relation to the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for Councillors.

Council reviewed and endorsed *Policy No. 092 – Councillor Allowances and Support* on 28 June 2023.

Council also publishes in its Annual Report the details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor. The details of the expenses including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor paid by Council for 2023/24 are set out as below:

	Conferences & Training Expenses	Travel Expenses	Car Mileage Expenses	IT & Communication Expenses	TOTAL
Cr. Charles Gillingham	1,146	1,284	3,832	300	6,561
Cr. Garner Smith	1,026	2,033	-	300	3,359
Cr. Jane Ogden	727	89	113	153	1,083
Cr. Keith Link	701	2,615	-	300	3,616
Cr. Kelvin Burt	701	-	-	300	1,001
Cr. Ross Stanton	6,136	1,053	9,880	300	17,369
Cr. Travis Collier	1,362	486	-	300	2,148
	11,800	\$7,560	13,825	\$1,953	\$35,139

CODE OF CONDUCT

On 17 February 2021, Council reviewed and adopted *Policy No. 078 – Councillor Code of Conduct* in accordance with section 139(4) of the Act. The reviewed Councillor Code of Conduct includes four new mandatory standards of Council conduct (conduct standards) to provide greater clarity around the behaviour expected of Councillors and a consistent framework for handling complaints alleging misconduct under the Code.

The Code of Conduct documents Gannawarra Shire Councillors' commitment to working together in the best interests of the people within the municipality and to discharging their responsibilities to the best of their skill and judgement.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Councillors are elected by the residents and ratepayers to act in the best interests of the community. This is a position of trust that requires Councillors to act in the

public interest. When a council delegates its powers to a Council officer or a committee, the officer or committee must also act in the public interest.

A conflict of interest occurs when a personal or private interest might compromise the ability to act in the public interest. A conflict of interest exists even if no improper act results from it.

Council has a comprehensive procedure in place to accommodate the disclosure of a conflict of interest. Declaration of a conflict of interest is a standing agenda item for all Council meetings.

While the procedures vary depending on the role and circumstances, in general they involve disclosing the relevant interests in a specific way and then stepping aside from the decision-making process or from the exercise of the public duty. A register is maintained to record all disclosed conflicts of interest.

During 2023/24, 14 Councillor conflicts of interest and one Officer conflict of interest were declared at a Council meeting.



ABOVE: Cr Charlie Gillingham (centre), pictured with Council Chief Executive Officer, Geoff Rollinson (left) and Cr Travis Collier (right) received a Municipal Association of Victoria Mayor Emeritus Award in October 2023 for serving three terms as Mayor.

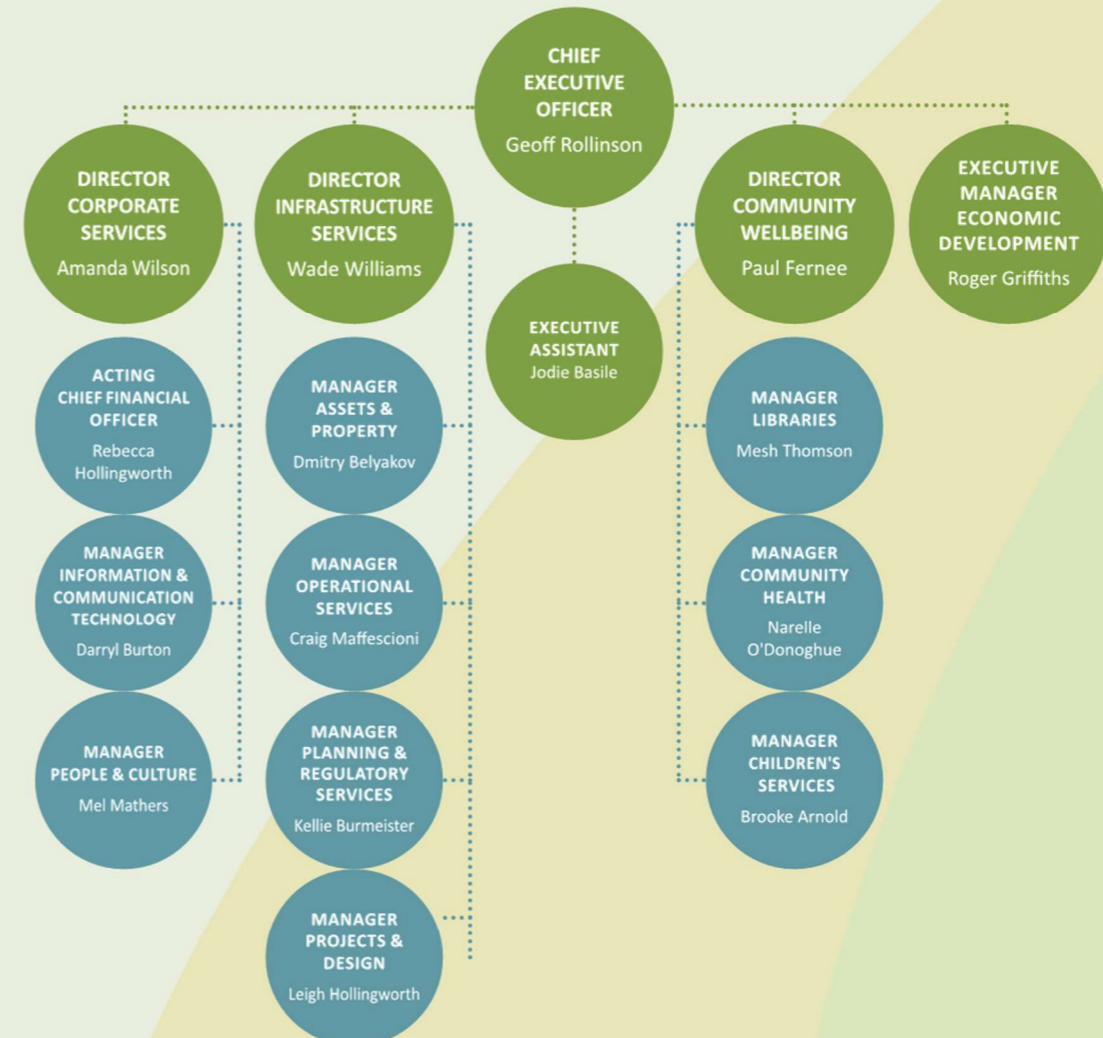


Organisational Structure

Council has four directorates reporting to the Chief Executive Officer - Corporate Services; Community Wellbeing; Economic Development; and Infrastructure and Development. Each of these directorates is made up of individual units, each led by a senior officer.

The Chief Executive Officer is directly accountable to the Mayor and Councillors, who are elected by Gannawarra Shire ratepayers.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE – AS OF 30 JUNE 2024



Executive Leadership Team

GEOFF ROLLINSON Chief Executive Officer

Council's former Director Infrastructure and Development, Geoff Rollinson was appointed Council Chief Executive Officer on 21 December 2022.

Geoff's earliest qualifications and experience are in agriculture. He gained extensive experience and knowledge in Local Government when working with both the former Borough and Shire of Kerang and

then the Gannawarra Shire upon amalgamation in 1995.

He has a Diploma of Civil Engineering and held the positions of Works Engineer and Manager of Operational Services with Gannawarra Shire from 1995 until he started as the Director Infrastructure and Development in 2011.

Areas of responsibility:
Council Planning and Performance;
Councillor Support.



AMANDA WILSON Director Corporate Services

Amanda Wilson joined Council in November 2023, having previously worked in local government for ten years in both Victoria and New South Wales. Prior to local government, Amanda worked in private enterprise and the not-for-profit sector.

Amanda has held diverse roles including financial management,

human resources, change management, governance and risk. Amanda has qualifications in accounting, business, human resources and work health and safety.

Areas of responsibility:
Finance; Rates; Procurement;
Governance; Risk; Occupational Health and Safety; Human Resources; Payroll; Records Management; Customer Service;
Information Technology.



WADE WILLIAMS Director Infrastructure and Development

A career professional in the Civil & Built environment with over nine years of professional experience managing complex projects and teams in the civil industry, Wade joined Gannawarra Shire Council in 2018, working in and leading the Engineering team as the Manager of Projects & Design.

Wade commenced in the role of Acting Director Infrastructure & Development in early 2023,

and was appointed Director Infrastructure and Development in September 2023.

Wade holds qualifications in Building Surveying, Professional Certificate in Infrastructure Financial Management, and a Post Graduate Certificate in Project Management.

Areas of responsibility:
Major Projects; Operational Services; Engineering; Waste Management; Landfill and Transfer Stations; Local Laws; Flood and Fire Management; Building; Planning; Aquatic Facilities; Climate Change Adaptation.



PAUL FERNEE Director Community Wellbeing

Appointed to the Director Community Wellbeing role in September 2023, Paul was Acting Director Community Wellbeing at Gannawarra Shire Council from July 2022 after commencing with Council in late 2019 as Manager Community Engagement.

Paul's career in Local Government has mostly been spent in rural Victorian communities, leading a variety of services including Infrastructure,

Community Development and Sport and Recreation.

Paul has a strong focus on personal and professional development having achieved a Master of Business (Sport Management); Bachelor of Exercise Science; and a Graduate Diploma in Education.

Areas of responsibility:
Maternal Child Health; Community Health; Children and Youth Services; Immunisation; Libraries; Arts and Culture; Environmental Health; Community Engagement and Communications.



ROGER GRIFFITHS Executive Manager Economic Development

Roger has over 30 years of experience working in the development sector, specialising in agricultural projects, residential and industrial developments, energy and mining and tourism related projects.

Roger has worked with Gannawarra Shire Council for the past 24 years, and facilitated the development of the Gannawarra Solar Farm - the largest integrated solar and battery facility in Australia when it was constructed.

Roger has initiated much of the strategic focus for the Gannawarra Shire, resulting in a diverse and

growing agricultural sector thanks to medicinal cannabis, free range egg farms and viticulture projects. He has guided the growth of Kerang's Tate Drive Industrial Estate and developed a prolific branding profile for the Gannawarra. Under his watch, the economy has undergone significant diversity, resulting in population growth.

Roger has interests in outdoor nature-based activities, boating, music and wine making and believes in 10 years the Gannawarra will be one of the strongest rural councils in Victoria.

Areas of responsibility:
Economic Development.



