



HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday 26 October 2021

Virtual Meeting
via Video Conference

6:00 PM

A LIVE STREAM OF THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED
VIA [COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

Confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 23 November 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Drylie".

Chair, Cr Tim Drylie, Mayor

MINUTES

Tuesday 26 October 2021

Virtual Meeting

via Video Conference

Commencing at 6:00 PM

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BRADLEY THOMAS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tuesday 26 October 2021

CONDUCTING COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUALLY

Council continues to be guided by government directives and wants to do the right thing for the health of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with these directives, the public are unable to attend this meeting in person. This meeting is being held virtually to protect the health and wellbeing of Councillors, Council Officers, and the community.

In the spirit of open, transparent and accountable governance, this Special Council meeting will be live-streamed on Council's Facebook page. The meeting will also be recorded and made available on Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Pursuant to the Ministerial Guidelines, should technology problems be encountered and we are unable to broadcast this meeting, the meeting will be adjourned until resolution or postponed.

Council's Special meeting will be conducted tonight in accordance with:

- The Local Government Act 2020
- The COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020
- The Minister's Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meetings
- Council's Governance Rules; and
- The Hepburn Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct.

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

2 OPENING OF MEETING

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Tessa Halliday, Cr Tim Drylie

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr Bradley Thomas - Chief Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Burgess - Director Organisational Services, Mr Bruce Lucas - Director Infrastructure and Delivery, Ms Leigh McCallum - Director Community and Development, Mr Chris Whyte – Manager Information and Communication Technology, Ms Krysten Forte - Manager People and Governance

The meeting opened at 6.03pm.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

“WE THE COUNCILLORS OF HEPBURN SHIRE
DECLARE THAT WE WILL UNDERTAKE ON EVERY OCCASION
TO CARRY OUT OUR DUTIES IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY
AND THAT OUR CONDUCT SHALL MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS OF THE CODE OF
GOOD GOVERNANCE
SO THAT WE MAY FAITHFULLY REPRESENT AND UPHOLD THE TRUST PLACED IN THIS
COUNCIL BY THE PEOPLE OF HEPBURN SHIRE”

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
Nil.

5 OFFICER REPORTS

5.1 ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNITY VISION 2021-2031 AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 INCLUDING THE MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as Director Organisational Services, I Andrew Burgess have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Community Vision 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan [5.1.1 - 37 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the proposed Hepburn Shire 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan (the Plan) incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) for adoption.

As part of Council's transition to the *Local Government Act 2020*, there is a requirement for Council to prepare and adopt a 10 year Community Vision and 4 year Council Plan.

The Community Vision 2021-2031 is a statement that captures the aspirations of the community for the next 10 years. It is shaped by five key Focus Areas that are critical to reaching the goals set out in the Community Vision.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 is Council's key strategic document. It describes the Council and community's vision for the future, how Council will strive towards that vision during its 4-year term, where it will focus its efforts, and how it will measure progress.

Council, for the first time has chosen to integrate our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan into the Council Plan recognising the importance of the health and wellbeing of our citizens, and that health and wellbeing impacts every area of Council's operations.

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) specifies that the Community Vision, Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan must be adopted by 31 October 2021.

The Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan was heavily informed by the Hepburn Together community engagement project which encompassed four broad stages:

Stage 1. Development of the Community Engagement Policy

Stage 2. Broad Engagement

Stage 3. Deliberative Engagement

Stage 4. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Engagement

Department of Health Exemption - MPHWP

The Department of Health is satisfied that the Hepburn Shire Council Draft Community Vision, Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, adequately address the matters specified in Section 26(2) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and has approved an exemption to have the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan incorporated into the Council Plan.

In approving Council's request for exemption Deputy Secretary Public Health, Zoe Wainer commended Council on pursuing the integration of public health and wellbeing goals across Council.

Finalised Draft

The draft 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan was made publicly available and open to submissions from 28 July 2021 to 27 August 2021.

During the Public Exhibition period Council received 40 submissions representing 53 individual submitters. A summary of proposed changes is contained within the Key Issues section of this report. All submitters will be provided with a written response to their submissions.

Ideas Bank

All feedback received during the public exhibition period has been included in an 'Ideas Bank. The Ideas Bank will be linked to a community engagement toolkit along with the detailed Engagement Summary from the Hepburn Together project. These will be important resources for Council Officers going forward.

Council has had the opportunity to consider the submissions and note some changes to the draft Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health Plan be included in the final plan.

Adopting the proposed changes outlined provides improvements to the Plan content whilst maintaining the intent and direction of the draft plan that was placed on public exhibition.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Acknowledges the community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan;*
- 2. Notes the feedback received on the 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan (the Plan) incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).*

3. *Note changes made to the draft 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan (the Plan) incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).*
4. *Provides a written response to all those community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031*
5. *Adopt and approve the Community Vision 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Acknowledges the community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan;*
2. *Notes the feedback received on the 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan (the Plan) incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).*
3. *Note changes made to the draft 2021-2031 Community Vision and 2021-2025 Council Plan (the Plan) incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).*
4. *Provides a written response to all those community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031*
5. *Adopt and approve the Community Vision 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.*

Moved: Cr Tim Drylie

Seconded: Cr Tessa Halliday

Carried

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides a Council must prepare and adopt a Council Plan for a period of at least the next 4 financial years after a general election in accordance with its deliberative engagement principles.

Section 88 of the Act requires that Council maintain a Community Vision that describes the community's aspirations over a minimum 10-year outlook. The Vision

must be developed with the community, using deliberative engagement practices and both the Plan and the Vision must be adopted by 31 October 2021.

The Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan was heavily informed by the Hepburn Together community engagement project which encompassed four broad stages:

Stage 1. Development of the Community Engagement Policy

The purpose of the policy was to outline Council's commitment to community engagement and to identify the processes essential to encourage best practice is followed when undertaking community engagements.

Stage 2. Broad Engagement

The purpose of this engagement stage was to gather a wide range of feedback from the community so that it could inform the later deliberative engagement stage and development of the Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

Stage 3. Deliberative Engagement

This engagement stage was designed to harness the community's creativity and expertise to work collaboratively and unearth community priorities and solutions integral to the development of the Community Vision and Council Plan.

Stage 4. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Engagement

This engagement was conducted to inform the development of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan has been developed in partnership with Central Highlands Rural Health and identifies the health priorities of the municipality for the next 4 years.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan Exemption:

In August 2021 Council submitted a request for exemption under Section 27 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, relating to the preparation of a standalone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The Department of Health, Regional Operations West reviewed the draft Plan and sought information from Council officers on the Councils' planning process and practices for including public health and wellbeing matters in the Council Plan. This information was considered against the requirements of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and the associated planning guides provided to councils.

The Department of Health advises that it is satisfied that the Hepburn Shire Council Draft Community Vision, Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, adequately address the matters specified in Section 26(2) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and has approved the exemption.

KEY ISSUES

Council received 40 submissions representing 53 individual submitters.

Council has had the opportunity to consider the submissions and note some changes to the draft plan to be included into the final plan.

The proposed changes to the Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan in response to community feedback are summarised as follows:

- **Acknowledgement of Country:** The inclusion of our neighbouring Traditional Owners the Wurundjeri to our South East, and the Wadawurrung to our South West pays respect to all Traditional Owners whose lands exist within the Hepburn Shire.
- **Community Vision:** Wording has been added to reflect that we are a rural community living and working on the land of the Traditional Owners, the Dja Dja Wurrung. This improved wording connects the Community Vision to the identity and uniqueness of our Shire.
- **Traditional Owners:** Our relationship with the Traditional Owners is of vital importance to Council. Strategies have been added to Focus Areas 1, 3 and 4 that align with the value of this relationship. Inclusion of key DJAARA documents, plans and strategies demonstrate Council's commitment to work together with DJAARA on shared priorities.
- **Strategic Indicators:** Strategic Indicators have been reviewed and improved across all Focus Areas. These have been strengthened by the inclusion of specific targets. The reviewed Indicators are measurable and able to be reported on to the community.
- **Focus Area 1 - A resilient, sustainable and protected environment:** In keeping with the importance placed by our community on protecting the environment the word 'protect' has been added to Focus Area 1. A Priority Statement and strategy has been included. This Priority Statement was reinstated as recommended by the Hepburn Together Community Panel. Some strategies have been recategorized and minor changes made to wording for clarity and readability. Strategic Indicators have been improved.
- **Focus Area 2 – A healthy, supported and empowered community:** Minor wording changes have been made to Priority Statements and Strategies that clarify Council's intention and responsibility strategies. Strategic Indicators have been improved.
- **Focus Area 3 – Embracing our past and planning for the future:** The inclusion of an additional Strategy and the Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan, strengthening our commitment to work more closely with Dja Dja Wurrung. Wording changes have been made aligned with these additions. Priority Statement 3.2 has been edited in line with Council's commitment to protecting the character of our towns and rural settings. A Strategy has been edited

acknowledging the connection between arts and culture and community wellbeing. Strategic Indicators have been improved.

- **Focus Area 4 -Diverse economy & opportunities:** Additional Priority Statement acknowledging the importance of the circular economy. A new strategy has been included to support this commitment. Minor edits to original Priority Statement strengthen their meaning and improve readability. Strategic Indicators have been improved.
- **Focus Area 5 – A dynamic and responsive Council:** Strategies related to the development of strategies, policies and plans edited to indicate that all strategies will be implemented once developed. Strategic Indicators have been improved.
- **Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan:** Wording has been edited in Strategies to improve readability, acknowledge and strengthen the importance of partnerships and elevate the importance of diversity. Wording has been added to that recognises the community impact of the Covid pandemic and the recent storm event in the Shire. A text box has been added elevating Council’s CoRE membership.

In addition to these five Focus Areas, the Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan contains 23 Priority Statements, 22 Strategic Indicators, and 116 Strategies.

The below table shows how these are distributed across each Focus Area.

Focus Area	Priority Statements	Strategies	Our Strategic Indicators
1. A resilient, sustainable and protected environment	5	19	5
2. A healthy, supported and empowered community	5	30	5
3. Embracing our past and planning for the future	3	19	4
4. Diverse economy and opportunities	4	19	3
5. A dynamic and responsive Council	6	29	5

Each Focus Area is detailed through:

- **Priority Statements** are the goals that outline the aspirations Council wants to achieve relating to each Focus Area
- **Strategic Indicators** identifying how Council will measure and monitor progress against the Priority Statements and Strategies

- **Legislation, Plans and Strategies** provides additional reference documents that support the Priority Statements, Strategic Indicators and Strategies within the Focus Area
- **Strategies** identifying what actions, plans, or strategies Council will undertake to achieve the Priority Statements
- **Council's role** describes Council's responsibility to either deliver, facilitate, and form partnerships and collaborate.

'Ideas Bank'

Some of the feedback from the community was unable to be included in the Council Plan. This feedback included broad statements, commentary on Council's activities and services, localised issues and/or was seeking a level of detail more consistent with specific Strategies, Policies or Plans.

Council is committed to working with our community on key policies and plans in accordance with the Community Engagement Policy adopted March 2021. With this in mind **all feedback** received during the public exhibition period has been included in an 'Ideas Bank. The Ideas Bank will be linked to a community engagement toolkit along with the detailed Engagement Summary from the Hepburn Together project. These will be important resources for Council Officers going forward.

The most mentioned themes were Planning, Aquatics provision, environmental protection, climate change, tree management, inclusion of Traditional Owners, waste management, footpath and cycling paths, and affordable housing. We received additional in-depth feedback relating to the structure, wording and inclusions within the Plan.

Adopting the proposed changes above provides improvements to the Plan content whilst maintaining the intent and direction of the draft plan that was placed on public exhibition.

The final draft is now complete and is presented to Council for adoption.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Within the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to adopt a Council Plan, prior to or on 31 October 2021.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan identifies. A resilient, sustainable and protected environment is a key Focus Area of this 4 year plan. Several priority statements and strategies referenced in the Plan

directly relate to mitigating climate change and securing the health and wellbeing of our community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications of the Community Vision and Council Plan including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan have been considered as part of the 2021/2022 budget and Annual Plan. Implications associated with the 10-year Vision and 4 year Council Plan implications have been further considered by Council as part of the development of 10-year Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Plan including the development and adoption of a Workforce Plan, and Revenue and Rating Plan.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Covid restrictions limited our ability to conduct face to face community engagement during the public exhibition period. Access to Council's service centres and hubs was also limited. Council undertook various engagement approaches to reach all community members, including those with limited digital access.

Receiving, analysing, and incorporating this feedback as appropriate in the final Community Vision and Council Plan incorporating the MPHWP has ensured that the final Plan reflects our community's vision, goals, aspirations, and priorities.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement Policy

Council undertook an extensive community engagement program to seek the community's input into the development of the Community Engagement Policy, Community Vision and Council Plan. Refer overview and results outlined previously in the report.

Engagement Participation Summary

Promotion to engage for all phases include:

- 6,868 text messages sent to ratepayers.
- 6,041 emails sent to individuals and community groups.
- 1,000 plus fliers were distributed at events, pop-ups, and workshops.
- 36 Social Media posts during the period between 22 March to 8 April reaching 22,560 views and generating 876 engagements.

Public Exhibition Participation Summary

- Inclusion of Community Vision and Council Plan information in various Council communications including Hepburn Life (Council's e-newsletter) and rates notices.
- Four local community newspapers and newsletters including Daylesford, Trentham, Clunes and Creswick and surrounding areas.
- 3,752 text messages sent to ratepayers generating 531 engagements.

- 310 emails sent to community members who have registered interest.
- 24 social media during the period between 28 July to 27 August reaching 15,449 views and generating 287 engagements.

Participate Hepburn Online Engagement Summary

Between 12 January 2021 and 27 August 2021, the key visitation metrics for Council's online engagement platform where Hepburn Together was featured as the major project is as follows:

- 3,523 unique public users representing 21.8 percent of Hepburn Shire's population
- Hepburn Shire residents viewed Participate Hepburn 9,060 times to view community engagement projects including Hepburn Together.



Community Vision

2021 - 2031

Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Plan

2021-2025 including Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

Community

VISION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

The Community Vision is a result of extensive engagement activities undertaken with a broad cross-section of our community during the Hepburn Together project. The engagement activities brought the voice of the community to Council. Our community's goals, aspirations and priorities have been captured and used to develop the Community Vision and help shape the long-term direction of the Shire.



Vision

STATEMENT

Hepburn Shire - an inclusive rural community located in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are valued, partnerships are fostered, environment is protected, diversity supported, and innovation embraced.



A resilient, sustainable and protected environment

A responsive, adaptive, and resilient community that addresses changes to our climate and biodiversity.



A healthy supported, and empowered community

A community that values connection, supports diversity, health, and wellbeing, and is inclusive of all people and their needs.



Embracing our past and planning for the future

We acknowledge and empower the Traditional Owners and other cultures of our area to protect our historical roots while planning for future generations.



Diverse economy and opportunities

Our community is enhanced by a diverse and resilient economy that supports local aspirations through opportunity.



A dynamic and responsive council

Council and the community partner to achieve their aspirations through excellent communication and engagement, the delivery of effective services, strong financial management, and governance.

Community ASPIRATIONS

These aspirations are what the community wants for the Shire over the next ten years. The aspirations helped to guide the development of the Community Vision and Council Plan.

We asked participants to describe the identity of Hepburn Shire community. The 306 answers were analysed and used to create this word cloud. The top 5 words used were: diverse, community, sustainable, inclusive and connected. The following sections are a summary of the community's response to key questions for each Focus Area.



 Focus Areas in the four-year Council Plan A resilient, sustainable and protected environment	
Where we are now?	Respondents of the survey and pop ups were asked what they love about the Hepburn Shire area, what characteristics are important to the identity of the Hepburn Shire and what supports their wellbeing. Recurrent key responses were the natural environment, strong commitments to sustainability and biodiversity, and mitigating the effects of climate change. The environment is also seen as an enabling element of many other key responses including rural character and liveability and agriculture and produce. Environmental sustainability was the top priority identified by respondents to the survey.
Where we want to be in 10 years?	Respondents have priorities, changes and future vision that incorporates a focus on environment with innovative and diverse strategies. The community would like Council to become a leader in sustainability through initiatives, education, and strong partnerships with community as well as with regional and government partners.
How do we get there?	The key response data indicates that people would like Council to focus on actions supporting climate change mitigation, biodiversity, sustainability, weed management, strong waste management and recycling projects, net zero emissions and planning that fosters excellent environmental outcomes.

 Focus Areas in the four-year Council Plan A healthy, supported and empowered community	
Where we are now?	Respondents see the following elements as critical to their wellbeing: community connection, community groups, sport and recreation facilities (including an indoor heated pool), outdoor activities (such as walking and biking) and their connection to nature. The sense of community and access to health services and Centres for creative and education opportunities also assists wellbeing.
Where we want to be in 10 years?	There is a strong focus on harnessing the creativity and expertise of community members and building a strong partnership with Council in order to inform Council decision making. This partnership is seen as a critical factor in building a resilient community that has capacity to participate in its local democracy. Respondents are also seeking a focus on services that support vulnerable people who may experience family violence, mental health issues and other health related issues.
How do we get there?	When asked what focus areas to concentrate on when developing the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, the issues in order of priority were: tackling the effects of climate change on health, increasing active living, improving mental wellbeing, preventing all forms of violence and increasing healthy eating, and excellent sport and recreation facilities that are well maintained and in high usage.

Diverse economy and opportunities



Where we are now?

Survey and pop up participants felt that tourism is the driving force of the local economy, however, a more diverse economy is required to support the community. Residents felt that focus is presently skewed towards promoting and supporting tourism ventures, with not enough focus on local needs. The hospitality industry was identified as a strength of the economy. Participants in the engagement also identified affordable housing as a key issue that effects the ability for people to live, work and play in the local area. Lack of affordable housing is also impacting local business as it is increasingly difficult for people to find local staff.

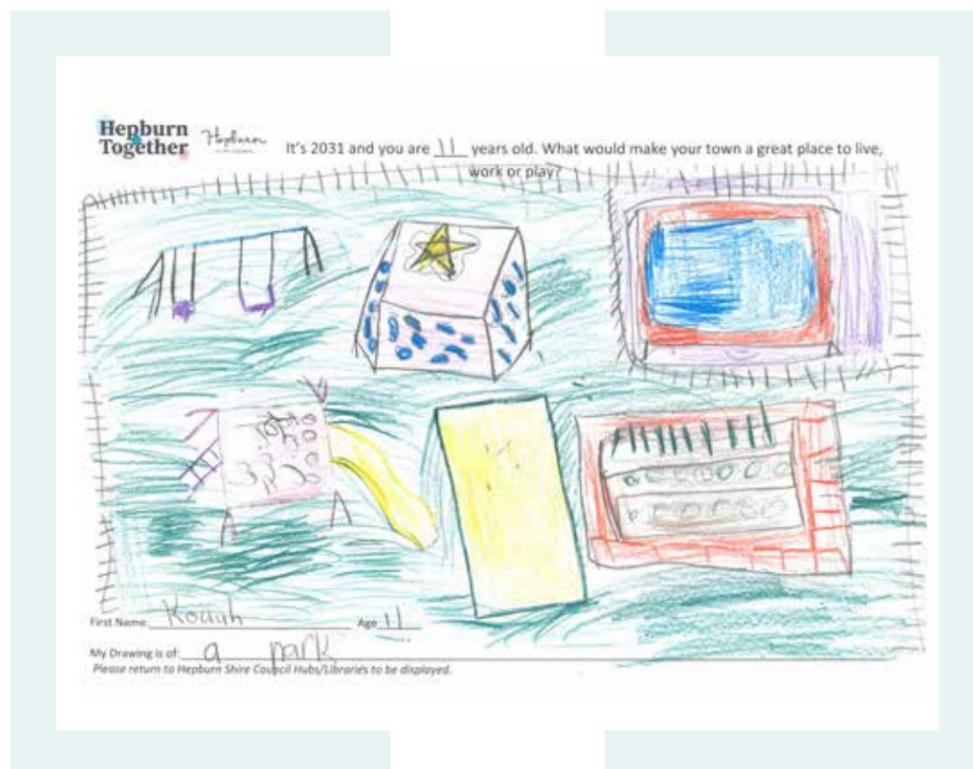
Where we want to be in 10 years?

Participants in the engagement told us that they would like a diverse economy that is better prepared to respond to shocks, like the COVID-19 pandemic. They would also like to broaden the type of business and industry in the area and increase the number of job opportunities available. People would like to better support residents and vulnerable people within the community that are finding it difficult to find affordable and long-term housing.

Respondents suggested Council focus on supporting innovative local industry including those linked to renewable energies, agriculture and local food production. They also sought a strategy to address the lack of affordable housing and the impact of short term stay accommodation on the amount of available long term housing stock.

How do we get there?

A focus on supporting innovative local industry including those linked to renewable energies, agriculture and local food production. Respondents also sought a strategy to address the lack of affordable housing and the impact of short term stay accommodation on the amount of available long term housing stock. Explore and develop opportunities in new and emerging economies including the sharing and circular economies.



Embracing our past and planning for the future

Where we are now?

An area of critical concern in the engagement process was maintaining the Shire's rural character and liveability. Coupled with this is an appreciation for our history, including First Nations People's history. Maintaining historical buildings and architecture are considered areas of importance. The preservation of farmland, open spaces and a calm environment are key elements of the ideal vision community members expressed for the local area.

Where we want to be in 10 years?

Liveability was the second highest priority identified by survey respondents and featured heavily in the feedback from pop ups. Those who participated in the engagement called for strong planning controls to retain the character, liveability and lifestyle of the area. Feedback also indicated a strong concern for the preservation of farmland, and sustainable development that is supported by appropriate infrastructure. In addition to these measures, recognition of the important link between history and the areas' identity is required, with ongoing maintenance and reference.

Engagement participants would like sympathetic and sustainable planning practices that preserve the character of the area. They expect excellent infrastructure and amenity to support the population and maintain heritage buildings and streetscapes. Having a voice in planning decisions and processes was expressed as an important component of the community's partnership with Council.

How do we get there?

Engagement participants are seeking sympathetic and sustainable planning practices that preserve the character of the area. They expect excellent infrastructure and amenity to support the population and maintain heritage buildings and streetscapes. Having a voice in planning decisions and processes was expressed as an important component of the community's partnership with Council.



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Focus Areas in the four-year Council Plan A dynamic and responsive Council

Where we are now?	Participants would like a stronger partnership between Council and the community. They expressed desire for greater community participation in Council decision making. The community wants Council to embrace the creativity and expertise of the community, and to utilise local skills as an alternative to hiring outside consultants. They would also like strong levels of financial management, transparency of decision making and leadership on key issues.
Where we want to be in 10 years?	<p>Respondents want Council to have a strong relationship with the community, and support innovative consultation. The community would like a financially viable Council that is able to respond and adapt to emerging issues and take leadership on issues that are important to the community (such as the environment).</p> <p>Participants said the way to achieve this is through strong partnerships and advocacy that highlights the needs and support required from Council, excellent consultation and communication. They also identified the need for strong financial management, coupled by long term strategic planning. Creating a resilient community by ensuring Council is adaptable to the emerging issues impacting the community.</p>
How do we get there?	Strong partnerships and advocacy that highlight the needs and support required from the Hepburn Shire Council. Build a great partnership with the community that is characterised by excellent consultation and communication. Strong financial management, coupled by excellent long term strategic planning. Creating a resilient community by ensuring Council is adaptable to the emerging issues impacting the community.

Key TERMS

Broad engagement – a variety of engagement methods used to collect feedback from the Hepburn Shire community.

Community engagement – an ongoing process of communication between Council and Hepburn Shire citizens and stakeholders about important projects and plans that will impact our community.

Community Engagement Policy 2021 – states Council’s commitment to community engagement, outlines how Council will engage with the community and provides the framework for the planning and review of engagement projects that promotes continuous improvements and engagement.

Community Vision – the long-term (ten years +) aspirations that the community has for Hepburn Shire.

Council – the elected officials of the Hepburn Shire Council, comprising a Mayor, Deputy Mayor and five councillors elected in November 2020.

Council Plan – is shaped by Councillors, staff and the community, and describes the long-term vision for Hepburn Shire and shows how Council will strive towards that vision during its four-year term (2021-2025).

Deliberative engagement – a more in-depth form of community engagement that harnesses the community’s creativity and expertise to unearth community priorities and solutions. A small, but representative group of the community develops a deeper understanding of the subject matter and works together to reach a representative or common view.

Focus Areas – are important topics identified through the broad community engagement process. Focus Areas are carried through the Community Vision and Council Plan.

Hepburn Shire citizens – residents and ratepayers of Hepburn Shire.

Hepburn Together Project – Council’s major strategic planning project that encompasses the development of the Community Engagement Policy, ten-year Community Vision, four-year Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan), Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

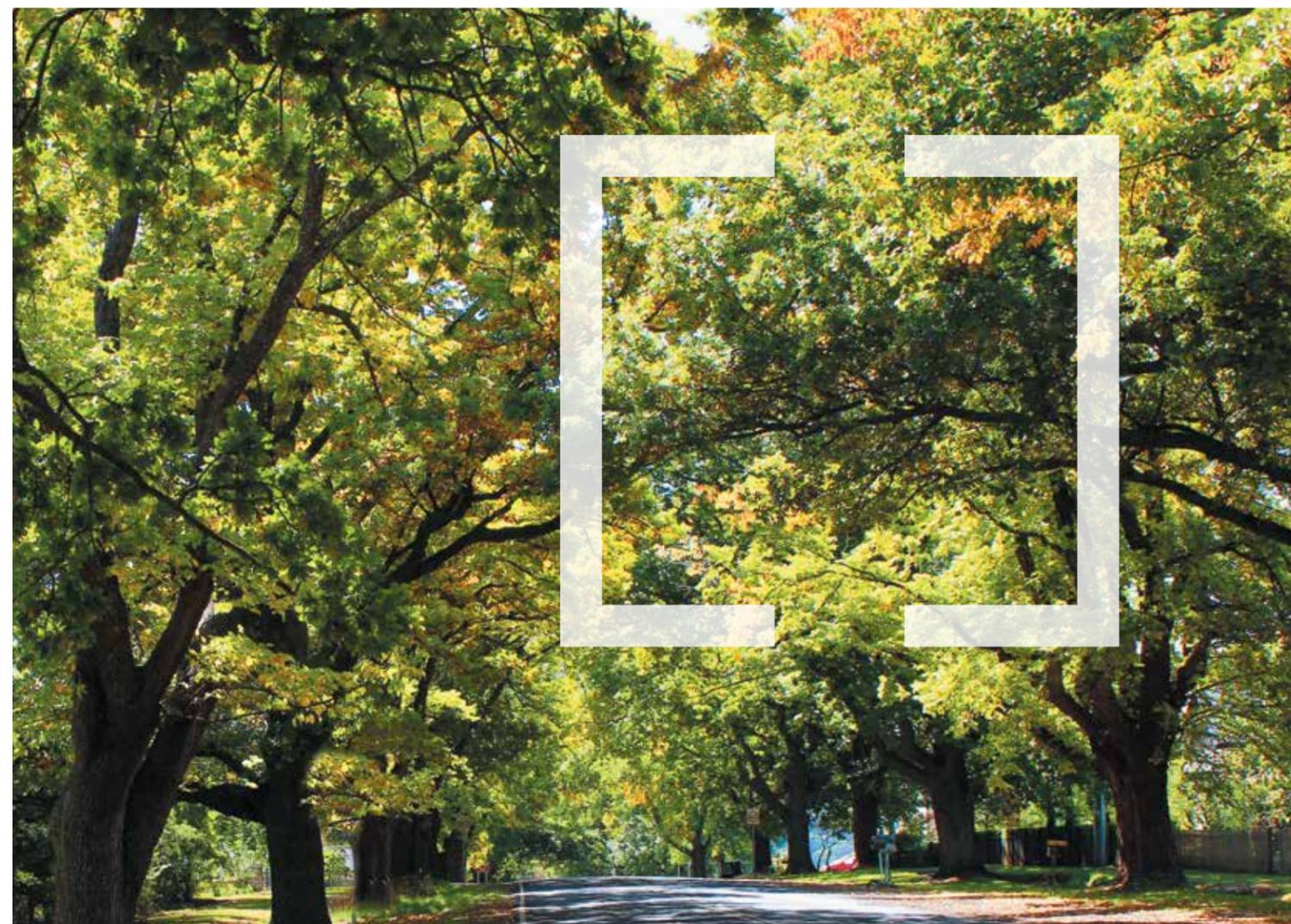
Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework – our planning framework describes how Hepburn Shire Council strives to realise the community’s aspirations through a cascading hierarchy of long and medium-term plans, resourcing decisions, and continual process of implementation, monitoring and review.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) – what Council will do to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing in Hepburn Shire.

