



# Annual Report 2023/24





## Acknowledgement

Swan Hill Rural City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, and pays its respects to their elders, past and present.

## Thanks

Congratulations to our photography competition winner, Shawn Brennan, whose photo of a shearing shed at Goschen features on our front cover.

Swan Hill Rural City Council would like to also thank Russell Singh and Dianne Martin for their generous donation of Harmony Day photos that have been used throughout this report.



# About our Annual Report

Swan Hill Rural City Council is pleased to present it's 2023/24 Annual Report, which provides a detailed account of our performance from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Documenting Council's performance against the 2023/24 Budget and the Council Plan, the Annual Report highlights achievements and challenges faced within key service areas and programs.

Council seeks to achieve community engagement and an understanding of Council's operations by conducting its affairs openly and with integrity.

Transparency in our decision-making and accountability are core values of Council, reflecting high levels of good governance.

This report provides information to a variety of audiences including community groups, businesses, ratepayers, visitors, investors, government agencies and other interested stakeholders.

## Our Offices

### Swan Hill Office

45 Splatt Street  
Swan Hill VIC 3585  
03 5036 2333

### Robinvale Office

72 Herbert Street  
Swan Hill VIC 3549  
03 5051 8000

### Postal

PO Box 488  
Swan Hill VIC 3585

### Email

[council@swanhill.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@swanhill.vic.gov.au)

### Website

[www.swanhill.vic.gov.au](http://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au)

### Social Media

FB: [@SwanHillCouncil](#)

IG: [@swanhillruralcitycouncil](#)





## Contents

### Introduction

Snapshot of Council	7
Vision Statement, Our Mission and Values	8
Highlights of the year	9
The year at a glance	12

### The year in review

Mayor and CEO Message	19
Financial summary	21
Major capital works	26
Advocacy campaigns	28
Australia Day Awards	32

### Our Council

Our Region	35
Our history	36
Councillors	37

### Our people

Our Executive Leadership Team	41
Our organisational structure	43
Council employees	44
Valuing our people	46
Staff Recognition Awards	48

### Our performance

Our performance	51
Community Vision and Council Plan	52
Strategic Pillar 1: Liveability	53
Strategic Pillar 2: Prosperity	62
Strategic Pillar 3: Harmony	70
Strategic Pillar 4: Leadership	74

### Corporate governance

Council leadership	78
Governance and management checklist	87

### Performance statement

Contents	96
Appendices:	
1: Donations and contributions	115
2: Organisations of which Council is a financial member	117

### Financial performance

Understanding the Financial Statements	119
----------------------------------------	-----



# Welcome to the report of operations

We are committed to transparent reporting and accountability to our community. The Annual Report is our primary means of advising residents within the municipality about our operations and performance during the 2023/24 financial year.

## Introduction

Provides a snapshot of our region and highlights what we have accomplished.

## The year in review

Messages from our Mayor and CEO, a financial summary and major project highlights.

## Our Council

Our region's history and profile, and information on our Councillors.

## Our people

Information on Council's employees, including our organisational structure, occupational health and safety, equal opportunity, and appreciating our staff.

## Our performance

Results against our Council Plan key strategic initiatives, Local Government performance reporting indicators, and major initiatives and services identified in the 2023/24 Budget.

## Corporate governance

Governance and statutory information including decision-making, elected members, risk management, benchmarking and accountability.

## Performance statement

Local Government performance reporting indicators for sustainable capacity, service performance and financial performance.

## Financial performance

Council's general purpose financial statements.





# Part One

## *Introduction*

## Snapshot of Council

Swan Hill Rural City Council covers 6,116 square kilometres and is home to 21,403\* people. It includes the townships of Boundary Bend, Manangatang, Ultima, Woorinen South, Beverford, Piangil, Nyah West, Nyah, Lake Boga, Robinvale and Swan Hill.

The Swan Hill municipality has experienced significant growth over the past decade, led by the expansion of horticultural and agricultural practices and supported by an innovative manufacturing sector.

This success is depicted by the fact that irrigated areas have been increasing with a higher proportion of mature, high value crops such as almonds and table grapes. The region is one of Australia's largest producers of almond and table grape plantings, vegetables including potatoes and carrots, stone fruit, olives, avocados and field crops.

The region also boasts an impressive 69% of its municipality dedicated to cropping and associated dryland infrastructure, including wheat, barley, lentils, cereal/hay, pulses (including chickpeas and lupins), grazing, oats, and canola.

More than 20 per cent of all jobs in the city are directly related to agriculture.

The SunRISE report for Swan Hill on 2021 irrigated crops had a value of production of \$1.22 billion, and an additional \$268.4 million for dryland cropping.

Located along the Murray River, tourism plays an important role in our region's economy. Our climate and natural beauty attracted approximately 591,000 visitors this year as reported in the Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) 2023 report. Visitation was up by 1% and tourists stayed 1.2 million nights within our region—up by 35%. Overnight visitor spend is estimated to average \$454 per visitor, with the total visitor spend estimated at \$190 million within the region.

\*2021 ABS data estimates the Swan Hill Rural Council residential population to be 21,403, however, due to ongoing concern that the ABS consistently underestimates the population of Robinvale, Council commissioned Geografia to undertake a population determination study. The ABS census figure of 2021 show the Robinvale population as 3,740 people. The work of Geografia has reliably demonstrated that the true Robinvale population sits at approximately 7,900 people; making the total residential population 25,367.



## Vision Statement

Built on strong foundations that embrace our rich history and natural environment, our region will be a place of progression and possibility, we are a community that is happy, healthy and harmonious—we are empowered, we are respectful and we are proud.

## Our Mission

We will lead, advocate, partner and provide efficient services and opportunities for growth and the wellbeing of our community, environment and economy.

## Our Values

Council values our residents and community and will be responsive to their needs. In pursuing our objectives, we believe in, and are committed to, the following values:

## Community engagement

We will ensure that our communities are consulted, listened to and informed.

## Leadership

We will be at the centre of our community. By actively engaging our community we will form the collective view on strategic issues and express our views through strong advocacy and action.

## Fairness

We will value and embrace the diversity of our community and ensure that all people are treated equally.

## Accountability

We will be transparent and efficient in our activities and we will always value feedback.

## Trust

We will act with integrity and earn the community's trust by being a reliable partner in delivering services and providing facilities.



## Highlights of the year

### Liveability

- The Road Management Plan (RMP) was suspended in 2022 following the Victorian Flood Events, this financial year Council's RMP was fully reinstated.
- Investigations begin for Council's draft Drainage Strategy, with a focus on stormwater drainage asset management across the region and an acknowledgment of rainfall events putting pressure on the ageing infrastructure.
- The commencement of the draft Waste Management Strategy. The Waste Management sector is changing because of government efforts to tackle unsustainable practices and transition to a circular economy. To align with these changes, Council is drafting a Waste Management Strategy to guide waste and recovery services over the next ten years.
- The completion of the 2023/24 Tree Planting Program included hundreds of trees being planted across the municipality.



- In 2023, Council conducted a Housing Summit which highlighted the need to explore and develop new innovative approaches to support housing outcomes. This included bringing people together in a well-coordinated community approach, where we make best use of land, investment dollars, government funding and local know how.
- The unveiling of our River Viewing Platform and Boardwalk, this is a beautiful new resource for our region that is designed to celebrate our river - making the riverside walk even more enjoyable for visitors and locals.

### Prosperity

- This financial year has seen a significant increase in Community Engagement with over 16,000 views on the Let's Talk Community Engagement platform and over 2,000 contributions received.
- Official opening of CUC (Country Universities Centre) Mallee – this centre will help students in regional and remote areas to access higher education, without having to leave their community. It provides campus-style facilities for students who study online. At the time of their officially opening, they had over 110 student enrolments.



- Big things feature - Swan Hill's iconic Giant Murray Cod - Arnold - featured on a new release of collectable coins and post stamps. The Royal Australian Mint partnered with Australia Post to celebrate the Aussie Big Things theme - we were delighted to have been selected as 1 of 10 collectible "Big Things".
- Council has secured approximately \$20 million in grants, since July 2023, from a variety of State and Federal Government funding programs, to enable the delivery of new or improved infrastructure and facilities.
- The Community Development Fund supported 26 community groups/organisations that shared in \$78,000 worth of funding to support various projects throughout the municipality.
- Our 23/24 Event Support Fund allocated \$90,000 in funding, supporting 33 events.
- Domestic visitors spent \$190 million on travel to the Swan Hill region - down by 6%.

## Harmony

- Our municipality is proud to have more than 40 nationalities among our community and a population that is welcoming and resilient.
- We welcomed 70 new citizens to our municipality in this financial year, coming from 19 countries.



- 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the twinning relationship between Robinvale and Villers-Bretonneux, marking a proud milestone in the history of both towns.
- Commemorating the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Swan Hill and Yamagata.

## Leadership

- Council continued to be a visible presence in the community. In May 2024, Council had the honour of hosting Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Gardner, Victorian Governor. Her Excellency visited a number of locations; including, the Robinvale Villiers—Bretonneux Memorial, toured the Robinswood Homestead, attended a Civic Reception at the Swan Hill Art Gallery, and viewed the Heartbeat of the Murray laser lightshow at the Pioneer Settlement.
- Coffee with a Councillor continued in 2023/24.
- We continued to be active advocates for the municipality, and as a member of the Murray River Group of Councils.

## Challenges for 2023/24

- Cost of living and inflation - In the 2023/24 financial year, Swan Hill Rural City Council faced substantial challenges due to the rising cost of living and inflation. Residents felt the strain as everyday expenses increased, affecting their overall financial stability. Concurrently, inflation led to escalating costs for Council projects, putting strain on budget management and the timely delivery of essential services and infrastructure. These economic pressures necessitated strategic adjustments and careful planning to ensure the continued support and well-being of our community.
- Recruitment has remained a challenge this financial year in our region, like many other areas. The labour and skills shortage continues to be impacted by housing and childcare shortages.

## Major changes for 2023/24

During 2023, Swan Hill Rural City Council made the decision to transition away from delivering in-home aged and community-based services, from 31 May 2024.

The decision was made in response to the planned introduction of the Commonwealth Government's new model of care - Support at Home program – which is part of its National Reform of Aged Care being introduced in the lead-up to 1 July 2027.

The Commonwealth Government approved Uniting AgeWell, Northern District Community Health and Swan Hill District Health to provide services that include domestic assistance, personal care, in-home flexible respite care, meals on wheels, home maintenance as well as social support programs from 3 June 2024.

Council supported approximately 450 clients to transition to the new providers.

Council acknowledges the Community Care Services team and thanks them for their wonderful and dedicated services and care for residents in our community.

<b>100%</b> Median House Price— increase (10 Years)	<b>139</b> Media releases	<b>7,400</b> tonnes of garbage, recycling and organics collected from kerbside bins
<b>184,060</b> Aquatic Facility Visits	<b>90</b> Planning permits issued	<b>41</b> Art Gallery Events and Exhibitions
<b>20,062</b> Attendance at Swan Hill Town Hall PACC	<b>10,382</b> Art Gallery Visitors	<b>75,839</b> Pioneer Settlement Visitors
<b>5,778</b> Active Library Members	<b>130</b> inspections of food businesses	<b>44</b> Livestock Exchange Sale Days
<b>350</b> Tress planted	<b>300</b> Maternal and Child Health Birth Notifications	<b>2,000+</b> Social media posts



# Year at a glance

## July



- Swan Hill municipality celebrates NAIDOC week with a range of activities in Swan Hill and Robinvale.
- Council welcomes \$1 billion fund to build 1300 new social and affordable housing homes in rural and regional Victoria, announced by the State Government.



- Victorian Government announces the implementation of a Container Deposit Scheme.



- Unclaimed goats are put to work controlling weeds at one of Council's retarding basins.

## August



- Pioneer Settlement's impressive brand-new Laser Light show, "Legends of the Mallee", is officially launched.
- Council welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission and presentation to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria.
- Council awards a Drainage and Road Reconstruction contract enabling the commencement of vital infrastructure upgrades of Butterworth Street, Swan Hill.



- Council delights in seeing the construction underway for a new modern and advanced Emergency Department (ED) in Swan Hill.
- Go North Arts Festival returns at the Swan Hill Town Hall Performing Arts Centre. A free event where the community could 'get their hands dirty'.



## September



- Our iconic giant Murray Cod, Arnold, features in the "Big Things" coin and stamp collection. The collection was officially launched on 4 September, marking a day of celebration for our region.



- The brand new dry fitness space opens at the Swan Hill Aquatic and Recreation Centre on 7 September. The new area boasts 75% more floor space.



- Following community consultations, the Robinvale Skate Park project commences.
- Council staff host a shared lunch to celebrate Women's Health Week.

## October



- Fairfax Youth Festival returns with a whirlwind evening of music, pride, and community spirit.
- Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery opens the Conflated Exhibition. An Inflatable Exploration of Bodies, Environments, and Cultures.



- The Swan Hill Regional Library organises a Roving Storytime to celebrate National Children's Week. Children, parents, carers, community members, and local businesses join together to enjoy reading.
- Council staff attend Swan Hill's Market Day to inform the community of our commitment to Sustainable Waste Management.
- Swan Hill Regional Library hosts Leading Australian crime writer, Chris Hammer. Chris is the author of international bestsellers Scrublands, Treasure & Dirt, The Tilt and The Seven.