MAJOR CHANGES

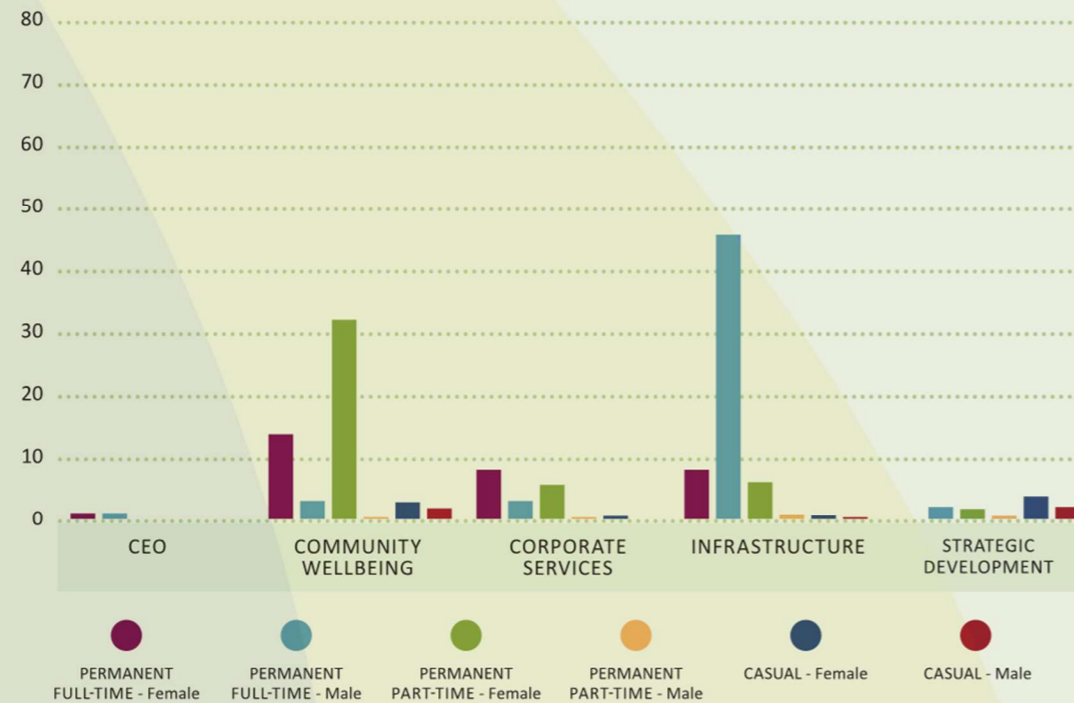
- Wade Williams was appointed Director Infrastructure and Development in September 2023 after holding the position in an acting capacity since January 2023.
- Paul Fernee was appointed Director Community Wellbeing in September 2023 after holding the position in an acting capacity since July 2022.
- Amanda Wilson was appointed Director Corporate Services in November 2023 following the retirement of former Director Corporate Services, Phil Higgins.
- Council ceased providing Aged and Disability services to residents in October 2023.
- A restructure of Council's Corporate Services team occurred in April 2024.
- A restructure of Council's infrastructure & Development team occurred in June 2024.

Our Workplace

Below is a summary of full-time equivalent (FTE) Council staff by organisation structure, employment type and gender.

FTE BY GENDER, DEPARTMENT – AS OF 30 JUNE 2024

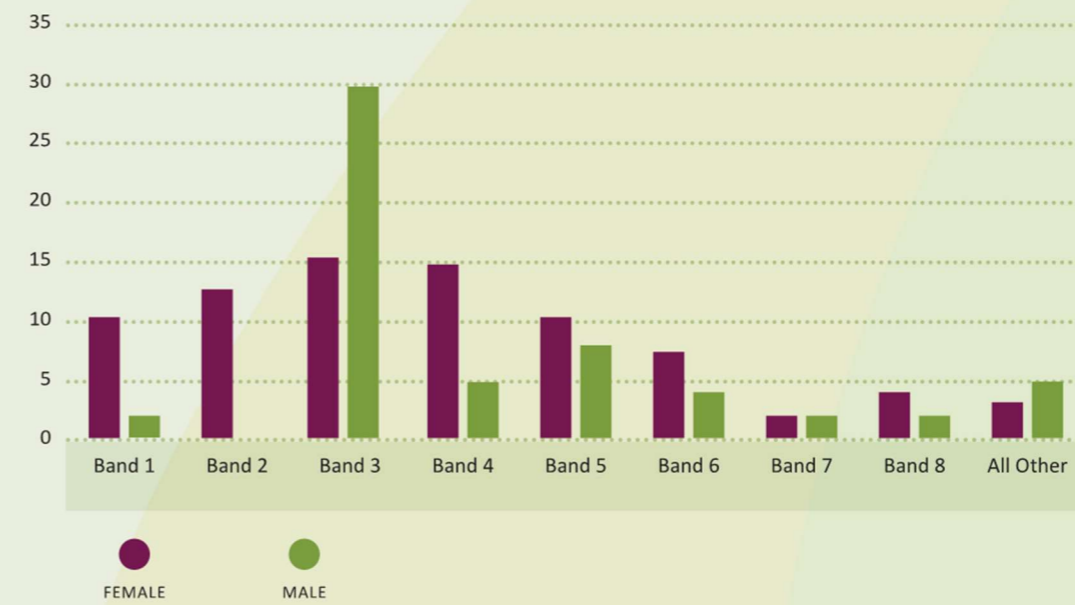
EMPLOYMENT TYPE	GENDER	CEO	COMMUNITY WELLBEING	CORPORATE SERVICES	INFRASTRUCTURE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
Permanent Full-Time	Female	1.00	13.58	8.00	8.00	0.00	30.58
Permanent Full-Time	Male	1.00	3.00	3.00	46.00	2.00	55.00
Permanent Part-Time	Female	0.00	31.99	6.24	5.99	1.68	45.90
Permanent Part-Time	Male	0.00	0.21	0.21	0.08	0.00	0.50
Casual	Female	0.00	2.74	0.37	0.59	0.00	3.70
Casual	Male	0.00	1.84	0.00	0.10	0.00	1.94
Total		2.00	53.36	17.82	60.76	3.68	138



Below is a summary of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment classification and gender.

FTE BY BAND LEVEL, GENDER – AS OF 30 JUNE 2024

	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL FTE
Band 1	10.38	2.13	12.51
Band 2	12.46	0	12.46
Band 3	15.68	29.21	44.89
Band 4	14.93	5	19.93
Band 5	10.39	8	18.39
Band 6	7.32	4	11.32
Band 7	2	2	4
Band 8	4	2.1	6.1
All Other	3	5	8
Total	80.16	57.44	137.6



ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

In December 2022 Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement was approved by the Fair Work Commission. This agreement sets staff pay and conditions for the next three years.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Council's workforce plays a vital role in ensuring that Council meets current and future business needs.

Council is committed to continually developing and improving the skills and capacity of its staff by providing access to a range of professional development opportunities.

Staff undertook compliance training throughout 2023/24, with leadership skills across the organisation enhanced thanks to targeted training in the areas of recruitment and workplace safety.

Staff maintained and expanded their technical skills through a variety of online webinars and forums relevant to their fields of expertise.

TRAINEESHIP AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Council supports pathways for local students by providing work experience and traineeship opportunities.

Council's work experience program allows for students from across the municipality to experience working in a variety of Council departments. This allows young people to see the many career opportunities available in local government and to also increase awareness of Council's operations.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

Council is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and will ensure that all workplace employment matters reflect this.

Supported by various policies, new staff inductions and training, Council ensures that the work environment is respectful and free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

As part of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council has an obligation to promote gender equality, with Council's *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025* underpinning this obligation.

Developed following communication and consultation with management, employees, Councillors and staff union representatives, the action plan includes the results of a workplace gender audit and strategies and measures for promoting gender equality in the workplace.

The action plan has two key strategies:

- To improve our understanding of the gender and diversity profile of our workforce; and
- To raise awareness of gender equality and intersectional gender inequality.

WORKFORCE PLAN

As part of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to develop a workforce plan which describes Council's organisational structure, specifies projected staffing requirements for a period of at least four years, and sets out measures to seek and ensure gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness.

Adopted in December 2021, Council's *Workforce Plan 2021-2025* was developed in line with the *Growing Gannawarra – 2021-2025* Council Plan objectives and, along with Council's *Gender Equality Action Plan*, will guide Council's human resource practices for the next four years.



Health and safety within our workforce is our number one priority, as it contributes to making Gannawarra a workplace of choice; a workplace where our people have a strong connection and involvement; and a place where our staff enjoy coming to work each day.

We strive to foster a safety culture that supports an incident and injury-free workplace for all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

Council's Occupational Health and Safety Committee meets regularly and continues to work to make the organisation a safe and healthy place for all staff. Our committee, including staff health and safety representatives, receive regular refresher training and safety updates.

Accident and incident reporting is a standing agenda item at Management Team meetings, with data regularly reported to Council's Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Council's risk framework.

Council continued its proactive approach to encourage Council staff to protect themselves and others from influenza. Council provides free vaccination against influenza to its workforce on an annual basis, with 50 per cent of staff, including casual employees, taking the opportunity to be immunised against influenza in 2023/24.

Council continues its commitment to becoming recognised under the Victorian Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program. This Statewide health promotion program encourages best practice in workplaces around Mental Health and Wellbeing, Physical Activity, Smoking, Healthy Eating, and Alcohol and Other Drugs. Council has received recognition in four out of the five priority areas.

The following initiatives took place in support of the Healthy Workplaces Achievement Program during 2023/24:

- Consistent use of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing to promote good Mental Health and Wellbeing across the organisation.
- Promotion of R U OK? Day in September 2023 and providing practical strategies for staff to have conversations when someone says they are not okay.
- Participation in Gannawarra Goes Orange Day in November 2023 to raise awareness about family violence.
- Participation in the Victoria Against Violence 16 Days of Activism campaign in December 2023 across all worksites.
- 22 managers and emerging leaders participated in a leadership and resilience workshop with Beyondblue Ambassador, Brad McEwan, in February 2024.
- Council hosted an International Women's Day event in March 2024.
- Male staff participated in a mental health and wellness session with Jeremy Forbes from the HALT (Hope Assistance Local Tradies) Australia in March 2024.
- IDAHOBIT Day events were held across worksites in May 2024.