Priority statement – the goals that sit under each Focus Area outline the aspiration we want to achieve for each topic.

Strategies – the actions, plans, or ways we will achieve the priority statements.

Strategic indicators – give us clarity on how we measure and track our progress in achieving our priority statements and strategies.



Message

FROM THE MAYOR



I have been delighted to work with my fellow Councillors and our community throughout the Hepburn Together project. This transformative project harnessed Council’s commitment to work with our community to set our strategic direction by developing our ten-year Community Vision and a four-year Council Plan incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Council’s approach to the Hepburn Together project was based on the commitments to the community outlined in our Strategic Engagement Plan. We promised that we would listen, communicate, respect all views, keep the community up to date and base our strategic planning framework on community recommendations to the greatest extent possible. We believe we have delivered on this promise and plan to use our learnings to enhance our engagement and consultation practices with our community.

The Community Vision paints a picture of what our community wants to be. It is aspirational but realistic. It envisages a partnership between the Council, the community, all levels of government, service providers and private industry coming together to achieve our goals. The Council Plan is our roadmap for the remainder of the Council term. It provides the strategic direction for Council’s operations – and provides the community with a clear picture of what we will be working on.

This clear direction provides a solid basis to advocate for additional Federal and State Government investment in our community to build on the goals we have highlighted, from environment and sustainability to health, education, and infrastructure.

On behalf of my fellow Councillors, we offer a commitment to continue to work with the citizens and community groups to achieve the community’s goals outlined in the Community Vision.

Councillor Lesley Hewitt
(Mayor) Birch Ward

Message

FROM THE CEO



The Hepburn Together Project has been embraced incredibly well by our community, with more than 1,400 individuals or groups being involved and delivering clear messages about what should be the priorities for our shire.

We have listened to the feedback and have integrated it strongly into the development of the Community Vision and Council Plan. I’m particularly proud that our Council has included the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan into the Council Plan, to demonstrate the importance that health and wellbeing plays in the liveability and economy of our shire.

Council staff, many who are community members, are lucky to work in such a beautiful shire – full of uniqueness and diversity. They are strongly committed to ensuring our organisation supports Councillors and our community to deliver the Community Vision.

2020 and 2021 have presented many challenges for our community due to the COVID pandemic and subsequent restrictions. Our organisation has shown to be very nimble to adjust to the different requirements and a new way of working.

The Council Plan provides the focus for the next four years for our organisation, as we strive to focus on good governance, financial sustainability, quality customer service and the delivery of a broad range of services and projects. The ability to respond to change shown by many over the last 18 months gives us strong confidence to deliver the Council Plan.

The Council Plan will be complemented by the Annual Plan, Budget, Revenue and and Rating Plan 2021-2025 and the Financial Plan (Long Term Financial Plan) 2021-2031, to be adopted by October 2021. These documents will detail the financial and non-financial resources required by Council to implement the key Focus Areas and Strategies identified in the Council Plan. An important role will be continued advocacy to both State and Federal Government to supplement our income, and to partner with our community.

We look forward to working hard to continue to engage with, partner with and deliver for our community.

Bradley Thomas
Chief Executive Officer

Your COUNCILLORS



Cr Lesley Hewitt
(Mayor) Birch Ward



Cr Brian Hood
(Deputy Mayor) Coliban Ward



Cr Jen Bray
Birch Ward



Cr Tessa Halliday
Cameron Ward



Cr Don Henderson
Creswick Ward



Cr Tim Drylie
Creswick Ward



Cr Juliet Simpson
Holcombe Ward



HEPBURN TOGETHER

- Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Community Vision 2031
- Council Plan 2021 – 2025 including the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan

About

THE COMMUNITY VISION 2031 AND COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

As part of the Council's transition to the Local Government Act 2020, a Community Vision and Council Plan must be developed to provide the framework for our Integrated Strategic Planning Framework. The Community Vision anchors all strategic planning undertaken by Council.

The Community Vision is a statement that captures the aspirations of the community for the next ten years. It is shaped by five Focus Areas which are critical to reaching the goals set out in the Community Vision.

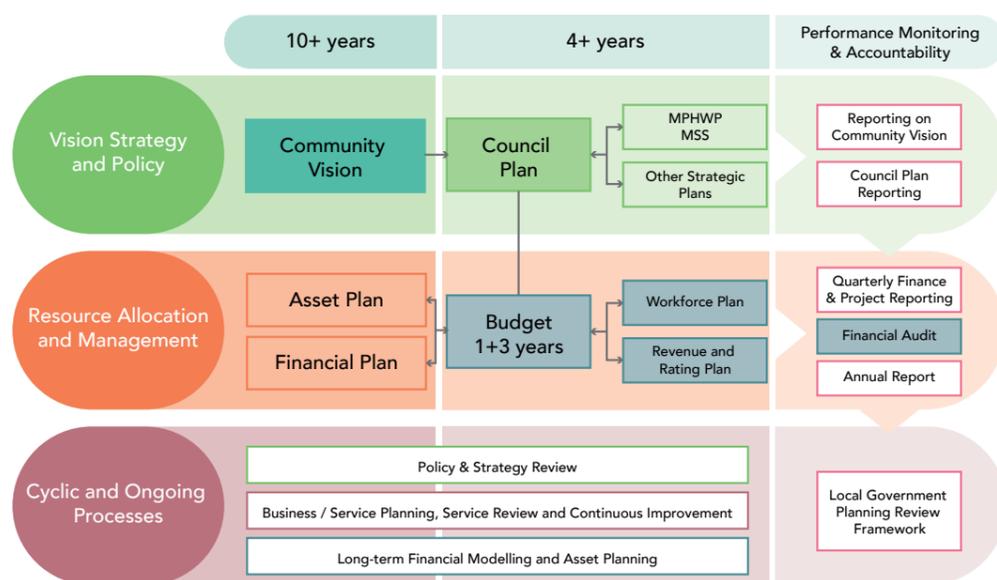
The Council Plan 2021-2025 is the blueprint for Council's work over the next four years. Priority statements and strategies support the five Focus Areas outlined in the Community Vision and set out Council's operational priorities. This plan incorporates Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan to ensure its high-level priorities are included.

The Council Plan (the Plan) plays a vital role in setting the strategic direction of the Council for the Council term and ensures an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING

The diagram below depicts the planning and accountability framework that applies to local government in Victoria. Each element is critical to the achievement of the Council Plan.

Council's strategic planning framework:



Hepburn

TOGETHER PROJECT

What did we do?

The Hepburn Together project involved citizens in developing the Community Engagement Policy, Community Vision and Council Plan including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. The engagement process encompassed four broad stages:

Stage [1]

Development of the Community Engagement Policy



The purpose of the policy is to document Council's commitment to community engagement and to identify the processes to be followed when undertaking community engagement. Council heard from 325 citizens about their expectations around community engagement and communication.

One of the important elements of the Community Engagement Policy is Council's commitment to community engagement. Council's commitment includes promises to:

- Ensure community access to engagement processes is as broad as possible.
- Use simple and clear language when we communicate.
- Actively listen without judgment to what people say.
- Respect diverse views and request mutual respect between all parties.
- Value the creativity and expertise of the community in our decision making and problem solving.
- Ensure all contributions are recorded.
- Report back to the community on what we have heard.
- Base the engagement framework on community recommendations to the greatest extent possible.
- Provide feedback on where input has not been incorporated into the outcome and explain the reasons for our decision.
- Measure and assess the effectiveness of our community engagement practices and commit to ongoing continuous improvement and innovation.

Stage [2]

Broad engagement



The purpose of broad engagement was to gather a wide range of feedback from the community to inform the later deliberative engagement stage and development of the Community Vision and Council Plan including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Council heard from 1,463 people of various demographics during this engagement, which occurred between 27 February to 8 April 2021.

The broad engagement process used various engagement methods, including online surveys, community pop-ups, vision sheets distributed to schools and kindergartens, workshops, and community-led engagement. The broad engagement asked people to consider: Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

Engagement participation

Council used a variety of engagement methods to collect feedback from the community.

The broad engagement delivered a participation rate of 9.1% of our population, which is outstanding and reflective of our engaged community.

ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY	COUNT
SURVEY (INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES)	343
SURVEY (GROUP RESPONSES)	285
STUDENT DRAWING SHEETS	333
POP UPS / WORKSHOPS	239
INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS	8
SOCIAL MAP VISIONER	28
YOUTH WORKSHOP	14
MPHWP SURVEY	161
MPHWP POP-UP ATTENDEES	52
TOTAL	1,463

We distributed drawing sheets to local schools and kindergartens so children could capture their vision of the Shire in 2031. We asked them to draw what would make their town a good place to live work and play.

Thank you to the schools and kindergartens throughout the Shire, for assisting us to collect these ideas.



ATTACHMENT 5.1.1

Stage [3]

Deliberative engagement

Council facilitated open and random recruitment to enlist 40 local citizens that reflected the demographic composition of the Shire. The 40 Community Panel members were provided with a briefing document regarding the broad engagement and Council operations. The deliberative engagement process was designed to harness the community's creativity and expertise, and promote working collaboratively to unearth priorities and solutions. The Community Panel met across three sessions between 15 April to 21 April 2021. The sessions were framed by the Focus Areas identified in the broad engagement and included a retain and change brainstorm, small group work, and more general deliberation. The Panel developed 15 Priority Statements that were recommended to Council for consideration.

DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT PANEL



Following Broad Engagement with 9.6% of our entire community and completing Deliberative Engagement five key areas were identified being:

- A resilient, sustainable and protected environment.
- A healthy supported, and empowered community.
- Embracing our past and planning for our future.
- A diverse economy and opportunities.
- A dynamic and responsive Council.

Stage [4]

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan engagement

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

161

MPWHP SURVEY

32

CO-DESIGN SESSION ATTENDEES

52

MPWHP POP-UP ATTENDEES

Additional health and wellbeing data was gathered via surveys and pop up sessions conducted as part of the Hepburn Together broad engagement phase

Targeted engagement, including a survey, pop-up sessions, and a co-design session, were conducted during April 2021 to inform the development of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Participants of this engagement included citizens, health and wellbeing sector partners, and Council Officers. Council partnered with Central Highlands Rural Health to align the public health priorities. Over 200 people participated in this engagement, complemented by a through data analysis via a Municipal Scan, providing an evidence base to identify health and wellbeing priorities for the next four years.

The consolidated report outlining the findings from engagement undertaken during the Hepburn Together project is available on the Participate Hepburn website at: <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au>

Priority areas



Tackling climate change and its impact on health



Increasing healthy eating



Improving mental wellbeing



Preventing all forms of violence

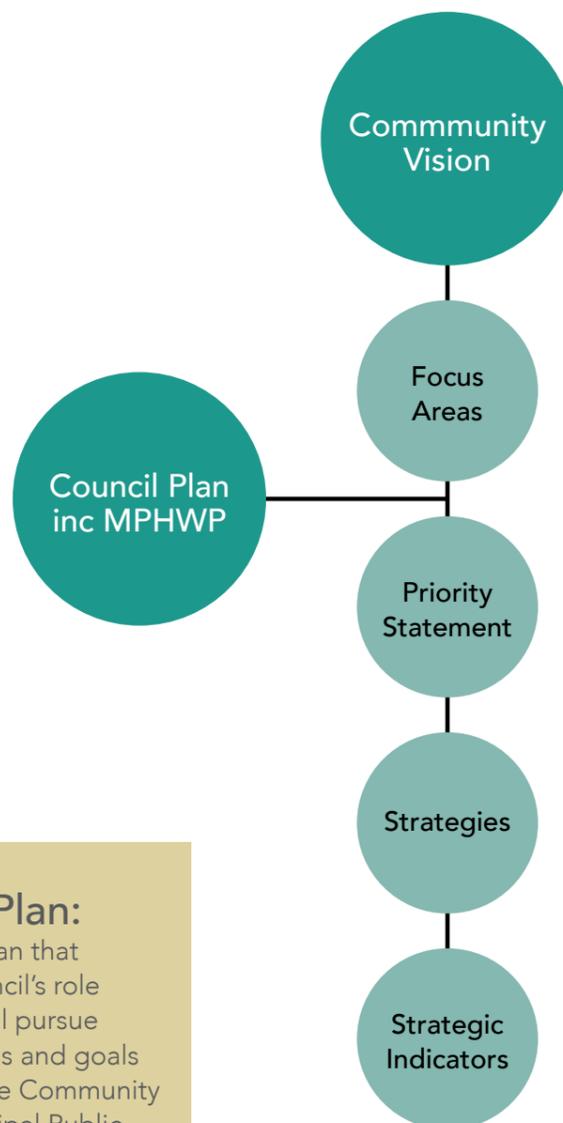
Council

PLAN

The Council Plan is Council's key strategic document. It describes the Council's and community's vision for the future, how Council will strive towards that vision during its four-year term, where it will focus its efforts, and how it will measure progress. Council, for the first time has chosen to integrate our Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan into the Council Plan recognising the importance of the health and wellbeing of our citizens, and that health and wellbeing impacts every area of Council's operations.

STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

The Community Vision and the Council Plan have been designed to ‘speak to each other’ and not lose focus of the aspirational vision described by the community. The illustration below shows the interrelation of the key terms and different elements of the Community Vision and Council Plan (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).



Community Vision:

a long-term vision that outlines the aspirations and goals of the Hepburn Shire community.

Focus Areas:

are important topics identified through the broad community engagement process. Focus Areas are carried through the Community Vision and Council Plan.

Council Plan:

a four-year plan that outlines Council's role and how it will pursue the aspirations and goals outlined in the Community Vision, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and other strategic priorities.

Priority statement:

the goals that sit under each focus area outline the aspiration we want to achieve for the topic.

Strategies:

the actions, plans, or strategies to achieve the priority statements.

Strategic indicators:

give us clarity on how we measure and track our progress in achieving our priority statements and strategies.



Hepburn Shire is small rural Shire, with a population of 16,157. The population is projected to reach 17,700 by 2036. The Shire covers an area of 1,473 square kilometres which includes Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs and Trentham, and the villages of Glenlyon, Allendale, Kingston, Leonard's Hill, Lyonville, Newlyn, Denver, and Smeaton, and other smaller settlements, each with their own unique identity and character. Located in central Victoria, the Shire is ideally situated within easy access to Melbourne, Ballarat, and Bendigo. It is a great place to live, work, invest and visit.

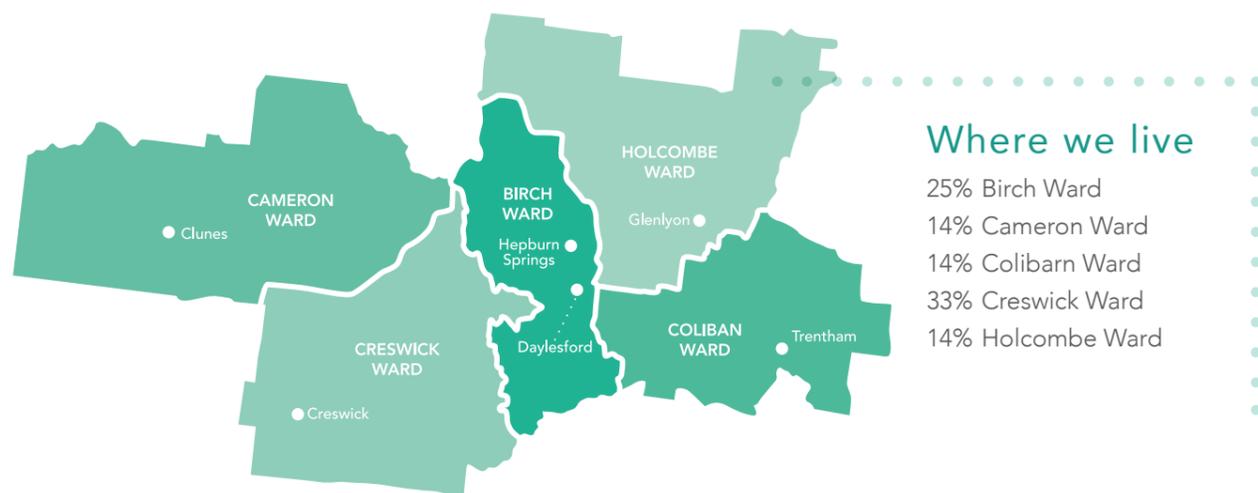
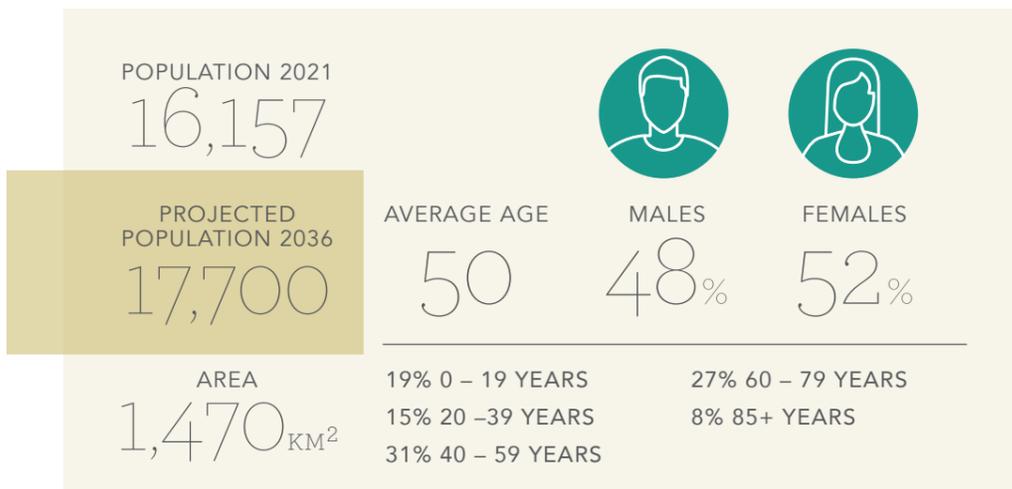
Hepburn Shire has a rich cultural history which began with the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners and custodians of the area. Mass migration during Victoria's goldrush era saw many cultures settle in the region, which created a distinctive architecture and culture, still present throughout the Shire today. The Shire is renowned for its native forests, mineral springs reserves and waterways, botanical gardens, volcanic plains with rich soils, gold, and many spectacular heritage buildings. It is a popular tourist destination that has a reputation for indulgence and relaxation, festivals and outdoor recreational activities.

The Shire has a vibrant and diverse welcoming community that is well serviced by schools and childcare, recreation facilities, libraries, hospitals and shopping precincts. There is a large range of events throughout the year including markets, community run festivals, book fairs, LGBTIQ+ festivals and artisan masterclasses. With a strong arts community there are opportunities to visit artist studios, exhibitions and workshops.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted Hepburn Shire. Some of the biggest impacts on our community included social isolation along with heightened financial and emotional stress on families and local business. Another significant consequence of the pandemic was the impact on housing affordability and availability due to an influx of new residents choosing to move to our Shire.



OUR Community



Top 5 Industries



Health AND WELLBEING STATUS

The rate of family violence 1151.5 per 100,000 people has increased over time in Hepburn Shire.

Women are more than twice as likely to be the victims of stalking, harassment and threatening behaviour and sexual offences than men.

6.6%

OF WOMEN EXPERIENCED FAMILY VIOLENCE

37.6%

ADULTS DIAGNOSED WITH ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION

16.7%

CURRENTLY SMOKE

45.9%

PRE-OBESE OR OBESE

54.7%

OF ADULTS DO NOT EAT ENOUGH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

64.5%

OF ADULTS MET PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

20.6%

HAVE SOUGHT HELP FROM A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL



Social capital and safety

94.4%

FEEL SAFE DURING THE DAY

69.2%

FEEL SAFE AT NIGHT

30.2%

OF PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

77.4%

FELT THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD WAS 'CLOSE-KNIT'

Local Impact of COVID-19 on Health and Wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of our community has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions. A Health and Wellbeing survey by Central Highlands Rural Health reported impacts to physical exercise, social connection, work, cultural and leisure activities and mental health.

- Overall levels of physical activity decreased
- There was an increase in feeling lonely three or more days per week
- 20% more people were anxious five to seven per week
- 29% people increased alcohol consumption
- The biggest impacts on the community were social isolation, economic impacts upon local business and mental health concerns.

Hepburn Shire Health Profile - Central Highlands Rural Health 2020

Data is sourced from Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census community profiles and Hepburn Know Your Council Area Based Statistics, REMPLAN Victoria in the Future 2019.

COVID-19 and Gender had a significant impact on women, as identified in a local report by Women's Health Grampians. In its report it stated "Women are the frontline of essential workers in this pandemic – in healthcare, teaching, aged care, social assistance and childcare. Female-dominated industries such as hospitality, retail and the arts have been hard hit by social distancing requirements, and more women than men have lost their jobs. Lower-income workers are more likely to be out of work than the highest income-earners. These women are often from diverse backgrounds".

Disclaimer: The data presented throughout this document is generally pre-COVID-19 data unless otherwise stated. This should be considered when viewing data, as it may not reflect all current impacts stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Women's Health Grampians Gender and Info Sheet Addressing COVID-19.

Hepburn Shire Health Profile - Central Highlands Rural Health 2020

COUNCIL Services

Local councils are responsible for the governance and delivery of services that support the community at the municipal level. This includes the delivery of more than 100 services including planning and building services, economic development, sustainability services, waste management, local laws emergency management, recreation, community services, and much more.

Read a list of Council services at: <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au/hepburn-together>.

COUNCIL'S Role

Councillors are elected by, and accountable to, the people who live and do business within the municipality. As such, the importance of being responsive to the community and their needs is critical to the success of Council.

To achieve our strategic objectives in all five Focus Areas, Council:

Delivers

By leading and mostly funding the delivery of initiatives and priorities.

Forms partnerships and collaborates

By partnering with key stakeholders in the Shire, such as member groups and community groups to deliver initiatives and priorities.

Facilitates

By assisting others to lead delivery, bringing interested parties together and advocating and promoting our community's best interest and priorities to other levels of government and decision makers.

COUNCIL POLICIES, STRATEGIES *and Plans*

Council has an extensive list of policies, strategies and plans that guide the organisation. These range in areas from financial hardship to tourism, waste management, walking and cycling and much more. As these are regularly updated read the full list on Council’s website.

Read Council policies at: <https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/council-policies/> and strategies and plans at: <https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/plans-strategies/>.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND OUR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

As Hepburn Shire, along with the rest of the country navigates the new COVID normal, business support, community and economic recovery will remain a high priority. Our region has been severely impacted by the pandemic lock downs and border closures, which have all contributed to varying challenges for businesses, especially those in the tourism and hospitality sector. Community and businesses have had to adapt and change their way they operate to respond to changing behaviour. This has seen the introduction of a number of creative and innovative practices, that while introduced as a temporary measure during COVID, are now permanently in place. As the nation began to open-up in late 2020, regional Victoria, in particular our region began experiencing a surge in visitation and in some cases, visitor numbers in the first quarter of 2021, were higher than pre-COVID times. Council will continue to play an active role in community and business recovery and support.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2015, member states of the United Nations committed to a new, overarching framework for global development titled Transforming Our World: **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, providing a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The agenda sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for all countries to aim to achieve by the year 2030. The SDG’s recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies

that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth, all while tackling climate change. Council has mapped where its Focus Areas correlate with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals. These are shown throughout this document.

Hepburn Shire Council understand the importance of realising these goals and will use them to support our future planning.

The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals are below.



Focus

AREAS

Council has identified five Focus Areas in the Council Plan to help work towards the aims of the Community Vision.



1 A resilient, sustainable and protected environment

Health and Wellbeing Plan

This green dot symbol means these strategies align with, and contribute to, the aims of our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.



Priority Statements:

- 1.1 Adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030.
- 1.2 Prioritise environmental management, protection, and regeneration.
- 1.3 Transition to ecologically sustainable and accountable tourism.
- 1.4 Develop meaningful policies and strategic partnerships that link sustainability and public health.
- 1.5 Protect and regenerate the natural resources of the Shire including soils, water and ecological systems, from both current and future threats.

Our Strategic Indicators

How we will measure progress against our Focus Area.

Council led indicators based on target or desired trend:

- An annual reduction in Council's Corporate emissions measured via tonnes CO2. (Note that a specific % reduction will be developed as part of the Sustainable Hepburn strategy development).
- 10% annual reduction in community emissions – measured by Tonnes CO2.
- An annual reduction in tonnes of waste to landfill per capita. (Note that a specific % reduction will be developed as part of the Sustainable Hepburn strategy development).
- Maintain existing 11 kilometres of Roadside Weed Control across Shire.