# Year at a glance

## November



- Silo art installation at the Graincorp site in Lake Boga welcomes a mural that complements the region and promotes the area's history and of course, the Catalina Flying Boat Museum.
- Renowned author, Darry Fraser visits the library to share her love of the Murray River.
- Over 100 business professionals and engaged community members gather at a highly successful Housing Summit in Swan Hill.
- Cr Stuart King is elected as Mayor.
- Shade structures at Barry Steggall Playground in Tower Hill are completed just in time for summer.
- After the 90-day Independent Strategic Review of the Infrastructure Pipeline Program, the Federal Government announces that their funding commitment has been reaffirmed for the crucial Swan Hill Bridge infrastructure project.
- A one in fifty-year rainfall event takes place, Council staff work quickly to get the water out of flooded areas.

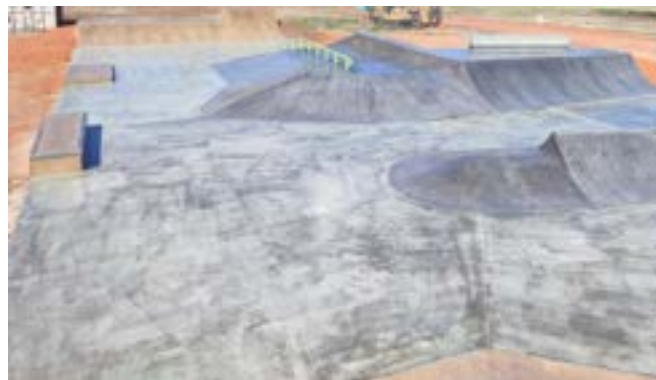


- Painting and landscaping at the new Robinvale Splash-pad take place.

## December



- After a successful lease transfer, Catalina Grill House opens alongside the historic Catalina Museum.



- Robinvale Skate Park opens to residents.
- At Council's scheduled December meeting, after having considered all available information, Council makes the difficult decision to close the Swan Hill Drag Strip.



- Tennis champion turned writer, Jelana Dokic speaks to a large crowd at the Swan Hill Regional Library.



## January



- Swan Hill Regional Library has partnered with St Mary MacKillop College, to run The Be Connected Young Mentors program.
- Council announces a line-up of events to celebrate Australia Day 2024. The festivities bring the community together to honour achievements, welcome new Australian citizens, and foster cultural connections.



- Tennis Victoria announces that Swan Hill will host Country Week Tennis in 2025.
- Council hosts Citizenship ceremonies as part of the Australia Day celebrations, in Swan Hill and Robinvale. 2024 marks the 75th Anniversary of Australian Citizenship.
- Council hears Robinvale community concerns regarding the Robinvale Hotel, and continues its commitment to pursue redevelopment of this significant commercial site.

## February

- Heritage Victoria grants approval for the much-anticipated Swan Hill Tourism and Cultural Hub at Pioneer Settlement.
- Comprehensive road upgrade and drainage improvements along Butterworth Street in Swan Hill commence.
- Another successful Big Summer Read program runs from 1 December 2023 to 31 January 2024. 195 school aged children from 5-17 years participate and collectively they read 4,050 books.



- Following Council's decision to transition away from delivering in-home aged and community-based services from 31 May 2024, the Commonwealth Government announces the new providers.



- Council asks the community to share their thoughts on the Australia Day and Shared Connections celebrations for 2024.
- Residents have the chance to safely dispose of household chemicals without harming their health at the environmental Sustainability Victoria's Detox your Home event held at the Swan Hill Landfill site.

# Year at a glance

## March

- Swan Hill Harmony Day is held at the Swan Hill Riverside Park. A large crowd gathers to celebrate cultural diversity in our community.
- Residents of Robinvale have the opportunity to attend a Council meeting held at the Robinvale Community Arts Centre.
- In a bid to strengthen and support Council advocacy efforts, Council launches a survey on their Let's Talk platform calling for residents to submit their personal experiences with two of Swan Hill's most dangerous intersections.
- The Art Gallery opens its doors on the Sunday of the Swan Hill Regional Food and Wine Festival for people to come and participate in activities and workshops.



- Council hosts the Autumn Citizenship ceremony as part of the national Harmony Week celebrations. We welcome our newest citizens with a ceremony that showcases our nation's rich heritage and cultural diversity.



- A Seed Library is launched at the Robinvale Library, aiming to promote sustainable gardening practices and support the local Robinvale community to grow their own food.

## April



- A significant milestone for the Swan Hill community is marked with the official opening of the Swan Hill Riverfront Precinct, by Senator Jana Stewart.
- Our Mayor commemorates ANZAC Day by attending services at Villers-Bretonneux and Bullcourt, France. The trip also marks the 40 year anniversary twinning city relationship between Robinvale and Villers-Bretonneux.
- 40 years of the sister city relationship between Swan Hill and Yamagata is commemorated when the entire Swan Hill – Yamagata Club, including our Mayor Stuart King and his wife, Angela made the journey to Yamagata.
- Reticulate water turned on and celebrated with community, Grampians Mallee Water and Council.



- Council opens registrations of interest from current secondary school students within the municipality wishing to be considered for the 2025 Yamagata Student Exchange.
- Council participated in the Inquiry and Planning Panel for the Goschen Mineral Sands and Rare Earth Environment Effects Statement that held hearing over 6 weeks, now waiting on the Minister for Planning to make a decision on the proposal.



## May



- The Victorian Governor, her Excellency Professor Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, visits the municipality.



- Council turned RAINBOW to acknowledge IDAHOBIT Day - The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia.
- The Swan Hill community welcomes a new sporting facility with the installation of rugby goal posts at Gurnett Oval.
- Lake Boga welcomes a 1.8 metre wide, 14 metre long gangway pontoon that is accessible to boaters who experience mobility challenges.
- The park at Nyah West has new play equipment structures installed.
- Council receives a substantial funding commitment from the Federal Government's Growing Regions Program, set to transform the Riverfront precincts in Swan Hill and Robinvale into iconic and visionary spaces for future generations to come.
- The first Housing Action: Greater Swan Hill forum takes place at the Swan Hill Town Hall and online at the Robinvale Resource Centre.

## June

- The 2024/25 Budget is adopted at the scheduled June Council Meeting.
- After active community consultation, the 24-Hour Cat Containment order is adopted at the scheduled June Council Meeting.



- Council launches an innovative organic waste project at Ultima. A new chapter will unfold as the newly acquired parcel of land is transformed into a cutting-edge organics processing facility.
- Council announces \$650,000 of Federal Government funding for the 'Transforming the Heart of Swan Hill Precinct' project has been secured.
- In an effort to promote sustainable living and responsible waste management, Council launches the "Small Acts Make a Big Impact" campaign.



- The community is asked to provide input into the future development of the Swan Hill Showgrounds Recreation Reserve Precinct, over 400 responses were received.
- At Council's scheduled June meeting, Council hears submissions from interested parties on possible uses for the Swan Hill Drag Strip.





# Part Two

*Year in review*

# Mayor and CEO message

As we reflect on the past financial year, we are proud to highlight the progress and achievements of Swan Hill Rural City Council. Our collective efforts have been instrumental in enhancing our community pillars of liveability, prosperity, leadership and harmony.

This year, we successfully reinstated our Road Management Plan (RMP), which had been suspended in 2022 due to the Victorian Flood Events. This reinstatement is crucial for maintaining the safety and functionality of our road network. Additionally, we commenced a Drainage Strategy to enable us to address the challenges posed by extreme rainfall events. This strategy focuses on improving stormwater drainage asset management to better cope with climate impacts and protect our infrastructure.

The unveiling of our River Viewing Platform and Boardwalk was a milestone that makes the riverside walk even more enjoyable for visitors and locals. This is a wonderful new resource for our region that celebrates our beautiful river.

Our commitment to environmental sustainability was further demonstrated through the completion of the 2023/24 Tree Planting Program, which saw hundreds of new trees planted across our municipality. Furthermore, we began drafting a Waste Management Strategy to align with government

efforts towards a circular economy and address unsustainable practices. This strategy will guide our waste and recovery services over the next decade alongside the commencement of our trial composting facility at Ultima.

In November 2023, we convened a Housing Summit that underscored the need for innovative solutions to housing challenges. This summit fostered a collaborative approach to maximise land use, attract investment, and leverage government funding to improve housing outcomes in our region. An ongoing Housing Action: Greater Swan Hill Committee has since been created tackling the housing challenge for the community. Council has continued to work with developers in Swan Hill and Robinvale and commenced the construction of the remaining four of eight houses in Ronald Street, Robinvale. Council has also supported numerous applications for Federal Government funding for housing projects.

Community engagement reached new heights this year, with over 16,000 views on our Let's Talk platform and more than 2,000 contributions from residents. This increased engagement reflects our dedication to transparency and active participation from our community.

The role of Council includes:

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

We also celebrated the official opening of the Country Universities Centre Mallee. Council played a pivotal role in getting this new centre off the ground to ensure that higher education access is available to students in regional and remote areas. At its opening, over 110 students were already enrolled, highlighting the centre's importance to our educational landscape.

Our iconic Giant Murray Cod, Arnold, gained national recognition as it was featured in a new series of collectible coins and stamps by the Royal Australian Mint and Australia Post.

In terms of financial support, we secured over \$20 million in grants from State and Federal Government programs for infrastructure and facility improvements. Our Community Development Fund distributed \$78,000 to 26 community groups, and our Event Support Fund allocated \$90,000 to support 33 local events. Despite a 6% decrease in domestic visitor spending to \$190 million, our region continues to benefit from these investments.

This year, we took the opportunity to celebrate the 40th anniversary retrospectively, of our sister city relationship with Yamagata, which had been postponed due to COVID restrictions. We also honoured the 40th anniversary of our twinning relationship with Villers-Bretonneux. These celebrations reflect our community's rich diversity and unity and reaffirm our commitment to nurturing global connections and cultural exchange.

Council has actively advocated on several key issues, including inquiries into the 2022 Flood Event, migration and nation building, bank closures in regional Australia, and the proposed Goschen Mineral Sands Project. We have also engaged with federal and state committees on local government sustainability, funding, and infrastructure projects, including the Swan Hill Bridge.

We have successfully advocated for federal funding to remain for the Swan Hill Bridge through the 90-day review and a campaign visit to Canberra. In addition, an extension of time and funding for the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery upgrade and Tourism and

Cultural Hub projects was also granted. Our advocacy efforts also included strategic water recovery, greater solar energy generation, funding support for enabling infrastructure, and simplified migration to address worker shortages. We remain committed to advocating for the issues that matter to our residents.

Internally, Council has streamlined many of our processes with upgraded programs and software, leading to faster response times and a more efficient customer service experience. Our newly launched website, developed with extensive community input, has greatly enhanced our online presence. It now features efficient navigation and a modernised visually appealing design.

The year presented significant challenges. The rising cost of living and inflation impacted both our residents and Council's budget, necessitating careful planning and strategic adjustments to continue delivering essential services. Recruitment difficulties, influenced by housing and childcare shortages, also presented challenges like those faced across many regions.

A major transition occurred in aged care services. Effective from 31 May 2024, Council ceased delivering in-home aged and community-based services in response to the Commonwealth Government's new Support at Home program. We have supported approximately 450 clients in transitioning to new providers, including Uniting AgeWell, Northern District Community Health, and Swan Hill District Health. We extend our sincere gratitude to our Community Care Services team for their exceptional dedication and care.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to addressing challenges and seizing opportunities to build a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous community for all.

We extend our gratitude to residents, community groups, businesses, and Council officers for their ongoing collaboration and dedication to our municipality's achievements in 2023/24.



**Councillor Stuart King**

**Mayor**



**Scott Barber**

**Chief Executive Officer**

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

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



# Financial Summary

## Operating position

On a full accrual basis the surplus for the year was \$3.4 million. It is important to note that this is an accounting profit after recognising non-cash items such as depreciation and amortisation of \$12.9 million and the receipt of infrastructure assets created by developers.

Major revenue and expenditure items included in the operating result can be identified from the following graphs.

For more information on the comprehensive income statement, balance sheet and cash flows for the year, please refer to the audited General Purpose Financial Report in Part Eight of this Annual Report.

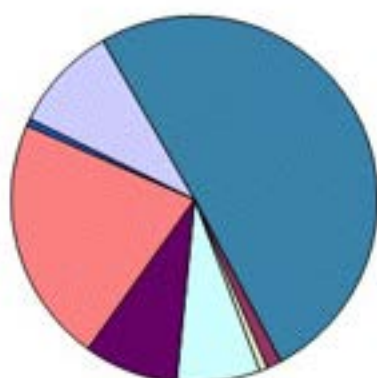
## Revenue

Council's total revenue for 2023/24 was \$63.9 million as per the Comprehensive Income Statement. A breakdown of Council's revenue sources highlights that 81.7% of Council's income comes from three income categories.

Other revenue is derived from interest received, Tower Hill land sales, flood and waste reimbursements.

- Rates and garbage charges 50.5%
- Grants—capital 21.8%
- Other revenue 9.4%

Total revenue (\$63.9 million)



- Rates & garbage charges
- Statutory fees & fines
- Net gain on disposal of assets
- User fees
- Grants - operating
- Grants - capital
- Contributions
- Other revenue

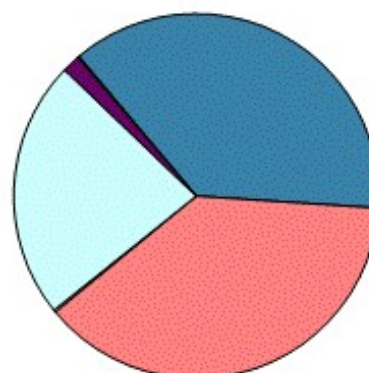
## Expenditure

Council's total expenses for the 2023/24 year were \$60.6 million as per the Comprehensive Income Statement.