ABOVE: Staff promoted R U OK? Day in September 2023 by highlighting practical strategies for staff to have conversations when someone says they are not okay.



Our Performance

Council's actions to support residents and grow the Gannawarra are guided by the Growing Gannawarra – 2021-2025 Council Plan.

Planning and Accountability Framework

Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to prepare the following:

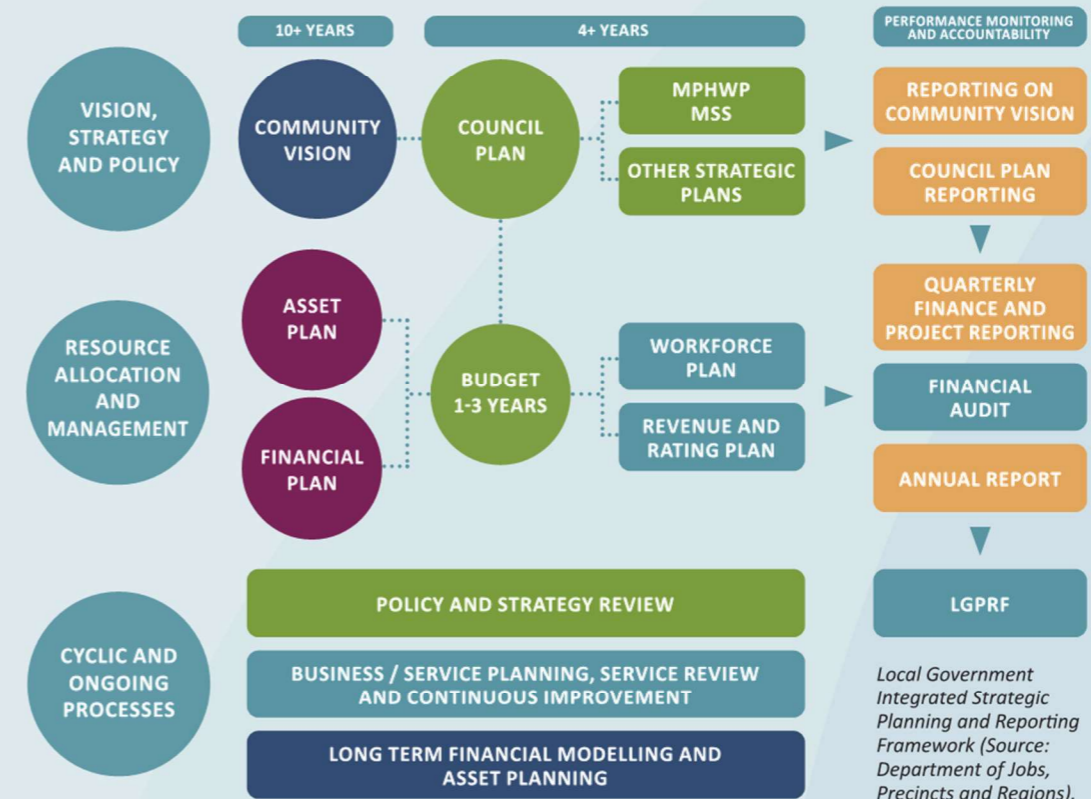
- A Community Vision (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Council Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- A Financial Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- An Asset Plan (for at least the next 10 financial years);
- A Revenue and Rating Plan (for at least the next 4 financial years);
- An Annual Budget (for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years);

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

The Act also requires councils to prepare:

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

The following diagram shows the relationships between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework for local government. It also shows that there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input and feedback.



MPHWP – Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan MSS - Municipal Strategic Statement
LGPRF – Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

Local Government Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (Source: Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions).

Growing Gannawarra 2021-2025 Council Plan

Year 3 Action Plan Outcomes



2021-2025 COUNCIL PLAN YEAR 3 ACTION PLAN OUTCOMES

The *Growing Gannawarra 2021-2025 Council Plan* identifies three priority areas, each featuring a set of strategic priorities and success measures.

The three priority areas are:

Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

Sustainability

Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

ASSESSING OUR PERFORMANCE

Council's performance for the 2023/24 year has been reported against each strategic objective outlined in the *Growing Gannawarra 2021-2025 Council Plan* to demonstrate how Council is performing in achieving the Council Plan's goals.

Performance has been measured as follows:

- Results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the *Growing Gannawarra 2021-2025 Council Plan*, which are supported by an annual Action Plan for each of these three priority areas.
- Progress in relation to the major initiatives identified in the 2023/24 Gannawarra Shire Council Budget, which align with actions listed in the *Growing Gannawarra 2021-2025 Council Plan* annual Action Plan.
- Services funded in the 2023/24 Gannawarra Shire Council Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided those services.

For Results against the prescribed service performance indicators and measures, please refer to the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework section of this Annual Report.

Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

Strategic Priority 1.

Improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our community through partnerships, services and programs.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Support the community's recovery from the 2022 floods	Partner with agencies to support recovery efforts following the 2022 floods	Complete	Council has successfully partnered with agencies as part of the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee, in alignment with the Gannawarra Flood Recovery Plan to deliver hundreds of programs and activities, with further projects to continue into 2025.
Implement Gannawarra Free from Family Violence Action Plan 2023-2024	Actions within Gannawarra Free from Family Violence Action Plan 2023-2024 implemented	Complete	Council held a successful Gannawarra Goes Orange campaign in November 2023, partnering with health services, Victoria Police, Rotary Club of Kerang and Mallee & District Aboriginal Services.
Continue to implement the Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM) Action Plan 2021- 2025 including the priorities of improving mental wellbeing (through reconciliation and resilience), working towards gender equality and preventing family violence, and tackling climate change and its impact on health and wellbeing	GLAM Action Plan number of initiatives achieved	Complete	Successful partnership projects completed with particular focus on reducing Family Violence (16 Days of Activism), IDAHOBIT activities, Reconciliation Week, Men's Health and Flood Recovery. Support through Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee has also been successful in building local capacity.
Adopt the Gannawarra Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership with the Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM) and Kerang Elders Group	Gannawarra Reconciliation Action Plan adopted	In progress	Final version of the Reconciliation Action Plan is being finalised for review by Council.
Partner to deliver the Buloke Loddon Gannawarra Population Health Implementation Plan including preventative measures to improve the health priority areas of heart and respiratory health, diabetes, mental health and oral health	Number of actions from the Buloke Loddon Gannawarra Population Health Implementation Plan achieved	Complete	Council partnered with Bendigo Health Public Health Unit and Northern District Community Health in improving healthy food systems and mental health outcomes.
Review Council's Onsite Wastewater Management Plan	Review Wastewater Management Plan	Complete	<i>Draft Wastewater Management Plan</i> was presented for community engagement April-May 2024. The final version will be presented to Council for adoption in July 2024.

Strategic Priority 2. Build unique transformational infrastructure that enhances liveability and passive and active recreation.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Development of Quambatook Weir Pool and Walking Tracks	Weir Pool and walking tracks completed	In progress	Environmental water management and native vegetation approval process underway.
Development of conceptual designs for Kerang and Cohuna aquatic facilities	Conceptual designs for Kerang and Cohuna aquatic designs developed	In progress	Tender process underway. Council will seek further funding to facilitate the development of conceptual designs.
Deliver the Kerang CBD development - Stage 3 and 4	Kerang CBD Development – Stage 3 and 4 commenced	In progress	Stage 3 completed by 30 June 2024. Stage 4 to be completed by end of 2024.
Planning of the Kerang-Koondrook Rail Trail	Conceptual designs for Kerang-Koondrook Rail Trail completed	Complete	Conceptual designs complete. Development of planning designs underway.

Strategic Priority 3. Construct a regional community wellbeing centre.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Further development of The Glasshouse @ the Gannawarra designs	Glasshouse designs completed and construction underway	Complete	Project tender awarded March 2024, with preliminary works commenced May 2024.

Strategic Priority 4. Respond to key community needs through innovative, commercially focused services including aged care and early childhood services.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Development of municipal-wide community plans	Development of municipal-wide community plans	Complete	Community plans have been completed for Council's six rural communities through funding provided from the Centre for Farmer's Health.

Strategic Services. The strategic services that contribute to this strategic objective are:

Strategic Service	Actual \$,000	Budget \$,000	Variance \$,000
Bridges This service conducts ongoing maintenance of Council's bridge network.	508	352	(156)
Business Undertakings Business undertakings include Council's responsibility for the provision and maintenance of a limited number of elderly person's units. This area also includes private works undertaken by Council at the request of others.	120	113	(7)
Children's Services This service provides family oriented support services including pre-schools, long day care, maternal and child health, youth services and development, immunisation and family day care.	(82)	17	99
Community Care This service provides a range of services for the aged and disabled including home delivered meals, personal care, transport, home maintenance, housing support and senior citizen clubs. This service also provides food safety and public and community health and safety.	581	118	(463)
Community Engagement This service is responsible for the management and provision of advice on external communication, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, on behalf of Council.	355	437	81
Community Facilities This service is responsible for the maintenance and management of Council's building and properties including public halls and community amenities.	940	809	(131)
Drainage This service conducts ongoing maintenance of Council's drainage network.	597	480	(117)
Events Council's arts and culture program investigates opportunities to capture the economic value of local events and ensures a link between the community and Council.	13	104	91
Fire Prevention Fire prevention includes the implementation of Council's fire prevention policy along with maintaining strategic fire breaks. Council also has responsibilities in the replacement of fire plugs.	38	18	(20)

Strategic Services.

The strategic services that contribute to this strategic objective are:

Strategic Service	Actual \$,000	Budget \$,000	Variance \$,000
Flood Response and Emergency Works Council's response to the 2022 floods. Council received \$1.5 million in 2022/23 as part of the State Government's efforts to support flood affected councils through its Council Flood Support Fund.	617	0	(617)
Footpath, Kerb and Channel This service conducts ongoing maintenance of Council's footpath, kerb and channel network.	666	611	(55)
Library This service provides public library services across the municipality and provides customer focused service that caters for cultural, educational and recreational needs of residents and provides a focal point where they can meet, relax and enjoy the services and facilities offered.	615	633	18
Local Laws This service maintains and improves the health and safety of people, animals and the environment by providing services including dog and cat collection, lost and found, pound service, registration and administration service and after-hours emergency service. It also provides education, regulation and enforcement of local laws and relevant State legislation.	274	309	35
Pest Control Council is responsible for undertaking an arbovirus eradication program each year.	49	(1)	(49)
Recreation Reserves This service provides maintenance and support of municipal recreation facilities including recreational reserves and parks and gardens.	78	(363)	(441)
Roads This service conducts ongoing maintenance of Council's vast road network.	4,887	(22,933)	(27,819)
Swimming Areas This service provides maintenance and operation of Council's swimming areas and, when require to, undertake projects in relation to boating safety.	787	750	(37)
Transport Connections This service includes responsibility for the maintenance of the Kerang weighbridge, Kerang Aerodrome and Kerang train station.	88	102	14

Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

Strategic Priority 1.