Legislation plans and strategies

- Dja Dja Wurrung Dhelkunya Dja Country Plan 2014-2034.
- Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy.
- Public Land Act (in development).
- Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037.
- Hepburn Z-NET Community Transition Plan 2019-2029.
- How Hepburn Shire Farms can reach Z-NET.
- Hepburn Shire Council Towards Zero Emissions Roadmap.
- Hepburn Shire Council Biodiversity Strategy.
- Hepburn Planning Scheme.
- Hepburn Z-NET – Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy.
- Hepburn Wind MOU.
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan.
- Grampians Region Climate Adaption Strategy.
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.



1.1 Adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030.
 ● Tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
1.1.1 Undertake actions to support Council's declaration of a climate emergency including bi-annual reporting to community on local actions and projects which are delivering upon climate change mitigation, while ensuring that the levels of activity remain consistent with the importance of the climate emergency. ●	Deliver Partner
1.1.2 Review procurement policies and procedures to ensure they provide a focus on sustainable practices. ●	Deliver
1.1.3 Continue to support the objectives of Hepburn Z-NET and the Hepburn Wind MOU to achieve the target of net zero community emissions by 2030.	Partner
1.1.4 Promote the use of environmentally sustainable practices through planning processes and the Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy. ●	Deliver Advocate
1.1.5 Pursue the environment and sustainability objectives outlined in Council's Municipal Planning Scheme. ●	Deliver
1.1.6 Support community transition to zero emissions through the Towards Zero Community Grants Program and or any other applicable grant funding program. ●	Deliver Partner
1.1.7 Contribute to the implementation of the Grampians Region Climate Adaption Strategy. ●	Deliver Advocate
1.1.8 Publish Council's emission profile annually. ●	Deliver

1.2 Prioritise environmental management, protection, and regeneration.
 ● Tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
1.2.1 Review Environmental Significance Overlays. ●	Deliver
1.2.2 Undertake appropriate Municipal Emergency Management Planning to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. ●	Deliver Advocate
1.2.3 Adopt and implement a Tree Management Strategy to protect existing trees and increase planting of new trees. ●	Deliver

1.3 Transition to ecologically sustainable and accountable tourism.
 ● Tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
1.3.1 Develop and implement a sustainable and accountable Visitor Economy Strategy that balances sustainability goals whilst supporting the economy.	Deliver Partner

1.4 Develop meaningful policies and strategic partnerships that link sustainability and public health.
 ● Increasing healthy eating (priority area), tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area), improving mental wellbeing (priority area/co-benefit)

Strategy	Council Role
1.4.1 Strengthen and protect existing agriculture to support the availability, sustainability and accessibility of local food sources. ●	Facilitate
1.4.2 Promote community adaptation to the public health risks of climate change. ●	Partner
1.4.3 Increase community understanding of the risks of climate change to public health through communication and education. ●	Partner
1.4.4 Develop a meaningful and strategic partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung to identify and collaborate on our shared environmental priorities.	Partner

1.5 Protect and regenerate the natural resources of the Shire including soils, water and ecological systems, from both current and future threats.
 ● Increasing healthy eating (priority area), tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area), improving mental wellbeing (priority area/co-benefit)

Strategy	Council Role
1.5.1 Develop and implement the 'Sustainable Hepburn Strategy' to align waste, sustainability, and biodiversity strategies. ●	Deliver
1.5.2 Continue environmental services with an increased focus on weed management and roadside vegetation management including development and implementation of a Roadside Conservation Strategy. ●	Deliver
1.5.3 Support the implementation of priorities of the Integrated Water Management Plans. ●	Partner Deliver



2 A healthy, supported and empowered community

Priority statements

- 2.1 Support appropriate land use and accommodate more affordable long-term housing within townships that conforms with the character of the area.
- 2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing.
- 2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.
- 2.4 Assist our community to increase access to healthy food to improve nutrition, reduce chronic disease, improve mental wellbeing and strengthen the local food production system.
- 2.5 Improved mental wellbeing within the community.

Our Strategic Indicators

How we will measure progress against our Focus Area.

Council led indicators based on target or desired trend:

- Over the life of the Plan 5% increase in proportion of adults eating sufficient fruit and vegetables.
- Network of mental health service providers servicing the Shire established. 75% of network active in Shire to support access to mental health services.
- Over the life of the Plan, a 5% increase in percentage of population that are active library borrowers.
- Network of providers servicing the Shire focussing on prevention of all violence. 75% of network active in Shire to support prevention of all violence.
- Over the life of the Plan, a 5% increase of children enrolled in Maternal Child Health (MCH) who participated in MCH services.

Legislation, Plans and Strategies

- Hepburn Shire Active Women and Girls Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Council Affordable Housing Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Council Playspace Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Council Walking and Cycling Strategy: Priority Works February 2017.
- Hepburn Shire Council: Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.
- Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens master plan.
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.
- Hepburn Shire Youth Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Aquatic Strategy (under development).
- Hepburn Shire Arts & Culture Strategy (under development).



2.1 Support appropriate land use and accommodate more affordable long-term housing within townships that conforms with the character of the area

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

	Strategy	Council Role
2.1.1	Develop an Integrated Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.1.2	Deliver the strategic planning program from the adopted Municipal Planning Scheme.	Deliver
2.1.3	Advocate for involvement in the Victorian State Government's Big Housing Build program.	Deliver

2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area), prevention of all forms of violence (priority area)

	Strategy	Council Role
2.2.1	Conduct a gap and needs analysis of local health and community services to support advocacy for funding parity. ●	Partner
2.2.2	Promote partnerships with health service providers to improve shared community health outcomes. ●	Partner
2.2.3	Support advocacy for a new facility for Central Highlands Rural Health. ●	Facilitate
2.2.4	Develop services networks to increase community awareness and access to local services. ●	Partner
2.2.5	Develop, adopt and implement an Early Years Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.2.6	Develop, adopt and implement a Positive Ageing Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.2.7	Work with our partners to support the provision of Early Years Services, e.g Maternal Child Health, Kindergartens, Childcare and Playgroup. ●	Partner
2.2.8	Continue services to build strong, safe and resilient communities (emergency management, local laws, animal control, environmental health). ●	Deliver
2.2.9	Deliver actions identified in the Disability Action and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2018-2022. ●	Deliver
2.2.10	Develop, adopt and implement a new Disability Action and Inclusion Plan post-2022 ●	Deliver

2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area, co-benefit), Tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area), Prevention of all forms of violence (priority area)

	Strategy	Council Role
2.3.1	Increase female health and wellbeing by implementing the Hepburn Shire Active Women and Girls Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.3.2	Implement appropriate actions from the 'Play is for everyone' Hepburn Shire Playspace Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.3.3	Support access and participation through strong asset management practices aligned with developing a long-term Asset Plan. ●	Deliver
2.3.4	Facilitate walking and cycling infrastructure by implementing works outlined in the Walking and Cycling Strategy. ●	Deliver
2.3.5	Promote the use of libraries and hubs throughout Hepburn Shire. ●	Deliver
2.3.6	Maintain our open spaces for the enjoyment of our community and visitors. ●	Deliver
2.3.7	Design, develop and advocate for funding to enhance or build sport and active recreation facilities identified through Master Planning. Ensure design and construct projects comply with Universal Design principles, including compliance with the Design for Everyone Guide. ●	Deliver
2.3.8	Deliver key projects including Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens enhanced visitation experience, Bullarto Station Precinct development and Creswick Town Hall restoration. ●	Deliver
2.3.9	Finalise and implement the Hepburn Shire Aquatic Strategy. ●	Deliver

2.4 Assist our community to increase access to healthy food to improve nutrition, reduce chronic disease, improve mental wellbeing and strengthen the local food production system.

- Increasing healthy eating (priority area), improving mental wellbeing (priority area, co-benefit)

Strategy	Council Role
2.4.1 Lead by example, by supplying and promoting local, sustainable and healthier food and drink options across Council-run meetings, events, activities, facilities and programs. ●	Deliver
2.4.2 Support initiatives that encourage healthier lifestyles and habits across the lifespan, particularly in children's early years. ●	Facilitate Partner
2.4.3 Partner with local organisation/s to increase access to healthy and affordable food (including for vulnerable groups) and to support positive food system change. ●	Facilitate Partner
2.4.4 Partner with key health agencies to support initiatives and services to improve health and wellbeing. ●	Partner

2.5 Improve mental wellbeing within the community.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
2.5.1 Raise awareness and understanding of mental health services and resources, and work with other levels of government to localise and improve mental health services available to residents with a specific focus on youth mental health. ●	Partner
2.5.2 Strengthen partnerships and support education, programs, events and prevention activities that focus on community participation, diversity and inclusion. ●	Partner
2.5.3 Adopt a co-benefit approach to improving mental wellbeing, supporting active living and healthy eating initiatives. ●	Facilitate Partner
2.5.4 Ensure Council services, activities and facilities are accessible and inclusive to remove barriers to participation. ●	Deliver





3 Embracing our past and planning for the future

Priority statements

- 3.1** Partner with and empower our Traditional Owners and broader community to acknowledge, understand, celebrate, and preserve our area's cultures, traditions, and environs.
- 3.2** Protect and enhance the existing character of our towns and rural settings through community-inclusive strategic planning to strengthen planning controls on growth and development.
- 3.3** Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.

Our Strategic Indicators

How we will measure progress against our Focus Area.

Council led indicators based on target or desired trend:

- 90% of current staff have completed cultural awareness training within the last 4 years.
- Deliver Council's documented and agreed annual strategic planning program.
- A 3% per annum (1.5km) footpath expansion i.e. new footpath (generally concrete or asphalt, not granitic sand) to increase connectivity of walking paths across the Shire.
- Across the life of the Plan, a 10% increase in the percentage of Planning applications decided within required time frames.

Legislation, Plans and Strategies

- Hepburn Planning Scheme.
- Hepburn Shire Council Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Hepburn Heritage Strategy 2020-2030.
- Community Engagement Policy 2021.
- Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.
- Planning and Environment Act 1987.
- Road Management Plan.
- Asset Management Policy.
- Asset Management Strategy.
- Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014-2034.



3.1 Partner with and empower our Traditional Owners and broader community to acknowledge, understand, celebrate, and preserve our area’s cultures, traditions, and environs.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
3.1.1 Continue to implement and review the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and build strong partnerships through the RAP Advisory Committee. ●	Deliver Partner
3.1.2 Hold annual strategic meetings with Dja Dja Wurrung to share and align projects and priorities. ●	Partner
3.1.3 Develop and implement an Arts and Culture Strategy to support local artists to provide creative cultural experiences to enrich community wellbeing. ●	Deliver
3.1.4 Develop and implement an Indigenous Heritage Strategy to support the recognition and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage. ●	Deliver
3.1.5 Manage and support our heritage buildings in accordance with the adopted Hepburn Heritage Strategy 2020-2030.	Deliver
3.1.6 Partner with other Council’s to advocate for UNESCO World Heritage Listing of the Central Victorian Goldfields.	Partner

3.2 Protect and enhance the existing character of our towns and rural settings through community-inclusive strategic planning to strengthen planning controls on growth and development.

- Tackling climate change and its impact on health (priority area), improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
3.2.1 Develop and complete Town Structure Plans as per Council’s strategic planning program.	Deliver
3.2.2 Support community planning to enable local communities to determine their priorities for the future. ●	Deliver Partner
3.2.3 Conduct a study of land development supply. ●	Deliver
3.2.4 Develop an Agricultural Land Use and Settlement Strategy. ●	Deliver
3.2.5 Undertake strategic land use planning to identify access to commercial and industrial land.	Deliver
3.2.6 Develop and implement a local Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Planning Policy.	Deliver

3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.

- Tackling climate change and its impact on health, Improving mental wellbeing (priority area, co-benefit)

Strategy	Council Role
3.3.1 Continue to provide strong management and maintenance of our infrastructure.	Deliver
3.3.2 Support the amenity of our towns through the maintenance, replacement and development of streetscapes.	Deliver
3.3.3 Advocate, plan and deliver pedestrian, cycling and recreation paths and trails that reduce reliance on vehicles. ●	Deliver Facilitate
3.3.4 Advocate to the State and Federal Government to improve cycling connections, public transport infrastructure and roll out of a public electric vehicle (EV) charging network across city boundaries and the broader region.	Facilitate
3.3.5 Ensure sustainable and accessible infrastructure that promotes healthy recreation, physical activity and social connection. ●	Deliver
3.3.6 Maintain and improve the amenity and cleanliness of townships, roadsides and public spaces.	Deliver
3.3.7 Advocate for and partner in the delivery of Council’s priority projects.	Deliver Facilitate



4 Diverse economy and opportunities

Priority statements

- 4.1** Work in partnership to attract and retain young people in our area through the provision of improved digital connectivity, education opportunities, employment pathways, affordable housing, improved public and active transport options, and leadership opportunities.
- 4.2** Advocate for improved internet infrastructure to support business, residents who work from home, students, and other citizens of the Hepburn Shire area.
- 4.3** Support and facilitate a diverse and innovative local economy that encourages an increase of local businesses with diverse offerings to achieve positive social, economic and environmental impacts.
- 4.4** Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals.

Our Strategic Indicators

How we will measure progress against our Focus Area.

Council led indicators based on target or desired trend:

- 2% annual increase in total spend per visitor.
- 4% annual increase in per capita Gross Regional Product.
- 5% annual increase of subscribers to the Hepburn Shire business e-newsletter.
- 4% annual increase percentage of gross revenue generated by businesses and organisations, outside the Tourism sector.

Legislation, Plans and Strategies

- Hepburn Shire Council Economic Development Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Council Events Strategy.
- Central Highlands Digital Plan.
- Hepburn Shire Council Youth Strategy.
- Hepburn Shire Council Arts & Culture Strategy (to be developed).
- Hepburn Shire Council Affordable Housing Policy.
- Hepburn Shire Agriculture and Rural Settlement Strategy (to be developed).



4.1 Work in partnership to attract and retain young people in our area through the provision of improved digital connectivity, education opportunities, employment pathways, affordable housing, improved public and active transport options, and leadership opportunities.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
4.1.1 Develop and implement a Youth Strategy 2021-25 to support the delivery of services and opportunities to young people in Hepburn Shire. ●	Deliver
4.1.2 Explore offering a graduate or traineeship program in alignment with Council's Workforce Plan development. ●	Deliver
4.1.3 Advocate to government to assist with funding of the business case for the establishment of Institute of Gastronomy within the Shire.	Deliver Facilitate
4.1.4 Investigate the formation of a Youth Council or Youth Advisory Committee. ●	Deliver

4.2 Advocate for improved digital connectivity including enhanced internet infrastructure to support business, residents who work from home, students, and other citizens of the Hepburn Shire area.

Strategy	Council Role
4.2.1 Support implementation of Central Highlands Digital Plan.	Facilitate
4.2.2 Review the impact of the co-working space at the Hepburn Hub at the Rex and explore the feasibility of a local co-working spaces in other parts of the Shire.	Deliver Partner
4.2.3 Install public wi-fi in appropriate areas.	Deliver
4.2.4 Advocate to ensure that our community has access to, and benefits from reliable digital services.	Facilitate

4.3 Support and facilitate a diverse and innovative local economy that encourages an increase of local businesses with diverse offerings to achieve positive social, economic and environmental impacts.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
4.3.1 Implement a Business Concierge model (Customer Service, Planning and Economic Development) to enhance the permit applications process.	Deliver
4.3.2 Invest in streetscapes and infrastructure in commercial and retail areas across the Shire.	Deliver
4.3.3 Finalise the pilot project of the Artisan Agriculture Project to support producers more broadly. ●	Deliver Partner
4.3.4 Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy that ensures diverse offerings.	Deliver
4.3.5 Develop and implement a Commercial Land Use Policy.	Deliver
4.3.6 Develop and implement a HSC Shire Wide Agricultural and Rural Settlement Strategy.	Deliver
4.3.7 Support local and regional tourism campaigns and initiatives to support the local offer.	Deliver
4.3.8 Implement the Events Strategy 2020-2025 building on existing brand pillars including Indulge (Food & Drink), Refresh (Escape & Rejuvenate), Learn (History & Culture) and Make (Art & Artisans). ●	Deliver Partner
4.3.9 Review procurement policy to ensure a focus on sustainable practices, a meaningful partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung and support of local businesses. ●	Deliver

4.4 Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals.

- Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
4.4.1 Review waste services to ensure alignment with the new State Government's Circular Economy program.	Deliver
4.4.2 Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals.	Deliver



5 A dynamic and responsive Council

Priority statements

- 5.1 Harness community expertise.
- 5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making.
- 5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations.
- 5.4 Improve staff resourcing, support, and capacity building.
- 5.5 Strong asset management and renewal.
- 5.6 Be a leader in gender equality and equity and promote respect and safety in our community.

Our Strategic Indicators

How we will measure progress against our Focus Area.

Council led indicators based on target or desired trend:

- 5% annual increase subscribers to Council's e-newsletter, Hepburn Life.
- Achieve a low or medium risk rating for VAGO financial sustainability indicators.
- 2% annual increase percentage of service requests responded to in accordance with customer service charter.
- Increase result of community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement from 44 to 50 points, over the life of the plan, a 14% improvement.
- 100% of annual actions from the adopted Workforce Plan are implemented.
The Workforce Plan will be adopted by 31 December 2021 to ensure gender equity, diversity and inclusiveness in the workforce.

Legislation, Plans and Strategies

Local Government Act 2020.
Local Government Act 1989.
Gender Equality Act 2020.
Hepburn Shire Council Community Engagement Policy.
Hepburn Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct.
Hepburn Shire Council Act@Work Plan.
Employee Code of Conduct.
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.
Freedom of Information Act 1982.
Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012.



5.1 Harness community expertise.
 ● Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
5.1.1 Conduct a Community Skills Session to capture community skills and interest for future engagements. ●	Deliver Partner
5.1.2 Strengthen processes to create strong alignment with community-led engagement. ●	Deliver
5.1.3 Continue to value, support and implement Community Reference Groups, where appropriate. ●	Deliver Partner
5.1.4 Actively participate in community and government networks and regional alliances. ●	Partner Facilitate

5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making.
 ● Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
5.2.1 Implement the Community Engagement Policy and procedures to improve community engagement practices and relationship building. ●	Deliver
5.2.2 Communicate in a timely, clear, responsive and accessible way about decisions and circumstances that impact our community.	Deliver
5.2.3 Implement the recommendations of Hepburn Shire Council Service Review – Customer Experience.	Deliver
5.2.4 Create an online database of Community Groups and contacts from across the Shire accessible to relevant Council Departments.	Deliver
5.2.5 Increase public participation in council meetings by continuing to live stream meetings.	Deliver

5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations.

Strategy	Council Role
5.3.1 Strengthen the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework, including a programmed service review of all Council services.	Deliver
5.3.2 Develop and implement an Annual Plan to set the operational direction of Council year on year.	Deliver
5.3.3 Enhance long-term financial planning and forecasting through the development and implementation of a Long-Term Financial Plan.	Deliver
5.3.4 Effectively advocate, scope projects, prepare applications and ensure delivery of major initiatives and projects.	Deliver Facilitate
5.3.5 Development and implementation of an Information, Communications and Technology (ICT) Strategy to ensure staff have quality equipment and software to deliver high quality services to our community.	Deliver
5.3.6 Ensure Council practices, processes and decision making is compliant with the Local Government Act 2020 provisions and other related legislation and regulations.	Deliver
5.3.7 Strengthen internal governance through ongoing Councillor and staff capacity building and skill development.	Deliver
5.3.8 Embed Council's risk management framework and risk appetite into project management and decision making.	Deliver
5.3.9 Ensure the procurement practices of staff are in line with set policies, procedures and guidelines that have a focus on transparency, accountability and probity.	Deliver
5.3.10 Respond and adapt to requirements set out by the Victoria Electoral Commission in relation to representation reviews and general elections.	Deliver

5.4 Improve staff resourcing, support, and capacity building.
 ● Preventing all forms of violence (priority area), improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
5.4.1 Develop Workforce Plan to promote gender equity, diversity, inclusion, with an appropriate organisational structure to deliver the Council Plan. ●	Deliver
5.4.2 Ensure training and development of staff to ensure continuous improvement and access to the required skills.	Deliver
5.4.3 Strengthen the organisational approach to project management and delivery.	Deliver
5.4.4 Ensure that 100% of staff are offered the opportunity to undertake Cultural Awareness training. ●	Deliver

5.5 Strong asset management and renewal.

Strategy	Council Role
5.5.1 Continue to invest in asset maintenance, renewal and upgrade programs.	Deliver
5.5.2 Review and modernise Council's Asset Management practices in alignment with the development of Council's Asset Plan.	Deliver
5.5.3 Deliver the annual Capital Works program.	Deliver

5.6 Be a leader in gender equality and equity and promote respect and safety in our community.
 ● Preventing all forms of violence (priority area), Improving mental wellbeing (priority area)

Strategy	Council Role
5.6.1 Implement provisions of the Gender Equality Act 2020, including a Gender Equity Action Plan. ●	Deliver
5.6.2 Provide strong Council leadership, both internally and in the community, to build understanding of safe, respectful and equitable relationships through education and awareness raising. ●	Deliver Partner
5.6.3 Review and update the Act@Work Plan and continue to strengthen Gender Equity on Council. ●	Deliver

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC

Health & Wellbeing Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires all local governments to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) within 12 months of a Council election.

For the first time, the Hepburn Shire Council Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 has been integrated into the Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-2025. This decision was made to elevate health and wellbeing priorities, ensuring that people are at the centre of all we do. Council is committed to not only preventing disease and injury, but also protecting and supporting health, through early intervention strategies, health promotion and primary prevention efforts.

The MPHWP identifies the health priorities of the municipality for the next four years. Each priority area has several strategies, which will guide collective action to prevent or reduce public health issues and support our communities to be healthy and well.

The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 sets out the requirements and the objectives of a MPHWP. Objectives include:

- Protecting public health and preventing disease, illness, injury, disability or premature death
- Promoting conditions in which people can be healthy
- Reducing inequalities in the state of public health and wellbeing.

The health and wellbeing of communities are influenced by a range of complex social factors, 'including the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness' (World Health Organisation). Socioeconomic status, food, transportation, gender, employment, inclusion, housing and early life are some of the determinants that influence health and wellbeing along with individual characteristics and lifestyle choices.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

- Review and evaluation of previous MPHWP 2017-2021 priority areas, strategies and outcomes.
- Local health data analysis, including the social determinants of health, through the preparation of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Data Scan.
- Formation of a Project Control Group (PCG) that included staff from Council and Central Highlands Rural Health.
- Collaboration with member organisations of the Hepburn Shire Health & Wellbeing Working Group.
- Discussion with Council staff upcoming projects and programs.
- Analysis of community and stakeholder engagement findings from the 'Hepburn Together' project, including community surveys, pop-up sessions, targeted consultations for priority groups and a stakeholder Co-Design Session.
- Participation in the Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership (PCP) Integrated Health Planning process and development of shared regional priorities and measures.
- Review of relevant Council, State Government and local strategies and plans.

OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERS

The Hepburn Shire Health and Wellbeing Working Group was formed via Expression of Interest in 2019. Change cannot be achieved without many partners working collectively with community. Members of the working group represent various organisations, all of which are critical in protecting and supporting the health of our communities. The working group impacts health and wellbeing through shared priorities, local knowledge and partnerships.

Council would like to acknowledge the contribution of these partners.

- Creswick Neighbourhood House
- Cr Tessa Halliday (Council appointed representative)
- Central Highlands Rural Health
- Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership
- Clunes Neighbourhood House
- Daylesford Neighbourhood Centre
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.
- Health Futures Australia
- Trentham Neighbourhood Centre
- Women’s Health Grampians

Planning considerations

Being healthy and well is not just the absence of disease, it is the result of a combination of physical, social, mental and emotional and spiritual factors that influence a person’s ability to live a happy and meaningful life. A holistic view of health and wellbeing is taken throughout the MPHWP, also acknowledging the following priority groups and factors in our planning work:

Health inequities: Not all people have the same access to resources, knowledge, and skills to maintain health and wellbeing.

Diverse Services: Health and wellbeing services should be varied, flexible and adaptable to meet the diverse needs, values and cultures within our communities. Health services is a broad term that encompasses all health and wellbeing services, including both public and private services and a diverse range of approaches and modalities.

People and place-based: Efforts will be targeted to population groups or communities in certain locations that are facing the greatest health inequities. Local expertise, knowledge, experiences and stories will be sought as per the Hepburn Shire Community Engagement Policy.

Liveability: The conditions of where someone lives, works and plays. Liveable communities provide a foundation for health and wellbeing. A liveable community is safe, socially cohesive, inclusive, environmentally sustainable and attractive. Local Government plays a key role in the natural and built environment and infrastructure as well as social, economic and environmental conditions that create liveable communities.

Intersectionality: Provides an approach and a practice to understand and address structural forms of inequality. Complex and multi-faceted social identities such as race, gender, disability, social economic status and sexuality and can intersect at an individual level, impacting experiences of discrimination, oppression and privilege.



Priority Groups

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders: Specifically, the principle of self-determination will be considered, whilst acknowledging the role of cultural determinants and the centrality of culture, which aligns with the Aboriginal community's holistic understanding of health, wellbeing and safety.³ Council will continue to be guided by the local Aboriginal community and Traditional Owners through actions outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan to ensure greater acknowledgement, respect and inclusion.⁴

People with disability have a broad range of needs, levels of impairment and differences in what support they may require when participating physically and socially. Hepburn Shire has a higher proportion of persons needing assistance with core activity than the Victoria average.

Young people: Young people have unique experiences, perspectives and opportunities to learn and grow as they transition through this phase of their life. They can face unique personal, social, physical and emotional challenges that can affect their health and wellbeing.

Early years and children: Supporting families throughout the early years and into childhood provides a foundation for lifetime health and wellbeing. When compared with Victorian averages, Hepburn Shire has similar proportions of children developmentally on track across all categories of development. The proportion of children developmentally on track in terms of language and cognitive skills (school-based) is higher in Hepburn Shire than in Victoria. However, it should be noted that whilst the number of children who are 'on track' in the physical health and wellbeing domain has significantly increased over time from 63 percent in 2012 to 80.6 percent in 2018, the number of children who are classified as 'vulnerable' has increased over time from 3.6 percent in 2009 to 13.2 percent in 2018. Further, the number of children who are classified as 'vulnerable' in one or more domains has increased from 14.0 percent in 2009 to 22.5 percent in 2018.⁵

Older people: People have a unique experience of ageing, including their strengths, needs and wishes for their lives. The ABS 2016 Census population data shows that Hepburn Shire Council has a higher proportion of people over the age of 55 years compared to Victoria. Certain factors can inhibit people's ability to age positively, such as physical or financial vulnerability or loss of social connection resulting in loneliness. Council is committed to developing a Positive Ageing Strategy, which will involve engaging with residents to understand what is important for them to age well in Hepburn Shire.

LGBTIQ+ community: Hepburn Shire has vibrant communities of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and questioning and asexual. LGBTIQ+ community members have a right to equality, fairness and respect and to live a life free from discrimination.