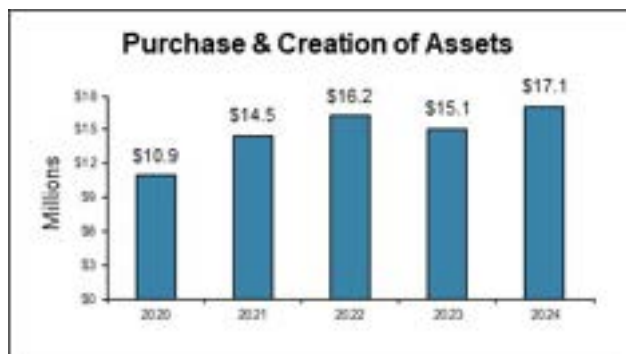
A breakdown of Council's expenses highlights that 98.2% relates to three expenditure categories.

- Employee costs 37.2%
- Materials and services 38.0%
- Depreciation 23.0%

Total expenditure (\$60.6 million)



- Employee costs
- Materials and services
- Bad and doubtful debts
- Depreciation & amortisation
- Other expenses
- Finance costs

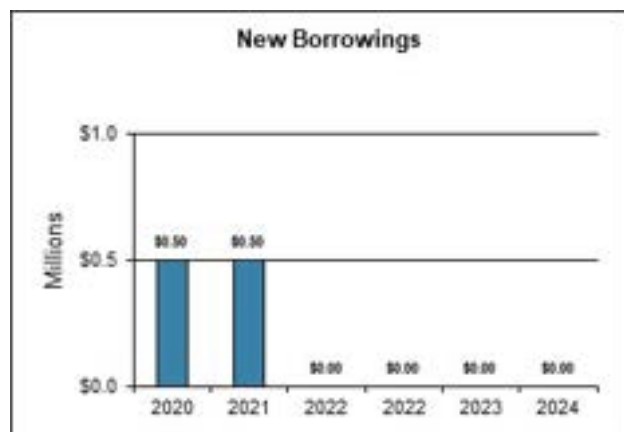


## Capital expenditure

During the financial year, Council spent \$17.1 million on capital works and asset purchases, bringing the five-year total of expenditure on fixed assets to almost \$73.8 million.

The graph on the left shows the level of expenditure spent on new and redeveloped assets over the past five years.

Major capital expenditure items were road networks, construction works at Tower Hill, sporting facilities, parks and open spaces.



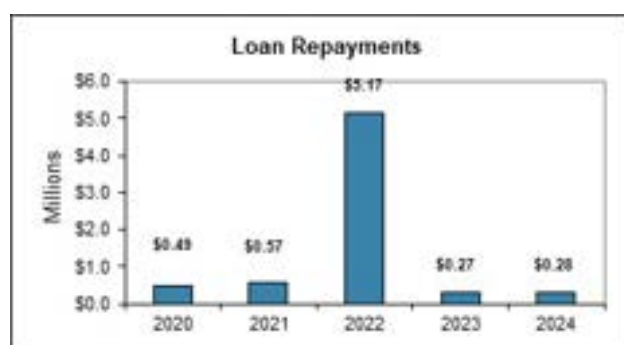
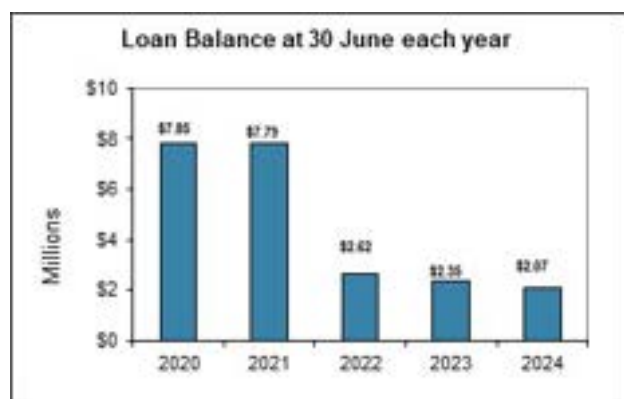
## Borrowings

Loans are used to fund major capital projects and asset purchases. Loan funding allows the community to pay for the asset (such as a leisure centre) over some of the time that it is being used.

At 30 June 2024, Council had a loan liability of \$2.07 million. This is a planned and responsible level of debt, achieved in accordance with Council's borrowing strategy.

During 2021/22 Council repaid an interest only loan of \$4.8 million. This loan was for a term of seven years, and each year Council had put aside funds in a reserve for the loan to be repaid in full at maturity.

Loan repayments for the upcoming year are forecast to be \$0.53 million.



## Equity

The Balance Sheet shows total community equity of \$689 million, represented by accumulated surplus and asset revaluation reserve.

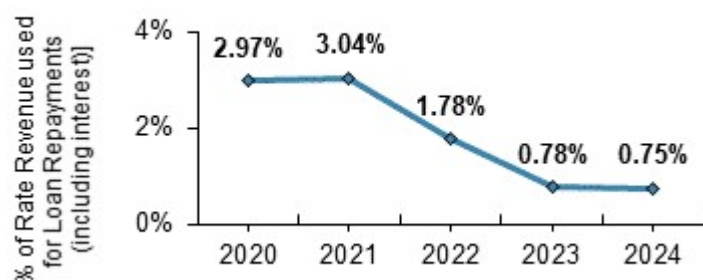
The increase in equity is due to the revaluation of Council's buildings, road and infrastructure assets and a \$3.3 million surplus in 2024.

The graph on the left shows the movement in equity over the past five years.



# Financial ratios

## Debt Commitment Ratio

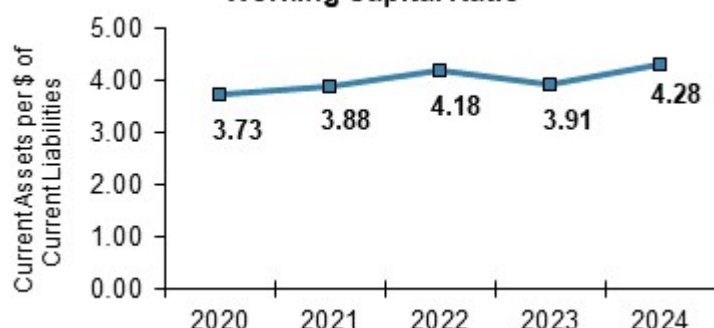


## Debt commitment ratio

The debt commitment ratio identifies the percentage of rate revenue required to pay interest and principal on Council's loans.

Closely tied to the Borrowing Strategy, the ratio shows that Council is in a healthy position and that it decreased in 2024. Of the \$2.07 million in loans, \$0.5 million are interest only repayment loans.

## Working Capital Ratio

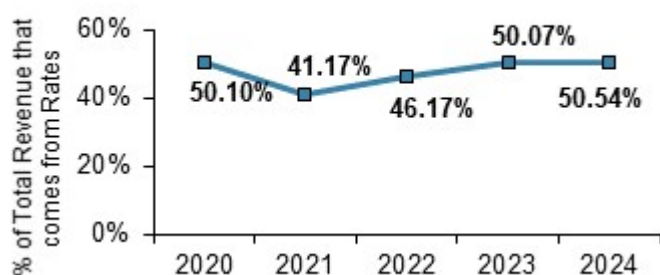


## Working capital ratio

Working capital ratio shows the level of current assets Council has available to meet its current liabilities. The graph shows that the ratio is healthy and has remained constant over the past five years.

The ratio is expected to decrease marginally in future years.

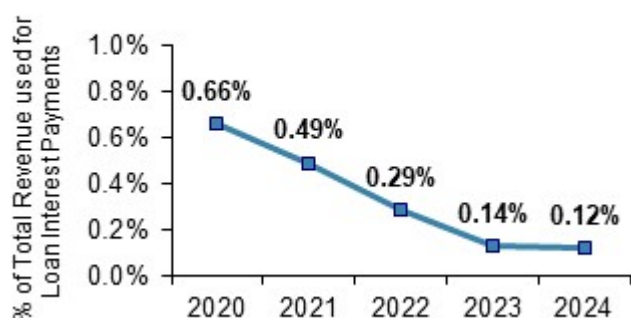
## Revenue Ratio



## Revenue ratio

The revenue ratio shows rate revenue as a proportion of total revenue and seeks to measure Council's reliance on property rates. It is influenced by other revenue sources such as government grants, contributions, user fees and charges. This ratio increased in 2024 due to the reduced level of grants received.

## Debt Servicing Ratio



## Debt servicing ratio

The debt servicing ratio shows the amount of rates required to pay the interest on Council's loan liability. This ratio documents that loan interest does not place a burden on finances.



## Description of operations

Swan Hill Rural City Council plays a vital role in shaping the future prosperity, health and wellbeing of our municipality. Council aims to be progressive, dynamic and committed as we work towards this.

Swan Hill Rural City Council delivers more than 100 services to our community.

These range from waste and road management, to managing and improving open space and community buildings.

We delivered services and facilities for children, young people, families and our elderly. We offer business development, town and strategic planning and community health initiatives.

Council's vision, strategic objectives and strategies to improve services and facilities are described in our Council Plan 2021-25 and the associated Budget.

The progress of these strategies and their delivery against the Budget is reported in this Annual Report. Refer to the section on Our Performance for more information about delivery of Council services.

The delivery of core services and facilities are measured by a set of Service Performance Indicators, as you will see in this report. We also track progress on the initiatives set out in our Council Plan.

Council has a wide range of responsibilities under both Victorian and Commonwealth legislation.

## Economic factors

Council delivered its eighth budget under the 'Fair Go' rates system. Council's rates increase was aligned with the rate cap set at 3.5%.



## Services provided

Council receives funding from a number of sources and had a budgeted income of almost \$59 million in 2023/24. Below is a breakdown of the services Council delivered and what these cost, for every \$100 of expenditure.

### \$11 Recreation and Community Facilities

Halls, parks, reserves, pools, playgrounds, sporting facilities and street beautification.

### \$17 Transport Services

Maintaining over 3,650km of roads, footpaths, signs, street cleaning, tree maintenance and the aerodrome.

### \$12 Governance and Administration

Municipal offices in Swan Hill and Robinvale, Councillor support, Council depots and plant equipment.

### \$3 Community Care

Domestic assistance and property maintenance for our seniors.

### \$12 Environmental and Waste Management

Recycling services, garbage collection, landfills, drainage and environmental management.

### \$4 Cultural Services

Performing Arts, Libraries, Art Gallery and Indigenous Affairs.

### \$3 Family, Youth and Children's Services

Services and support for families, children and youth.

### \$4 Pioneer Settlement

Managing, marketing, maintaining and developing this premium tourist attraction, including Heartbeat of the Murray Laser Light Show.

### \$4 Economic Development and Marketing Services

Business development and investment, marketing of the region and leases of caravan parks.

### \$9 Public Health, Safety and Regulatory Compliance

Animal control and registrations, parking, immunisations, emergency management, lighting and community health.

### \$21 Other

Livestock Exchange, property acquisitions and disposal, commercial works, planning and building services, Tower Hill residential development.



## Major capital works

During 2023/24 the major capital works included:

### Monash Drive – Viewing Platform and Boardwalk

Total project cost: \$681k

### Tower Hill – Stage 15 Development

Actual spend 2023/24: \$1.3m

Total project cost: \$1.75m

### Robinvale Recreation and Aquatic Centre

Actual spend 2023/24: \$750k

Total project cost: \$3.14m



### Robinvale Skate Park

Actual spend 2023/24: \$502k

Total project cost: \$583k

### Robinvale Recreation and Aquatic Centre Splash Park

Actual spend 2023/24: \$480k

Total project cost: \$624k

### Floating Pontoon Lake Boga

Actual spend 2023/24: \$434k

Total project cost: \$434k



### Book collection purchases

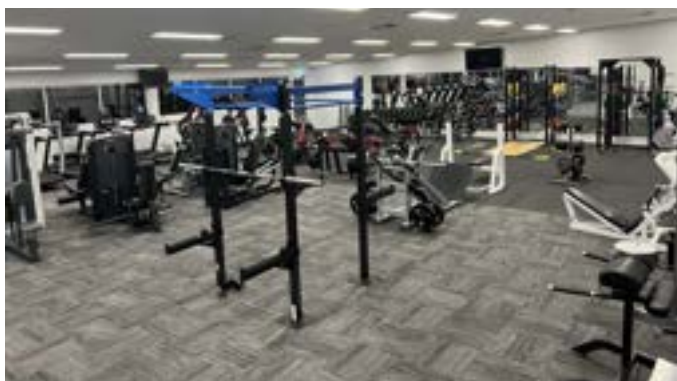
Actual spend 2023/24: \$159k



### Swan Hill Aquatic and Recreation Centre Group Fitness Room

Actual spend 2023/24: \$372k

Total project cost: \$781k



### Swan Hill Town Hall Exterior Refurbishment

Actual spend 2023/24: \$149k

Total project cost: \$304k



### Robinvale John James Oval Lighting

Actual spend 2023/24: \$345k

Total project cost: \$345k

### Swan Hill Saleyards Traffic Management

Actual spend 2023/24: \$110k

Total project cost: \$110k

### Circular Agricultural Plastics Economy

Actual spend 2023/24: \$278k

Total project cost: \$278k

### Apex Park Playground Renewal

Actual spend 2023/24: \$84k

Total project cost: \$84k

### Robinvale Recreation and Aquatic Centre Internal Fit out

Actual spend 2023/24: \$273k

Total project cost: \$454k

### Swan Hill Off-Leash Dog Park – Stage 2

Actual spend 2023/24: \$52k

Total project cost : \$52k



### Nyah West Revitalisation

Actual spend 2023/24: \$211k

Total project cost: \$211k

### Nyah West Toilet Block Renewal

Actual spend 2023/24: \$178k

Total project cost: \$191k

### Pioneer Settlement - Lighting Activation

Actual spend 2023/24: \$136k

Total project cost: \$753k

### Road reconstruction, sealing and maintenance

Actual spend 2023/24: \$15.95m

Multiple roads around the municipality were reconstructed and/or resealed during 2023/24.