Facilitate infrastructure, programs and policies that support economic development and productivity, whilst considering our natural environment.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Continue to implement adopted Waterfront Masterplans	Kangaroo Lake North End Jetty works completed	Complete	Kangaroo Lake North End jetty works completed July 2023.
Purchase of additional industrial land in Kerang to address growth demand	Purchase of additional land completed	Complete	A parcel of land has been purchased for a new industrial estate in Kerang.

Strategic Priority 2.

Facilitate the implementation of new energy infrastructure and energy projects.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Continue to advocate for delivery of VNI-West (KerangLink)	AEMO confirms final route for VNI-West	In progress	Regular meetings are held with Transmission Company Victoria to provide feedback on the final route for VNI West. Route to be announced in the second half of 2024.
Facilitate new energy projects in Gannawarra	Number of new or planned energy projects facilitated	In progress	Staff continue to work with energy companies on wind, solar and battery projects across the Gannawarra Shire.

Strategic Priority 3.

Advocate for improvements in digital connectivity and services.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Support upgrades to connectivity in smaller townships	Implementation of signal boosters in poorly connected townships as part of the flood recovery process	Complete	Signal boosters have been approved for installation in many of the smaller communities with poor phone service.

Strategic Priority 4.

Support the creation of destinations in the Gannawarra to attract visitors to our region.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Implement relevant strategies that support destination development	Number of actions implemented from Tourism Strategy, Economic Development Strategy and Retail Strategy	Complete	Strategies are being implemented along with advocacy to improve infrastructure aimed at creating destinations. Koondrook waterfront and Cohuna waterfront projects are successful examples.

Strategic Priority 5.

Continue to support existing, and facilitate diversification of agriculture to improve regional productivity through sustainable planning.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Continue to facilitate new industry projects which diversify agriculture	Number of new industry projects developed to diversify agriculture	Complete	New agricultural projects are being implemented, including beef feedlotting, free range poultry and dairy feed barns.
Projects and technology that enhance local productivity in agriculture	New projects and technology identified	Complete	New agricultural projects are being implemented, including beef feedlotting, free range poultry and dairy feed barns.

Strategic Priority 6.

Support growth through land rezoning for future residential development opportunities.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Review the Gannawarra Planning Scheme	Submit the review of the Gannawarra Planning Scheme to the Minister for Planning	In progress	Planning Scheme Review report has been drafted and will be presented to Council for adoption in the near future.
Adoption of the Gannawarra Urban Growth Strategy	Strategy adopted by Council	Complete	The Gannawarra Urban Growth strategy has been developed and is being used to drive new housing projects across the Gannawarra.

Strategic Services

The strategic services that contribute to this strategic objective are:

Strategic Service	Actual \$,000	Budget \$,000	Variance \$,000
Economic Development This service assists Council to facilitate an environment that is conducive to a sustainable and developing local business sector and provides opportunities for local residents to improve their skill levels and access employment.	325	344	19
Planning and Building This service processes all planning and statutory building applications, provides advice and makes decisions about development proposals which require a planning permit, as well as preparing policy documents that shape the future of the Council.	279	316	37
Tourism This service facilitates and encourages tourism development and opportunities to draw visitors to the municipality. The tourism program includes the Gateway to Gannawarra Visitor Centre, caravan parks and signage.	377	526	148

Sustainability

Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

Strategic Priority 1.

Generate additional revenue through new energy infrastructure and commercially viable services.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Support to develop Payment in Lieu of Rates (PiLoR) certified energy farms across Gannawarra	Increased income from PiLoR	Complete	PiLoR revenue continues to increase and will significantly increase should planned energy projects eventuate.
Active pursuit of grants to assist in delivery of Council's capital and operational service delivery	Number of grants applied for versus successful grants	Complete	Council applied for 10 grants during 2023/24 - three of which were successful. An outcome on three others is still to be determined.
Further investigation into developing microgrids at Kerang Transfer Station and Kerang Aerodrome to provide alternate renewable energy options for residents	Study completed	In progress	Expressions of interest for interested parties to conduct investigation completed and awarded. Studies are underway.

Strategic Priority 2.

Carefully monitor expenditure to ensure value for money and monitor the long term financial plan to maintain financial sustainability.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Continue Rural Transformation Fund Asset Management software partnership project with Swan Hill Rural City Council and Buloke Shire Council	Project commenced	In progress	Project has commenced but is going through rescoping. Council is sourcing a consultant for additional procurement support work. The current planned timing for completion of project tendering phase is the end of November 2024.
Adopt Asset Management Sub Plans and Asset Management Strategy	Asset Management Plan and Asset Management Strategy adopted	In progress	Project has commenced. Revaluations are currently being completed and once approved / validated they will provide the data for the asset plan and sub-plans to be established.

Strategic Priority 3.

Be a creative employer of choice through our adherence to good governance and our inclusive culture.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Review and implement changes to Gender Equality Action Plan	Review Gender Equality Action Plan and implement changes to comply with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022 and Fair Work Act 2009	In progress	Gender Equality Action Plan in process of review to ensure adherence to changes to legislative requirements.
Development of Children's Services Workforce Plan	Children's Services Workforce Plan completed	Complete	Children's Services Workforce Plan completed June 2024.

Strategic Priority 4.

Support community resilience through climate adaptation, clean energy, environmental sustainability and waste management programs.

Action	Measure	Status	Comments
Continue to work with regional groups on the rollout of the Food Organics, Garden Organics (FOGO) system to reduce waste to landfill	FOGO rollout plan developed in line with the Regional Plan	In progress	Rollout to be guided by updated Waste Management Strategy, which is to be developed in 2024/25.
Review alternative options for Council's fleet vehicles (e.g incorporating hybrid/ electric vehicles)	Review of incorporating alternative vehicles into Council's operations completed	Complete	Review of Council's fleet vehicles undertaken.
Implement Council's <i>Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan</i> , which considers impacts on health and wellbeing	Implement initiatives outlined in <i>Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan</i>	Complete	Initiatives relating to municipal emergency management, renewable energy adaptation and expansion of electric small plant fleet implemented.
Review Council's <i>Waste Management Strategy</i>	<i>Waste Management Strategy</i> reviewed	In progress	Review underway. Consultants engaged to develop updated version of Waste Management Strategy, which is to be presented to Council in 2024/25.

Strategic Services

The strategic services that contribute to this strategic objective are:

Strategic Service	Actual \$,000	Budget \$,000	Variance \$,000
Council The governing body to work together with our community to capitalise on our natural assets, support our business and agricultural sector and deliver quality services to our community.	442	489	47
Environment Protection This service includes programs for the eradication of noxious weeds, tree maintenance and planting.	142	142	0
Executive This service provides organisational policy and leadership support in the areas of advocacy, continuous improvement, corporate planning, performance measurement, delivery and reporting.	1,264	1,339	135
Governance This service includes support services in the area of finance, records management, customer services, human resources and several governance functions such as risk and compliance. Human resources develops and implements strategies, policies and procedures for the provision of human resources, risk management and insurances, customer service, records management and media and internal communications.	2,558	2,213	(345)
Information Technology This service provides, supports and maintains reliable and cost effective computer systems and communication facilities and infrastructure to Council staff enabling them to deliver services in a smart, productive and efficient way.	982	909	(73)
Waste Management This service provides kerbside collection of garbage and waste from households and commercial properties and operating costs of transfer stations and landfill.	2,183	2,571	388

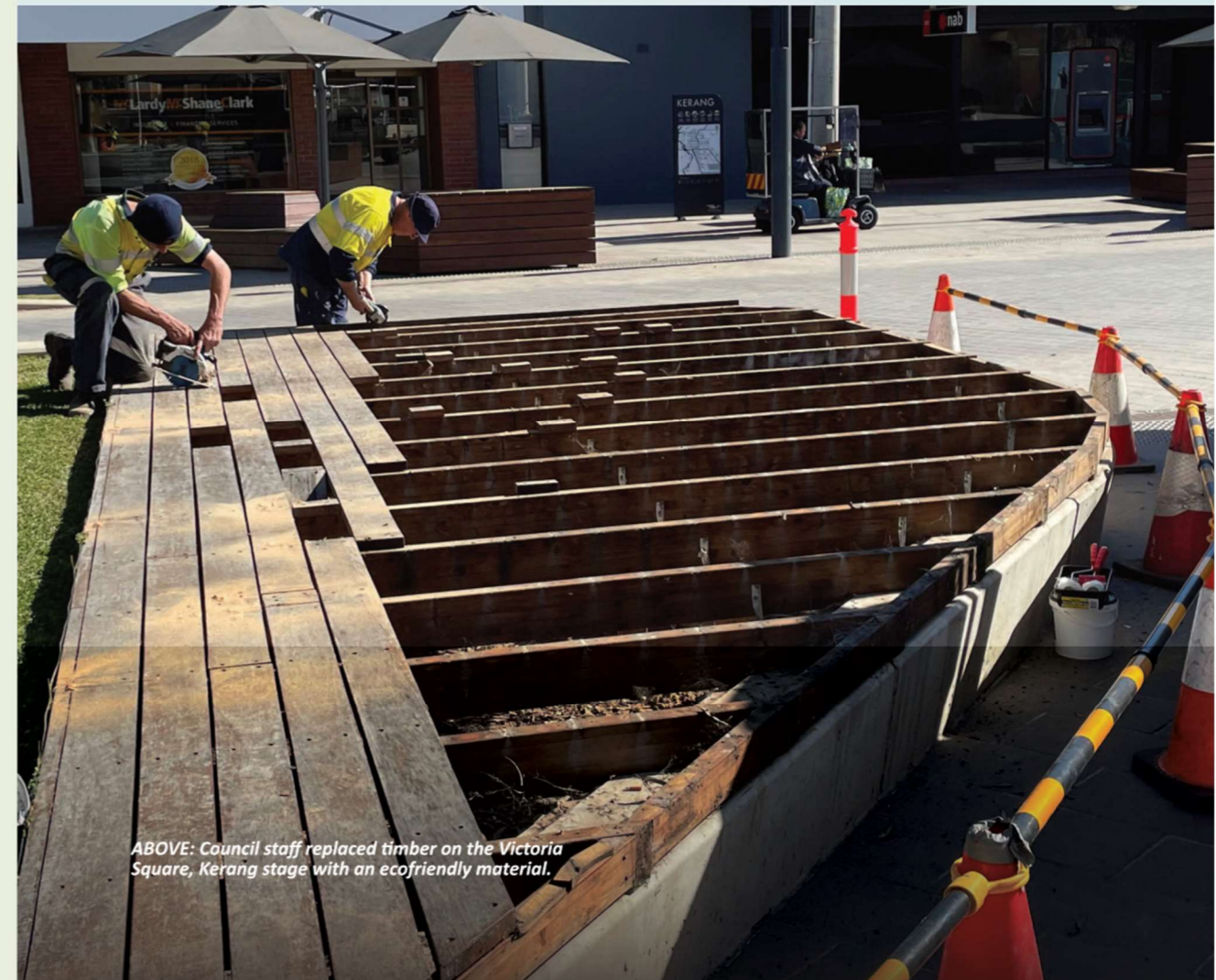
Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

WHAT IS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE REPORTING FRAMEWORK?