Culturally and linguistically diverse: Cultural diversity is valuable for a community, including the different skills, perspectives, traditions, values and experiences these groups and individuals have. Some people may have been born overseas. Some people may speak languages besides English at home, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Australian South Sea Islander languages.



LENS: GENDER EQUITY

All MPHMP priority areas, strategies and actions will be developed, implemented and evaluated with a Gender Equity Lens and also considering impacts of intersectionality. Gender inequality can impact all facets of life and have negative health and wellbeing consequences. Council is already committed to implementing the Hepburn Shire Active Women & Girls Strategy 2019-2029, which aims to address gender inequality in sport and active recreation. Council is also committed to the implementing the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, including conducting Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) for all new and reviewed policies, programs

and services that have a direct and significant impact on the public. Council continues its work on the Act@Work program with the support of Women's Health Grampians.

LENS: CO-BENEFITS

Adopting a co-benefit lens means that we will recognise the multiple benefits that may come from one action. For example, an active transport project supporting people to walk or cycle to school or work could have co-benefits for climate change, active living and mental wellbeing. A co-benefits lens helps us to strengthen partnerships, create solutions and leverage resources to achieve change.



³ Korin Korin Balit-Djak Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027

⁴ Hepburn Shire Reconciliation Action Plan 2018

⁵ Hepburn Shire Council Municipal Data Scan ABS 2016 Census

Priority AREAS

Council has identified four Priority Areas in the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan to help work towards the aims of the Community Vision.



[1]

Tackling climate change and its impact on health

Resilient and safe communities that are adapting to the public health impacts of climate change.



[2]

Increasing healthy eating

Access to nutritious food and water for everyone, especially the most vulnerable. People are supported to make healthy lifestyle choices through collaborative people and place-based approaches.



[3]

Improving mental wellbeing

Hepburn Shire's diverse communities are celebrated, included and respected. Social connections are strengthened through participation in community groups, clubs, arts, culture, nature and physical activity. Everyone can access mental health services, housing, learning and employment.



[4]

Preventing all forms of violence

Everyone is able to live free from all forms of violence. Prevention efforts focus on gender equity, while responding to the needs of our diverse population.



[1] Tackling climate change and its impact on health

The World Health Organization has described climate change as the defining issue for public health in the 21st century. It is an urgent challenge, with implications at the global, national and community level. It is an issue of importance for all people, but the significance of children and young people’s views, ideas and concerns should be noted here, as action relates directly to their shared futures. Climate change affects health in many ways: directly by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as prolonged heatwaves, floods and bushfires; and indirectly through worsening air quality, changes in the spread of infectious diseases, risks to food safety and drinking water quality, and effects on mental health. Hepburn Shire communities suffered a significant storm event in June 2021 and its impacts will need to be considered throughout the life of this Plan.

Climate Change			
Indicator	1981-2010 average per year	Projected change 2050s: medium emissions	Projected change 2050s: high emissions
Days exceeding 35 degrees (Daylesford)	3.8 days	8.9 days	9.8 days
Days minimum 20 degrees + (Ballarat)	1.7 days	Nc	3.8-7.1 days
Coldest winter daily minimum temperature	-	0.5	0.8
Average days per year under 0 degrees (Daylesford)	20.6 days	11.2	8.4
Estimated rainfall %	-	-4%	-10%
Forest fire danger index greater than 95th percentile (Ballarat)	1986-2005	-	12.5 days

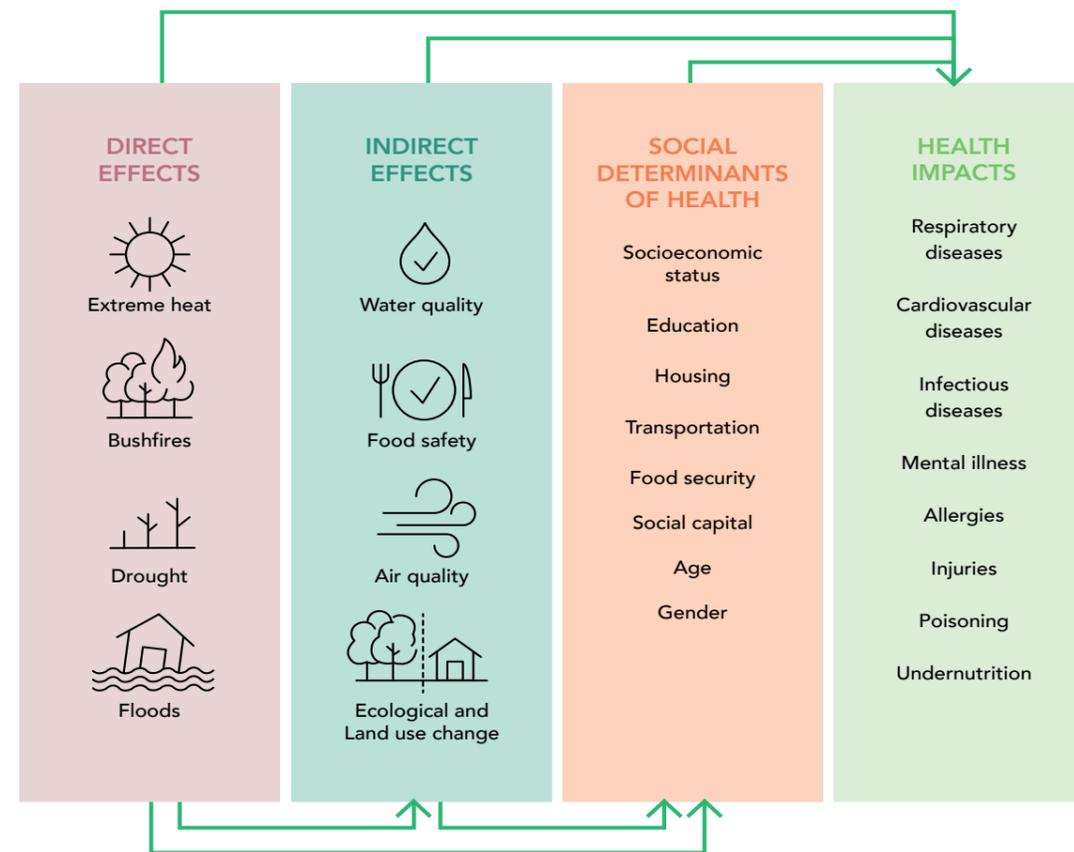
GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Females (15-54 years) in Hepburn were much more likely than males to be receiving the Single Parent Payment and may be more affected by the increasing costs of living associated with climate change (e.g., energy, food, transport).
- A greater proportion of females in Hepburn (61%) accessed specialist homelessness services, compared to the Victorian average (59%). Natural disasters may prolong displacement for those already homeless (i.e., spending longer in emergency shelters as a result of fire or floods).

A changing climate will impact how and where we live. Climate change will affect people with chronic disease, lung disease, those susceptible to heat stress, depression and anxiety. Some of Hepburn Shire’s more vulnerable cohorts include:

- 2.4% of people who have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder.
- 15.6% of people who have asthma.
- 4.4 % of people who have heart, stroke or vascular disease.
- 37.6% of people who have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON HEALTH AND WELBEING



Adapted from Watts et al. 2015, The Lancet, Health and climate change: policy responses to protect public health.

Reference: Victorian Government 2020, Tackling climate change and its impacts on health through municipal public health and wellbeing planning: guidance for local government, September 2020 <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-public-health/climate-change-and-health>>.

[Strategies]

- Increase community understanding of the risks of climate change to public health through communication and education.
- Promote community adaptation to the public health risks of climate change.
- Implement plans and policies to support adaptation to the health impacts of climate change, considering the specific impacts on vulnerable people.
- Link sustainability and public health through collaboration and strategic partnerships.⁷

⁶ Tackling climate change and its impact on health - health.vic Women’s Health Grampian’s ‘Applying a Gender Lens to Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Planning’, Hepburn Shire, February 2021



[2] Increasing healthy eating

Hepburn Shire has many of the essential ingredients to support healthy eating – fertile land, the expertise of farmers and producers, diverse hospitality business and positive change occurring in our food system. There are rich and unique histories, experiences and cultures connected to food throughout our Shire.

Diets and the food environment have changed markedly over the past 30 years. Many Victorians do not consume enough of the foods and drinks required to keep them healthy (such as vegetables, fruit and wholegrain cereals) and consume too many discretionary foods and drinks high in energy, saturated fat, added sugar, salt or alcohol. This change has coincided with an increase in obesity, and contributed to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

Healthy eating also relates to access, including affordability, and creating supportive environments where positive changes to socio-cultural norms toward food can occur.⁸

- 46% of HSC residents met fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines.
- 54.7% of HSC residents did not meet the fruit and vegetable guidelines.
- 45.9% of HSC residents are obese or pre-obese.
- 9.1% of HSC drink sugar-sweetened drinks daily.

[Strategies]

- Lead by example, by supplying and promoting local, sustainable and healthier food and drink options across Council-run meetings, events, activities, facilities and programs.
- Support initiatives that encourage healthier lifestyles and habits across the lifespan, particularly in children's early years.
- Increase access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food e.g. by supporting positive food system change.
- Create diverse partnerships, including with key health agencies, to support initiatives and services that increase healthy eating.

Hepburn Shire Health Profile - Central Highlands Rural Health 2020

8 Increasing healthy eating - health.vic

9 Women's Health Grampian's 'Applying a Gender Lens to Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Planning', Hepburn Shire, February 2021

GENDER AND HEALTHY EATING

- Women's relationship with food is impacted by gender expectations, as well as biological factors related to sex.
- Australian women's food access, behaviours and health outcomes are strongly influenced by socioeconomic determinants and how food is prepared, shared and consumed.
- Older women who are housebound, in residential care, or with decreased food intake may be at risk of deficiency.
- Socially constructed body image ideals and normalisation of dieting and other weight control behaviours are significant and affect young women's relationship with food in particular.
- The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage shows that most towns in the Shire ranked in the lowest 25% of all Victorian towns/suburbs, indicating a high-moderate level of socio-economic disadvantage. Women living in areas of disadvantage and experiencing food insecurity are more likely to be obese. This correlation is not observed in men.
- Women in Hepburn were less likely to be pre-obese/obese (55.4%) than women from other Central Highlands LGAs, a lower rate than the regional (50%) and state average (43.7%).¹⁶ However, women in Hepburn were more likely to be obese (22%) compared to men (15%).⁹



[3] Improving mental wellbeing

A holistic approach to mental wellbeing involves recognising the person as a whole, not just their mental health. Understanding and recognising the connection and interdependence between mental, emotional, physical, social, spiritual and cultural wellbeing is at the core of improving mental wellbeing. Each person will have a different experience of mental wellbeing, and paths to recovery, depending on their age, race, gender, culture, heritage, language, faith, sexual and gender identity, relationship status, life experience and beliefs.

- 8.3% of Shire residents report high or very high psychological distress (lower than Central Highlands and Victorian rates).
- 37.6% of adult residents have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression.
- 20.6% of the population have sought assistance for a mental health problem.
- Residents have higher mortgage and rental stress rates than the Central Highland and Victorian average.

[Strategies]

- Raise awareness and understanding of available mental health services and resources, and advocate to localise, diversify and improve mental health services.
- Strengthen partnerships and support education, programs, events and prevention activities that focus on community participation, diversity and inclusion.
- Adopt a co-benefit approach to improving mental wellbeing, supporting active living and healthy eating initiatives
- Ensure Council services, activities and facilities are diverse, accessible and inclusive to remove barriers to participation.





[4] Preventing all forms of violence

Violence can occur in many forms, including physical (e.g. assault), psychological (e.g. coercion or bullying), sexual violence and through forms of deprivation or neglect. Multiple forms of violence may occur at once, all of which affect people or groups in our communities in different ways. There can be significant health and wellbeing impacts from violence, and fear of violence can limit people's everyday activities, social interaction and physical activity. It is important to view violence through an intersectional framework and to acknowledge associated risk factors, such as alcohol and other drugs.

Instances of 'crimes against a person' are significantly and overwhelming in the form of family violence and violence against women. Family violence causes physical and mental health impacts, social isolation from family and friends, food insecurity, displacement of housing, loss or limited employment and death. It is estimated that it costs Australia \$21.7 billion dollars a year to address family violence incidences (VicHealth 2015).

- In 2019, the rate of Family Violence per 100,000 people in the Shire was 1,151.5.
- 6.6 per cent of women in the Shire have experienced family violence.
- Women are more than twice as likely to be the victims of sexual assault in the Shire.
- Women are twice as likely to be in part-time employment compared to men (M25.9/F52.7).
- Men are far more likely to be in full-time jobs than women (M61.7/F34.5).
- Men and women in the Shire are more likely to have low support for gender equality in relationships.
- Women are more than three times more likely to be a lone parent (M22.5/F77.5).
- Women in the Shire are more likely to experience homelessness than men, per 10,000 (M63.9/F99.2).



GENDER AND PREVENTING ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE¹⁰

- Violence against women has far-reaching negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of women, children, families and communities.
- Women from diverse backgrounds, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women or women with disabilities, are more likely to experience higher rates of violence.
- Addressing the underlying causes of men's violence against women is key to preventing it. Research indicates the key drivers include beliefs and behaviours reflecting disrespect for women; low support for gender equality; and an adherence to rigid gender roles and identities. It is not sufficient to challenge these attitudes and beliefs in isolation; rather we also need to address the structures, policies and practices supporting them.

CoRE Alliance

Hepburn Shire Council has worked closely with local stakeholders in the area of gender equity, including Women's Health Grampians who leads the regional Communities of Respect & Equality (CoRE) Alliance. This Alliance of organisations, businesses and sporting clubs in the Grampians region share a vision for safe, equal and respectful communities and council has been a proud member of CoRE since 2016.

[Strategies]

- Provide strong Council leadership, both internally and in the community, to build understanding of safe, respectful and equitable relationships through education and awareness raising.
- Partner with regional and local organisations to work collaboratively in the prevention of all forms of violence and raise awareness and access to family violence services.
- Promote and raise awareness of links between family violence, gender equity and mental wellbeing.
- Implement provisions of the Gender Equality Act 2020, including a Gender Equality Action Plan.
- Continue to demonstrate leadership and commitment to the CoRE Alliance as an active member.

¹⁰Women's Health Grampian's 'Applying a Gender Lens to Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Planning', Hepburn Shire, February 2021

REPORTING THE *Council Plan*

The Council Plan is complemented by the Annual Plan, Annual Budget, Revenue and Rating Strategy, Financial Plan (Long Term Financial Plan) 2021-2031 to be adopted by October 2021. These documents detail the financial and non-financial resources required by Council to implement the key Focus Areas and Strategies identified within.

In the interests of transparency and accountability, Council is committed to regularly monitoring and reporting progress on the Council Plan 2021-2025 to the community.

Each quarter across the financial year, a progress report will be prepared and presented to an open Council Meeting.

Council has demonstrated its commitment to ongoing community engagement, and will measure its success based on the Strategic Indicators. Council will report extensively on critical deliverables and initiatives under each Focus Area of the Council Plan through the Annual Report each year.

Strategic Indicators identified for each Focus Area are based on achieving a target or desired trend. The plan will be reviewed annually to identify, and address changing circumstances and reflect on the community's priorities.

In addition, public health and wellbeing matters and deliverables of the MPHWP will be monitored, reported, and reviewed annually to ensure the community's health and wellbeing remain at the forefront of the Council's strategic planning. An external Health and Wellbeing Working Group will work in partnership with a Council working group to implement the MPHWP along with community. They will develop an annual Action Plan and undertake mid and annual reviews to monitor progress.





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 www.facebook.com/hepburncouncil

DAYLESFORD

Cnr. Duke & Albert Streets,
Daylesford
8:30am – 5:00pm

CRESWICK

Creswick Hub
68 Albert Street, Creswick
8:30am – 5:00pm

TRENTHAM

13 Albert Street, Trentham
Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm

CLUNES

The Warehouse – Clunes
36 Fraser Street, Clunes
Mon & Thurs 10am – 6pm
Wed & Fri 10am – 4pm

5.2 ADOPTION OF THE FINANCIAL PLAN 2021-2031 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as the Senior Accountant, I Paul Brumby have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Summary of Survey Results - Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 [**5.2.1** - 29 pages]
2. Financial Plan 2021 - 2031 [**5.2.2** - 36 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the proposed Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 for adoption.

At the September Ordinary Meeting of Council 2021, Council approved the draft Financial Plan 2021-2031 for public exhibition. The draft plan was made publicly available on the Participate Hepburn website from 23 September 2021 to 6 October 2021. During this period Community feedback was invited by way of an online survey via Participate Hepburn.

During the Public Exhibition period Council received 21 survey responses. A summary of the responses is contained within the Key Issues section of this report.

Eight community members indicated that they would like Council to respond to their submission, and these responses will be provided after Council adopts a final version of the 10-year Financial Plan.

Council has had the opportunity to consider the submissions. On this occasion no changes are being proposed however, all feedback received during the public exhibition period has been included in an 'Ideas Bank. The Ideas Bank will be linked to a community engagement toolkit and these survey responses will be important resources for Council Officers to consider going forward.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Acknowledges the community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031;*
2. *Notes the feedback received on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031;*
3. *Provides a written response to all those community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 and requested a written response;*
4. *Adopts the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031; and*
5. *Notes that the adopted Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 will be published on Council's website.*

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Acknowledges the community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031;*
- 2. Notes the feedback received on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031;*
- 3. Provides a written response to all those community members who provided feedback on the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 and requested a written response;*
- 4. Adopts the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031; and*
- 5. Notes that the adopted Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 will be published on Council's website.*

Moved: Cr Don Henderson

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

BACKGROUND

The community survey on the draft version of the Hepburn Shire Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 was open for comment on Participate Hepburn from 23 September 2021 through to 6 October 2021.

KEY ISSUES

21 survey responses were received for this survey.

The survey posed thirty questions, and the responses to these questions are considered below.

Q1. If you would like Council to respond to your submission, please write your name:

Eight people have provided their name and will be provided with a response after Council has considered all the submissions. These names are not shown in the survey results attachment.

Q2. Your email:

Eight people have provided their email addresses and this page has been deleted from the attachment for privacy reasons.

The survey asked specific questions exploring the comfort/discomfort of survey respondents around five financial proposals. Full responses are shown in the survey results attachment, whilst the majority position is summarised below:

Q3. Increase borrowing – 52% very or somewhat uncomfortable with this option

Q4. Increase rates – 71% very or somewhat uncomfortable with this option

Q5. Increase user fees so only those who use the service pay more – 81% somewhat or very comfortable with this option

Q6. Reduce other services so that the savings can be reallocated – 57% somewhat or very comfortable with this option

Q7. Sell an asset, such as a property, that Council owns – 57% somewhat or very comfortable with this option

Q8. Do you have any ideas for Council to further increase its income?

The survey asked an open-ended question about ideas for Council to further increase its income and twelve people provided a response (with verbatim responses shown in the attachment). These suggestions fall broadly into two categories as summarised below:

One-off income generating suggestions:

- Sell the Rex building

Recurrent income generating/expense reducing suggestions:

- Introducing an unoccupied residence charge
- Introducing parking meter fees in Daylesford on weekends
- Introducing initial and annual fees for placing and maintaining a shipping container on a property
- Project fundraisers
- Cutting staff/reducing the salaries budget
- Amalgamating with another Council
- Introducing new swimming pool fees

The survey then asked survey respondents their view on the future levels of Council expenditure relative to the current levels of Council expenditure on 21 service areas. Full responses are shown in the survey results attachment, whilst the majority position for each service area is summarised below:

Q9. Assets, Roads and Maintenance – 62% about the same level of expenditure

Q10. Parks and Open Spaces – 71% about the same level of expenditure

Q11. Aged and Disability Services – 57% about the same level of expenditure

Q12. Waste, Recycling and Environment – 57% about the same level of expenditure

Q13. Compliance – 48% about the same level of expenditure

- Q14. Youth Services** – 48% about the same level of expenditure
- Q15. Capital and Major Works** – 38% about the same level of expenditure
- Q16. Strategic and Statutory Planning** – 48% about the same level of expenditure
- Q17. Community Development** – 52% about the same level of expenditure
- Q18. Communications** – 71% about the same level of expenditure
- Q19. Building Control** – 48% about the same level of expenditure
- Q20. Customer Service** – 90% about the same level of expenditure
- Q21. Early Years Services** – 57% about the same level of expenditure
- Q22. Recreation** – 52% about the same level of expenditure
- Q23. Sustainability** – 48% about the same level of expenditure
- Q24. Libraries** – 71% about the same level of expenditure
- Q25. Environmental Health** – 67% about the same level of expenditure
- Q26. Economic Development** – 57% about the same level of expenditure
- Q27. Emergency Management** – 67% about the same level of expenditure
- Q28. Risk and Property** – 67% about the same level of expenditure
- Q29. Natural Resource Management** – 52% about the same level of expenditure

Whilst for each of the 21 service areas, the majority of respondents wanted to see about the same level of expenditure in the future, there were some other trends of note:

Services where many respondents wanted to see more spending included:

- Natural Resource Management – 48%
- Waste, Recycling and Environment – 43%
- Sustainability – 38%
- Assets, Roads and Maintenance – 33%
- Youth Services – 33%
- Emergency Management – 33%

Services where many respondents wanted to see less spending included:

- Compliance – 43%
- Strategic and Statutory Planning – 38%
- Building Control – 33%

- Capital and Major Works – 33%

Services where respondents had a very high conviction that current spending levels should continue unchanged included:

- Customer Service – 90%
- Communications – 71%
- Parks and Open Spaces – 71%

Respondents also identified three service areas where spending less is not an option in their opinion. These services are:

- Waste, Recycling and Environment
- Emergency Management
- Natural Resource Management

Q30. Please provide any further details you wish to share as part of your submission, including feedback on the draft Long-Term Financial Plan.

The survey concluded by asking an open-ended question about providing any further details to share as part of your submission, including feedback on the draft Long-Term Financial Plan. Ten people took the opportunity to contribute their thoughts here. These suggestions touch on a broad range of issues, with the key themes summarised in the following table.

<p>Firstly, the original financial plan said that the community have expressed that they want council to spend less money on tourism and events, so this must be reflected in the Financial Plan, and it doesn't seem to be.</p>
<p>Secondly, given that the Community Vision & Plan is still in the draft stage it would have made more sense to release the Financial Plan after the release of the finalised Vision.</p>
<p>Thirdly as custodians of a significant catchment and important mineral springs , council must take a more active role in assuring our water is not squandered. This must be reflected in the community Vision & consequential financials.</p>
<p>Before looking ahead a decade – or even four years for that matter – it should be obvious that the biggest mistake of the past few years (Rex Theatre Renovation debacle) has to be rectified, has to be cleaned up.</p>
<p>I should say that I do congratulate the council, most sincerely, for killing some previously-approved projects during the March 2021 general meeting. Those were excellent decisions which were well taken.</p>
<p>Waste, recycling, and environment is inappropriately reflected in this list as it is a cost recovery activity. Worryingly, the waste budget does not seem to have circular economy developments in scope.</p>

Keep Hepburn's towns like country towns NOT city-fying with kerbs and footpaths. Spend less on footpaths; grass in the country is good to walk on too.
Allow for rezoning of rural properties instead of allowing sub developments of 400 & 600 sq metre blocks in towns
Council needs to allocate appropriate resources in the area of Asset Management and Maintenance for weed management and maintenance on Council roadsides. A high level of investment is urgently required, where there is significant neglect and invasion of blackberries and gorse species on Council roadsides that is compromising private farmland including damaging fences and encroaching on farm pasture. We have the responsibility of clearing kilometres of blackberries and gorse to access and replace fencing because Council has not fulfilled their weed control obligations over the years.
Council also provides no support for the repair of fences where Council trees have fallen on these fence lines, where they are the adjoining owner.
The real questions should be, what is Council in the business of? Is Council in the business of running childcare centres for example? I firmly believe that if it is not a legislated requirement to deliver the service, then don't. As pointed out in the Plan, we are a small Council with a low income base. We need to stop trying to be all things to all people and concentrate on delivering the key items really well - recreation, roads, rubbish, economic development and planning.
Amalgamation with city of Ballarat. We would have more money for services and infrastructure if we spent less per household on running a small council.

Councillors considered the contents of the submissions on the Council Financial Plan 2021-2031 at a Councillor briefing held on 18 October 2021. Following this discussion, all responses were noted. No changes have been proposed to the draft plan which will be presented to Council for adoption.

Council is committed to working with our community on key policies and plans in accordance with the Community Engagement Policy adopted March 2021. With this in mind all feedback received during the public exhibition period has been included in an 'Ideas Bank.' The Ideas Bank will be linked to a community engagement toolkit and these survey responses will be important resources for Council Officers to consider going forward.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2017-2021

High Performing Organisation

13. Deliver sustainable financial management, supported by effective long term financial planning (10 Years), cost savings and efficient purchasing, and developing additional income streams beyond rates revenue.

Section 91 of the *Local Government Act 2020* prescribes that Council must develop and maintain a financial plan as follows:

91 Financial Plan

(1) A Council must develop, adopt and keep in force a Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices.

(2) The scope of a Financial Plan is a period of at least the next 10 financial years.

(3) A Financial Plan must include the following in the manner and form prescribed by the regulations—

(a) statements describing the financial resources required to give effect to the Council Plan and other strategic plans of the Council;

(b) information about the decisions and assumptions that underpin the forecasts in the statements specified in paragraph (a);

(c) statements describing any other resource requirements that the Council considers appropriate to include in the Financial Plan;

(d) any other matters prescribed by the regulations.

(4) A Council must develop or review the Financial Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Financial Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election. (

5) The Financial Plan adopted under subsection (4) has effect from 1 July in the year following a general election.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The 10-year Financial Plan is a key strategic tool used to ensure the financial sustainability of Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report, rather this report presents a model of Council's possible performance and position over the coming ten years.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct risk implications associated with this report. Adopting the 10-year Financial Plan by the date required in the Act will eliminate the risk of non-compliance with Section 91 of the Act. A 10-year Financial Plan is a tool that can be used to mitigate the financial sustainability risk of Council in the medium term.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Council undertook community engagement on the 10-year Financial Plan, in order to seek refinements to the plan, prior to adopting a final version of the 10-year Financial Plan at a Special meeting of Council. The community engagement was a short consultation period via Participate Hepburn, but it should be noted that detailed consultation has already been undertaken through the broad engagement phase as part of the Hepburn Together project.

Eight community members indicated that they would like Council to respond to their submission, and these responses will be provided after Council adopts a final version of the 10-year Financial Plan.