## Advocacy campaigns

Swan Hill Rural City Council regularly advocates to the Victorian and Federal governments for funding for important programs and projects that will benefit our community and the broader region.

### Improve housing availability

A lack of suitable, affordable housing is a significant barrier to economic growth across our municipality. Workers in all sectors have trouble finding housing when re-locating to our area, contributing to a local skills shortage. Housing is especially problematic for our seasonal workforce.

Council conducted a Housing Summit which highlighted the need to explore and develop new and innovative approaches to support housing outcomes. This included bringing people together in a well-coordinated community approach, where we make best use of land, investment dollars, government funding and local know-how.

Following the Housing Summit a Housing Forum was held and the development of a Housing Action Committee made up of individuals who are involved in sectors related to housing and community services was formed.

At present around 60-70 homes are built each year and this is not addressing the current shortfall, let alone building houses for people to move here to work, play and live.

### A true population

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data for Swan Hill Rural City Council inaccurately represents the number of residents who actually call our region home.

Council-commissioned 2019 Robinvale Population Determination Study showed that Robinvale's population is between 7,900 and 8,800, much higher than the official Census data 3,740 (2021 Census.)

Council is seeking recognition for the true population data for Robinvale.

### Water and sewerage for small towns

Poor water and wastewater infrastructure is one element restricting housing development in our small towns, in areas where our agriculture, horticulture and manufacturing sectors need housing the most.

Council has continued to advocate for the Government to introduce a fund that water authorities can access to extend water and wastewater systems to small towns and ease our critical housing shortage.



### Assist overseas workers

The demand for overseas professional, skilled and semi-skilled workers, is higher than ever. The pandemic exacerbated workforce gaps that existed in our region beforehand, placing pressure on local industry – including agriculture, horticulture, tourism, hospitality and healthcare.

Council is advocating for the following:

- streamlining the process for overseas workers to come to Australia and work in regional areas
- support for overseas workers living and working in regional areas, who want to progress to permanent residency
- practical planning for seasonal worker accommodation.

### Biosecurity

Council seeks assistance to support landholders and the community to manage established pests and diseases, for example Queensland Fruit Fly.

Our Council does not support a shift of these responsibilities to local government. The only practical way for area-wide pest and disease management, is through a state or national coordinated funding mechanism.

### Cost shifting from Government

Council is seeking greater transparency in relation to State and Federal Government initiatives that are imposed onto Local Government.

Greater reporting and budgeting requirements would enable better record keeping for initiatives that require a transfer of responsibilities.

### A new Swan Hill Hospital

The Swan Hill Needs a New Hospital Committee and Council have been advocating for a new hospital. We appreciate the Federal Government's \$30 million commitment and the State Government's \$35.7 million - which has acted as seed funding for Stage 1 of the new hospital.

Council continues advocating for all levels of government to further contribute to further stages of the build, so that a new Swan Hill Hospital is complete in its entirety.

### Swan Hill Rail Precinct Pedestrian Overpass

For over ten years Council has worked closely with the Department of Transport and Planning and the rail authority agencies to reach an agreement on pedestrian access. Various options have been explored and dismissed including 'at grade' possibilities.

Council's 10 Year Major Projects Plan 2022/23 to 2031/32 has allocated funding to support Connecting the Swan Hill CBD to Riverfront. This project is dependent on receiving funding from State and Federal bodies to support Council funds.



## Advocacy campaigns continued

### A new Swan Hill Bridge

The aging single-lane Swan Hill bridge creates a bottleneck for traffic moving through our region, is costing millions in ongoing repairs, and is simply unusable for the higher mass and over dimensional vehicles that local and interstate industry relies on.

The reaffirmed commitment from the Federal Government for \$60 million is welcome. We need all levels of government to continue working together to assist with the heritage removal on the current bridge, complete the designs, and commit to total project funding.

### Train Stabling Facility beyond the Swan Hill Central Business District to Murray Riverfront precinct

Council was concerned to discover that the Department of Transport and Planning has proposed to develop a stabling facility south of the Swan Hill Railway Station. Council's concern is that this land adjoins both the CBD precinct and the Riverfront tourism precinct, potentially impacting local tourism.

With significant progress already made in the Riverfront Precinct and millions of dollars more set to be invested in the construction of the Swan Hill Tourism and Cultural Hub (\$5m), an extension to the Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery (\$6m), and purchase of the former GrainCorp site at 42 Monash Drive, which is in excess of \$10 million over the last ten years, it's clear that Council action needs to be taken.

Council is willing to work in partnership with the rail/transport authorities to find a solution including alternative stabling locations either south or north of the railway station.

### Active Community Connectivity

The Swan Hill Central Business District and the Riverfront precinct are currently separated by the railway, limiting commercial and tourism opportunities. Council has actively pursued a pedestrian access connection between Curlewis Street and Monash Drive since it was identified in the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan 2013.



## Fix our roads

Large scale transport projects are out of reach for local government, therefore investment is needed.

Council is grateful that the Roads to Recovery program has injected essential funding into our ageing road network, and we encourage Federal Government to continue it.

Recent flooding events and an extraordinarily wet season, has had a significant impact on our local roads as well as our state road networks.

### State arterial road priorities

#### *Hattah-Robinvale Road*

The growth of almond farms and other horticulture in the area has highlighted the need for this road to be widened, and for an upgrade of the intersection with Collins Road.

#### *Murray Valley Highway*

Key improvements identified as part of the Central Murray Regional Transport Strategy include pavement widening and shoulder sealing, more passing lanes north of Nyah, improved intersections and additional rest stops. This would reduce conflicts between freight, buses, caravans and other vehicles, improving safety and travel times.

#### *Murlong/McCallum Street and Gray/Campbell streets intersections*

We recently called for feedback from the community regarding two notorious Swan Hill intersections.

We received invaluable feedback from our community with a total of 452 surveys completed, reflecting strong engagement from residents that are invested in the safety and efficiency of our roadways.

It was alarming to see from these crucial results how many incidents have occurred at these intersections and data that has been lost as a result of these accidents and near misses not being reported to the Police. We appreciate the community participating in this consultation and supporting our advocacy efforts to enhance the functionality and safety of these intersections.

Council will use these findings to further highlight and advocate to the Government regarding the importance of prioritising improvements to address traffic flow and safety issues in these key areas.

### Quick stats:

77% reported having had a near miss or accident at one of these intersections.

60% reported having had a near miss or accident at both intersections.

95% said they did not report their near miss or accident to the Police.

92% of incidents involved motor vehicle versus a motor vehicle.

97% of respondents identified the Murlong/McCallum Street intersection as requiring urgent attention.



# Australia Day Awards

## Local Government

### Citizen of the Year 2024 -



Ross Cleeland was awarded the Australia Day Citizen of the Year 2024 in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to community service and an unwavering commitment to the betterment of Swan Hill.

Ross Cleeland has become a pillar of community support through his multifaceted roles and tireless efforts in various organisations. Currently serving as the Secretary of the St Vincent de Paul Swan Hill conferee and welfare, Ross exemplifies compassion and empathy in aiding those in need.

As the Secretary for A Good Kitchen, Ross takes a hands-on approach to addressing homelessness supporting essential sustenance to the less fortunate. His dedication extends further as a Community Driver for Swan Hill Neighbourhood House, ensuring that residents have access to vital resources and assistance.

Ross's advocacy for social causes is further demonstrated through his role as a member of the Domestic Violence Housing Committee, where he actively contributes to initiatives addressing the urgent needs of individuals facing domestic violence.

His extensive involvement in community organisations is truly commendable. Ross serves as both President and Secretary of the Apex Club of Swan Hill, demonstrating leadership and dedication in promoting community welfare. His contributions extend to the sports arena, where he holds the positions of President, Secretary, and Life Member of both RSL Cricket Club and Swan Hill and District Cricket Association. Ross is also President and Life Member of Tyntynder Football Club and Tyntynder Junior Football Club, embodying the spirit of sportsmanship and community building.

Ross's commitment to beautifying Swan Hill is evident through his involvement in the McCallum Street beautification committee, showcasing his dedication to enhancing the aesthetics of our municipality.

His leadership extends to the rotary community, where he has served as both the President and Secretary and is currently the Community Service Director of Swan Hill Sunrise Rotary, exemplifying the Rotary motto of "Service Above Self."

Inducted into the Swan Hill and District Cricket Association Hall of Fame, Ross's contributions have left an indelible mark on the sporting community. Yet, beyond accolades, Ross Cleeland is characterised by his genuine enjoyment of helping and meeting people, making him a beloved figure in Swan Hill. Ross Cleeland is the embodiment of selfless service, community spirit, and leadership.

The Citizen of the Year award is a testament to his outstanding contributions, reflecting the gratitude and admiration of a community that has been positively impacted by his generosity and tireless efforts.

## Student Achievement award winners

Brock Baker	St Mary MacKillop College	Matilda Patterson	Woorinen District Primary School
Zoe Steicke	Swan Hill College	Tillie Shadbolt	Beverford Primary School
Lachlan Roberts	Swan Hill Specialist School	Ella Davis	Lake Boga Primary School
Connor Robertson	Swan Hill Primary School	Audrey Ibbs	Nyah District Primary School
Micah Dodgshun	Swan Hill Christian School	Aiden Plant	Manangatang P-12 College
Kye Pearce	Swan Hill North Primary School	Montana Zappia	Robinvale St Mary's Primary School
Emily Lawry	St Mary's Primary School	Wade Best	Robinvale P-12 College



### Young Citizen of the Year 2024



Shannon Polglase was awarded the Australia Day Young Citizen of the year for 2024, in recognition of exceptional resilience, extraordinary courage, remarkable leadership and an outstanding contribution to the local community.

Shannon's journey has been marked by overcoming trials and trauma with unwavering positivity. In the face of adversity, Shannon has demonstrated extraordinary courage, emerging as an inspirational figure within our community.

Shannon has become a profound influence on the youth of our community. Through empowerment and encouragement, Shannon leads by example, fostering the active involvement of young individuals. This positive impact is reflected in the improvement of self-esteem and a strengthened sense of identity among those touched by Shannon's guidance.

Shannon's commitment to building relationships between cultural groups has enriched the fabric of our community, fostering understanding and unity. Shannon has become a catalyst for positive change within our community.

Recognised by coaches and bestowed with the esteemed title of Captain of the Colts Football Team in 2022, Shannon's leadership qualities have shone brightly both on and off the field. This acknowledgment underscores Shannon's ability to inspire and lead others towards a shared vision of success.

Shannon Polglase represents the qualities and virtues befitting the Young Citizen of the Year. Through resilience, courage, and leadership, Shannon has not only overcome personal challenges but has also become a transformative force for positive change within our community.

### Community Event of the Year 2024



Mallee Cruisers' Show and Shine at Riverside Park Swan Hill was awarded the Australia Day Community Event of the Year for 2024. This extraordinary event brought together a diverse and vibrant community, attracting 120 entrants from various locations from right across the region and boosted the local economy.

Entrants created a spectacular display of cars, utes, vans, and motorbikes, captivating a large audience. The event held at Riverside Park welcomed approximately 500-600 enthusiastic attendees. Festivities included market stalls, a variety of food options, and entertainment for children, featuring a jumping castle, face painting, representation from the Novo Youth Council and Youth Inc, and the community ambulance.

The highlight of the event was the competition for 23 trophy categories and lucky entrant prizes, adding an element of friendly competition and excitement. Generous donations from local businesses contributed to a successful raffle, with proceeds exceeding \$8000. Notably, all profits from this outstanding event will be channelled back into the community to support mental health initiatives.

The Mallee Cruisers' dedication, commitment, and community spirit showcased in this event truly exemplify the essence of the Australia Day Award - Community Event of the Year. Their efforts have not only brought joy and unity but also made a lasting impact on the well-being of the community.



# Part Three

*Our Council*



## Our Region

The Swan Hill municipality covers 6,116 square kilometers that over 40 nationalities call home, creating a community that is diverse, welcoming and resilient. Our region has experienced significant economic growth over the past decade, led by the expansion of horticultural/agricultural practices and supported by an innovative manufacturing sector. With more than 40 commercially grown products including almonds, olives, stone fruit, grapes, vegetables, cereals, legumes, lucerne, sheep, beef and dairy – it is easy to see why our municipality is an important part of Victoria's food bowl.

The beautiful Murray River winds its way through much of the municipality, offering a major draw card for visitors and those who call the region home.

**21,403\***

Total Population



**\$3.17b**

Annual  
economic output



**2664**

Number of local  
businesses



**11,327**

Local jobs



**591,000**

Total visitors

## Top Four Gross Regional Product by Industry



**\$1.28b**

Agriculture, forestry  
and fishing



**\$196M**

Health care and  
social assistance



**\$297M**

Manufacturing



**\$237M**

Construction

Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) ©2024. ©2023. Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id (informed decisions). Data are based on a 2020/21 price base for all years. NIEIR-ID data are inflation adjusted each year to allow direct comparison, and annual data releases adjust previous years' figures to a new base year.

\*2021 ABS data estimates the Swan Hill Rural Council residential population to be 21,403, however, due to ongoing concern that the ABS consistently underestimates the population of Robinvale, Council commissioned Geografia to undertake a population determination study. The ABS census figure of 2016 show the Robinvale population as 3,497 people. The work of Geografia has reliably demonstrated that the true Robinvale population sits at approximately 7,900 people; making the total residential population 25,806.



## Our history

For thousands of years, the traditional owners of the lands that now form the Swan Hill Rural City Council lived in the region, with the land providing abundant food sources and a permanent water supply.