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian councils. It ensures that councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote

transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The framework is made up of various measures from a range of service areas, including roads, planning, animal management and waste. It is complemented by a Governance and Management checklist of 24 items, which shows the policies, plans and procedures in place at each council. Together, they build a comprehensive picture of council performance.



ABOVE: Council staff replaced timber on the Victoria Square, Kerang stage with an ecofriendly material.



ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Provision of animal management and responsible pet ownership services to the community including monitoring, registration, enforcement and education.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i>	2.14	2.96	1.96	1.54	Council Local Laws Officers continue to respond to animal management requests in a timely manner. The average response time is less than 2 days, which shows the team's commitment to helping the community.
[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]					
Service Standard					
<i>Animals reclaimed</i>	26.40%	29.85%	25.18%	34.10%	A total of 217 animals were collected by Council offices in 2023/24. Of these animals, 128 were rehomed and 74 were released.
[Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100					
<i>Animals rehomed</i>	79.20%	70.15%	40.07%	89.51%	A total of 217 animals were collected by Council offices in 2023/24. Of these animals, 128 were rehomed and 74 were released.
[Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x100					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of animal management service per population</i>	\$9.54	\$10.26	\$8.71	\$7.75	The cost of animal services was reduced significantly due to staff vacancies and not backfilling positions with consultants.
[Direct cost of the animal management service / Number of registered animals]					
Health and Safety					
<i>Animal management prosecutions</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	There were no animal management prosecutions in 2023/24.
[Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100					



AQUATIC FACILITIES

Provision of indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities to the community and visitors for wellbeing, water safety, sport and recreation.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Service Standard					
<i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i>	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	Council's authorised officers conducted an annual inspection and water sampling at each of the three Council managed aquatic facilities.
[Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]					
Utilisation					
<i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i>	3.27	3.03	3.59	3.70	The past 12 months saw a significant increase in the use of the indoor exercise pool in Kerang, whilst a decrease was seen in the utilisation of Council's seasonal pools.
[Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]					
Service cost					
<i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i>	\$12.31	\$17.01	\$11.36	\$12.91	A decrease in attendance in the outdoor pools, alongside continued escalation in costs to deliver aquatic services, particularly maintenance of aging outdoor pools, has seen an increase in cost per visit of aquatic facilities.
[Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]					



FOOD SAFETY

Provision of food safety services to the community including registrations, education, monitoring, inspections and compliance.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to action food complaints</i>	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	All complaints received relating to food safety where actioned by Council's authorised officers within one day of the complaint being received.
[Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]					
Service Standard					
<i>Food safety assessments</i>	12.86%	100.00%	97.47%	98.75%	There was one food premise that did not receive an inspection during the reporting period. This oversight has since been rectified.
[Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>] x100					
Service standard					
<i>Food safety samples</i>	New in 2024	New in 2024	New in 2024	52.17%	While within the expected range, this is a low result and a process has been put in place to increase annual food sampling in future reporting periods.
[Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] x100					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of food safety service</i>	\$378.57	\$227.95	\$256.12	\$296.86	Additional Environmental Health resources were engaged to undertake the required assessments leading to a higher cost compared to the previous year, however the cost remains low compared to expected cost for delivering a food safety service.
[Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>]					
Health and Safety					
<i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i>	100.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	There were no critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications during the reporting period.
[Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100					



GOVERNANCE

Provision of good governance to the community including making and implementing decisions with reference to community engagement, policy frameworks and agreed practice.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Transparency					
<i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i>	3.42%	2.94%	10.32%	3.03%	The number of Council decisions made under meetings closed to the public is consistent with previous years. The anomaly was 2022/23, which saw a significant increase in closed Council meetings due to the employment contract of the previous CEO and the proposed exiting from Community Care Services.
[Number of Council resolutions made at Ordinary or Special Meetings of Council, or at meetings of a special committee consisting only of Councillors, closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at Ordinary or Special Meetings of Council or at meetings of a special committee consisting only of Councillors] x100					
Consultation and Engagement					
<i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i>	56.00	46.00	49.00	51.00	Continued upward trend on community satisfaction with consultation and engagement.
Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement					
Attendance					
<i>Councillor attendance at Council Meetings</i>	94.05%	98.90%	90.18%	86.81%	
[The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Ordinary and Special Council Meeting / (Number of Ordinary and Special Council Meetings) × (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x100					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of elected representation</i>	\$36,020.55	\$41,335.36	\$51,109.32	\$42,969.38	There has been a 15.93% decrease since last year. The recruitment of the Chief Executive Officer in 2022/23 saw a spike in the cost of elected representation expenses as the anomaly.
[Direct cost of the governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]					
Satisfaction					
<i>Satisfaction with Council decisions</i>	55.00	46.00	48.00	48.00	Satisfaction with Council decisions remains steady, with Council continuing to focus on improving community perceptions.
Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community					



LIBRARIES

Provision of print and digital based resources to the community in a variety of formats including collection services, e-services, research tools and interactive learning programs.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Resource Currency					
Recently purchased library collection	34.93%	32.17%	34.17%	32.84%	There has been a slight decrease in purchasing new items for the collections in 2023/24.
[Number of library collection items purchased in the last five years / Number of library collection items] x100					
Service Cost					
Cost of library service per population	\$57.04	\$61.36	\$65.03	\$60.96	General cost efficiencies achieved in 2023/24, therefore over all direct library cost are down on the previous year.
[Direct cost of the library service / Population]					
Utilisation					
Loans per head of population	New in 2024	New in 2024	New in 2024	4.00	Loans per head of population are steady and meeting target.
Number of library collection loans / Population					
Participation					
Library membership	New in 2024	New in 2024	New in 2024	21.50%	Library membership is within the expected indicator range.
[Number of registered library members / Population] x100					
Participation					
Library visits per head of population	New in 2024	New in 2024	New in 2024	6.01	Library visits per head of population are high and at the top of the expected range.
Number of library visits / Population					

RETIRED MEASURES The following indicator was retired in the year ending 30 June 2023			
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023
Utilisation			
Physical library collection usage	1.64	1.23	1.39
[Number of library collection item loans / Number of library collection items]			
Note: This measure was replaced by <i>Loans per head of population</i>			
Participation			
Active library borrowers in municipality	13.50%	11.47%	10.80%
[Number of active library borrowers in the last three years / The sum of the population for the last three years] x100			
Note: This measure was replaced by <i>Library Membership</i>			



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Provision of universal access to health services for children from birth to school age and their families including early detection, referral, monitoring and recording of child health and development.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Service Standard					
Infant enrolments in the MCH service	101.02%	101.09%	105.62%	101.01%	Infant enrolments in the Maternal and Child Health Services (MCH) has remained steady, with a small decrease throughout 2024.
[Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100					
Service Cost					
Cost of the MCH service	\$84.92	\$92.36	\$0.03	\$0.03	MCH Service cost reduced as permanent staff have been recruited to vacant position and casual labour costs have reduced.
NOTE: Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses					
Participation					
Participation in the MCH service	85.60%	80.77%	88.56%	81.69%	Participation in MCH Service has slightly decreased throughout the year due to a lengthy staffing vacancy.
[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100					
Participation					
Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children	97.37%	83.33%	95.56%	96.49%	Participation in the MCH Service by Aboriginal children has slightly increased. Staff continue to strengthen partnerships with local Aboriginal services to provide a safe environment for all families to attend.
[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100					
Satisfaction					
Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit	94.90%	105.43%	102.25%	90.91%	Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage has decreased due to some families living on the border of the Shire choosing to access services in a different municipality closer to their home.
[Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100					



ROADS

Provision of a network of sealed local roads under the control of the municipal council to all road users.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Satisfaction of Use					
<i>Sealed local road requests</i>	12.67	36.85	50.00	39.02	Sealed road requests have decreased due to Council's Road Management Plan compliance, with defect timeframe rectification improving on the previous year's statistics.
[Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100					
Condition					
<i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards</i>	99.50%	99.42%	90.72%	2.55%	Council is still waiting on approval for defect rectification from the October-December 2022 floods, which is affecting sealed road condition standard. Council is reviewing deteriorated roads on a case-by-case basis and is prioritising the works to address the worst affected roads as a priority.
[Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i>	\$37.46	\$38.41	\$42.51	\$26.08	Reconstruction works have been closer to the source of road pavement construction material which has realised a large saving in haulage costs for projects and reusing of suitable pavement material that is on-site.
[Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i>	\$4.80	\$4.52	\$4.65	\$5.07	Road making materials such as sealing aggregate, fuel and equipment price increases are contributing factors.
[Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]					
Satisfaction					
<i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i>	54.00	50.00	41.00	41.00	Community satisfaction is unchanged from 2022/23. Council is aware that residents find it difficult to ascertain a Council-maintained road compared to roads maintained by other authorities.
[Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]					