Closed

Ten-year Financial Plan
[Hepburn Together](#)

20
Contributors

21
Contributions

Contribution summary

1. If you would like Council to respond to your submission please write your name: Required

Short Text | Skipped: 13 | Answered: 8 (38.1%)

Sentiment

No sentiment data

Tags

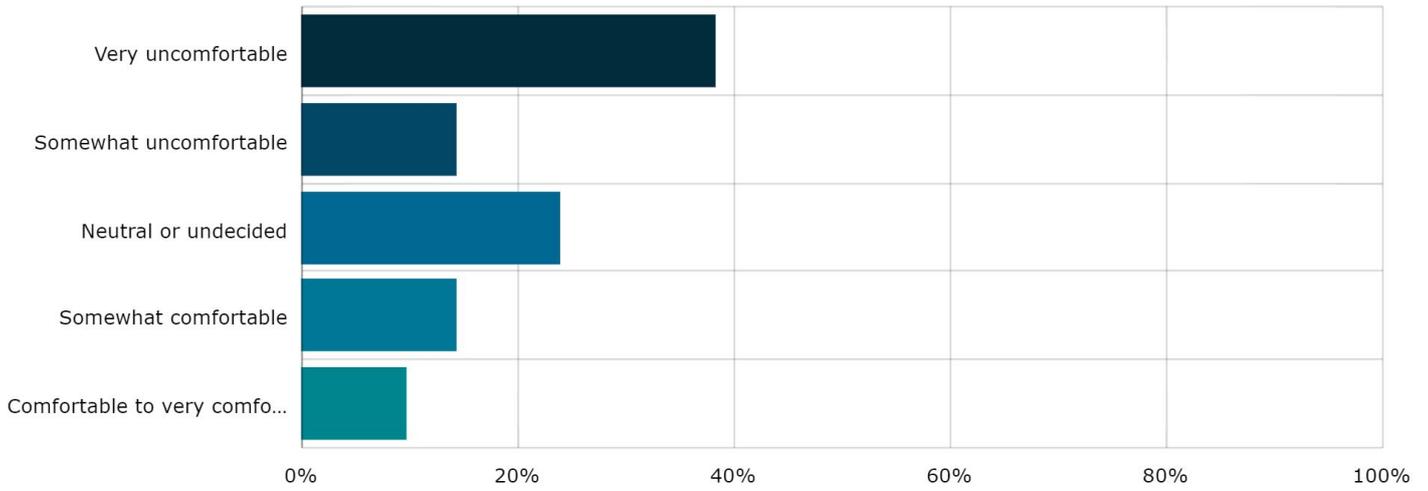
No tag data

Featured Contributions

No featured contributions

3. Increase borrowing Required

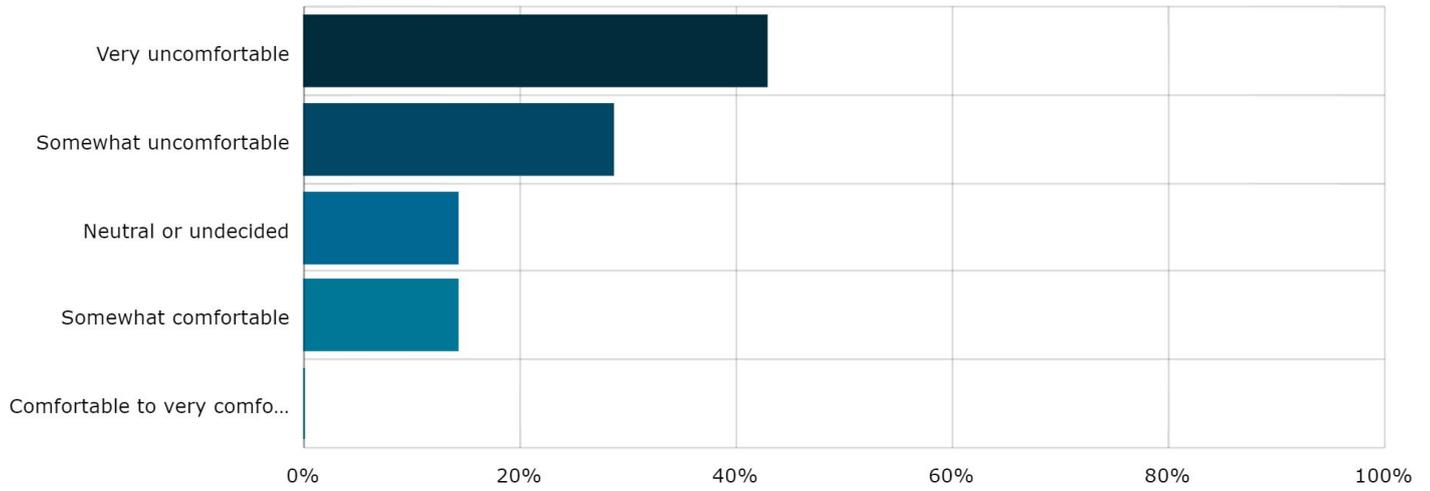
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Very uncomfortable	38.10%	8
Somewhat uncomfortable	14.29%	3
Neutral or undecided	23.81%	5
Somewhat comfortable	14.29%	3
Comfortable to very comfortable	9.52%	2
Total	100.00%	21

4. Increase rates Required

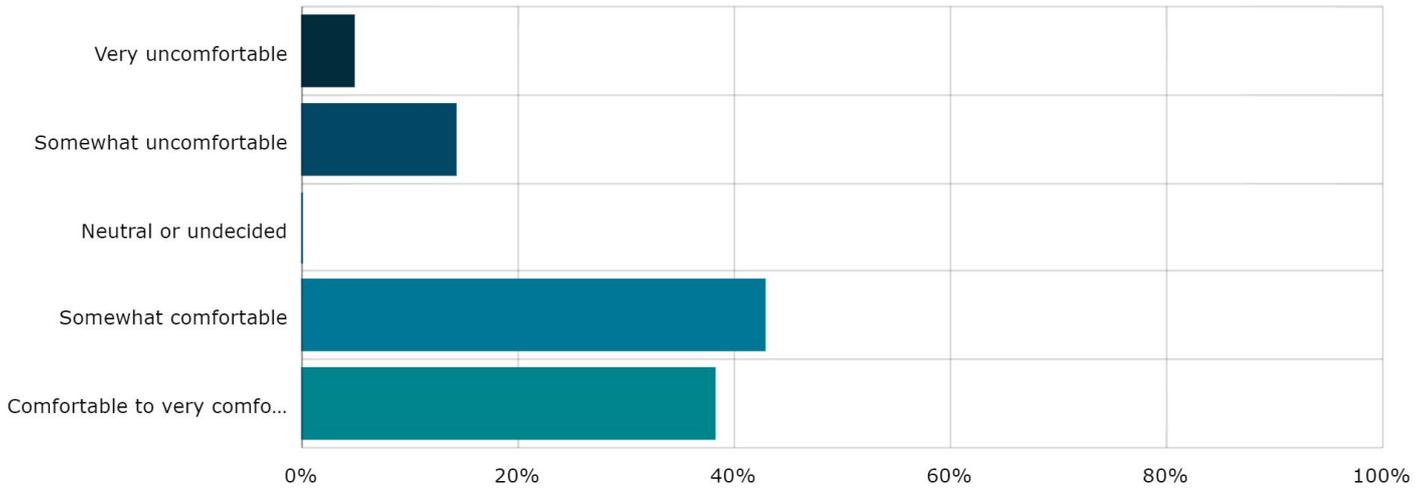
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Very uncomfortable	42.86%	9
Somewhat uncomfortable	28.57%	6
Neutral or undecided	14.29%	3
Somewhat comfortable	14.29%	3
Comfortable to very comfortable	0%	0
Total	100.00%	21

5. Increase user fees so only those who use the service pay more Required

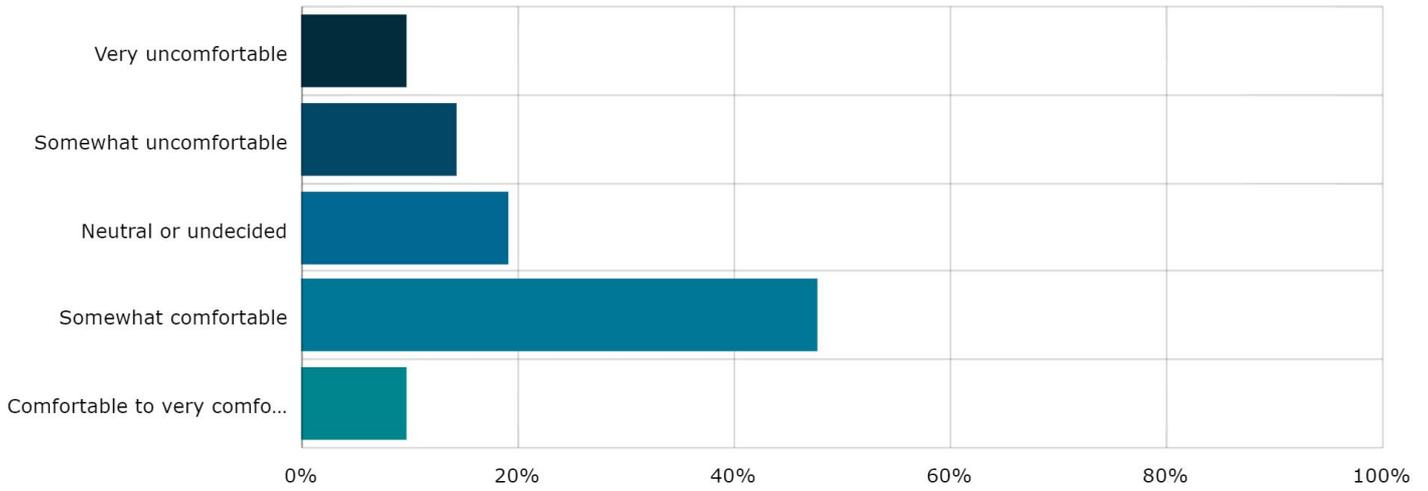
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Very uncomfortable	4.76%	1
Somewhat uncomfortable	14.29%	3
Neutral or undecided	0%	0
Somewhat comfortable	42.86%	9
Comfortable to very comfortable	38.10%	8
Total	100.00%	21

6. Reduce other services so that the savings can be reallocated Required

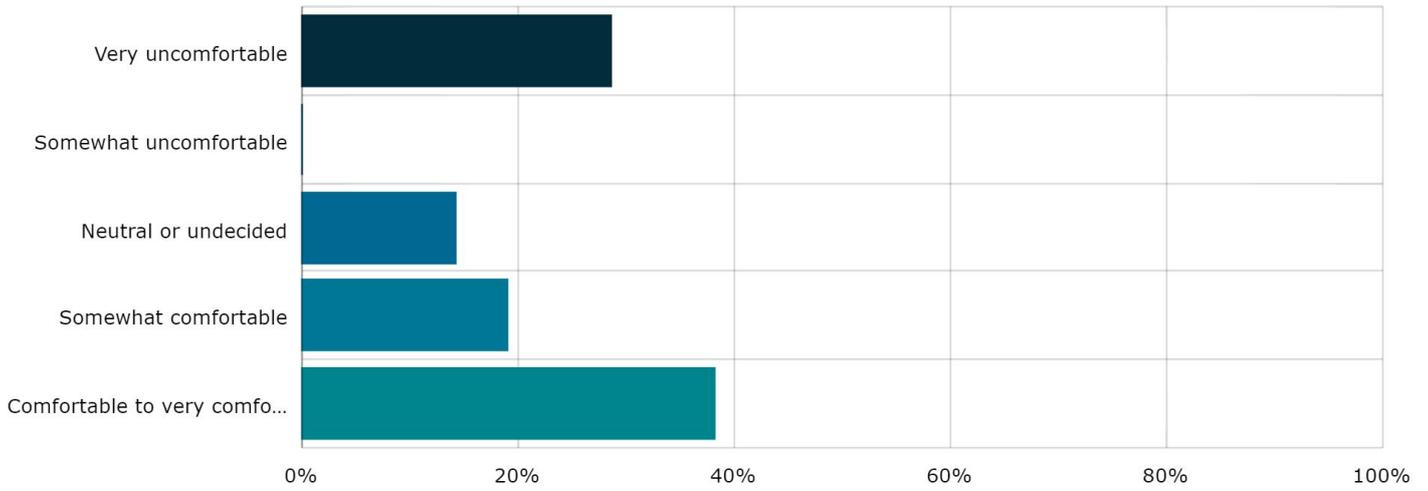
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Very uncomfortable	9.52%	2
Somewhat uncomfortable	14.29%	3
Neutral or undecided	19.05%	4
Somewhat comfortable	47.62%	10
Comfortable to very comfortable	9.52%	2
Total	100.00%	21

7. Sell an asset, such as a property, that Council owns Required

Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Very uncomfortable	28.57%	6
Somewhat uncomfortable	0%	0
Neutral or undecided	14.29%	3
Somewhat comfortable	19.05%	4
Comfortable to very comfortable	38.10%	8
Total	100.00%	21

8. Do you have any ideas for Council to further increase its income?

Long Text | Skipped: 9 | Answered: 12 (57.1%)

Sentiment

No sentiment data

Tags

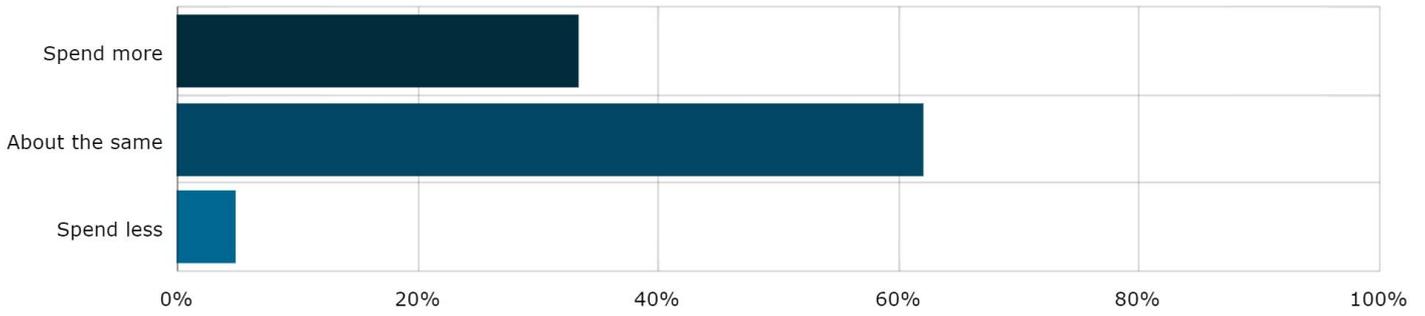
No tag data

Featured Contributions

No featured contributions

9. Assets, Roads and Maintenance Required

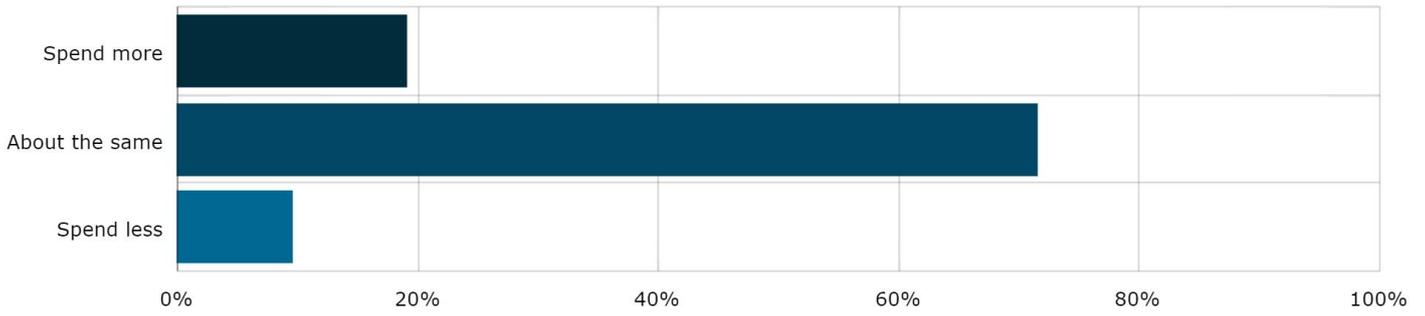
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	33.33%	7
About the same	61.90%	13
Spend less	4.76%	1
Total	100.00%	21

10. Parks and Open Spaces Required

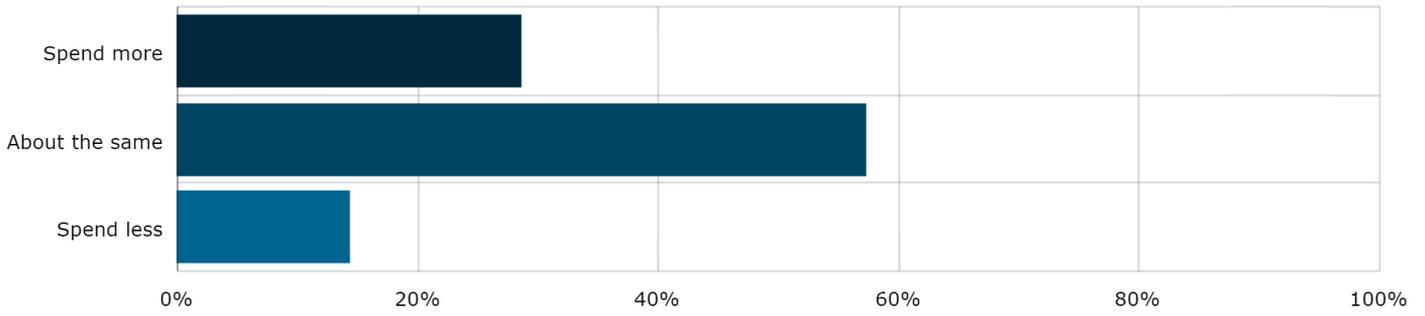
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	19.05%	4
About the same	71.43%	15
Spend less	9.52%	2
Total	100.00%	21

11. Aged and Disability Services Required

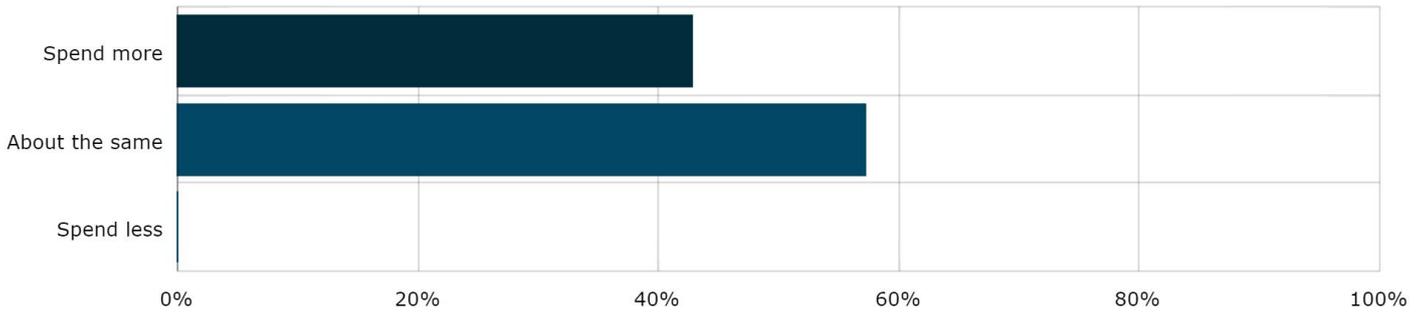
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	28.57%	6
About the same	57.14%	12
Spend less	14.29%	3
Total	100.00%	21

12. Waste, Recycling and Environment Required

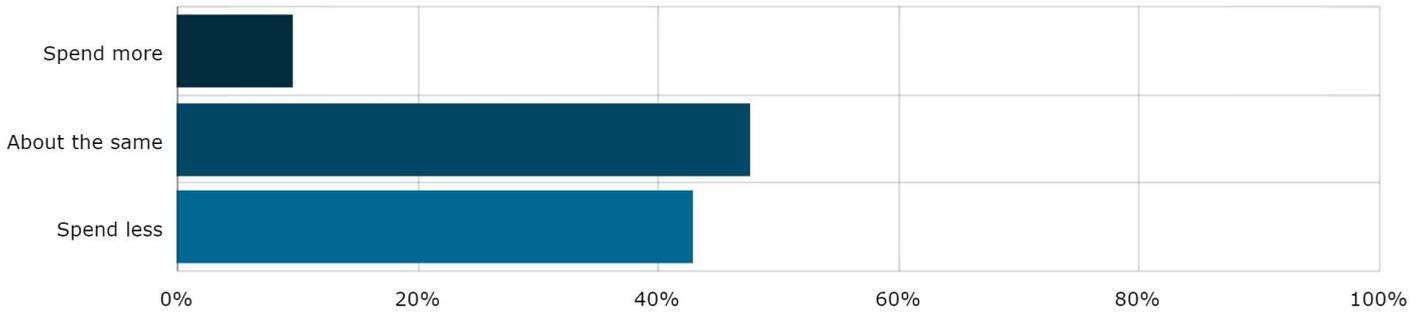
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	42.86%	9
About the same	57.14%	12
Spend less	0%	0
Total	100.00%	21

13. Compliance Required

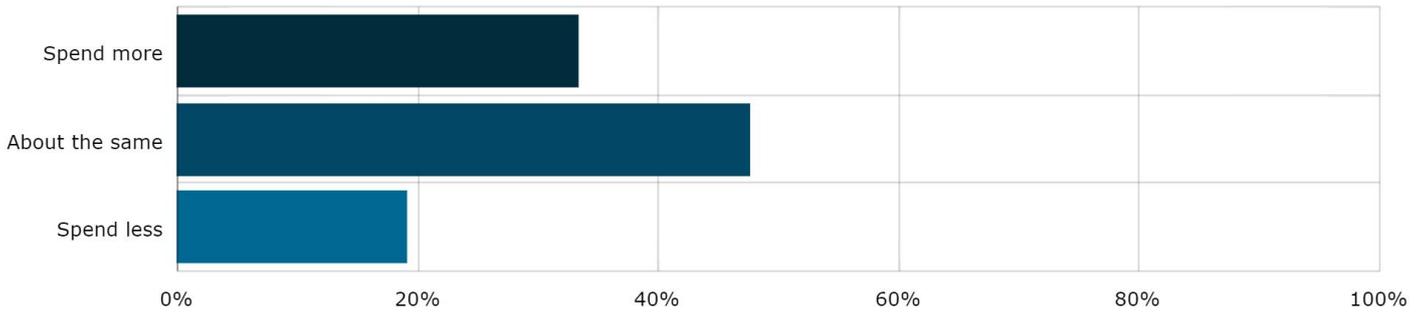
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	9.52%	2
About the same	47.62%	10
Spend less	42.86%	9
Total	100.00%	21

14. Youth Services Required

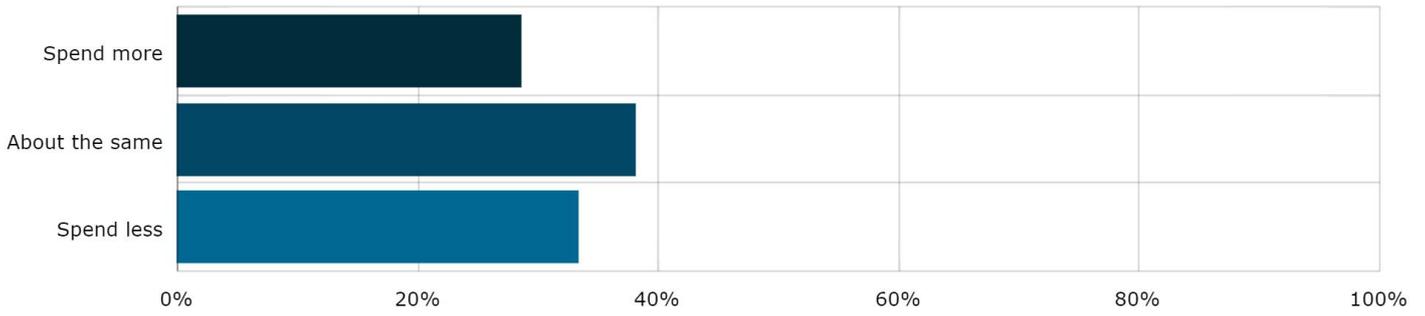
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	33.33%	7
About the same	47.62%	10
Spend less	19.05%	4
Total	100.00%	21

15. Capital and Major Works Required

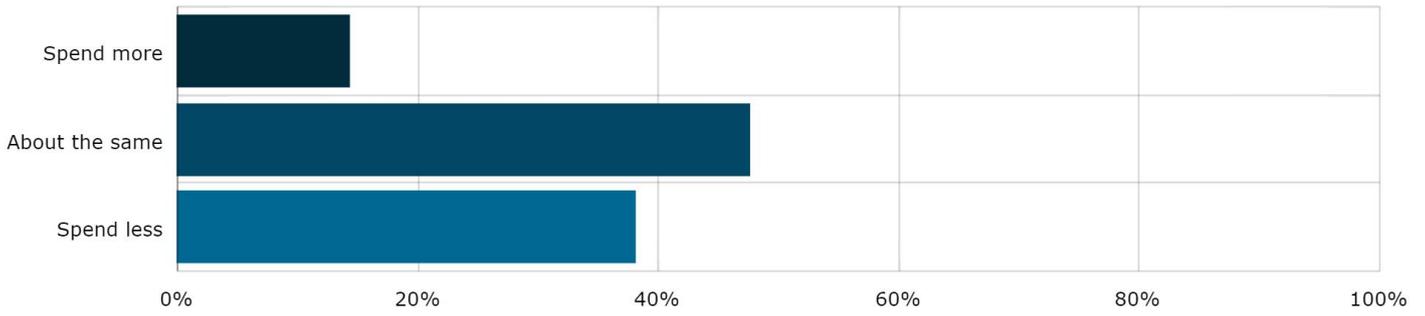
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	28.57%	6
About the same	38.10%	8
Spend less	33.33%	7
Total	100.00%	21

16. Strategic and Statutory Planning Required

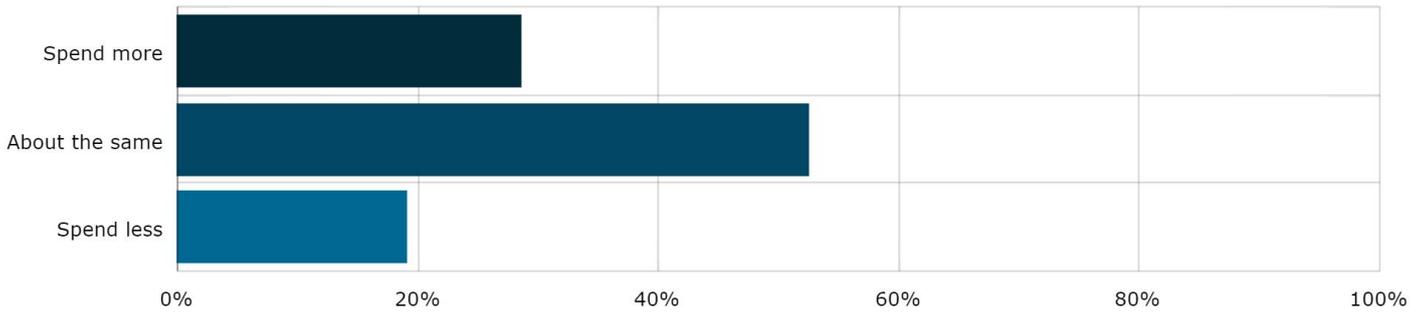
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	14.29%	3
About the same	47.62%	10
Spend less	38.10%	8
Total	100.00%	21