In 1836, led by explorer Major Thomas Mitchell, the first Europeans arrived. Settlers started to arrive soon after, establishing large sheep stations next to the Murray River.

In 1871, the Shire of Swan Hill was proclaimed and was located in Kerang (which now forms part of the Gannawarra Shire).

In 1890, part of the Shire of Swan Hill was severed and formed the Mildura Shire, now called the Mildura Rural City Council.

In 1893, the Shire of Castle Donnington was created and centred around the town of Swan Hill. By 1904 it had assumed the name Shire of Swan Hill.

Returned servicemen settled in the Tol Tol and Robinvale areas circa 1923 and established farms, persevering through the Depression and providing a solid foundation for the prosperous farming community centred there today.

The Borough of Swan Hill was formed in 1939 and in March 1965 became the City of Swan Hill.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the City of Swan Hill was considered one of the largest wheat-producing municipalities in Victoria. Whilst broadacre farms are still found in abundance in our region, many farmers have since transitioned away from dryland farming to grow grapes, citrus, olives, carrots, asparagus, stonefruit and a wide range of other crops.

In January 1995, the Shire and the City were amalgamated to form Swan Hill Rural City Council.



# Councillors

The Council is elected to provide leadership and good governance for the municipal district and the local community.

Swan Hill Rural City Council is not divided into Wards, with seven Councillors elected as representatives for all residents and ratepayers across the municipality.

They have responsibility for setting the strategic direction for the municipality, policy development, identifying service standards and monitoring performance across the organisation.



**Cr Stuart King**  
**Mayor**  
Elected 2020



**Cr Les McPhee**  
Elected 2008



**Cr Ann Young**  
Elected 2016



**Cr Bill Moar**  
Elected 2016



**Cr Chris Jeffery**  
Elected 2016



**Cr Nicole McKay**  
Elected 2019



**Cr Jacquie Kelly**  
Elected 2022



## Community Satisfaction Survey

Each year, Local Government Victoria coordinates a state-wide local government community satisfaction survey. The survey measures the community's perceptions of their local council's performance in key areas.

Between 29 January - 18 March 2024, a total of 400 residents from across the municipality were randomly selected and contacted to provide their feedback via a telephone survey.

### Overall performance

The overall performance index score of 48 out of 100 for Council represents a decrease on the 2023 result. While disappointing, the decline in performance mirrors a general decline across the state, and can be partially attributed to the impact of recent flood events on local infrastructure.

### Top performing areas

Council's three highest performing services are:

- Waste Management
- Appearance of Public Areas
- Family Support Services

### Areas for improvement

Council's three lowest performing services are:

- Sealed and Unsealed Roads
- Planning & Building Permits
- Consultation and Engagement.





for overall performance

State average - 54

Large rural council - 50



for overall Council direction

State average - 45

Large rural council - 42



for community consultation

State average - 51

Large rural council - 48



for customer service

State average - 67

Large rural council - 65



for sealed local roads

State average - 45

Large rural council - 38



for making community decisions

State average - 50

Large rural council - 46

Full survey results are available on Council's website - [www.swanhill.vic.gov.au](http://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au)



# Part Four

## *Our People*



### Our Executive Leadership Team

Council is the governing body that appoints a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management of operations, in accordance with the strategic directions of the Council Plan. Four Directors and the CEO form the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and lead the organisation.

#### Scott Barber - Chief Executive Officer



Scott is a results-driven Executive with more than two decades experience developing and leading high performing teams within local government, utilities and services sectors, as well as governance roles within the private and public sectors.

Scott has an in-depth understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing regional communities, with experience spanning local government, irrigated agriculture, bulk water management, infrastructure operations and financial leadership.

Scott has held Executive roles at Goulburn-Murray Water, Murray River Council and most recently Director of Projects & Strategy at Wagga Wagga City Council. He has completed a Master of Applied Science, Bachelor of Engineering, Graduate Certificate in Management and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

#### Bruce Myers - Director Community and Cultural Services



Bruce is a qualified librarian who started his career at the Swan Hill Regional Library, managing the mobile library, in 1994. From 1998 until 2007 Bruce was Manager of the Library. Bruce became the Director Community and Cultural Services in 2007. He now heads a team of about 70 people involved with a wide range of community services, including community-based aged care, children's and youth services and cultural experiences.

#### Michelle Grainger - Director Development and Planning



Michelle commenced as Director Development and Planning in January 2024.

A qualified town planner, Michelle has worked for a number of rural Councils in Victoria, managing statutory and strategic planning, economic development, regulatory services and environment teams.

Balancing sustainable land use outcomes with growing rural and regional economies has led to Michelle to having a variety of experience in agriculture, renewable energy, industry and business development proposals. She enjoys working in local government as it provides a range of opportunities to work with and for the community.



## Leah Johnston - Director Infrastructure

Leah commenced her role as Director Infrastructure with Council in April 2023. Leah is a qualified engineer, and recognised on the National Engineering Register. She also has an Advanced Diploma in Project Management, and Diploma in Emergency Management.

She has had a long career in local government, having worked within the engineering and works departments from a range of Councils in South West Victoria over the last 25 years, before relocating to Swan Hill.



## Bhan Pratap - Director Corporate Services

Bhan has 21 years of dedicated service to local government in Queensland, Northern Territory and Victoria, working within several regional and outback councils in a variety of positions. Bhan has worked in senior Executive positions, as CEO, Deputy CEO, Director of Corporate and Financial Services, and Chief Financial Officer. In addition to this, he is a Fellow of CPA Australia (FCPA) and has the following qualifications: Bachelor of Arts with majors in Accounting & Financial Management and Management & Public Administration, Graduate Diploma in Management and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) with majors in Local Government, Human Resources & Associations Management.

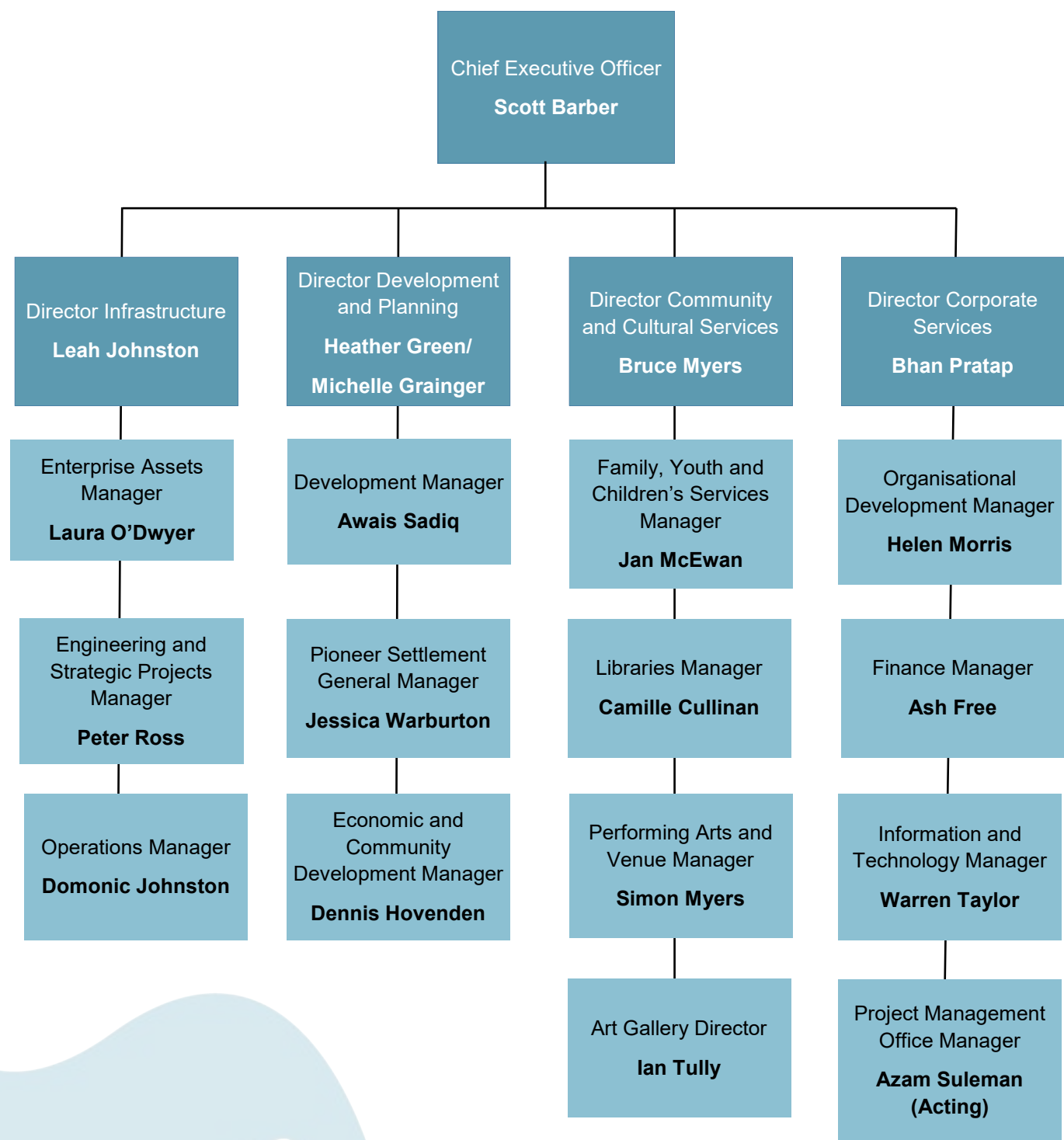


## Heather Green - Director Development and Planning

Heather worked as Council's Director Development and Planning from July 2017 through to January 2024, before stepping into the role of Executive Manager Strategic Projects at Council.

Heather has extensive local and state government experience across Australia. During her nine years as a manager and director at Victoria's Alpine Shire Council, she focused on sustainable development, planning, tourism and economic development. Heather was at Toowoomba for 15 years as the Manager of Strategic Planning. During her time working for the Northern Territory Government as the Katherine Land Manager, she oversaw planning, Crown leases and grazing licences. Heather has a Bachelor of Applied Science (Planning).



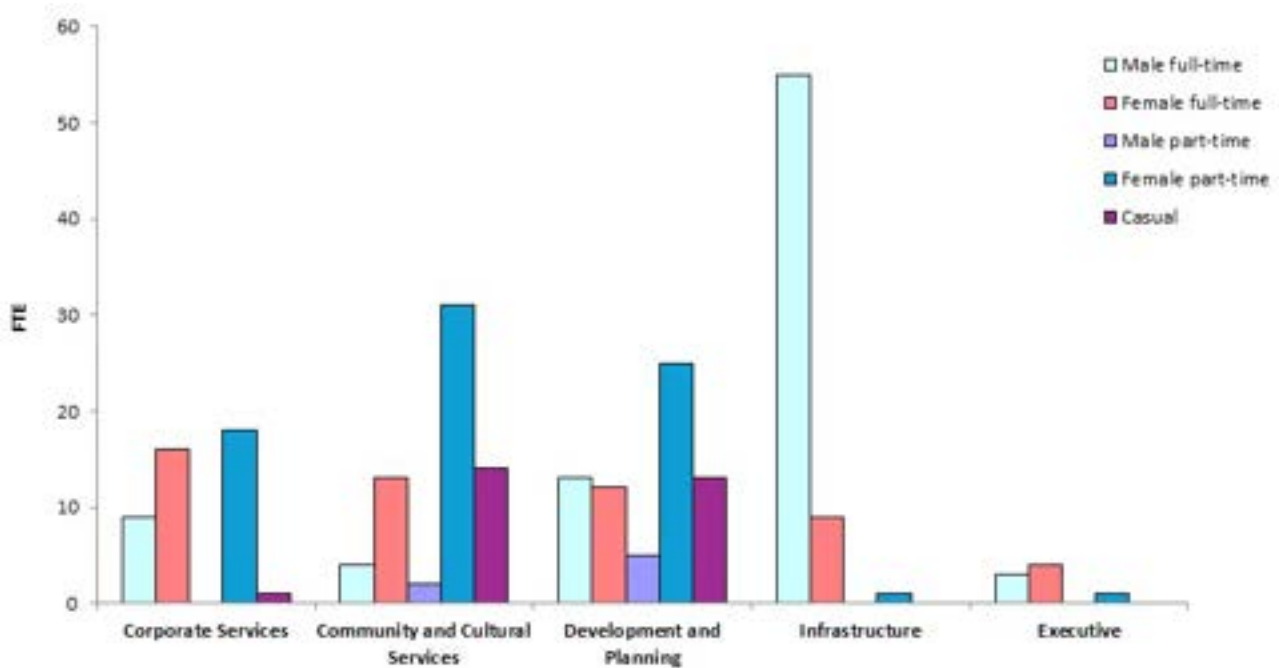


# Council employees

The table below shows the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff by directorate, employment type and gender as at 30 June 2024.

Directorate	Male full-time	Female full-time	Male part-time	Female part-time	Casual	Total Staff	Male total FTE	Female total FTE	FTE total
Corporate Services	9.0	16.0	-	18.0	1.0	44.0	9.0	28.4	38.4
Community and Cultural Services	4.0	13.0	2.0	31.0	14.0	64.0	5.9	35.6	41.6
Development and Planning	13.0	12.0	5.0	25.0	13.0	68.0	16.7	26.4	43.1
Infrastructure	55	9.0	-	1.0	-	65.0	55.0	9.8	64.8
Executive	3.0	4.0	-	1.0	-	8.0	3.0	4.7	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>249.0</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>105.9</b>	<b>195.5</b>

**Staff (FTE) by directorate, employment type and gender—30 June 2024.**





The table below shows the number of full time equivalent (FTE) staff categorised by employment band classification and gender as at 30 June 2024.