STATUTORY PLANNING

Provision of land use and development assessment services to applicants and the community including advice and determination of applications.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Timeliness					
<i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i>	33.00	64.00	63.00	60.00	The time taken to decide planning applications has remained steady.
[The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]					
Service Standard					
<i>Planning applications decided within required time frames</i>	90.75%	64.75%	66.67%	58.54%	Planning applications decided within the required time frames has decreased due to the complexity of applications received and the increased number of secondary consent applications received.
[(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of statutory planning service</i>	\$1,533.56	\$1,880.64	\$2,553.27	\$3,413.97	Whilst the overall cost of service remains stable, the number of planning applications received during 2023/24 decreased quite significantly compared to the previous year.
[Direct cost of the statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]					
Decision Making					
<i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	Two VCAT decisions were decided where Council's decision was upheld.
[Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100					



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Provision of kerbside waste collection service to the community including garbage and recyclables.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023	Results 2024	Material Variations and Comments
Service Standard					
<i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i>	2.57	2.21	3.48	4.20	Whilst experiencing an increase in reported bins being missed, Gannawarra is still well within the acceptable range. Additionally, the contractor has employed a number of new drivers which may have contributed to the slight increase.
[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service</i>	\$65.58	\$71.06	\$109.25	\$148.23	The cost of kerbside recycling collection has increased significantly due to a 13% contract increase and implementing a more comprehensive data collection process, which has unfortunately impacted the reporting period. These costs represent the implication that transport costs have on small rural communities and access to recycling and waste disposal infrastructure.
[Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]					
Service Cost					
<i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i>	\$42.11	\$70.24	\$51.56	\$86.75	The cost of kerbside recycling collection has increased significantly due to a 13% contract increase and implementing a more comprehensive data collection process, which has unfortunately impacted the reporting period. These costs represent the implication that transport costs have on small rural communities and access to recycling and waste disposal infrastructure.
[Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]					
Waste Diversion					
<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i>	44.88%	39.77%	36.50%	39.91%	The percentage of waste from kerbside collection being diverted from landfill has slightly increased, but continues to remain steady.
[Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100					

RETIRED MEASURES The following indicator was retired in the year ending 30 June 2023			
Service/indicator/measure	Results 2021	Results 2022	Results 2023
Satisfaction			
<i>Kerbside bin collection requests</i>	90.42	107.18	230.84
[Number of kerbside garbage and recycling bin collection requests / Number of kerbside bin collection households] x1000			


Governance and Management Checklist

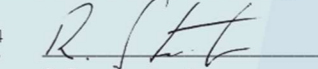
The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council's assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ITEM	ASSESSMENT
1 Community engagement policy (policy under section 55 of the Act outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest)	Adopted in accordance with section 55 of the Act Date of adoption: 17 February 2021
2 Community engagement guidelines (guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community)	Current guidelines in operation Date of adoption: 17 February 2021
3 Financial Plan (plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years)	Adopted in accordance with section 91 of the Act Date of adoption: 20 October 2021
4 Asset Plan (plan under section 92 of the Act setting out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years)	Adopted in accordance with section 92 of the Act Date of adoption: 15 June 2022
5 Revenue and Rating Plan (plan under section 93 of the Act setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges)	Adopted in accordance with section 93 of the Act Date of adoption: 16 June 2021
6 Annual budget (plan under section 94 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken during the budget year and the funding and other resources required)	Adopted in accordance with section 94 of the Act Date of adoption: 28 June 2023
7 Risk policy (policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations)	Policy Date of commencement of current policy: 21 July 2021
8 Fraud policy (policy outlining council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud)	Policy Date of commencement of current policy: 18 May 2022
9 Municipal emergency management planning (Council's participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee [MEMPC])	MEMPC meetings attended by one or more representatives of Council (other than the chairperson) during the financial year Dates of MEMPC meetings attended: 3 August 2023, 2 November 2023, 29 February 2024, 16 May 2024
10 Procurement policy (policy under section 108 of the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to the purchase of goods and services by the Council)	Adopted in accordance with section 108 of the Act Date of adoption: 15 December 2021
11 Business continuity plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster)	Plan Date of operation: 17 October 2022
12 Disaster recovery plan (plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster)	Plan Date of operation: 31 March 2022
13 Complaint policy (Policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints)	Developed in accordance with section 107 of the Act Date of commencement of policy: 15 December 2021

14 Workforce plan (Plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation)	Established in accordance with section 46 of the Act Date of commencement of current plan: 6 December 2021
15 Payment of rates and hardship policy (Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates)	Policy Date of commencement of current policy: 16 March 2022
16 Risk management framework (Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations)	Framework Date of adoption of current framework: 25 April 2022
17 Audit and Risk Committee (Advisory committee of Council under section 53 and section 54 of the Act whose role is to monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures, monitor Council's financial reporting, monitor and provide oversight on internal and external audit functions)	Established in accordance with section 53 of the Act. The Committee met quarterly during the past financial year.
18 Internal Audit (Independent accounting professionals engaged by Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance risk and management controls)	Since January 2021, Council has adopted a more targeted internal audit program focusing on efficiency and business gains. Auditors are appointed on an individual case-by-case scenario based on experience and qualifications in the relevant field of the audit.
19 Performance reporting framework (A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Framework Date of framework: 6 December 2021
20 Council Plan reporting (Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan including the results in relation to the strategic indicators for the first six months of the financial year)	Reports Date of reports: 9 July 2023, 5 February 2024
21 Quarterly budget reports (Quarterly reports presented to Council under section 97 of the Act comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations)	Reports presented to Council in accordance with section 97(1) of the Act Dates presented: 15 November 2023, 21 February 2024, 20 March 2024
22 Risk reports (Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies)	Reports Date of reports: 18 October 2023, 20 December 2023, 20 March 2024
23 Performance reports (Reports of indicators measuring results against financial and non-financial performance including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act)	Included in Council report 18 October 2023
24 Annual Report (Annual report under sections 98, 99 and 100 of the Act to the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements)	Presented at a meeting of the Council in accordance with section 100 of the Act Date of presentation: 18 October 2023
25 Councillor Code of Conduct (Code under section 139 of the Act setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters)	Reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act Date reviewed: 17 February 2021
26 Delegations (documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act)	Reviewed in accordance with section 11(7) of the Act and a register kept in accordance with sections 11(8) and 47(7) of the Act Date of review: 19 April 2023
27 Meeting procedures (Governance Rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees)	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act. Governance Rules adopted: 20 September 2023

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

 16 September 2024
 Geoff Rollinson Chief Executive Officer DATE

 16 September 2024
 Cr Ross Stanton Mayor DATE

Audit And Risk Management

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit and Risk Committee's role is to oversee and monitor the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management, good corporate governance, maintaining an effective system of internal control and risk management and fostering an ethical environment.

Council's five-member Audit and Risk Committee consists of three independent members – John Campbell (July 2023-February 2024), Laura Conti, Francis Crawley and Jarrah O'Shea (May-June 2024) - and two Councillor representatives, being Cr Charlie Gillingham and Cr Garner Smith.

Independent members are generally appointed for a three-year term. The Chair must be an independent member and is elected by the committee.

The Audit and Risk Committee meets at least quarterly, with four meetings held during 2023/24. The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) audit service provider and the Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services are invited to attend all Audit and Risk Committee meetings. Other management representatives attend as required to present reports.

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

INTERNAL AUDIT

Council's internal audit function provides independent and objective assurance to the Audit and Risk Committee that appropriate processes and controls are in place across Council. The Committee establishes a three-year strategic internal audit plan in conjunction with the appointed internal audit provider.

EXTERNAL AUDIT

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). The annual external audit of Council's Financial Statements and Performance Statement for 2023/24 was conducted by the VAGO appointed audit service provider, RSD Audit.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Council officers continue to encourage and provide support for proactive and embedded risk management throughout the organisation.

During 2023/24, Council's Audit and Risk Committee received risk management reports under its Risk Management framework (Council Opportunity and Risk Evaluator – CORE) and in accordance with the Committee's annual workplan.

The Business Continuity Plan was reviewed and endorsed by the Committee during 2023/2024 and subsequent testing of the plan was undertaken by relevant officers.

Statutory Information

The following information is provided in accordance with legislative and other requirements applying to Council.

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

In accordance with regulation 12 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*, the following are prescribed documents that are available for public inspection or copies of the documents can be obtained for the purposes of section 222 of the Act at 47 Victoria Street, Kerang:

- A document containing details of overseas or interstate travel (other than interstate travel by land for less than three days) undertaken in an official capacity by councillor or any member of council staff in the previous 12 months.
- Minutes of ordinary and special meetings held in the previous 12 months which are kept under section 93 of the Act, other than those agendas and minutes

relating to a part of a meeting which was closed to members of the public under section 89 of the Act and are confidential information within the meaning of section 77(2) of the Act.

- A register of delegations kept under sections 87(1) and 98(4) of the Act, including the date on which the last review took place under sections 86(6) and 98(6), respectively, of the Act.
- A document containing details of all leases involving land which were entered into by the council as lessor, including the lessee and the terms and the value of the lease.
- A register maintained under section 224(1A) of the Act of authorised officers appointed under that section.
- A list of donations and grants made by the council in the previous 12 months, including the names of persons who, or bodies which, have received a donation or grant and the amount of each donation or grant.

BEST VALUE

Council is committed to the principles of the Business Excellence Framework, which is an integrated leadership and management system that describes the elements essential to sustainable organisational excellence.

The objective of Business Excellence is to use quality management principles and tools in business management with the goal of improving performance based on customer focus, stakeholder value and process management. Council has integrated these principles into its everyday organisational environment.

Council adopted the *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan* to define the goals of the organisation over a four-year period as required by the *Local Government Act 2020*. The *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan* contains three goals, each featuring strategic priorities and success measures:

- Liveability
- Growth
- Sustainability

Council progressively monitors the provision of best practice service against success indicators using reports provided

by the Executive Leadership Team. Shortfalls against these indicators can then be seen as areas for improvement.

CARERS RECOGNITION

In accordance with the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*, Council is required to report annually on its care measurement obligations under Section 11 of that Act. Council provided services in accordance with the *Carers Recognition Act 2012* from 1 July until 31 October 2023.