17. Community Development Required

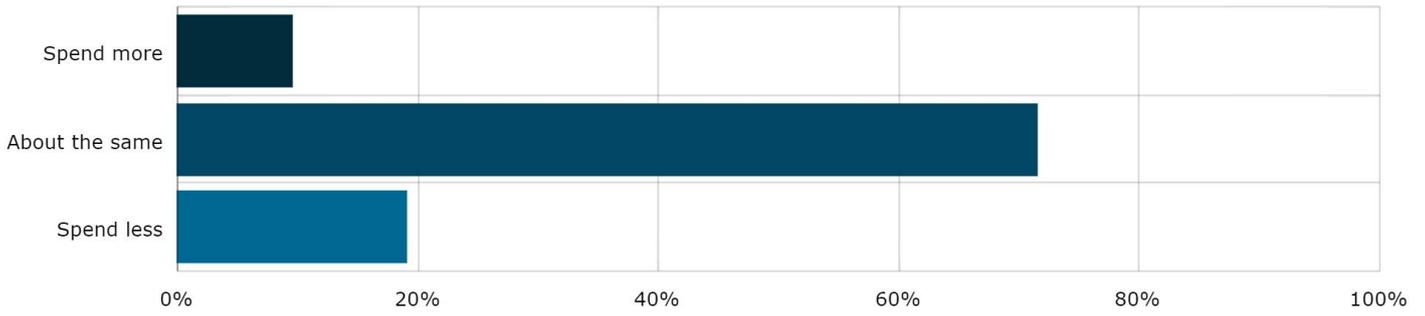
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	28.57%	6
About the same	52.38%	11
Spend less	19.05%	4
Total	100.00%	21

18. Communications Required

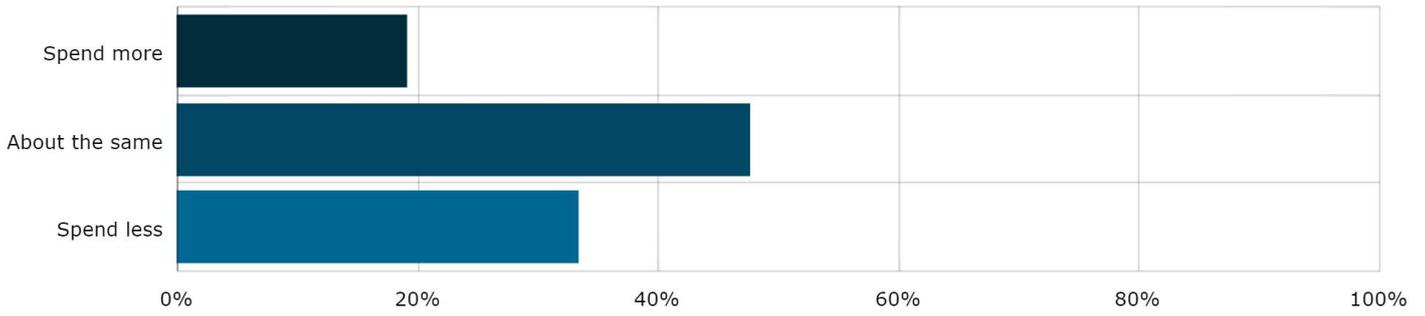
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	9.52%	2
About the same	71.43%	15
Spend less	19.05%	4
Total	100.00%	21

19. Building Control Required

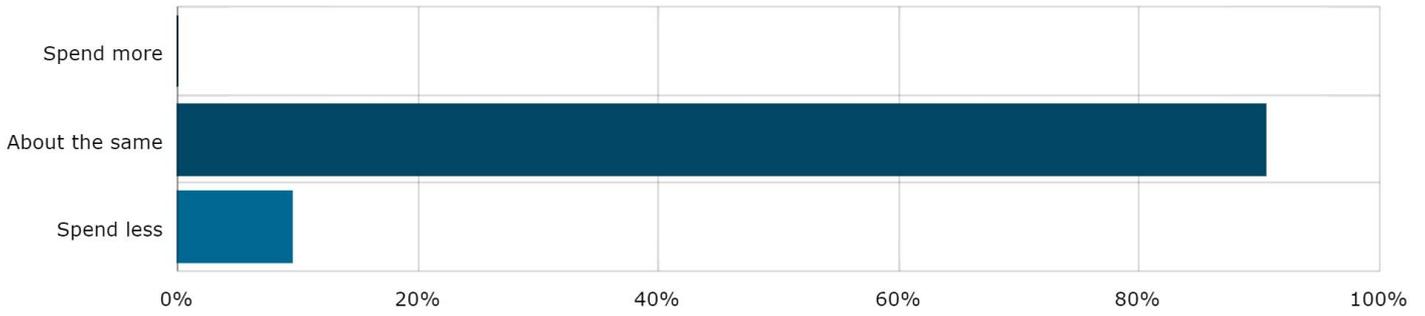
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	19.05%	4
About the same	47.62%	10
Spend less	33.33%	7
Total	100.00%	21

20. Customer Service Required

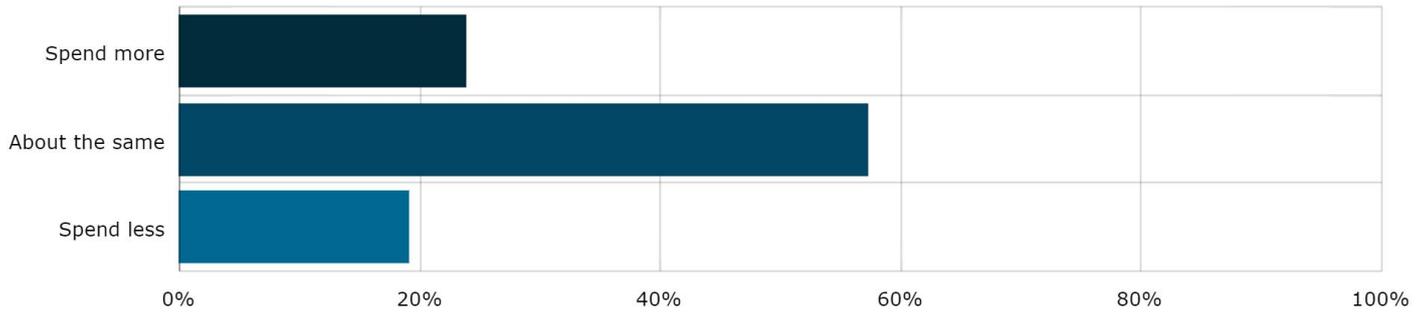
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	0%	0
About the same	90.48%	19
Spend less	9.52%	2
Total	100.00%	21

21. Early Years Services Required

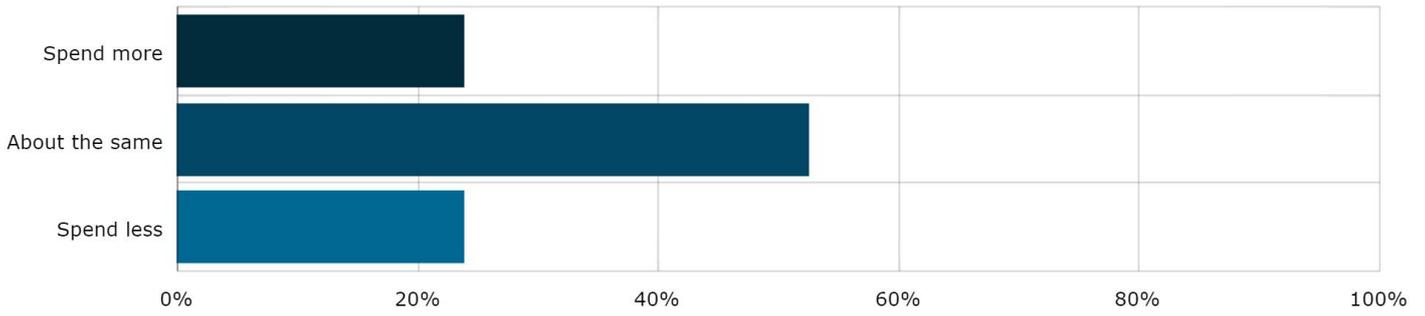
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	23.81%	5
About the same	57.14%	12
Spend less	19.05%	4
Total	100.00%	21

22. Recreation Required

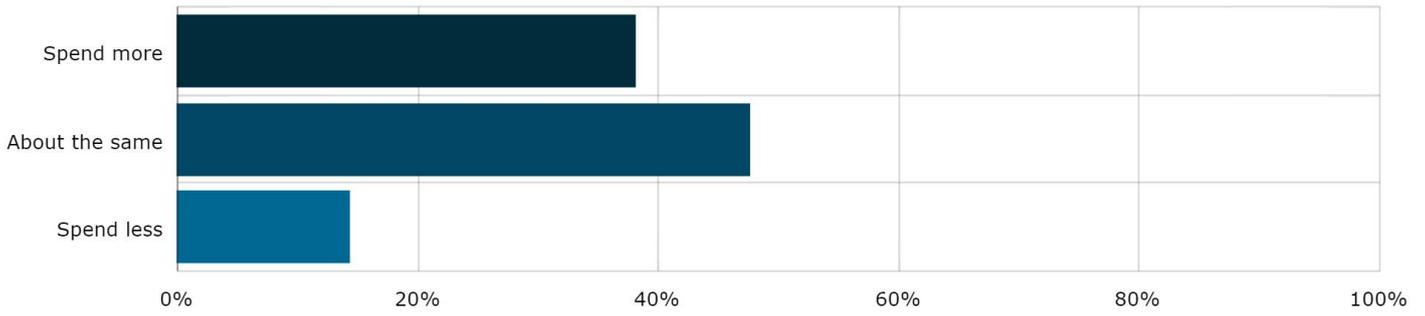
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	23.81%	5
About the same	52.38%	11
Spend less	23.81%	5
Total	100.00%	21

23. Sustainability Required

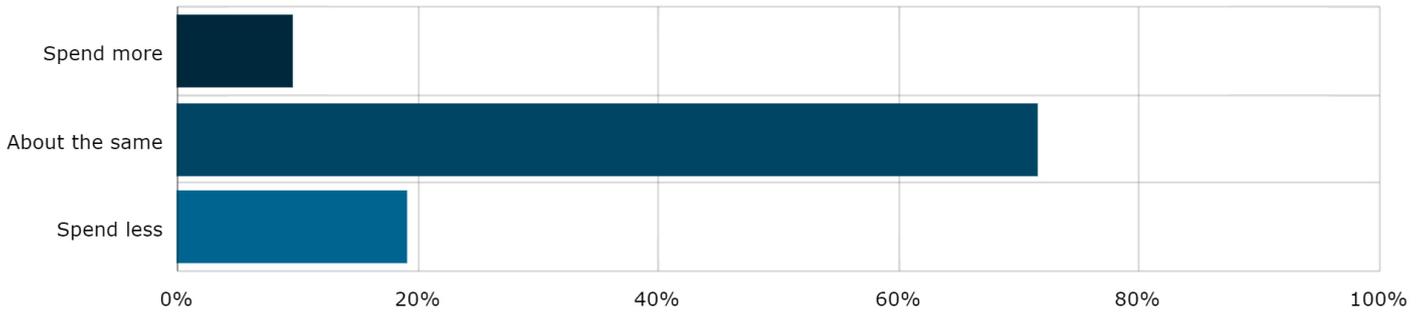
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	38.10%	8
About the same	47.62%	10
Spend less	14.29%	3
Total	100.00%	21

24. Libraries Required

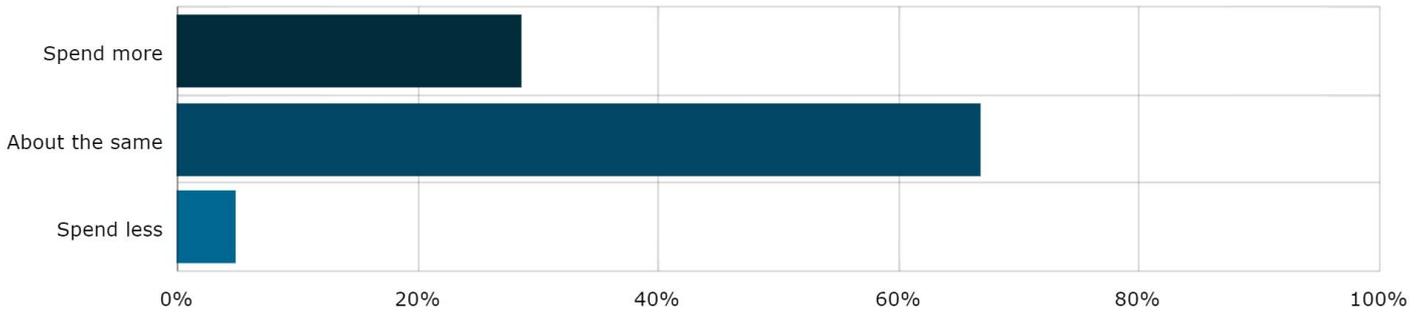
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	9.52%	2
About the same	71.43%	15
Spend less	19.05%	4
Total	100.00%	21

25. Environmental Health Required

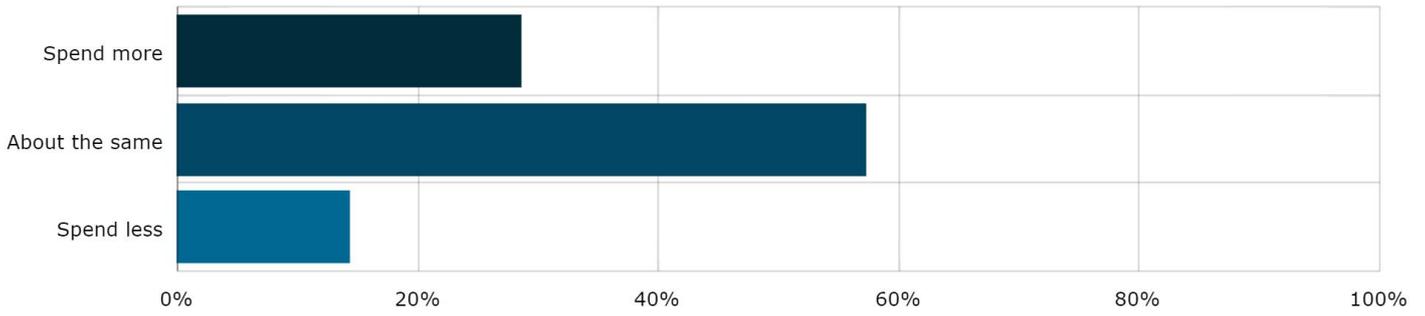
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	28.57%	6
About the same	66.67%	14
Spend less	4.76%	1
Total	100.00%	21

26. Economic Development Required

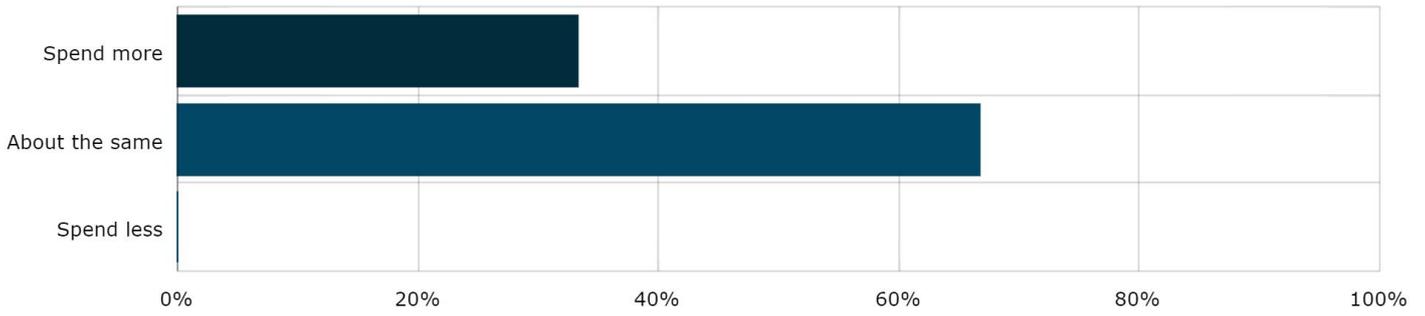
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	28.57%	6
About the same	57.14%	12
Spend less	14.29%	3
Total	100.00%	21

27. Emergency Management Required

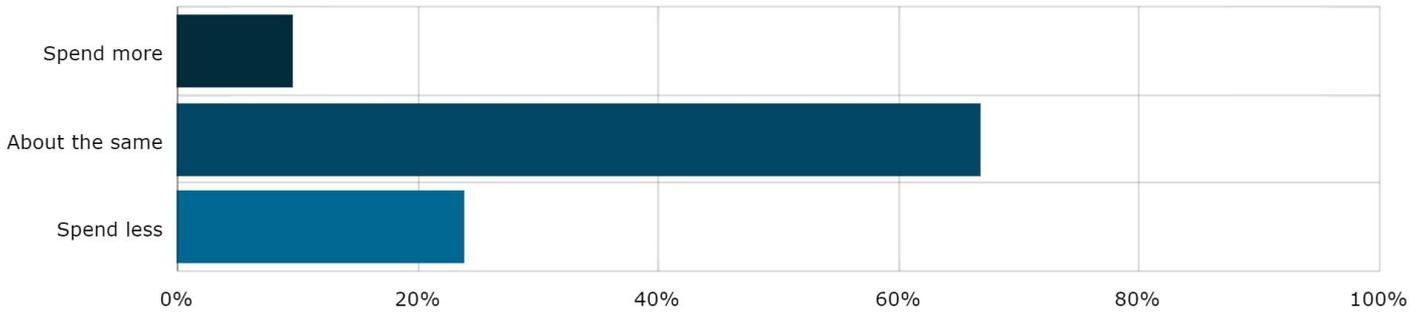
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	33.33%	7
About the same	66.67%	14
Spend less	0%	0
Total	100.00%	21

28. Risk and Property Required

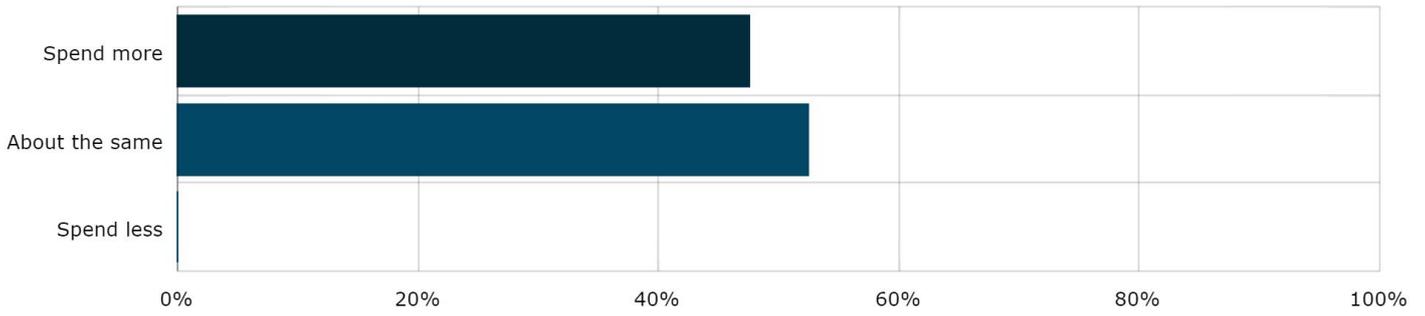
Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	9.52%	2
About the same	66.67%	14
Spend less	23.81%	5
Total	100.00%	21

29. Natural Resource Management Required

Select Box | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 21 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Spend more	47.62%	10
About the same	52.38%	11
Spend less	0%	0
Total	100.00%	21

30. Please provide any further details you wish to share as part of your submission, including feedback on the draft Long Term Financial Plan.

Long Text | Skipped: 11 | Answered: 10 (47.6%)

Sentiment

No sentiment data

Tags

No tag data

Featured Contributions

No featured contributions



Hepburn Shire Council

Financial Plan 2021- 2031

Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL



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1 - Executive Summary

1.1 - Introduction

The Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2030/31 (referred to as the Financial Plan in this document) is the key document in establishing the funding requirements of Hepburn Shire Council's strategy and implementation. The key principles underpinning the development of the Financial Plan are medium and long-term financial sustainability and the achievement of Council's strategic objectives as outlined in the Community Vision and Council Plan, developed as part of the Hepburn Together project.

Council's primary objective is to strive to achieve the best outcomes for the local community, having regard to the long-term and cumulative effects of decisions. Council does this in partnership with local community organisations and in conjunction with, or with the support of, other levels of government.

Hepburn Shire Council:

- has functions and authority conferred on it by the Victorian Parliament and relevant legislation;
- provides governance and leadership for the local community through advocacy, decision making and leadership;
- is accountable to the local community in the performance of our functions, the exercise of our authority and the use of our resources; and
- is responsible for many services, facilities, assets and infrastructure, which provide a range of everyday benefits to the community.

In developing the Financial Plan, key financial principles support Council's forecast financial performance and position over a 10-year period, forming part of our statutory requirements. The development of a Financial Plan is a new legislative requirement of the recently enacted Local Government Act 2020; and is required to be adopted by Council by 31 October 2021.

Due to the variable nature of assumptions that focus on fluctuations in the economy, an annual review of the Financial Plan will provide Council with the opportunity to review the financial principles to easily adapt to these external influences, changes in proposed service levels or projects.

The financial projections contained within this plan indicate Council's future direction and financial capacity, and provide a guide for future actions or opportunities. Council can then analyse the future effects and impacts of its current decisions, and review the Plan following the adoption of the Annual Budget each year.

As highlighted under section 2 (Legislative Requirements) there is a diagram which highlights the level of detail during the three phases of the Financial Plan. It is important to note that in years 2 to 10, where details are less "known" and figures are subject to greater levels of assumption, that these assumptions are prudent and don't vary significantly from that of the current operating environment. If assumptions are unrealistic, they can act to mask emerging financial sustainability issues. The 2020/21 Annual Financial Report and the 2021/22 Annual Budget forms the basis for the first year of the Financial Plan. Years 2-10 present inclusive years of financial projections that are underpinned by the base data and assumptions detailed in the plan.

1.2 - Financial Plan Overview

The plan covers the financial years 2021-22 to 2030-31 with an aim to remain financial sustainable; continue the renewal and upgrading of existing assets; and ensure delivery of the Community Vision and Council Plan 2021-25.

There are four primary issues for Council to balance in the development of the plan.

1 - Unrestricted Cash Balance

One challenge currently facing Council is its low unrestricted cash balance.

While Council currently has a significant cash and investments balance, the vast majority has been committed to future capital works, has been provided to fund specific projects, or is tied under other statutory or non-statutory requirements.

As at 30th of June 2020 the unrestricted cash balance was \$1.316 million. This situation had been improving during the 2020-21 financial year due to the decision made by Council to cancel or defer projects that had previously been included in the 2020-21 capital and operating works program, however, has been negatively impacted by the cost responding to the COVID Pandemic and Strom related costs. The draft unrestricted cash balance as at 30 June 2021 is \$842,000.

A low unrestricted cash balance means Councils does not have the same level of funding to allocate to services and capital works as other Councils, and needs to be closely monitored.

2 - Low property rating income

Hepburn Shire Council is a low rating Council relative to other small Councils and the State average, in relation to the raising of rate revenue.

For 2019/2020 the average rates charge for properties in small rural councils was \$1,687. This is \$111 or 6.6% per property higher than our Council, which averages \$1,576 per property. This equates to approximately \$1,260,738 per annum, which has been compounded over the past 5 years and will continue to do so over the life of this plan.

Given that rate revenue accounts for approximately 60% of Council's income and this source is subject to the State Government rate cap system, the task of delivering it's objectives and concurrently rectifying it's unrestricted cash balance will be an ongoing challenge, and a key focus of Council.

3 – COVID Financial Impact

Hepburn Shire, like Victoria and the rest of the world continues to be impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. The true impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet fully impacted Council's financials. There has been and will continue to be negative impacts through reduced revenue (rentals, rates interest waived) and additional costs to respond to the pandemic. The impacts of these items will be closely monitored by management during the coming year, and form updates to subsequent versions of the Financial Plan.

4 - Council Plan 2021-25

During 2021 Council has been working on a draft Community Vision and Council Plan, which includes a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Council developed these strategic documents following extensive community consultation earlier this year as part of the Hepburn Together Project.

Council had an extraordinary amount of community input, with more than 1,400 people and different community groups involved – which resulted in a community-led project which incorporated many of the communities’ ideas into the ambitions for the four-year Council Plan, and the ten-year Community Vision.

The Plan is ambitious and reflects the extensive Community engagement that has occurred during the Hepburn Together project and includes 114 strategies to be developed over the four-year Council Plan. A number of the strategies will require resources (human or financial) to be delivered, and the level of resources required will only be known as the strategies are developed. Therefore, the Financial Plan is developed with a link to the Council Plan, however it is important to note that each strategy has not been fully costed. This will occur as part of the Annual Budget process and is consistent across Local Government within Victoria. The Financial Plan is developed as a ‘guide’ to the financial resources required, with further details provided in subsequent documents, such as the Annual Budget.

2 - Legislative Requirements

This section describes how the Financial Plan links to the achievement of the Community Vision and the Council Plan within the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework. This framework guides Council in identifying community needs and aspirations over the long term (Community Vision), medium term (Council Plan) and short term (Annual Budget), and then holding itself accountable (Annual Report).

Figure 1 provides an overview of the core legislated elements of the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework and outcomes.