Employment Classification	Male FTE	Female FTE	Self-described gender FTE	Total FTE
Band 1	-	3.3	-	3.3
Band 2	1.4	5.7	-	7.2
Band 3	43.4	16.3	-	59.7
Band 4	5.8	25.6	-	31.4
Band 5	6.0	16.3	-	22.3
Band 6	9.0	12.2	-	21.2
Band 7	6.0	4.6	-	10.6
Band 8	1.0	3.2	-	4.2
Non-banded positions (includes salary packages)	17.0	18.6	-	35.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>105.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>195.5</b>

## Volunteers

Council is fortunate to have numerous local volunteers who give their time and expertise to assist Council and help others in the community. These dedicated volunteers play an essential role in delivering valuable services and support.

## Scholarship Program

Council's Scholarship Program supports up to seven local students who are completing undergraduate or TAFE studies during the school year. In addition to financial support, students receive valuable on-the-job experience by working at Council during semester breaks.

Students participating in the program are completing:

- Graduate Diploma in Child, Family and Community Nursing
- Bachelor of Design (Architecture) and Bachelor of Construction Management (Honours)
- Bachelor of Information Technology.

# Valuing our people

Swan Hill Rural City Council recognises the importance that each individual plays in achieving our goals. Our aim is to ensure that Council is a great place to work, where the capabilities of our people is nurtured and performance is focused on delivering exceptional service for our communities.

Council is committed to recruiting and retaining staff, but recognises ongoing challenges in today's climate including: skill shortages, pay conditions, an ageing workforce and staff turnover. To address the challenges, Council is implementing a number of strategies to keep valuable staff, expand Council's potential employee base, and promote Council as an employer of choice. Local governments require a diverse workforce that encompasses a wide range of occupations.

Council staff strategies include:

- A focus on enhancing the skills of staff to increase efficiency
- Implementation of the Workforce Plan including;
  - succession planning
  - recruitment and retention of staff
  - apprenticeships, traineeships and/or bursaries
- Offering phased retirement options to extend the careers of higher skilled staff
- Ongoing development of systems and processes to continually improve productivity
- Flexible work arrangements.

Swan Hill Rural City Council delivers substantial levels of government services, including community, social, health, physical, regulatory and environmental services, amongst others. Council also drives and develops considerable economic activity, supporting significant employment across the municipality.

## Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Committee

Council's OH&S Committee is made up of 11 committed and competent staff who have been elected by their designated work group, and are accompanied by a member of management. Together they work towards compliance with the OH&S Act and Regulations and assist with the delivery of Council's OH&S Management Plan.

The committee met six times during 2023/24.

In 2023/24 there were 24 reported injuries compared to 21 the previous year. There were 6 standard WorkCover Claims, compared to NIL the previous year, and seven minor WorkCover Claims compared to one the previous year.

## Health, safety and wellbeing

Council continued its commitment to staff health, safety and wellbeing by continuing several programs to encourage a healthy lifestyle and improved work/life balance. Programs include:

- Ergonomic assessments conducted upon request
- OH&S training including: Park and Playground Safety Inspection, Work Safety at Heights, HSR Initial five day OHS Training Course, Chemical Users Course, Confined Spaces, First Aid, CPR, White Card.
- Managing Construction Safety Training and Traffic Management Training.
- Provision of Personal Protective Equipment such as hi-vis safety vests, safety boots, broad brim hats, sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Internal HR Staff Matters newsletter distributed every six weeks. Regular features include updated Council policies and procedures, health and wellbeing, professional development, Gender Equality and Consultative Committee meeting minutes.
- Employee wellbeing initiatives including the flu vaccination program undertaken by Council's Public Health Unit and subsidised gym memberships.
- Ongoing provision of Council's Employee Assistance Program for employees requiring support and/or counselling for work and non-work related matters.
- Continued support of our internal Health and Wellbeing Committee with awareness day activities including RUOK day, Men's Health Week, LGBTQI+ initiatives, Women's Health Week, International Women's Day and National Safe Work Month.
- My Everyday Wellbeing program launched on 1 May 2024 providing staff and their families with online access to unlimited health and wellbeing resources, promoting health, wellness and efficiency in the workplace.



# Equal Employment Opportunity Program

## Our People

Council is dedicated to providing a workplace where diversity is embraced and decisions are merit-based. This includes ensuring fair, equitable and non-discriminatory consideration being given to all job applicants, regardless of age, sex, disability, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, race, religious beliefs or other irrelevant factors.

All staff undertake mandatory equal opportunity training every three years and our Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Procedure supports our organisation in fulfilling its obligations under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. In 2023/24, employees undertook Equal Opportunity training, Bullying and Harassment training and Culture at Work training.

Council offers bullying and harassment and sexual harassment courses with over 256 staff completing these programs.

The Sexual Harassment in the Workplace is now compulsory for staff to complete every two years, together with the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour courses which cover:

- Discrimination, harassment and bullying
- Impacts and actions
- Psychosocial hazards
- Respect@Work

These four Appropriate Workplace Behaviour modules address Respect@Work legislation, positive duty requirements, sexual harassment, discrimination, victimisation, vilification and bullying.

We have six Equal Opportunity contact officers available to provide guidance and assistance.

## Gender Equality Act 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* commenced on 31 March 2021. The Act aims to improve workplace gender equality in the Victorian public sector, universities and local councils. Our Council is committed to this work.

A Gender Equality Committee has been established which consists of volunteers within Council. The committee is focused on meeting Council's compliance obligations in line with the Act. The committee also provides gender-based advice and recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team.



The In Victoria, employers have a positive duty to prevent and eliminate sexual harassment in their workplaces under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

Council Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) has been an important document for improving and increasing gender equality within Council.

The Gender Impact Assessment requirement of the Act is being embedded into the policies, programs and services of Council to benefit all genders.

A new GEAP will be developed in March 2025.

## Preventing violence against women

Council is actively working towards Prevention of Violence Against Women primarily through promoting gender equity and building respectful and safe relationships and breaking down stereotypes of women. This prevention approach is consistent with Council's health and wellbeing planning approach, which is incorporated into the Council Plan and the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021-2025.

Council's partnership with Women's Health Loddon Mallee through the Collective Action for Respect and Equality (CARE), is leading to further access training for staff and various actions within the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) continue to be addressed.

There is also an active Gender Equality Network with agencies from across the LGA, who support events for the 16 Days of Activism events.

## Developing our people

Council is committed to providing learning and development opportunities to support the continuing professional development of our staff.

This year staff have accessed a range of learning and development opportunities including on-the-job training and coaching; attendance at courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, webinars, and meetings; and participation in professional networks. More than 2900 hours of organisational training was provided to staff during the year, or 14 hours per EFT. Council also offers study assistance for staff undertaking relevant undergraduate or postgraduate studies.

### Online training

Council continued to offer an expanded suite of compliance courses through an online learning program.

All internal courses are developed with industry experts and the courses are delivered in an engaging and easy to use format.

Courses are designed in line with relevant legislation, are fully customisable and are suitable for Council. The system also allows both administrators and end users to record attendance and completion of in-person training (accredited and non-accredited).

### People Matters Survey

This is an independent opinion survey conducted by the Victorian Public Sector Commission that enables employees from Councils across Victoria to have their say. The survey responses remain anonymous and confidential to create a safe space to express their opinions on their workplace culture and environment. The survey is designed to evaluate morale, engagement, achievement and overall employee satisfaction.

## Staff Recognition Awards

**Liveability Strategic Pillar Winner, and overall winner:** Town Hall Team (pictured below)

**Harmony Strategic Pillar Winner:** Economic Community Development Unit

**Prosperity Strategic Pillar Winner:** Jessica Chislett and Procurement and Properties Team

**Innovation/Customer Service Winners:** Adam Hunter, Conor McCreesh and Brooke O'Connor

**Leadership Strategic Pillar Winner:** Jessica Kei

**Special Commendation Certificate:** Harold Rovere and the Regulatory Services Team





## Staff service awards

Every year Council acknowledges service and presents awards to staff who have reached service milestones. Eleven staff were presented with Staff Service Awards at the annual all-staff function in December 2023.



**10 Years of Service**  
**Stacey Templeton**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Joyline Rovere**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Helen Morris**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Dean Everall**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Nicholas Brown**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Karen Taylor**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Amanda Smith**



**10 Years of Service**  
**Julie Wardle**



**20 Years of Service**  
**Anthony Duffin**



**20 Years of Service**  
**Samantha Uebergang**



**35 Years of Service**  
**Geoffrey Jochinke**



**25 Years of Service**  
**Roxanne Fox**



**25 Years of Service**  
**Tracie Warburton**



**25 Years of Service**  
**Christine Steicke**



**25 Years of Service**  
**Leanne Moroney**





# Part Five

## *Our Performance*

## Our performance

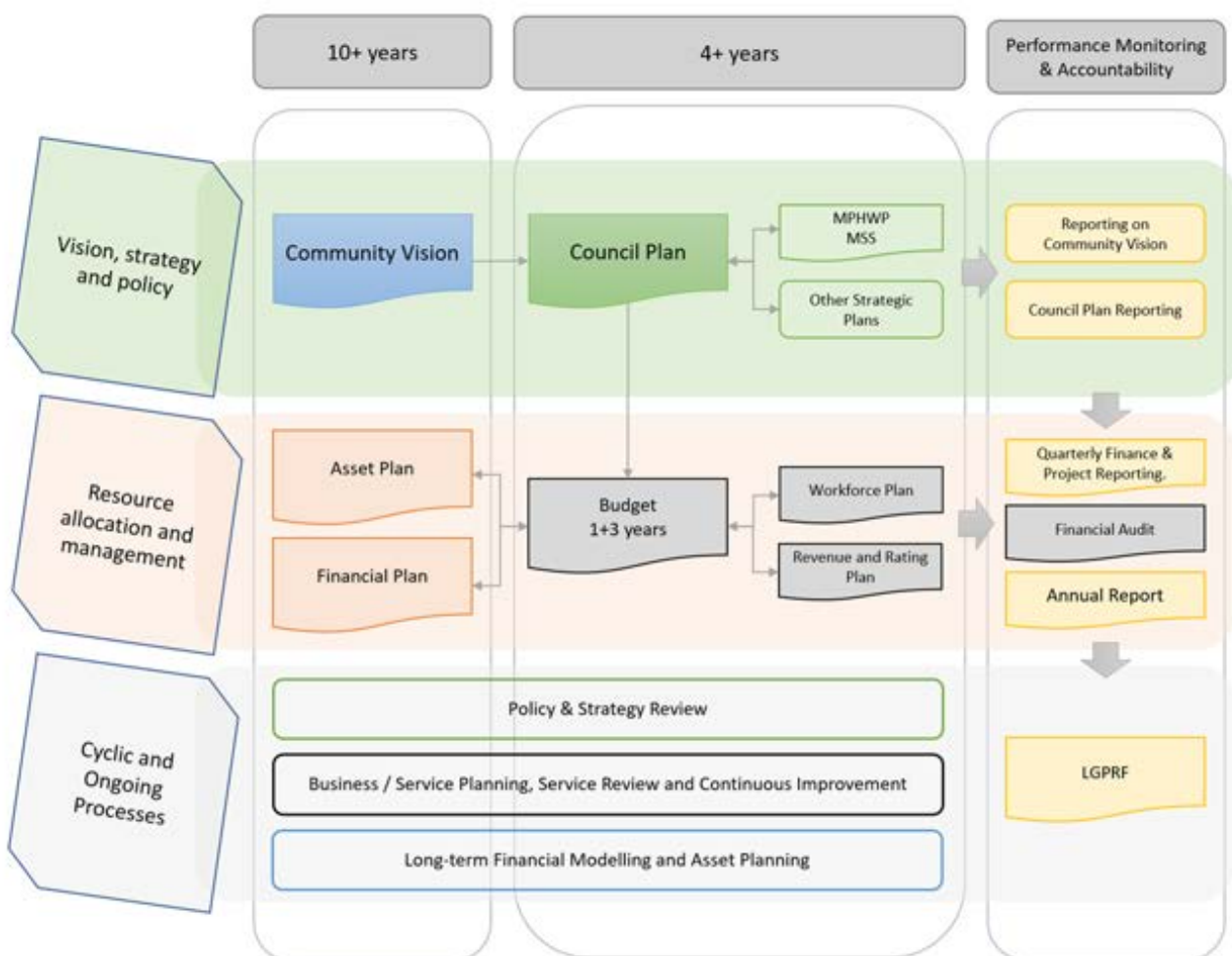
Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), sets out Councils' responsibilities for strategic planning, the budget process and reporting requirements.

Section 89 of the Act, requires Council to prepare its strategic plans in line with the strategic planning principles. These principles require Council to adopt an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting, that:

- addresses the Community Vision
- takes into account the resources needed for effective implementation
- identifies and addresses the risks to implementation
- provides for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

The Act also requires Council to prepare and adopt specific long term (10-Year), medium term (4-Year) and short-term (12-Month) plans. Council's Integrated Strategic Planning Framework is shown below.

### Integrated Strategic Planning Framework



# Community Vision and Council Plan

Built on strong foundations that embrace our rich history and natural environment, our region will be a place of progression and possibility, we are a community that is happy, healthy & harmonious - we are empowered, we are respectful and we are proud.

## Performance

Council’s performance for the year has been reported against each strategic initiative and respective actions to demonstrate how Council is progressing in achieving the strategic objectives in the 2021-25 Council Plan.

Performance has been measured as follows:

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

## Strategic Pillars

The Community Vision is supported by four themed pillars—liveability, prosperity, harmony and leadership.