Council has taken all practicable measures to comply with its responsibilities outlined in the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*. Council has promoted the principles of that Act to people in care relationships who receive Council services, to people in care relationships, and to the wider community by:

- Facilitating a monthly Carers Group;
- Recognising National Carers Week;
- Providing respite services to carers;
- Distributing information through Council services and community newsletters; and
- Working in partnership with other organisations and community groups.

CONTRACTS

Council invited tenders or sought Expressions of Interest under its *Procurement Policy* for the following tenders during 2023/24:

G05-2023	Flood Recovery Works Package 4 and 5	\$ 1,046,808
G06-2023	Flood Recovery Works Package 6 and 7	\$ 86,540
G07-2023	Flood Recovery Works Package 8 and 9	\$ 307,180
G08-2023	Flood Recovery Works Package 10, 11 and 12	\$ 986,884
G09-2023	Flood Recovery Works Priority Package	\$ 681,910
G10-2023	External Project Management Services – Landfill Specialist & Cap Construction	\$ 64,930
G11-2023	The Glasshouse @ Gannawarra	\$ 2,774,720
G13-2023	GIS System Upgrade at Gannawarra Shire Council	\$ 54,200
G01-2024	Design and Construct for Apex, Kervins and McLean Roads Bridge Replacements	\$ 1,122,470
G03-2024	Kerang & Cohuna Swimming Pool Project Urban Design	To be awarded in 2024/25
G04-2024	Project Management and Technical Services - Panel	Schedule of Rates
G05-2024	Contract Municipal Building Surveyor	Schedule of Rates
G06-2024	Koondrook Local Development Strategy	To be awarded in 2024/25
G07-2024	Provision of Internal Audit Services	To be awarded in 2024/25
G08-2024	Road Reseal Program	To be awarded in 2024/25
LGV2-64	Large Market Electricity Supply	Schedule of Rates
LGV2-64	Small Market Electricity Supply	Schedule of Rates
LGV2-64	Unmetered Electricity Supply	Schedule of Rates
G09-2024	Winning and Stockpiling Sandstone	To be awarded in 2024/25
G10-2024	Supply of Road Making Materials	To be awarded in 2024/25

Council did not enter any other contracts valued at \$100,000 or more for goods or services without engaging in a competitive process.

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

In accordance with section 38(3) of the Disability Act 2006, as Council has prepared a Disability Action Plan it must report on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan in its annual report.

During 2023/24, Council continued enacting its *Social Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023*, which is Council’s commitment to reducing barriers for groups most at risk of being excluded from the community. This includes those with disability, who are culturally or linguistically diverse, who are Indigenous, who identify as LGBTIQ+, young people, older people and community members facing socio-economic disadvantage.

The strategy was developed with input from the community, service providers and Council staff. It incorporates an implementation plan with actions to be completed across the life of the strategy.

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

In accordance with Section 68a of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council is required to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan at four yearly intervals and evaluate its implementation in the annual report.

Council adopted the *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2025* in October 2022, with a revised version of the plan adopted in March 2024.

Highlights achieved during 2023/24 include:

- Continued rehoming of surrendered or domestic animals the community could no longer care for.
- Funding was received to undertake a desexing program in 2023, resulting in 30 cats and 13 dogs being desexed.

FOOD ACT MINISTERIAL DIRECTIONS

In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

No such Ministerial Directions were received by Council during 2023/24.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

In accordance with section 7(4AA)(a) and 7(4AA)(b) of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, Council is required to publish certain statements in their annual report or separately such as on its website, concerning its functions and information available.

Council has chosen to publish the statements separately however provides the following summary of the application and operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Requests for access to information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* should be lodged on the FOI application form and sent to the Freedom of Information Officer, Gannawarra Shire Council, PO Box 287, Kerang VIC 3579. All requests:

- Should be in writing.
- Should identify as clearly as possible which document is being requested.
- Should be accompanied by the appropriate application fee (the fee may be waived in certain circumstances).

Access charges may also apply once documents have been processed and a decision on access is made (e.g. photocopying and search and retrieval charges).

Further information can be found at www.foi.vic.gov.au and at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/foi

Whilst several requests for documents were received, one valid Freedom of Information request was received during 2023/24.

PROTECTED DISCLOSURE PROCEDURES

In accordance with Section 69 of the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012*, a Council must include in its Annual Report information about how to access the procedures established by the Council under Part 9 of that Act. It is also required to provide certain information about the number and types of protected disclosure complaints investigated during the financial year.

The *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* aims to ensure openness and accountability in government by encouraging people to disclose improper conduct within the public sector and provide protection for people who make disclosures. Procedures on how to make a disclosure are outlined in *Policy No. 107 - Public Interest Disclosure*, which is publicly available on Council’s website.

During 2023/24, no disclosures were notified to Council officers appointed to receive disclosures, or to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC).

ROAD MANAGEMENT ACT MINISTERIAL DIRECTION

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

No Ministerial Directions were received by Council during 2023/24.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

In accordance with Section 46GM and 46QD of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, a Council that is a collecting or development agency must prepare and give a report to the Minister for Planning on infrastructure and development contributions including levies and works in kind. The report must be published in a Council’s Annual Report.

No infrastructure and development contributions were received by Council in 2023/24.



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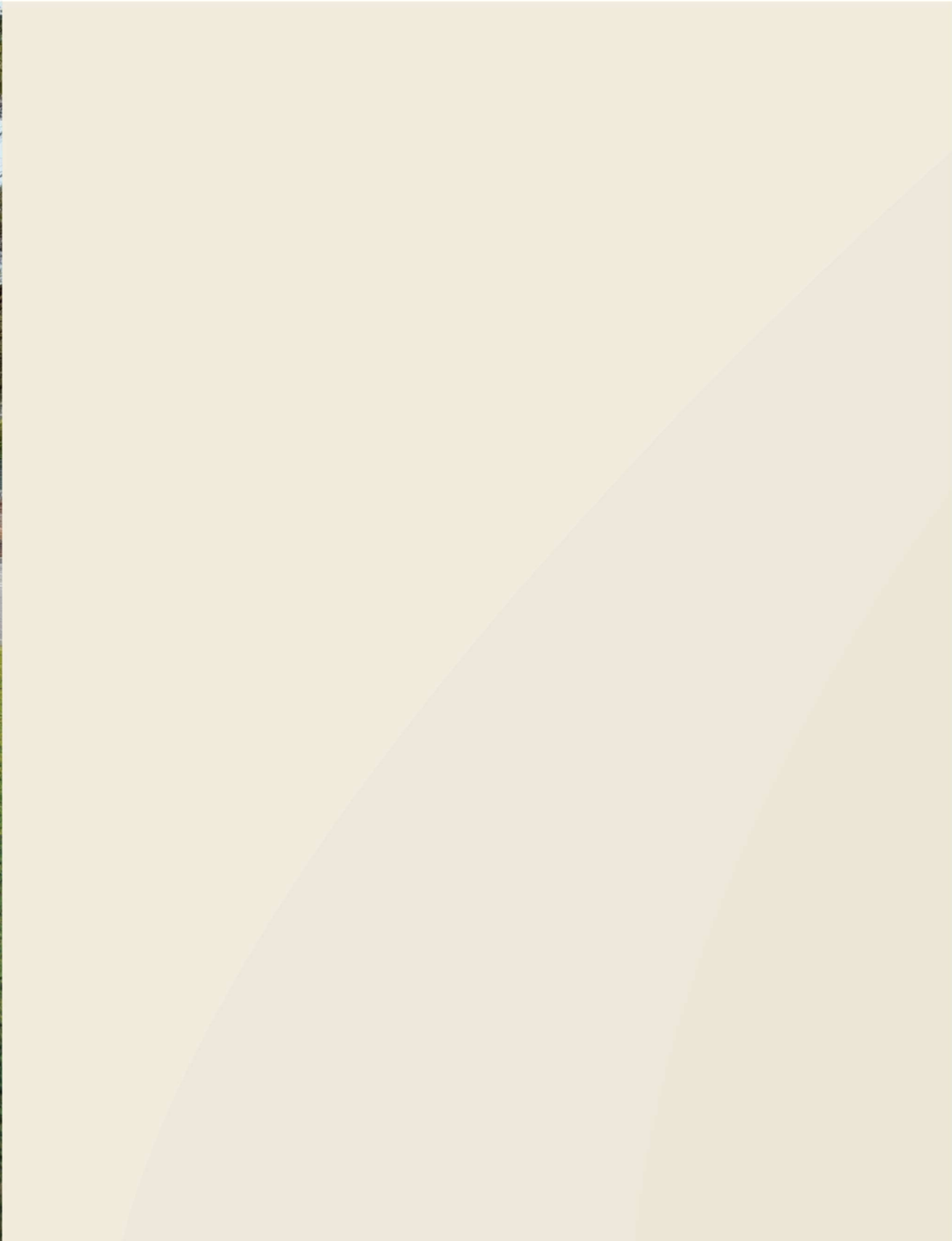
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Glossary

ACT – A decree proclaiming the law, passed by the legislature and given royal assent by the Crown.

ACTION PLAN – A document that lists the actions and steps needed to achieve a goal and/or objective.

ADVOCACY – Lobbying for the needs of the community through reasoned argument to the relevant authorities.

ASSET – A physical component of a facility that has a value, enables a service to be provided and has an economic life greater than 12 months. Roads, halls and footpaths are assets.

ASSET MANAGEMENT – The processes by which Council collects and maintains a comprehensive database of asset conditions and uses this information to prioritise works funding and maintain existing assets at desired condition levels.

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK – A framework or foundation used to create an environment for continuous improvement that leads to sustainable organisational success.

CAPITAL WORKS – Work undertaken to either renew, upgrade, or construct assets owned by the Gannawarra community. Renewal capital works extend the functional use of an existing asset by complete or part refurbishment or replacement. These works are usually carried out on an asset which is deteriorating to an unacceptable service level. Upgrade capital works intentionally improve the level of service provided by an existing asset, due to performance requirements having increased beyond current capacity.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY – A model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible.

CODES OF CONDUCT – Statements of how the Councillors and/or staff will interact and work with colleagues and the community.

COMMUNITY PLAN – Plan developed by a community that outlines the community's priorities.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SURVEY – An independent annual survey of community satisfaction, jointly sponsored by Local Government Victoria and local governments.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT – Process of ensuring that review and improvement practises are built into operational activities.

DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION – An expense which recognises the value of a fixed asset as it is used up over time.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS – Relates to wages and salaries, casual staff payments, annual leave, long service leave, superannuation, fringe benefits tax, Work Cover and redundancy payments.

EQUITY – Residual interest in the assets of Council after the deduction of its liabilities, which is made up of accumulated surplus and reserves. Total equity is also equal to net assets.

EXPENSE – An outgoing payment made by Council.

GOVERNANCE – How Council operates as a decision-making body, its relationship with the administration, and the ways that Council engages with its community in this process.

GROWING GANNAWARRA – 2021–2025 COUNCIL PLAN – Plan written to guide Council's activities for a four-year period. Details the strategic directions and objectives for the municipality, and underpins all the decision making processes, policies and procedures of Council.

INCOME – An incoming payment made to Council.

INFRASTRUCTURE – Physical assets required to enable the community to be connected and operational. This includes roads, drains, footpaths and public open spaces, as well as public facilities and buildings.

LIABILITIES – Future sacrifices of economic benefits that Council is presently obliged to make to other entities as a result of past transactions or other past events.

POLICY – A set of general guidelines that outlines Council's plan for addressing certain matters.

REVENUE – The amount of money that Council actually receives from its activities, mainly from rates, grants and services provided to customers and ratepayers.

RISK MANAGEMENT – Discipline for developing appropriate procedures to reduce the possibility of adverse effects from future events.

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN/ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN – The plan developed to establish a management system for the public road functions that are the responsibility of the Council. The management system is based on policy and operational objectives and at the same time recognises resource limitations in undertaking the necessary levels of service and performance standards outlined in the plan.

STRATEGY – A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim.

WARDS – The geographical area of Gannawarra Shire is broken into four electoral divisions named wards. Each ward has elected representatives.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics	KM	Kilometres
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator	KMP	Key Management Personnel
AAS	Australian Accounting Standard	LGA	Local Government Area
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, Asexual. The '+' represents minority gender identities and sexualities not explicitly included in the term LGBTIQ
CBD	Central Business District	LGPRF	Local Government Performance Reporting Framework
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	LGPRO	Local Government Professionals
CORE	Council Opportunity and Risk Evaluator	LGV	Local Government Victoria
CPA	Certified Practising Accountant	MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
CPI	Consumer Price Index	MCH	Maternal and Child Health
CR	Councillor	MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
CVGA	Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance	MFMPC	Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	MPHWP	Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
FAG	Federal Assistance Grant	MRGC	Murray River Group of Councils
FBT	Fringe Benefits Tax	MSS	Municipal Strategic Statement
FOGO	Food Organics, Garden Organics	NDCH	Northern District Community Health
FTE	Full Time Equivalent	NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
GLAM	Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting	OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
GST	Goods and Services Tax	PiLoR	Payment in Lieu of Rates
HA	Hectares	RSL	Returned and Services League
HR	Human Resources	SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
HSC	High School Certificate	VAGO	Victorian Auditor-General's Office
IBAC	Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission	VBI	Vested Benefit Index
IDAHOBIT	International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex discrimination and Transphobia		
IPAA	Institute of Public Administration Australia		
IT	Information Technology		

BACK PAGE: Outdoor dining space at Garden Park, Cohuna



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7.2 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING - 10 SEPTEMBER, 2024**Author:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate Services**Authoriser:** Geoff Rollinson, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the summary of the discussions of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 10 September 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) met on 10 September 2024. The agenda included reports related to financial, governance, compliance, and risk management matters including the 2024 annual financial and performance statements. The ARC meeting summary ensures compliance with Section 54 (4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the ARC Charter.

PURPOSE

This report outlines the actions of the ARC to meet its responsibilities to ensure compliance with Council policies, monitor financial performance, monitor risk and fraud control, and overview the audit functions. This report complies with Section 54 (4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* to review the ARC's performance against the Charter. This includes reporting on audit and risk issues as required by Section 54 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

DISCUSSION

The details of the 10 September 2024 ARC Meeting are summarised below:

Member attendees:

Frank Crawley – Independent Member - Chair

Laura Conti - Independent Member

Jarrah O'Shea – Independent Member

Cr Charlie Gillingham – Councillor Representative

Cr Garner Smith – Councillor Representative

Also in attendance:

Cr Ross Stanton – Mayor

Cr Keith Link

Geoff Rollinson – Chief Executive Officer

Amanda Wilson – Director Corporate Services

Rebecca Hollingworth – Acting Chief Financial Officer

Logan Tuohey – Financial Accountant

Dylan Taylor – Governance Officer

Brad Ead – AFS & Associates

Josh Porker – RSD Audit

Shivam Goel – RSD Audit

Apologies:

Nil

The following items were considered by the ARC at the meeting:

	Report	Resolution
5.1	Minutes of previous meeting	The ARC adopted the Minutes of the meeting held 7 May 2024 and noted that a summary of the meeting was presented to the May 2024 Council meeting.
5.2	Meeting held with external auditors without officer's present	The ARC confirmed the occurrence of the meeting held with external auditors without officers present.
5.3	Audit Closing Report and Final Management Letter	Following the completion of the 2023/2024 financial year audit, VAGO appointed Auditors RSD Audit, presented and discussed the Closing Report and Final Management Letter. The ARC received and noted both reports.
5.4	2024 Annual Financial Statements	The 2024 Financial Statements and Performance Statement were presented to ARC. The statements, subject to final audit, present the financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2024. The ARC resolved to recommend that Council approve the 'in principle' 2024 Financial Statements and 2024 Performance Statement.
5.5	Internal Audit Program Status Update	The ARC endorsed the Risk Assessment and Strategic Internal Audit Program Development as presented in by Council's Internal Auditors.
5.6	Recent Reports and Publications – Local Government	The ARC received and noted the report presented by Council's Internal Auditors containing reports and publications by regulatory and integrity agencies.
5.7	Proposed Audit and Risk Committee Meeting dates for 2025	The ARC set four dates for the 2025 calendar year for meetings to be held in February, May, September and November.
5.8	CEO Credit Card Expenditure and Work-Related Reimbursements	The ARC received and noted a report on CEO work related reimbursement and credit card expenditure for the 1 April – 30 June 2024 quarter.
5.9	Councillor Expenditure Report	That ARC receives and note the Councillor Expenditure Report which included conference, training, travel and car milage expenses for the for the 1 April to 30 June 2024 quarter.
5.10	Outstanding Internal Audit Actions Update	The ARC noted the progress by management on open audit actions and the detail on the progression of actions.

5.11	Family Day Care Audit	The ARC noted the outcome of the Audit completed by the Australian Government Department of Education on Council's administration of the Child Care Subsidy within the Family Day Care Service.
5.12	Risk Management Report	The ARC received and noted the Risk Management Report for period 1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024 which examined risk management processes within the organisation.
5.13	Protective Data Security Plan	The ARC reviewed and noted the Gannawarra Shire council Protective Data Security Plan and Mystic Park Cemetery Trust Protective Data Security Plan. The PDSP aim is to ensure that information assets are adequately safeguarded.

RELEVANT LAW

Section 53 and 54 *Local Government Act 2020*.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

The ARC was established by Council at its meeting on 19 August 2020.

OPTIONS

There is no decision associated with this report, it is for noting in accordance with the reporting requirements of Section 54 (4) and (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The *Local Government Act 2020* gives the ARC a broader focus and a stronger emphasis on key responsibility areas in financial and performance reporting, internal control environment (ICE), risk management, fraud prevention, internal audit, external audit, and compliance management risks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The three independent members on the ARC ensure that there is involvement by key community members.

INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The self-assessment survey conducted by the ARC involves reviewing current practices to analyse whether there is a better way of doing things, which reflects a continuous improvement approach.

COLLABORATION

Reports from various agencies were included in the agenda.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The ARC is operating within the adopted budget.

REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL PLANS AND POLICIES

Not applicable.

COUNCIL PLANS AND POLICIES

A review of Council policies is a key component of the Internal Control Environment Plan.

TRANSPARENCY OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

This report will be considered in an open Council meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officer preparing this report declares that they have no conflict of interest in regard to this matter.

8 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

9 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

10 QUESTION TIME

Question Time provides an opportunity for members of the public to submit questions, in advance, to gain a response at the Council meeting.

QUESTIONS FROM THE GALLERY

Completed Question Time forms must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer via email council@gsc.vic.gov.au no later than 5:00pm on the day prior to the Council meeting.

A maximum number of two questions may be submitted in writing by any one person.

Questions will be read by the author, Mayor or Chief Executive Officer.

The Mayor or Chief Executive Officer may indicate that they require further time to research an answer. In this case, an answer will be provided in writing generally within ten (10) business days.

Questions will be answered at the meeting, or later in writing, unless the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer has determined that the relevant question seeks confidential information defined in Section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020* such as:

- Council business information
- security information
- land use planning information
- law enforcement information
- legal privileged information
- personal information
- private commercial information
- confidential meeting information
- internal arbitration information
- Councillor Conduct Panel confidential information
- an issue outside the Gannawarra Shire Council core business

or if the question is:

- defamatory, indecent, abusive or objectionable in language or substance
- repetitive of a question already answered (whether at the same or an earlier meeting)
- asked to embarrass a Councillor or Council officer.

No debate or discussion of questions or answers shall be permitted and all questions and answers shall be as brief as possible.

11 DELEGATES REPORTS

11.1 DELEGATES REPORTS

Author: Jodie Basile, Executive Assistant to CEO

Authoriser: Geoff Rollinson, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has memberships with peak Local Government associations, local and regional forums, along with statutory committees. Some memberships require that a Councillor be appointed to act as a delegates to formally represent Council, typically in a voting capacity.

This Agenda item provides an opportunity for Council appointed delegates to present a verbal update on any pertinent matters arising from Council's membership with the following associations.

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES 2024	
COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC)	Cr Ross Stanton, Mayor
Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils	Cr Ross Stanton, Mayor
Community Halls Community Asset Committee	Cr Kelvin Burt
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Travis Collier
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)	Cr Keith Link
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Keith Link
Transport Committee Role including Rail Freight Alliance and Road Transport	Cr Keith Link
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	Cr Jane Ogden
Audit and Risk Committee (x 2)	Cr Charlie Gillingham Cr Garner Smith
Rural Councils Victoria	Cr Garner Smith
Timber Towns Victoria	Cr Garner Smith

12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Nil