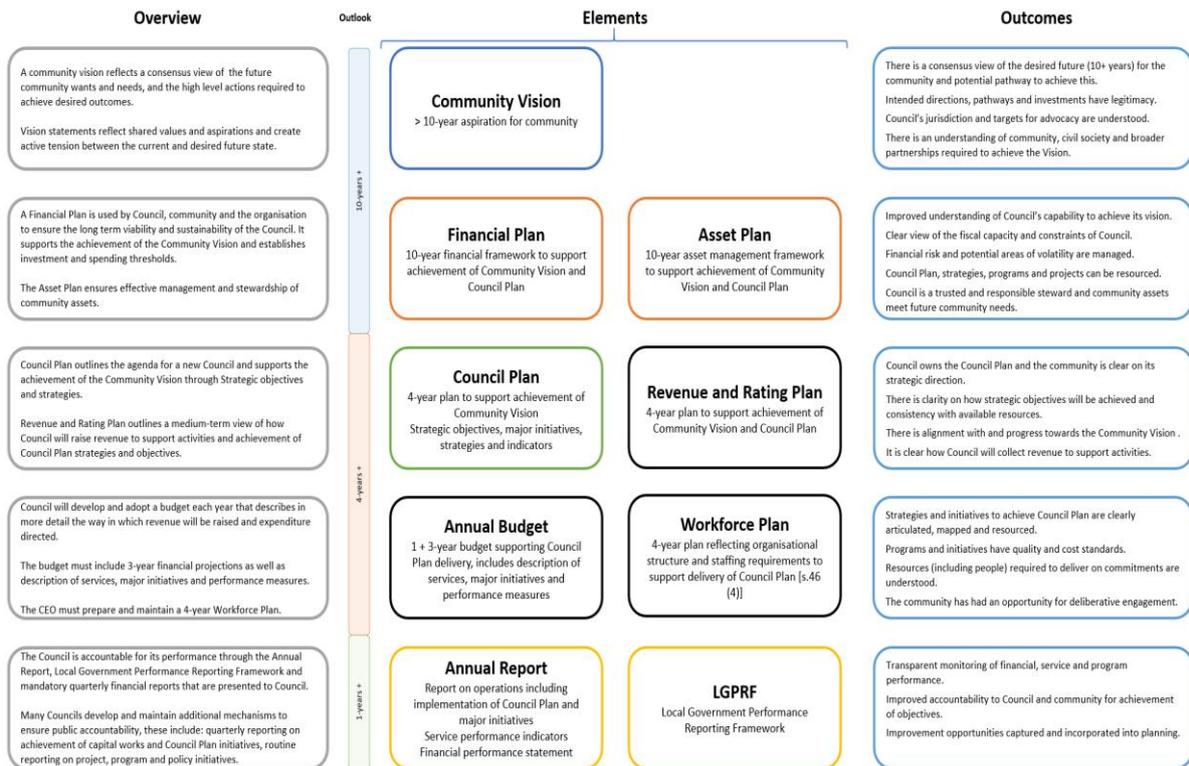


Figure 1. Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework and outcomes overview (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions 2020)

Figure 2 demonstrates how each element might inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.

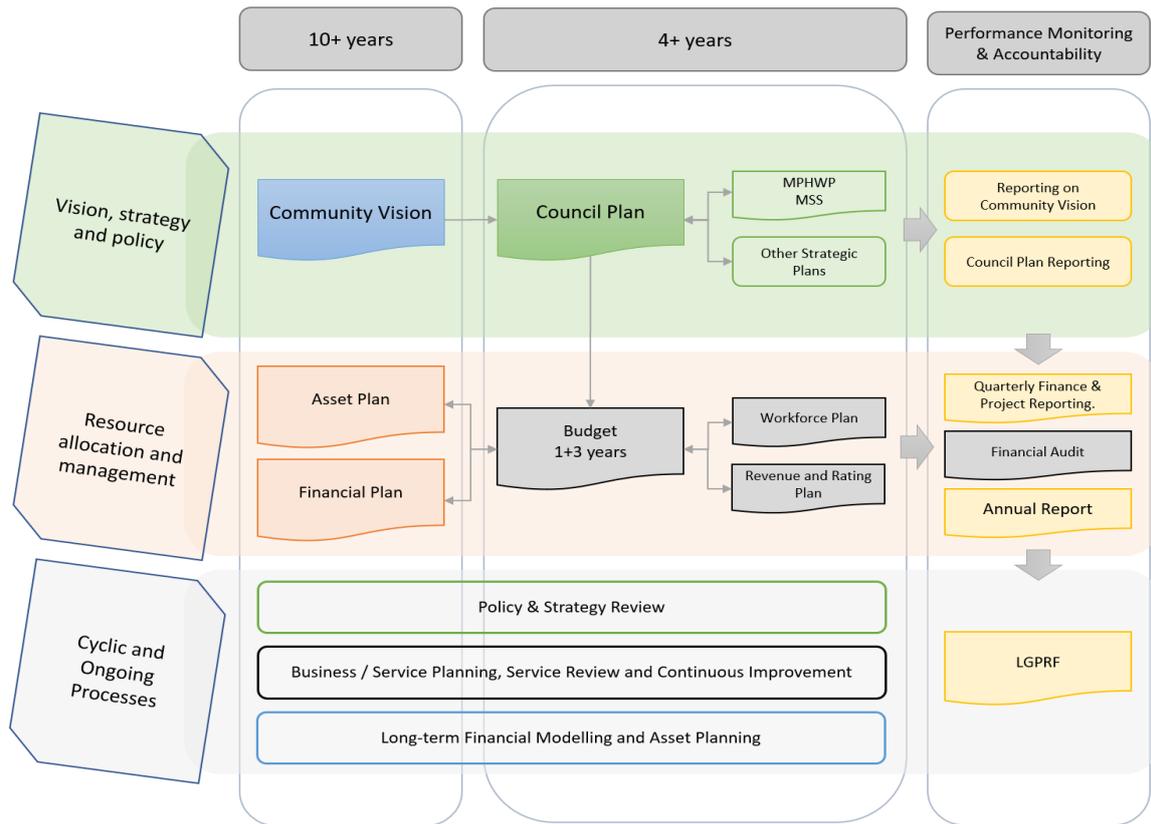


Figure 2. Elements influenced by the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework (Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions 2020)

Long Term Financial Plan - Level of plan detail



Acronyms:

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

3 - Planning and Principles

3.1 - Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- Councils financial plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan.
- The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring of progress and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

3.2 - Financial Management Principles

Council employs a strategic approach to financial planning that is influenced by the economic environment, our financial position, and impacts on the organisation, both internally and externally.

The aim of this strategic approach is to ensure:

- support of the achievement of our Community Vision 2021–2031;
- support of the achievement of our Council Plan 2021-2025;
- that the needs and expectations of the Hepburn Shire community are met;
- our long-term financial sustainability;
- intergenerational equity;
- delivery of appropriate, targeted, effective and efficient services;
- responsible rate increases;
- financial policies in place to ensure accountability; and
- Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position which are externally audited.

3.3 - Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money. The service performance principles are listed below:

- Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. The Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council Plan may be funded.
- Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.

- Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
- Council is developing a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
- Council is developing a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regards service provision.

It is important to note the Council has included strategy 5.3.3 within the Council plan to *Strengthen the Integrated Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework, including a programmed service review of all Council services*. This strategy will ensure during the life of the Council Plan, Councils puts in a process to review its current services, how they are delivered, financial allocations to each service and the Financial Plan will be updated based on decisions made throughout the service review process.

3.4 - Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan (when completed in 2022) is designed to inform the 10-year Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, the risk assessment issues as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

In addition to identifying the operational and strategic practices that ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner, the Asset Plan quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together the Financial Plan and Asset Plan seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

The completion of the Asset Plan in 2022, along with the 2022/23 Budget, will require an update to the Financial Plan, which is then intended to be reviewed annually. The development of the Asset Plan will also ensure a detailed 10-year capital works program is developed.

4 – Hepburn Together and Council Plan 2021-25

As part of Council’s transition to the Local Government Act 2020, there is a requirement for Council to prepare and adopt a 10-year Community Vision and 4-year Council Plan.

The Community Vision 2021-2031 is a statement that captures the aspirations of the community for the next 10 years. It is shaped by 5 Focus Areas which are critical to reaching the goals set out in the Community Vision.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 is Council’s key strategic document. It describes the Council’s and Communities vision for the future, how Council will strive towards that vision during its 4-year term, where it will focus its efforts, and how it will measure progress. Council, for the first time has chosen to integrate our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan into the Council Plan recognising the importance of the health and wellbeing of our citizens, and that health and wellbeing impacts every area of Council’s operations.

Council undertook an extensive community engagement program to seek the community’s input into the development of the Community Engagement Policy, Community Vision and Council Plan.

The draft Community Vision is –

Hepburn Shire - a place where all people in our community are valued, partnerships are fostered, the environment is protected, diversity is supported and innovation embraced.

The vision is supported by the five key areas of the Council Plan –



A resilient and sustainable environment

A responsive, adaptive, and resilient community that addresses changes to our climate and biodiversity.



A healthy supported, and empowered community

A community that values connection, supports diversity, health, and wellbeing, and is inclusive of all people and their needs.



Embracing our past and planning for the future

We acknowledge and empower the Traditional Owners and other cultures of our area to protect our historical roots while planning for future generations.



Diverse economy and opportunity

Our community is enhanced by a diverse and resilient economy that supports local aspirations through opportunity.



A dynamic and responsive council

Council and the community partner to achieve their aspirations through excellent communication and engagement, the delivery of effective services, strong financial management, and governance.

4.1 - Linkage to the Financial Plan

The Council Plan 2021-25 has a strong linkage to the development of the Financial Plan. Specific inclusions within the Council Plan are:

- Strategic Indicator – That Council achieve a low or medium risk rating for VAGO financial sustainability indicators.
- Strategy 5.3.3 – The Council enhance long-term financial planning and forecasting through the development of a Long-Term Financial Plan.

4.2 – Hepburn Together Project

Hepburn Shire Council embarked on a major strategic planning project called the Hepburn Together project. The project will shape the vision and direction for Hepburn Shire over the next 10 years and includes the development of Council’s Community Engagement Policy, Council’s 10-year Community Vision, The 4-year Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan), Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

The Hepburn Together project commenced in November 2020. The first round of engagement for the Community Engagement Policy was rolled out in January-February 2021. Consultation and engagement in relation to the Financial Plan is in line with the policy.

Broad engagement was carried out from 27 February to 8 April 2021 and Council rolled out broad engagement to inform the development of the Community Vision, the Plan and Financial Plan. Each of these plans will work together to form the strategic direction of the Hepburn Shire Council.

Council used a variety of engagement methods to collect feedback from the Hepburn Shire community. The broad engagement delivered a participation rate of 9.6 percent or over 1,400 participants – this is more significant than the majority of other Local Governments.

During the Hepburn Together project a number of key financial questions were asked, that have provided input to the development of the Council Plan and Financial Plan.

What should Council spend more money on?

- Infrastructure and amenity including preservation of history.
- Sustainability and environment including climate change action, sustainability and clean energy programs.
- Health and community services including aged care services, mental health services and family violence services.

What should Council spend less money on?

- Council expenditure including hiring external consultants, staffing, administration and expanding their role from traditional local government roles and responsibilities.
- Infrastructure and amenity relating to less major projects, high risk projects or those that have low socio-economic benefit.
- Tourism and events.

Council has a finite amount of money to deliver projects, initiatives and services. With rate capping, Council's income is not able to easily expand to accommodate new projects, initiatives or services. If new projects, initiatives or services were commissioned by Council – what is your view on how they should be funded?

- 50% - Council to obtain grant monies to fund projects
- 24% - I want Council to use its current funding pool
- 18% - I would be happy to pay more rates
- 8% - I already pay enough rates

5 - Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external/internal environment and consideration in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

5.1 - Key economic assumptions

It is important that the Financial Plan reflects the most recent economic data and forecasts available. Conducting an annual review of the plan will ensure that the underlying parameters and assumptions are reasonable, given current economic conditions and expectations.

The below tables presents information in regard to the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2021/22 to 2030/31. These assumptions will be assessed annually in order to ensure that they remain valid and updated accordingly.

Assumption	Notes	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Rates Cap Increase	2.3.1	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Supplementary Rates (\$000's)	2.3.1	\$152	\$169	\$174	\$179	\$174	\$179	\$184	\$189	\$195	\$200
Rateable property no. growth	2.3.1	0.90%	0.90%	0.90%	0.90%	0.85%	0.85%	0.85%	0.85%	0.85%	0.85%
Waste Charges	2.3.2	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Statutory fees and fines	2.3.3	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
User fees	2.3.3	2.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%	3.50%
Grants - Operating	2.3.4	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Grants - Capital	2.3.5	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Contributions - monetary	2.3.6	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Contributions - non-monetary	2.3.7	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Average Interest Rate on Investments	2.3.8	0.70%	0.80%	0.95%	1.10%	1.25%	1.40%	1.50%	1.50%	1.65%	1.80%
Other income	2.3.9	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Employee costs	2.3.10	3.50%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%	2.10%
Materials and services	2.3.11	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Depreciation & Amortisation	2.3.12	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%	1.05%
Other expenses	2.3.13	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%

5.2 Notes to Assumptions

The following provides greater details of the assumptions included within the Plan.

a) Rate Income Assumptions

Each year rate revenue increases as a result of a number of two main factors.

- The setting of the rate cap which is set by the Minister for Local Government. Rate capping has been in place since the 2016/17 financial year. While the 2021/22 Cap is 1.5%, the historical average over 6 years is 2.125%. Council has chosen the rate of 2% as an average for the remainder of the term of the financial plan.

- Supplementary rate income, which is additional income resulting from the development of existing properties and sub-divisions which creates new property income.

It is assumed that Council will increase rates at the rate allowed by the rate cap. While possible, zero rate rises and rate rises above the rate cap (requiring a rate cap exemption) have not been included in this plan.

A rate cap exemption maybe required in future years (included within the Financial Plan) to fund large capital projects or to increase the average rate charge to deliver services and programs in line with the Council Plan. If this was to occur, detailed community engagement would be undertaken.

b) Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25

In June 2021 (as required by the Local Government Act 2020) Council adopted its Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25, and this is available on Councils website.

The purpose of the Revenue and Rating Plan is to determine the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council to generate the required income to enable it to adequately finance the objectives in the Council Plan and the programs, services and capital works in the Budget.

The Revenue and Rating Plan is underpinned by Council's financial policies, such as the Revenue Collection and Financial Hardship Policy.

Elements of the Revenue and Rating Plan have been included in the Financial Plan. Council also included a motion to undertake further work in relation to rating differentials during 2021/22, however any changes to the differential rating system has no impact on total revenue raised and therefore no impact on the Financial Plan

c) Waste Charges

Council is currently undertaking a Waste Strategy (during 2021/22) and the type of service to be provided, infrastructure required and therefore the cost and revenue required will be further developed as part of that strategy. Following adoption of the Waste Strategy the Financial Plan will be required to be updated to reflect.

The Financial Plan includes an expected increase for the 2022/23 financial year of 8.0% before returning to an annual increase of 2.50% - however this is subject to a number of external factors (waste contracts), State Government Policy and implementation of the waste strategy.

d) Statutory Fees and Fines and User Fees

Statutory fees and fines (set by State Government) are estimated to increase by an average of 2.5%, which is a combination of a 2% CPI increase as well as an additional allowance for volume growth. User fees and fines (set by Council) are estimated to increase by an average of 3.5%, which is a combination of a 2.5% CPI increase as well as an additional allowance for volume growth.

e) Operating Grants

Operating grants are received by Council for tied (specific purpose) and un-tied Financial Assistance grant funding received from the Victorian Grants Commission. Operating grants are estimated to increase by 2.5% across the period of the financial plan. The 2021/22 budget only includes 50% of the Victoria Grants Commission grant as half of this grant was prepaid in 2020/21. For years 2-10 it is assumed that Council will receive 100% of its Victoria Grants Commission grant in each financial year.

f) Capital Grants

Capital Grant income is difficult to predict. Council has predicted recurrent grants to remain the same until the end of the 4-year budget. In 2025/26 it is predicted that the rate will increase by 5% then and remain at this level for the period of the plan.

g) Contributions Monetary

Are of generally low value relative to other income streams received by Council. The 2021-22 budget includes two project related contributions, which are over and above the normal level of contribution received. An adjustment has been included in the 2022-23 to return the forecast level of contributions to historical average levels and a minor increase of 2% has been factored as the on-going annual increase throughout the period of the plan.

h) Non-Monetary Contributions

Have historically been rare and when received are hard to predict the value of. For this reason, Council has chosen not to include any non-monetary contributions for the period of the plan.

i) Average interest rate on investments

Are currently at an all-time low, with predictions for the average received on investments during 2021-22 being 0.7%. It is difficult to accurately determine the future, with the Reserve Bank indicating that rates are likely to remain relatively unchanged until 2024, however other experts are expecting inflationary pressures to cause rates to increase due to inflationary pressures slightly sooner. Council has taken a relatively conservative approach with interest rate returns gradually increasing to 1.8% over the 10-year period of the plan.

j) Other income

Is also a relatively small component of Councils income streams. It is also made up of a number of different sources, which are on-going and also one-off in nature. It has been predicted that the total income stream will increase annually by 2% across the period of the plan.

k) Employee Costs

Employee costs are driven by a combination of factors, but predominantly by the Enterprise agreement, staff numbers and also the roles that they are undertaking.

The current enterprise agreement expired on 13 June 2021 and negotiations are currently taking place to negotiate a three or four-year enterprise agreement. Council's industrial relations advisors Meerkin and Apel have indicated that enterprise agreements currently under negotiation across the State are in the range of 1.2-1.7% per annum.

Council's current enterprise agreement is well below the benchmark for small rural councils and it is anticipated that there will be a one-off increase in year 1 plus 0.5% for banding increments. The enterprise agreement for years 2-10 is estimated at 1.6% plus 0.5% for banding increments.

The minimum Superannuation Guarantee rate increased from 9.5 per cent to 10.0 per cent on 1 July 2021, with further increases of 0.5 per cent each financial year thereafter until it reaches 12.0 per cent from 1 July 2025.

Based on the above factors, the assumption is that salary costs will increase by an average of 3.5% in year 2 and 2.1% for years 3-10.

l) Employee Costs (Workforce Plan)

As Council has recently gone through two organisational re-alignments in the past three years it has been assumed that the structure will remain fairly static in the short-term. The Plan includes no increase to staff numbers throughout the 10-years of the plan, this maybe difficult to achieve and still achieve delivery of the services.

As part of the new Local Government Act 2020, Council is required to have a Workforce Plan in place prior to 31 December 2021. The Workforce Plan is a 4-year plan reflection the organsiation structure and staffing required to support the delivery of the Council Plan.

The completion of the Workforce Plan, along with the 2022/23 Budget, will require an update to the Financial Plan, which is then intended to be reviewed annually.

m) Materials and Services

Materials and services are predominantly made up by waste contractor costs, recurrent maintenance of roads, parks and open spaces, IT, insurance and Utilities. These costs have been factored to increase by CPI, except where expectations for increase fall outside this expectation. Insurances for example have been increasing at a rate far higher than CPI and this expectation has been included in the forecast increase.

A number of one-off costs have also been factored into the plan, including:

- Election costs of \$200,000 have been added to the 2024/25 and 2028/29 years.
- Councillor induction and Council plan development has been budgeted at \$100,000 p.a. for the 2024/25, 2025/26, 2028/29 and 2029/30 years.
- 2021/22 includes a one-off Trentham storm clean-up expense of \$250,000. The total cost of recovery works will be multi-million however the majority of costs are anticipated to be reimbursed through insurance and State and Federal Government reimbursement.
- \$250,000 is funded in each of the financial year to fund new projects or initiatives as a result of the Council Plan.

n) Depreciation and Amortisation

Is a non-cash item that has been tied to the asset renewal strategy and the size of the Capital Works planned. Increases are tied to the expectation that replacement costs of Council assets will increase through CPI and other factors over time.

Further updates will be required following the adoption of the Asset Plan in 2022.

o) Other Expenses

Is also a relatively small component of Councils expenditure. It is also made up of a number of different sources, which are on-going and also one-off in nature. It has been predicted that the total expense will increase annually by 2% across the period of the plan.

p) Property sales

Following the planned completion of the Hepburn Hub at the Rex facility in 2022/2023, the assumption is that Council will review surplus freehold properties and undertake a sale process – which will repay debt associated with the project. A conservative estimate of \$3.25m has been modelled.

5.3 - Financial Policy Statements

The following measures demonstrate Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	\$0
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 1.25	1.25
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total borrowings / Rate revenue to remain below 60%	60%

Local Government Victoria has developed the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) to provide comprehensive performance information that meets the needs of a number of audiences. Those indicators and those of the above and the 10-year analysis are included at section 7 of the plan.

5.4 – Waste Management

Council's philosophy and Victorian Legislation is that the total cash cost of waste management will be fully funded by waste grants and charges over the life of the plan. Council recognises that capital expenditure on waste management will vary between years, so Council will use its waste management reserve to smooth out the annual variation in waste charges over time. The following table summarises the finances of Council's waste service over the life of the plan.

	Forecast / Actual 2020/21 \$'000	Budget 2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000
Waste Operating Income											
Kerbside Garbage Collection	1,167	1,416	1,529	1,460	1,497	1,534	1,572	1,611	1,651	1,692	1,734
Recycling Collection	744	909	982	938	961	985	1,010	1,035	1,061	1,088	1,115
Waste Property Charges	1,673	2,051	2,215	2,115	2,168	2,222	2,278	2,335	2,393	2,453	2,514
Transfer Station Fees	429	324	332	340	349	358	367	376	385	395	405
Tip Shop Merchandise Sales	69	61	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79
Grants	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Waste Operating Income	4,091	4,761	5,121	4,918	5,042	5,168	5,298	5,430	5,565	5,705	5,847
Waste Operating Expenses											
Kerbside Garbage Collection	1,647	1,146	1,175	1,204	1,234	1,265	1,297	1,329	1,362	1,396	1,431
Recycling Collection	1,195	1,848	1,894	1,941	1,990	2,040	2,091	2,143	2,197	2,252	2,308
Mulching Green Waste	169	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84
Transfer Stations	464	644	660	677	694	711	729	747	766	785	805
Street Sweeping	125	121	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	146	150
Litterbin Collection	104	204	209	214	219	224	230	236	242	248	254
Landfill Monitoring	84	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88
Waste Management	494	398	408	418	428	439	450	461	473	485	497
Waste Education	-	20	20	20	20	20	22	24	26	28	30
Waste Projects	74	100	70	72	76	80	85	90	95	100	105
Total Waste Operating Expenses	4,356	4,617	4,700	4,817	4,939	5,064	5,196	5,329	5,467	5,608	5,752
Waste Operating Surplus for the year	(265)	144	421	101	103	104	102	101	98	97	95
Waste Capital Program											
Waste capital grants	-	-	-	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Waste capital expenditure	-	-	-	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Net Waste Capital Program Expenditure	-	-	-	100							
Waste Cash Surplus (Deficit) for the year	(265)	144	421	1	3	4	2	1	(2)	(3)	(5)
Waste Reserve balance at start of year	(300)	(565)	(421)	-	1	4	8	10	11	9	6
Add Transfers to Waste Reserve	-	144	421	1	3	4	2	1	-	-	-
Less Transfers from Waste Reserve	(265)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(2)	(3)	(5)
Waste Reserve balance at end of year	(565)	(421)	-	1	4	8	10	11	9	6	1

6 - Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2021/22 to 2030/31.