### Liveability

**We will be a healthy, connected and growing community supported by a range of infrastructure and services.**



### Prosperity

**We will continue to build and strengthen a prosperous local economy, through sustainable growth and education. We will focus on creating jobs and wealth through adding value to existing strengths in all areas of our economy.**



### Harmony

**We will be a welcoming community for all, recognised for our maturity and respect for each other.**



### Leadership

**We will ensure accountable leadership, advocacy and transparent decision making.**



# Strategic Pillar 1: Liveability

## Our Performance

### Council Plan Initiatives

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan, including results achieved in relation to the strategic initiatives included in the Plan.

✓ Completed/ongoing      >> In progress      - Carried over 2024/25

Council Plan Initiative	Action	Status
Attractive urban areas and regional townships	Complete stage 1 of Vibrant Villages project	✓
	Continue to implement relevant actions of the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan	>>
	Complete and implement the Robinvale Riverfront Masterplan	>>
	Develop Nyah Riverfront Masterplan	>>
	Develop Boundary Bend Riverfront Masterplan	-
	Develop a Small Town Strategy	>>
Ensure adequate provision of a variety of safe and secure housing	Develop and build houses on Council owned property	>>
	Continue to implement the Robinvale Housing Strategy	>>
	Continue development of Tower Hill stages	>>
	Assist South West Development Precinct developers	>>
Excellent transport links to allow ease of movement	Advocate for the completion of the Murray Basin Rail Project	>>
	Advocate for the continual improvement of the Murray Valley Highway and upgrade of the Robinvale-Sea Lake Road	>>
	Actively participate in the Central Murray Regional Transport (CMRT) Forum	✓
	Implement relevant actions from the CMRT strategy	✓
Accessible open spaces and healthy rivers and lakes	Implement effective diversion and reuse of waste resources	>>
Encourage active and healthy lifestyles for people of all ages, abilities and interests	Develop detailed plans for the Lake Boga-Swan Hill trail	>>
	Support initiatives leading to better outcomes for children and families	>>
	Partner with agencies to address preventable illnesses and active lifestyles	>>
Spaces where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can flourish	Reinvigorate performance spaces across the area, including Robinvale Community Art Centre	✓

## Major Initiatives

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

Major Initiative	Progress
Tower Hill residential estate development (Budget \$1,800,000 Actual \$0)	Incomplete
Robinvale Leisure Centre Splash Park (Budget \$500,000 Actual \$480,127)	Complete
Robinvale Centenary Park Nature Play Precinct (Budget \$1,389,005 Actual \$74,280)	In progress
Re-seal sealed roads (Budget \$1,405,800 Actual \$1,338,292)	Complete
Re-sheet unsealed gravel roads (Budget \$744,700 Actual \$748,366)	Complete
Complete road works funded by the Federal Roads to Recovery Program (Budget \$1,434,160 Actual \$2,636,944)	Complete
Ronald Street subdivision – increase housing supply (Budget \$1,443,000 Actual \$370,492)	In progress
Deliver the roadside weeds and pest management program (Budget \$75,000 Actual \$0)	Incomplete
Compost facility establishment (Budget \$1,556,625 Actual \$433,134)	In progress

## Services funded in 2023/24 Budget

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description of Service Area	Budget <u>Actual</u> Variance
		\$000
Building and planning statutory services	Provide statutory planning services including processing all planning applications, providing advice and making decisions about development proposals that require a planning permit. Represent Council at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal where necessary. Monitor Council's Planning Scheme and prepare major policy documents shaping the future of the municipality. Provide statutory building services to the community, including emergency management responsibilities, fire safety inspections, swimming pool barrier audits and complaints, and illegal building works investigations.	715 <u>584</u> (131)
Public health and regulatory services	Co-ordinate food safety, immunisations and management of public health concerns to ensure an acceptable state of wellbeing is maintained within the community. This service also provides staff for school crossings throughout the municipality, animal management services, parking control and enforcement and provides education, regulation and enforcement of the general Local Law and relevant state legislation.	802 <u>905</u> 103
Leisure centres	A wide range of programs and services giving the community a chance to participate in cultural, health, education, and leisure activities that contribute to the community's general wellbeing.	1,819 <u>2,212</u> 393
Amenity and safety	Provide the community with well-maintained public areas with a focus on community access and safety. Maintain urban streets and public areas, including footpaths, in a clean and litter-free state and provide access to public conveniences and lighting of public areas. Provide and maintain efficient and effective open and underground drainage systems.	3,540 <u>3,352</u> (188)
Community buildings	Maintain and renew community buildings and facilities, including community centres, public halls and pre-schools.	986 <u>538</u> (448)



Service Area	Description of Service Area	Budget <u>Actual</u> Variance
		\$000
Recreation	Maintain Council's parks, reserves, playgrounds and streetscapes in a functional and visually pleasing landscape.	3,783 <u>2,590</u> (1,193)
Swimming pools	Provide quality, accessible aquatic facilities that support a high quality of life for residents and visitors.	466 <u>397</u> (69)
Traffic and transportation services	Manage Council's roads and associated infrastructure assets. Ongoing maintenance and renewal work to municipal infrastructure assets including sealed roads, unsealed roads, footpaths and aerodromes.	6,509 <u>8,021</u> 1,512
Environmental management	Advocate for, and assist to deliver environmental projects as part of Council's aim to become more sustainable in both built and natural environments. This service also provides emergency management planning and support ensuring the municipality is prepared in the event of an emergency.	212 <u>(229)</u> (441)
Waste management	Provide waste collection services, including kerbside collection of garbage, hard waste and green waste from households and some commercial properties. This service area aims to operate at a surplus in order to make provision for future waste management service and compliance costs, including the construction of new cells and compliance with environmental protection guidelines.	2,163 <u>355</u> (1,808)
Residential development	Facilitating the efficient development of Council owned land and the maximisation of economic returns to rate payers from its realisation.	(74) <u>1,081</u> 1,155
Cultural services	Performing arts, art gallery and library services. A customer-focused service that caters for the cultural, educational and recreational needs of residents, while offering a place for the community to meet, relax and enjoy the facilities and services. Includes the operation and maintenance of the Swan Hill Town Hall and Performing Arts Centre.	2,296 <u>2,634</u> 338

## Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures. Comments are provided if the result differs significantly from previous years, or requires further clarification.

\*Please note expected ranges are set by the State Government

Result 2024 column colour	Reason
	Within expected range
	Outside of expected range

Service/Indicator/ Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024*	Comments
<b>Aquatic Facilities</b> <b>Service standard</b> <i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	0.4	1.0	0.6	1.0	Favourable result - Increase inspections due to the ability to access pools during their opening hours and Environmental Health Officers taking on additional hours to undertake inspections.
<b>Utilisation</b> <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	3.43	5.58	6.17	8.67	Favourable result -The increase in patronage corresponds with upgrades to both the Swan Hill Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Robinvale Aquatic and Recreation Centre.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to the aquatic facilities]	\$18.56	\$14.91	\$12.39	\$8.69	Favourable result - Increased patronage has had a positive impact on the cost of service provision.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024	Material Variation
<b>Animal Management</b> <b>Timeliness</b> <i>Time taken to action animal requests</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	1.07	1.20	1.31	1.29	No material variation.
<b>Service standard</b> <i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x100	28.03%	26.90%	29.56%	22.77%	Less favourable - Animals reclaimed from the pound remains low due to cost of living crisis (registration, microchipping, de-sexing, and vaccinations).
<b>Service standard</b> <i>Animals rehomed</i> [Number of animals rehomed/ Number of animals collected] x100	67.42%	69.31%	60.95%	86.94%	Favourable result - The cost-of-living crisis continues to impact the number of animals uncollected by their registered owners, or abandoned or surrendered by their owners. However, it is a positive outcome that a significant percentage of these animals are being adopted by new owners.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of animal management service per population</i> [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	\$10.30	\$18.38	\$14.02	\$23.83	Less favourable: Replacement cost of staff on longer term paid leave. Cost is within expected range for this service. Note: 2022/23 result adjusted.
<b>Health and safety</b> <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions/ Total number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100%	NA	NA	NA	No animal management prosecutions in 2023/24.



Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024	Material Variation
<b>Food safety</b> <b>Timeliness</b> <i>The time taken to action food complaints</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.90	2.56	3.17	2.22	Favourable result - A full complement of Environmental Health Officer positions enabled Council to action food complaints in a timelier manner.
<b>Service standard</b> <i>Food safety assessments</i> [Number of registered class 1 and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment / Number of registered class 1 and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment ] x 100	28.07%	79.63%	84.76%	83.87%	No material variation.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of food safety service</i> [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises]	\$510.35	\$513.99	\$690.59	\$572.54	Neutral result: error in 2022/23 reporting adversely impacted 2022/23 and 2023/24 results. Actual result for 2023/24 shows a minimal 3.31% variance.
<b>Health and safety</b> <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical major non-compliance notifications about food premises]	66.67%	40.00%	100%	100%	No material variation.
<b>Health and safety</b> <i>Food safety Samples</i> [Number of food safety samples/Number of food safety samples required] x100	NA	NA	NA	1.21	New measure in 2023/24. Favourable result: Council was responsive to a complaint, and took sufficient food safety samples to provide required assurance.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024	Comments
<b>Roads</b> <b>Satisfaction of use</b> <i>Sealed local road requests</i> [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x 100	6.76	5.96	14.64	10.55	Favourable result - Requests for sealed local roads have reduced from previous years as flood repair has been completed throughout the network.
<b>Condition</b> <i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards</i> [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local road] x100	99.28%	99.37%	99.27%	98.95%	
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$33.26	\$59.36	\$30.97	\$76.08	Less favourable - The 2023/24 Road Reconstruction program compromised of two Access Roads. Due to higher density and heavier traffic, the pavement design was for 300mm (as opposed to 100mm depth as used for last years program) and more raw materials have been required. The cost of the raw materials has increased significantly during 2023/24.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$5.58	\$4.80	\$6.79	\$6.18	Favourable result - Council's reseal program has focused on a blend of rural and urban roads which has seen a 9% saving in Sq. metre rate, comparative to last years reporting.
<b>Satisfaction</b> <i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	52	51	44	35	Less favourable result - Council continues to face challenges due to a severe shortage of skilled labour and design engineers within the road construction industry. This forces Council to outsource capability, which in the short term may affect community satisfaction results.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024	Comments
<b>Waste Management</b> <b>Service standard</b> <i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x 10,000	5.78	3.99	5.19	2.29	Favourable result - There has been a significant reduction in reported missed bins for the 2023 -2024 reporting period. This has been mostly due to Councils kerbside collection contractor having had a more stable workforce during that period.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of kerbside garbage collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$86.91	\$93.39	\$106.77	\$109.58	
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$78.51	\$80.40	\$88.77	\$86.49	
<b>Waste diversion</b> <i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100	29.51%	30.92%	29.28%	28.38%	



# Strategic Pillar 2: Prosperity

## Council Plan Initiatives

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan, including results achieved in relation to the strategic initiatives included in the Plan.

✓ Completed/ongoing      >> In progress      - Carried over 2024/25

Council Plan Initiative	Action	Status
Support our key industries	Establish the Terms of Reference and develop an Annual Plan with the Agribusiness Advisory Committee	>>
	Consider the establishment of an Industry Support Committee (Manufacturing and other)	>>
	Establish a Livestock Exchange Stakeholder Committee to improve stakeholder engagement and to better meet the needs of livestock exchange users	✓
Encourage the growth and development of our economy	Continue to support existing businesses to grow through the implementation of the Better Approvals process	✓
	Actively pursue the establishment of a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA)	>>
Assets for our current and future needs	Deliver and review Council's capital works program and Major Projects Plan each year	✓
	Review current assets and identify future needs - create a program to bridge the gap and identify funding requirements	>>
	Continue to plan and seek funding to implement the development of community infrastructure	>>

## Major Initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2023/2024 Budget.

Major Initiative	Progress
Pedestrian and Cycling Strategy (Budget \$80,000 Actual \$0)	Incomplete
Livestock Exchange cattle scanner, security cameras and new sheep yards draft (Budget \$183,000 Actual \$21,100)	In progress
Art Gallery redevelopment (Budget \$6,648,455 Actual \$301,503)	In progress
Cultural and Tourism Hub development (Budget \$5,000,000 Actual \$183,634)	In progress



## Services funded in 2023/24 Budget

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description of Service Area	Budget <u>Actual</u> Variance
		\$000
Economic development	Assist the organisation with economic development to facilitate an environment that is conducive to a sustainable and growing local business sector, and provide opportunities for local residents to improve their skill levels and access employment.	12,850 <u>(2,486)</u> (15,336)
Livestock exchange	Provide a livestock selling facility and associated services to primary producers, purchasers and stock agents.	74 <u>304</u> 230
Pioneer Settlement	Care for and conserve the Pioneer Settlement and its collection. Market and promote the Settlement as a tourist destination, provide quality visitor programs and promote the sale of merchandise as an additional source of income.	753 <u>992</u> 239
Caravan parks	Provide and maintain caravan park facilities to a standard that promotes local tourism and supports a high quality of life.	(105) <u>(106)</u> (1)





## Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures. Comments are provided if the result differs significantly from previous years, or requires further clarification.