6.1 - Comprehensive Income Statement

		Forecast / Actual 2020/21 \$'000	Budget 2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000
Income												
Rates and charges	4.1.1	22,027	23,547	24,240	24,897	25,574	26,249	26,952	27,675	28,417	29,180	29,964
Statutory fees and fines	4.1.2	1,041	947	970	994	1,019	1,045	1,070	1,097	1,125	1,153	1,182
User fees	4.1.3	1,091	1,044	1,080	1,117	1,157	1,197	1,239	1,282	1,327	1,374	1,421
Grants - Operating	4.1.4	8,368	5,815	7,289	7,467	7,648	7,834	8,025	8,220	8,420	8,626	8,836
Grants - Capital	4.1.4	3,189	12,308	3,402	3,722	4,299	2,008	2,328	2,548	2,069	2,070	2,070
Contributions - monetary	4.1.5	582	528	289	295	301	307	313	319	325	332	339
Contributions - non-monetary	4.1.5	147	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equip.		(3,931)	(30)	15	165	90	15	15	15	15	15	15
Other income	4.1.6	1,151	1,384	1,452	1,424	1,435	1,520	1,573	1,630	1,678	1,761	1,871
Total income		33,665	45,543	38,737	40,081	41,523	40,175	41,515	42,786	43,376	44,511	45,698
Expenses												
Employee costs	4.1.7	15,647	15,899	15,757	15,821	16,320	16,680	17,040	17,408	17,783	18,167	18,559
Materials and services	4.1.8	12,408	16,256	11,942	12,097	12,676	12,735	12,927	13,199	13,803	13,888	14,106
Depreciation	4.1.9	6,593	6,925	6,998	7,071	7,146	7,221	7,297	7,373	7,451	7,529	7,608
Amortisation - intangible assets	4.1.9	133	121	122	121	121	11	-	-	-	-	-
Bad and doubtful debts		247	15	20	25	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Borrowing costs	4.1.10	165	212	166	198	225	266	240	205	174	141	108
Other expenses	4.1.11	767	787	802	818	834	851	867	886	903	921	939
Total expenses		35,960	40,215	35,807	36,151	37,350	37,792	38,399	39,099	40,142	40,674	41,348
Total comprehensive result		(2,295)	5,328	2,930	3,930	4,173	2,383	3,116	3,687	3,234	3,837	4,350

Adjusted Underlying Result

	Forecast / Actual										
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Total Income	33,665	45,543	38,737	40,081	41,523	40,175	41,515	42,786	43,376	44,511	45,698
Total expenses	35,960	40,215	35,807	36,151	37,350	37,792	38,399	39,099	40,142	40,674	41,348
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(2,295)	5,328	2,930	3,930	4,173	2,383	3,116	3,687	3,234	3,837	4,350
Less non-operating income and expenses											
Grants - Capital (non-recurrent)	2,220	11,339	2,433	2,753	3,330	1,020	1,320	1,520	1,020	1,000	1,000
Contributions - monetary (capital)	582	528	289	295	301	307	313	319	325	332	339
Contributions - non-monetary	147	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted underlying surplus/(deficit)	(5,244)	(6,539)	208	882	542	1,056	1,483	1,848	1,889	2,505	3,011

6.2 - Balance Sheet

	Forecast	Budget									
	/ Actual		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	2020/21	2021/22	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and cash equivalents	8,839	7,256	4,878	4,256	4,262	4,121	4,084	4,471	5,306	5,644	6,399
Trade and other receivables	4,542	4,377	4,408	4,460	4,512	4,552	4,606	4,648	4,705	4,764	4,824
Other financial assets	18,202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inventories	19	15	19	16	13	19	19	19	19	19	19
Other assets	130	39	30	40	55	55	55	56	55	56	55
Total current assets	31,732	11,687	9,335	8,772	8,842	8,747	8,764	9,194	10,085	10,483	11,297
Non-current assets											
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	326,340	343,060	349,563	355,085	360,406	362,171	364,052	366,373	367,748	370,189	372,650
Intangible assets	408	409	286	165	44	33	33	33	33	33	33
Total non-current assets	326,748	343,469	349,849	355,250	360,450	362,204	364,085	366,406	367,781	370,222	372,683
Total assets	358,480	355,156	359,184	364,022	369,292	370,951	372,849	375,600	377,866	380,705	383,980
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	8,430	3,111	3,157	3,203	3,203	3,203	3,203	3,203	3,203	3,203	3,203
Trust funds and deposits	1,205	1,205	1,209	1,213	1,217	1,221	1,214	1,214	1,214	1,214	1,214
Provisions	2,482	2,368	2,466	2,562	2,443	2,444	2,443	2,443	2,443	2,444	2,443
Interest-bearing liabilities	2,065	663	839	1,005	1,229	1,212	937	968	1,000	1,043	639
Other Liabilities liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities	14,182	7,347	7,671	7,983	8,092	8,080	7,797	7,828	7,860	7,904	7,499
Non-current liabilities											
Provisions	455	464	473	482	493	502	513	523	533	544	555
Interest-bearing liabilities	4,526	4,580	5,345	5,932	6,909	6,188	5,242	4,265	3,255	2,202	1,521
Other liabilities	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total non-current liabilities	5,007	5,044	5,818	6,414	7,402	6,690	5,755	4,788	3,788	2,746	2,076
Total liabilities	19,189	12,391	13,489	14,397	15,494	14,770	13,552	12,616	11,648	10,650	9,575
Net assets	339,291	342,765	345,695	349,625	353,798	356,181	359,297	362,984	366,218	370,055	374,405
Equity											
Accumulated surplus	160,265	164,969	167,887	171,996	176,290	178,787	182,013	185,805	189,141	193,074	197,515
Reserves	179,026	177,796	177,808	177,629	177,508	177,394	177,284	177,179	177,077	176,981	176,890
Total equity	339,291	342,765	345,695	349,625	353,798	356,181	359,297	362,984	366,218	370,055	374,405

6.3 - Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total	Accumulated Surplus	Revaluation Reserve	Other Reserves
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2021 Forecast				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	308,760	163,155	142,258	3,347
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(2,295)	(2,295)	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	32,826	-	32,826	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	293	-	(293)
Transfers from other reserves	-	(888)	-	888
Balance at end of the financial year	339,291	160,265	175,084	3,942
2022 Draft Budget				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	339,291	160,265	175,084	3,942
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	5,328	5,328	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(719)	-	719
Transfers from other reserves	-	1,949	-	(1,949)
Balance at end of the financial year	344,619	166,823	175,084	2,712
2023				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	344,619	166,823	175,084	2,712
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,930	2,930	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(935)	-	935
Transfers from other reserves	-	923	-	(923)
Balance at end of the financial year	347,549	169,741	175,084	2,724
2024				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	347,549	169,741	175,084	2,724
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,930	3,930	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(521)	-	521
Transfers from other reserves	-	700	-	(700)
Balance at end of the financial year	351,479	173,850	175,084	2,545
2025				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	351,479	173,850	175,084	2,545
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	4,173	4,173	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(529)	-	529
Transfers from other reserves	-	650	-	(650)
Balance at end of the financial year	355,652	178,144	175,084	2,424
2026				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	355,652	178,144	175,084	2,424
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,383	2,383	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(536)	-	536
Transfers from other reserves	-	650	-	(650)
Balance at end of the financial year	358,035	180,641	175,084	2,310

	Total	Accumulated Surplus	Revaluation Reserve	Other Reserves
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2027				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	358,035	180,641	175,084	2,310
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,116	3,116	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(540)	-	540
Transfers from other reserves	-	650	-	(650)
Balance at end of the financial year	361,151	183,867	175,084	2,200
2028				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	361,151	183,867	175,084	2,200
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,687	3,687	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(545)	-	545
Transfers from other reserves	-	650	-	(650)
Balance at end of the financial year	364,838	187,659	175,084	2,095
2029				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	364,838	187,659	175,084	2,095
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,234	3,234	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(550)	-	550
Transfers from other reserves	-	652	-	(652)
Balance at end of the financial year	368,072	190,995	175,084	1,993
2030				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	368,072	190,995	175,084	1,993
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,837	3,837	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(557)	-	557
Transfers from other reserves	-	653	-	(653)
Balance at end of the financial year	371,909	194,928	175,084	1,897
2031				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	371,909	194,928	175,084	1,897
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	4,350	4,350	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(564)	-	564
Transfers from other reserves	-	655	-	(655)
Balance at end of the financial year	376,259	199,369	175,084	1,806

6.4 - Statement of Cash Flows

	Forecast / Actual		Budget								
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)										
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and charges	21,768	23,722	24,056	24,690	25,361	26,045	26,730	27,461	28,185	28,941	29,719
Statutory fees and fines	1,008	932	956	980	1,004	1,030	1,056	1,083	1,111	1,138	1,168
User fees	915	966	1,074	1,107	1,142	1,183	1,225	1,269	1,314	1,360	1,408
Grants - operating	9,406	5,815	7,289	7,467	7,648	7,834	8,024	8,220	8,420	8,626	8,836
Grants - capital	8,420	4,570	3,402	3,722	4,299	2,008	2,328	2,548	2,069	2,070	2,070
Contributions - monetary	582	528	289	295	301	307	313	319	325	332	339
Interest received	97	235	322	270	259	322	351	384	407	467	551
Rent received	720	1,055	1,094	1,116	1,139	1,162	1,185	1,208	1,232	1,257	1,282
Trust funds and deposits taken	-	(11)	4	4	4	4	(7)	-	-	-	-
Other receipts	122	186	190	194	198	202	206	210	214	218	223
Net GST refund / payment	1,502	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Employee costs	(15,492)	(15,814)	(15,659)	(15,724)	(16,438)	(16,680)	(17,040)	(17,408)	(17,784)	(18,167)	(18,559)
Materials and services	(15,194)	(16,578)	(11,882)	(12,048)	(12,678)	(12,732)	(12,917)	(13,190)	(13,793)	(13,878)	(14,095)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other payments	(843)	(786)	(802)	(818)	(834)	(851)	(868)	(885)	(903)	(921)	(940)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	13,009	4,820	10,333	11,255	11,405	9,834	10,586	11,219	10,797	11,443	12,002
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(9,489)	(22,975)	(13,636)	(14,079)	(13,277)	(10,120)	(9,312)	(9,830)	(8,960)	(10,104)	(10,204)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	41	(30)	150	1,650	900	1,150	150	150	150	150	150
Proceeds from sale of assets held for sale	712	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Payments for investments	(17,010)	(6,000)	(8,000)	(5,000)	(7,500)	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)	(8,000)
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	24,202	8,000	5,000	7,500	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	(25,746)	(4,803)	(13,486)	(12,429)	(12,377)	(8,970)	(9,162)	(9,680)	(8,810)	(9,954)	(10,054)
Cash flows from financing activities											
Finance costs	(165)	(212)	(166)	(198)	(225)	(266)	(240)	(205)	(174)	(141)	(108)
Proceeds from borrowings	3,012	740	1,625	1,600	2,215	500	-	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(412)	(2,128)	(684)	(848)	(1,013)	(1,238)	(1,221)	(946)	(978)	(1,010)	(1,086)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	2,435	(1,600)	775	554	977	(1,004)	(1,461)	(1,151)	(1,152)	(1,151)	(1,194)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(10,302)	(1,583)	(2,378)	(620)	5	(140)	(37)	388	835	338	754
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	19,141	8,839	7,256	4,878	4,258	4,263	4,123	4,086	4,474	5,309	5,647
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	8,839	7,256	4,878	4,258	4,263	4,123	4,086	4,474	5,309	5,647	6,401

6.5 - Statement of Capital Works

	Forecast / Actual		Budget								
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property											
Land improvements	-	-	24	60	84	36	36	36	30	36	36
Total land	-	-	24	60	84	36	36	36	30	36	36
Buildings	2,838	1,296	3,160	2,010	3,646	1,660	(580)	1,181	1,416	2,202	2,213
Total buildings	2,838	1,296	3,160	2,010	3,646	1,660	(580)	1,181	1,416	2,202	2,213
Total property	2,838	1,296	3,184	2,070	3,730	1,696	(544)	1,217	1,446	2,238	2,249
Plant and equipment											
Plant, machinery and equipment	496	860	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Computers and telecommunications	208	917	650	683	717	752	790	830	871	915	960
Library collection	68	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Total plant and equipment	772	1,837	1,310	1,343	1,377	1,412	1,450	1,490	1,531	1,575	1,620
Infrastructure											
Roads	3,695	3,078	3,220	3,284	3,350	3,417	3,485	3,555	3,589	3,699	3,773
Bridges	201	600	-	1,600	1,600	700	714	728	619	757	773
Footpaths and cycleways	947	534	986	852	624	637	1,649	663	558	689	703
Drainage	38	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	225	270	270
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	276	2,967	3,769	3,664	1,832	1,322	1,321	868	673	616	616
Waste management	-	169	-	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Parks, open space and streetscapes	497	763	897	796	294	466	766	840	120	60	-
Other infrastructure	100	138	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carry Forward Works		11,661									
Total infrastructure	5,754	20,180	9,142	10,666	8,170	7,012	8,405	7,124	5,984	6,291	6,335
Total capital works expenditure	9,364	23,313	13,636	14,079	13,277	10,120	9,311	9,831	8,961	10,104	10,204
Represented by:											
New asset expenditure	749	1,670	3,919	4,340	907	566	1,973	529	381	380	387
Asset renewal expenditure	4,841	13,591	5,947	7,285	7,517	7,866	6,958	7,930	7,066	7,344	7,433
Asset upgrade expenditure	3,774	8,052	3,770	3,454	3,854	1,688	1,632	871	763	880	884
Total capital works expenditure	9,364	23,313	13,636	15,079	12,278	10,120	10,563	9,330	8,210	8,604	8,704
Funding sources represented by:											
Grants and Contributions	3,771	12,308	3,402	3,722	4,299	2,008	2,328	2,548	2,069	2,070	2,070
Asset Sales	753	(30)	150	1,650	900	1,150	150	150	150	150	150
Council cash	1,828	10,295	8,459	8,107	4,863	6,463	8,084	6,632	5,992	6,384	6,484
Borrowings	3,012	740	1,625	1,600	2,215	500	-	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	9,364	23,313	13,636	15,079	12,277	10,121	10,562	9,330	8,211	8,604	8,704

6.6 - Statement of Human Resources

Council is currently developing an organisational workforce plan which will inform this Statement of Human Resources in future years. The below details for 2021/22 – the cost would increase across the 10-years of the plan based on the assumptions included and staff numbers per this plan remain stable.

Staff expenditure	2021/22 \$'000
Total staff expenditure	
Female	8,221
Male	7,191
Total staff expenditure	- 15,412
Permanent full time	
Female	4,213
Male	6,297
Total	- 10,510
Permanent part time	
Female	2,599
Male	542
Total	- 3,141
Casual, temporary & other expenditure	
Female	1,409
Male	352
Total	- 1,761

Staff numbers	2021/22 FTE
Total staff numbers	
Female	84.4
Male	91.3
Total staff numbers	175.7
Permanent full time	
Female	41.0
Male	68.0
Total	109.0
Permanent part time	
Female	31.2
Male	8.0
Total	39.2
Casual, temporary & other expenditure	
Female	12.2
Male	3.1
Total	15.3
Capitalised Labour	
Female	0.0
Male	12.2
Total	12.2

7 - Financial Plan and Performance Indicators

This section describes the performance indicators that have been included and reviewed as part of the development of the Financial Plan. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Financial Policy Statements

The following measures demonstrate Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast										
			Actual	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	\$0	\$'000s \$0	\$'000s -\$6,539	\$'000s \$208	\$'000s \$882	\$'000s \$542	\$'000s \$1,056	\$'000s \$1,483	\$'000s \$1,848	\$'000s \$1,889	\$'000s \$2,505	\$'000s \$3,011
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 1.25	1.25	2.24	1.59	1.22	1.10	1.09	1.08	1.12	1.17	1.28	1.33	1.51
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100%	%	372%	133%	144%	149%	122%	107%	107%	93%	95%	94%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total borrowings / Rate revenue to remain below 60%	60%	%	28%	32%	35%	40%	35%	29%	24%	19%	14%	9%

Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF)

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators that form part of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF), are determined by the State Government and form annual reporting through <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Forecast												Trend
			Actual	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	+ / o / -
Operating position															
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	1	%	-13.7%	-1.0%	1.3%	0.3%	1.5%	2.5%	3.3%	3.2%	4.5%	5.6%	+	
Liquidity															
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	2	%	291%	235%	214%	205%	185%	171%	167%	165%	172%	196%	+	
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	3	%	179%	122%	101%	87%	66%	48%	43%	41%	48%	63%	o	
Obligations															
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	4	%	25%	29%	32%	36%	32%	26%	21%	17%	13%	8%	+	
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		%	11%	4%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	4%	4%	+	
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		%	19%	21%	23%	25%	22%	19%	15%	12%	8%	6%	+	
Asset renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	5	%	144%	149%	155%	159%	130%	116%	117%	108%	108%	108%	-	
Stability															
Rates concentration	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	6	%	65%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	62%	+	
Rates effort	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		%	0.31%	0.30%	0.29%	0.29%	0.28%	0.27%	0.26%	0.25%	0.24%	0.24%	-	
Efficiency															
Expenditure level	Total expenses/ no. of property assessments		\$0	\$3,175	\$3,117	\$3,104	\$3,180	\$3,192	\$3,216	\$3,248	\$3,307	\$3,324	\$3,351	+	
Revenue level	Total rate revenue / no. of property assessments		\$0	\$1,609	\$1,654	\$1,700	\$1,747	\$1,794	\$1,841	\$1,890	\$1,939	\$1,989	\$2,040	+	
Key to Forecast Trend:															
+ Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator															
o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady															
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator															

Notes to indicators

1. Adjusted underlying result - An indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. The positive result for this indicator identifies an adjusted underlying surplus and the trend indicates improving underlying surpluses over the strategic resource plan.
2. Working Capital - The proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. This indicator increases over the final two years of the plan, predominantly as a result of the decreasing expenditure on loan interest and loan principal repayments.
3. Unrestricted Cash - Similar to working capital, this indicator represents Council's ability to meet its short term commitments without the need to use funds which are earmarked for other purposes. This indicator also remains positive over the final four years of the plan.
4. Debt compared to rates - This indicator measures the level of Council's total debt as a percentage of rate revenue. This indicator improves strongly over the life of the plan as the level of debt declines steadily over the second half of the plan.
5. Asset renewal - This percentage indicates the extent of Council's renewals against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets.
6. Rates concentration - Reflects extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services.

VAGO Financial Performance Indicators

The table below lists and describes the financial indicators that VAGO uses to assess Council's financial sustainability risks. These indicators should be considered collectively and are more useful when assessed over time as part of a trend analysis.

Indicator	Formula	Description	High risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
Net result margin (%)	Net result/total revenue	A positive result indicates a surplus, and the larger the percentage, the stronger the result. A negative result indicates a deficit. Operating deficits cannot be sustained in the long term. The net result and total revenue are obtained from the comprehensive operating statement.	Less than negative 10% Insufficient revenue is being generated to fund operations and asset renewal.	-10%–0% A risk of long-term run down to cash reserves and inability to fund asset renewals.	More than 0% Generating surpluses consistently.
Adjusted underlying result (%)	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)/adjusted underlying revenue	This measures an entity's ability to generate surplus in its ordinary course of business, excluding non-recurrent capital grants, non monetary asset contributions and other contributions to fund capital expenditure from its net result. A surplus or increasing surplus suggests an improvement in the operating position.	Less than 0% Insufficient surplus is being generated to fund operations.	0%–5% Surplus being generated to fund operations.	More than 5% Generating strong surpluses to fund operations.
Liquidity (ratio)	Current assets/current liabilities	This measures an entity's ability to pay existing liabilities in the next 12 months. A ratio of one or more means that an entity has more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.	Less than 0.75 Immediate sustainability issues with insufficient current assets to cover liabilities.	0.75–1.0 Need for caution with cashflow, as issues could arise with meeting obligations as they fall due.	More than 1.0 No immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due.
Internal financing (%)	Net operating cashflow/net capital expenditure	This measures an entity's ability to finance capital works from generated cashflow. The higher the percentage, the greater the ability for the entity to finance capital works from its own funds. Net operating cashflows and net capital expenditure are obtained from the cashflow statement.	Less than 75% Limited cash generated from operations to fund new assets and asset renewal.	75%–100% May not be generating sufficient cash from operations to fund new assets.	More than 100% Generating enough cash from operations to fund new assets.
Indebtedness (%)	Non-current liabilities/own-sourced revenue	This assesses an entity's ability to pay the principal and interest on its borrowings when they are due from the funds it generates. The lower the ratio, the less revenue the entity is required to use to repay its total debt. Own-sourced revenue is used, rather than total revenue, because it does not include grants or contributions.	More than 60% Potentially long-term concern over an entity's ability to repay debt levels from its own-source revenue.	40%–60% Some concern over the ability to repay debt from own-source revenue.	40% or less No concern over the ability to repay debt from own source revenue.

Indicator	Formula	Description	High risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
Capital replacement (ratio)	Cash outflows for the addition of new infrastructure, property, plant and equipment/depreciation	This compares the rate of spending on new infrastructure, property, plant and equipment with its depreciation. Ratios higher than 1:1 indicate that spending is faster than the depreciating rate. This is a long-term indicator because capital expenditure can be deferred in the short term if there are insufficient funds available from operations and borrowing is not an option. Cash outflows for infrastructure are taken from the cashflow statement. Depreciation is taken from the comprehensive operating statement.	Less than 1.0 Spending on capital works has not kept pace with consumption of assets.	1.0–1.5 May indicate spending on asset renewal is insufficient.	More than 1.5 Low risk of insufficient spending on asset renewal.
Renewal gap (ratio)	Renewal and upgrade expenditure/depreciation	This compares the rate of spending on renewing, restoring and replacing existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 1.0 indicate that spending on existing assets is faster than the depreciation rate.	Less than 0.5 Spending on existing assets has not kept pace with consumption of these assets.	0.5–1.0 May indicate insufficient spending on renewal of existing assets.	More than 1.0 Low risk of insufficient spending on asset base.

Indicator	Forecast /												
	Actual	Draft	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Net result margin (%)	-6.8%	11.7%	7.6%	9.8%	10.0%	5.9%	7.5%	8.6%	7.5%	8.6%	9.5%		
Adjusted underlying result (%)		-19.4%	0.6%	2.4%	1.4%	2.7%	3.7%	4.5%	4.5%	5.8%	6.8%		
Liquidity (ratio)	2.24	1.6	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.5		
Internal financing (%)	137.7%	21.0%	76.6%	90.6%	92.1%	109.6%	115.5%	115.9%	122.6%	115.0%	119.4%		
Indebtedness (%)	30.7%	18.8%	21.0%	22.4%	25.3%	22.3%	18.7%	15.1%	11.6%	8.2%	6.0%		
Capital replacement(ratio)	1.43	3.3	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3		
Renewal gap (ratio)	130.7%	3.1	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1		

Unrestricted and Unallocated Cash Position

Council's unrestricted and unallocated cash across the life of the plan is as follows:

	Forecast										
	/ Actual	Budget									
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Total Financial Assets	27,041	7,256	4,878	4,256	4,262	4,121	4,084	4,471	5,306	5,644	6,399
Council's cash and cash equivalents which are subject to external restrictions:											
Trust funds and deposits	(1,205)	(1,205)	(1,209)	(1,213)	(1,217)	(1,221)	(1,214)	(1,214)	(1,214)	(1,214)	(1,214)
Statutory reserves	(1,526)	(1,526)	(1,515)	(1,360)	(1,261)	(1,168)	(1,081)	(1,000)	(925)	(857)	(796)
Total unrestricted financial assets	24,310	4,525	2,154	1,683	1,784	1,732	1,789	2,257	3,167	3,573	4,389
Amounts have been allocated for specific future purposes by Council:											
Cash held to fund carried forward works	(12,125)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unexpended grants received	(6,386)	(2,500)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Federal Government funding in advance	(2,541)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Discretionary reserves	(2,416)	(1,186)	(1,209)	(1,185)	(1,163)	(1,142)	(1,119)	(1,095)	(1,068)	(1,040)	(1,010)
Total unrestricted & unallocated financial assets	842	839	945	498	621	590	670	1,162	2,099	2,533	3,379

8 – Strategies and Plans

This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10-year financial projections included to the Financial Plan. There are a number of key plans that may have a significant impact on future versions of the Financial Plan, namely:

- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Workforce Plan
- Asset Plan
- Waste Strategy
- Strategic Land Use Planning, including Housing Strategies
- Aquatic Strategy
- Sustainable Hepburn

There are also a number of other strategies that may have some impact, in particular the services and capital works delivered. Strategies such as, but not limited to, Walking and Cycling, Aquatic, Sustainability, and a number of others as included in the Council Plan 2021-25.

The Financial Plan will be updated annually to take into account Council decisions.

8.1 – Borrowing Strategy

Debt has been built into this Financial Plan based on a treasury management position of drawing down on loans when required, and repaying loans when due and excess cash is available. Debt costs are at an all time low, and Council has commitments to a number of long term intergenerational project, and therefore it is forecast within this plan to borrow for a number of projects. Decisions regarding the actual borrowings undertaken will occur as part of the Annual Budget process. Loan borrowing is a tool that can provide Council with a mechanism to implement objectives in the Council Plan. It is an instrument that spreads the cost of an asset over a number of years while ratepayers who benefit from the asset pays for it's consumption over time.

Projects currently forecast for additional borrowing during the life of the plan are:

- Finalisation of the Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project
- Creswick Trails construction
- Trentham Community Hub construction
- Daylesford to Hanging Rock construction

- Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Pavilion construction
- Daylesford Town Hall renewal

The total amount borrowed as at 30 June 2021 was \$6.631 million. The following table highlights Council's current projected loan balances including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

	Forecast / Actual											
	2020/21 \$'000	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	
Opening balance	3,990	6,631	5,243	6,184	6,936	8,138	7,400	6,179	5,233	4,255	3,245	
Plus New loans	3,012	740	1,625	1,600	2,215	500	-	-	-	-	-	
Less Principal repayment	(371)	(2,128)	(684)	(848)	(1,013)	(1,238)	(1,221)	(946)	(978)	(1,010)	(1,086)	
Closing balance	6,631	5,243	6,184	6,936	8,138	7,400	6,179	5,233	4,255	3,245	2,159	
Interest payment	165	212	166	198	225	266	240	205	174	141	108	

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

Performance Indicator	Target	Forecast / Actual										
		2020/21 %	2021/22 %	2022/23 %	2023/24 %	2024/25 %	2025/26 %	2026/27 %	2027/28 %	2028/29 %	2029/30 %	2030/31 %
Total borrowings / Rate revenue	Below 40%	%	25.17%	28.88%	31.50%	35.95%	31.81%	25.85%	21.30%	16.85%	12.51%	8.10%
Debt servicing / Rate revenue	Below 5%	%	1.02%	0.78%	0.90%	0.99%	1.14%	1.00%	0.83%	0.69%	0.54%	0.40%
Debt commitment / Rate revenue	Below 10%	%	11.23%	3.97%	4.75%	5.47%	6.47%	6.11%	4.69%	4.56%	4.44%	4.48%
Indebtedness / Own source revenue	Below 60%	%	19.50%	22.28%	24.26%	27.80%	24.65%	20.03%	16.51%	13.07%	9.69%	6.27%

Council has projected a low borrowing requirement as demonstrated by the performance indicators. As noted above under future borrowing requirements, there may be the need to borrow in order to invest in future capital works or other significant strategic initiatives during the term of the financial plan. These indicators highlight that there is significant scope if Council wishes to do so.

The main indicator used across the sector is the Indebtedness indicator and is reviewed by the Victorian Auditor General each year. Throughout the 10-year plan Council remains in the low-risk category with a rate below 40%.

8.2 - Reserves Strategy

Council maintains both statutory and discretionary reserves in line with standard practice.

Financial reserves are funds that have been set aside from operating and capital incomes for future funding of capital projects. From an accounting perspective, the balance of these funds are held under 'Equity' in Council's Balance Sheet. Reserve movements are reviewed during the annual budget process.

The nature and purpose of each reserve including any usage restrictions is outlined below.

- Open Space Recreation Reserve - The Open Space Recreation Reserve is used to hold developer contributions towards public open space infrastructure arising property developers undertaking property subdivisions. These funds are then used to expand and upgrade Council's public open space facilities. Use of the funds in the Open Space Recreation Reserve are restricted by legislation.
- Mineral Springs Reserve - The annual operating surplus of the Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve is transferred to this reserve each year. Reserve funds are then used for capital projects at the Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.
- Clunes Caravan Park Reserve - The Clunes Caravan Park Reserve contains funds reserved for future capital works projects at the Clunes Caravan Park. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.
- Heritage Advisory Reserve - The Heritage Advisory Reserve contains funds reserved for future heritage advice. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.
- Mt Beckworth Pit Reserve - The Mt Beckworth Pit Reserve contains funds reserved for future gravel pit restoration works at the Mt Beckworth Gravel Pit. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.
- Smeaton Hill Pit Reserve - The Smeaton Hill Pit Reserve contains funds reserved for future gravel pit restoration works at the Smeaton Hill Gravel Pit. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.
- Waste Management Reserve - The annual operating surplus of Council's waste management function is transferred to the Waste Management Reserve each year. Reserve funds are then used for waste management capital projects. Council is undertaking a Waste Strategy during 2021-2022 which will inform future waste management capital projects required by the shire. The use of funds in this reserve is not restricted by legislation and is at the discretion of Council.

- Debt Management Reserve - Council financed the repayment of its defined benefits superannuation liability with an interest only bond. The Debt Management Reserve was to hold the notional principal repayment due on this loan over the life of the loan. At the maturity of the interest only bond, the entire bond was repaid with the proceeds of this reserve.

The following table details the 10-year total of restricted and discretionary reserves.

Reserves Summary	Restricted & Discretionary											
Opening balance	3,348	3,942	2,712	2,724	2,545	2,424	2,310	2,200	2,095	1,993	1,897	1,897
Transfer to reserve	887	719	935	521	529	536	540	545	550	557	564	564
Transfer from reserve	-293	-1,949	-923	-700	-650	-650	-650	-650	-652	-653	-655	-655
Closing balance	3,942	2,712	2,724	2,545	2,424	2,310	2,200	2,095	1,993	1,897	1,806	1,806

6 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 6:49pm.