\*Please refer to color-coded guide on page 57 for explanation.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024*	Comments
<b>Statutory Planning</b> <b>Timeliness</b> <i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i> [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	41	79	96	51	Favourable result - Council has engaged planning consultants to assist with the assessment of planning permit applications and this has improved the statutory timeframes for the assessment of the applications. Council is also in the process of recruiting permanent staff which will assist in maintaining the performance efficiency.
<b>Service standard</b> <i>Planning applications decided within required timeframes</i> [Number of planning application decisions made within 60 days for regular permits and 10 days for VicSmart permits / Number of planning application decisions made] x 100	96.39%	71.28%	59.85%	75.73%	Favourable result - Council has engaged planning consultants to assist with the assessment of planning permit applications and this has improved the statutory timeframes for the assessment of the applications.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of statutory planning service</i> [Direct cost of statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	\$2,675.24	\$3,217.67	\$3,967.19	\$5,483.89	Less favourable: Council has engaged consultants over the past 18 months to assess planning permit applications as it has been difficult to recruit planners to permanent positions. This directly leads to cost escalation but allowed Council to maintain a timely service to the community.
<b>Decision making</b> <i>Council's planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council's decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	0%	0%	75%	100%	Favourable result - For the small number of cases where Council's statutory planning decision making was reviewed by VCAT, the Authority found that Council's decision making was consistent with the local planning scheme.

## Community funding

Swan Hill Rural City Council recognises, respects and values the contribution that community, sporting and not-for-profit organisations make within our community. One of the ways Council does this is through the annual Community Grants program. Recipients of the 2023/24 Community Grants are detailed in the tables that follow.

### Community Development Fund

The Community Development Fund provides grants of up to \$5,000 to eligible community groups and organisations. Funding may be given for projects including minor repairs or upgrades to community facilities; purchase of new or upgraded equipment; new programs or activities; local sustainability initiatives or environmental innovations; increasing club capacity; OHS or risk management issues and more.

Organisation	Approved amount \$	Project description
Swan Hill Child Care Cooperative	5,000	Resource & Equipment Upgrade – purchase of children’s furniture
1 <sup>st</sup> Lake Boga Sea Scouts	3,500	Camp Readiness Upgrade – purchase of camping equipment (tents, camp stove, etc)
Nyah & District Community Pool Committee	5,000	Maintenance Shed – replacement of old shed with new Colorbond shed / concrete floor
Manangatang & District Bowling Club	5,000	Kitchen Makeover – installation of new kitchen cupboards
Lake Boga Bowling Club Inc.	4,500	Purchase of New Bowling Greens Roller – purchase bowling greens roller
Swan Hill Toy Library	1,985	Growing Our Toy Library by creating an Online Presence – website creation with online toy catalogue
Chinkapook Reserves Committee of Management Inc.	2,000	Kitchen Appliances – purchase of urn, pie warmer and fridge
Robinvale Lawn Tennis Club	4,000	New Lawn Mower – purchase of new lawn mower
Lakeside Golf Club, Lake Boga Inc.	3,100	Irrigation Pump Upgrade – purchase & installation of new irrigation pump
Swan Hill Soccer League Inc.	5,000	New Portable Goals – purchase a set of portable goal posts
Swan Hill Neighbourhood House Inc.	3,500	Kitchen Upgrade – installation of new stove/ cooktop and overhead cupboards in communal kitchen
Lake Boga Sports Club	3,000	Lake Boga Netball Court Upgrade – repairs to netball court surface
Woorinen Cricket Club Inc.	2,500	WCC Cricket Nets Redevelopment – replacement of old cricket nets

## Our Performance

Organisation	Approved amount \$	Project description
Swan Hill Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club Inc.	3,500	Kitchen Project – replace old stove with new unit
Lake Boga Equestrian Centre (Swan Hill Pony Club & Lake Boga Riding Club)	3,500	Canteen Windows – replacement of roller doors with servery windows on canteen section of building
Nyah District Cricket Club	2,500	New Training Net Matting – replace existing training net matting
Swan Hill Motor Racing Club	3,400	Broadcasting Upgrade – install new PA system in the SH Motor Racing Club area of the Motorplex
Swan Hill RSL Cricket Club	3,000	New Pitch Roller – purchase of new ride-on pitch roller
Speewa Heritage Collectors Club Inc.	2,000	New Fridge – purchase of new refrigerator for kitchen
Tyntynder Football Netball Club	2,000	Social Rooms Kitchen Upgrade - purchase/ installation of new electric fryers in kitchen
Swan Hill Cricket Club	1,015	Junior & Senior Equipment – purchase of match & training balls
Swan Hill Football Netball Club	2,000	Dishwasher Upgrade – purchase of new glass dishwasher
Robinvale Pistol Club	2,000	Re-Clad Shooting Range—replace old timber structure with steel posts and colourbond cladding. Variation approved—electrical works.
Lions Club of Lake Boga T/A Flying Boat Museum	2,500	WAAF Display—purchase of a mannequin and glass display cabinets for WAAF Exhibit. Variation approved—shelving display units.
Ultima Progress Association Inc.	1,000	Log Hut Renovation – removal of walls from old hut adjoining Cenotaph



## Event Support Fund

The Event Support Fund provides grants and logistical support to community groups and event organisers to develop new events, or existing events that provide significant economic and/or social benefit to the region.

For the 23/24 financial year, Council allocated \$76,165.00 worth of funding (cash and/or logistical support). This allowed Council to support 33 events, listed below.

Event Name	Sponsorship awarded (\$)	Logistical support awarded (\$)	Value Funded (\$)
2024 Robinvale Euston 80 Ski Race		4,500	4,500
Bigger Better Beverfod Community Colour Run	1,000		1,000
Beats at The Bend	3,000		3,000
Catalina Classic Two Triples	500		500
Celebrating Women With Wings	1,000		1,000
Fiji Day Celebration	1,000		1,000
Holiday Hoops Basketball Tournament	800		800
Lake Boga Bank 2 Bank	3,000		3,000
Lake Boga Fireworks	2,500	1,000	3,500
Lake Boga Yacht Club Easter Regatta 2024	1,000		1,000
Mallee Almond Blossom Festival		3,000	3,000
Nyah District Christmas Carnival	1,000	1,000	2,000
River Peoples Forum - Respect for Rivers, Integrity in Water Management		865	865
Swan Hill Bowls Club Inc. 58th Autumn/May Carnival	2,000		2,000

## Our Performance

Event Name	Sponsorship awarded (\$)	Logistical support awarded (\$)	Value Funded (\$)
Swan Hill Colour Run	500	500	1,000
Swan Hill District Cattle Show	2,000	500	2,500
Swan Hill District Show	2,500	1,000	3,500
Swan Hill Easter Market Day		1,500	1,500
Swan Hill Film Festival	1,000		1,000
Swan Hill Market Day		1,500	1,500
Swan Hill Region Food and Wine Festival	4,000	6,000	10,000
What's in my backyard?	1,000		1,000
Woorinen WinterFest	2,500		2,500
Brew and Chew Festival	7,000	3,000	10,000
Robinvale Early Years Family Expo	1,000		1,000
Robinvale Euston Christmas Carnival	1,000	2,000	3,000
Robinvale Euston Lantern Festival	2,000	2,000	4,000
Robinvale Lawn Tennis Club 2024 Easter Tournament	1,000		1,000
Spark		500	500
Speewa Collectors Club Rally	5,000		5,000
Speewa Swap Meet	500		500
Splash Down & Rev Up	2,500	500	3,000
Swan Hill Badminton Veterans Tournament	1,000		1,000

# Strategic Pillar 3: Harmony

## Council Plan Initiatives

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan, including results achieved in relation to the strategic initiatives included in the Plan.

✓ Completed/ongoing      >> In progress      - Carried over 2024/25

Council Plan Initiative	Action	Status
Our elderly and vulnerable are cared for	Review Community Access and Inclusion Strategy (CAIS)	>>
All members of our Communities are supported	Work in partnership with local agencies to prevent all forms of Family Violence	>>
	Develop and implement a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)	✓
	Ensure that we consider people of all abilities in the development of infrastructure and events	>>
Encourage and support community leadership	Continue to offer Aboriginal scholarships and leadership opportunities	✓
	Continue to assist to develop Our Place identifying an Aboriginal language name and business model	>>
Celebration and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait history and culture	Formal inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input in Art Gallery programming and cultural activities	✓
	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance	✓

## Major Initiatives

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

Major Initiative	Progress
Deliver the Empower Youth Initiative (Budget \$210,195 Actual \$221,910)	Complete



## Major Initiatives

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

Major Initiative	Progress
Coordinate the L2P Driver program in Swan Hill and Robinvale (Budget \$39,675 Actual \$2,936). Council has completed obligations for the program, further funding was not acquired.	Complete
Youth Support – Engage program (Budget \$96,705 Actual \$22,637)	In progress
Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan (KISP) (Budget \$75,405 Actual \$16,828)	In progress

## Services funded in 2023/24 Budget

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description of Service Area	Budget <u>Actual</u> Variance  \$000
Aged and disability services	A range of home and community care services for the aged and people with a disability including home delivered meals, personal care, transport, dementia care, home maintenance, housing support and senior citizen clubs.	15 <u>745</u> 730
Family and children services	Family oriented support services including pre-schools, maternal and child health, youth services, out of school hours, and holiday programs.	1,364 <u>897</u> (467)
Community development	Effective and ongoing liaison with, and support to, community and recreation groups. Support for the development and implementation of Community Plans and liaison with our Indigenous community.	781 <u>838</u> 57

## Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures. Comments are provided if the result differs significantly from previous years, or requires further clarification.

\*Please refer to color-coded guide on page 57 for explanation.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024*	Comments
<b>Resource currency</b> <i>Recently purchased library collection</i> [Number of library collection items purchased in the last five years / Number of library collection items] x 100	43.45%	41.20%	37.07%	46.92%	Favourable result - A comprehensive review of the collections at all the library service's branches was conducted during 2023/24, with a large number of unused and outdated items removed from the collection, therefore decreasing the average age of the items still in the collection.
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of library service</i> [Direct cost of library service / population]	\$44.18	\$50.14	\$51.98	\$66.53	Previous results not comparable.  Neutral Results. Government changes in reporting requirements for this indicator in 2023/24 resulted in an increase in the cost of library services per population.
<b>Utilisation</b> <i>Library loans</i> [The sum of the number of collection item loans / municipal population]	NA	NA	NA	4.48	New measure in 2023/24
<b>Participation</b> <i>Library membership</i> [The number of registered library members / Municipal population] x 100	NA	NA	NA	27.24%	New measure in 2023/24.
<b>Participation</b> <i>Library visits</i> [Number of library visits/ municipal population]	NA	NA	NA	2.6	New measure in 2023/24

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024	Comments
<b>Maternal Child Health (MCH)</b> <b>Service standard</b> <i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i> [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service / Number of birth notifications received] x 100	102.21%	102.01%	100.69%	100.33%	
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of the MCH service</i> [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	\$109.86	\$121.52	\$110.69	\$110.38	
<b>Participation</b> <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	80.05%	82.74%	89.19%	86.79%	
<b>Participation</b> <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100	76.26%	77.50%	83.57%	91.49%	Favourable result - This effort keeps families engaged with the Service and receiving the care and support needed.
<b>Satisfaction</b> <i>Participation in 4-week key age and stage visit</i> [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received]	94.01%	95.99%	92.44%	94.00%	



# Strategic Pillar 4: Leadership

## Council Plan Initiatives

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan, including results achieved in relation to the strategic initiatives included in the Plan.

✓ Completed/ongoing      >> In progress      - Carried over 2024/25

Council Plan Initiative	Action	Status
Well managed resources for a sustainable future	Invest in the development of employees to enable a highly skilled and engaged workforce	>>
	Develop and implement a Workforce Development Plan	✓
Provide robust governance and effective leadership	Implement a Project Management Framework and system	✓
	Develop and implement a Strategic Asset Management plan and supporting Asset Management plans	✓
	Provide Councillors with professional development and support to ensure effective governance	✓
	Work with Town Representative groups to better plan and deliver projects	>>
Sound, sustainable: • Financial management • Excellence in service delivery • Strategic planning	Deliver projects on time, on budget and within scope	✓
	Working to budget and ensure future planning to meet financial needs	✓
Effective and authentic engagement with our community	Review our use of social media platforms across Council with a view of increasing Council's exposure and ensuring consistent moderation	>>
Visible presence in our community	Continue quarterly Coffee with a Councillor around the municipality	>>
	Create a culture where staff are ambassadors for the Council	>>
Create meaningful partnerships across our communities	Continue involvement in community groups	>>
	Continue to support and work with Swan Hill Incorporated	>>
Strong relationship with State and Federal governments to influence advocacy and funding opportunities	Continue to advocate on the following issues: • Improved Healthcare for our people, including a new hospital for Swan Hill • A new Murray River Bridge at Swan Hill • Complete the Murray Basin Rail Project • Housing and enabling infrastructure Better use of environmental water and the development of a plan specific to the Murray River between Swan Hill and Robinvale	>>
	Review Council's advocacy strategy on an annual basis	✓
Working together in promotion of the municipality	Positively promote our region as a great place	>>
	Continue to work with Murray River Tourism and Swan Hill Incorporated to promote the municipality	>>

## Major Initiatives

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

Major Initiative	Progress
Further develop Council IT processes as identified in the Data and Technology Strategy (Budget \$1,051,000 Actual \$579,691)	In progress
Municipal office alterations (Budget \$450,000 Actual \$29,251)	In progress

## Services funded in 2023/24 Budget

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2023/24 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service Area	Description of Service Area	Budget Actual Variance \$000
Councillors and corporate management	Governance includes the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Leadership Team and associated support, which cannot easily be attributed to the direct service provision areas.	2,165 <u>2,293</u> 128
Community relationships	Proactively communicate Council decisions, programs and events to the community using a range of methods, and assist the organisation to respond to community issues as they arise.	265 <u>276</u> 11
Management of resources	Manage Council's offices along with human and financial resources to effectively and efficiently fulfil Council objectives. This includes rate raising and collection, customer service, human resource management, depot and office site management, Council finances, information technology and records management.	(27,962) <u>(25,855)</u> 2,107
Infrastructure planning and management	Provide for the planning, design and project management of Council's capital works program, and manage Council's plant and fleet assets and depot operations.	1,927 <u>2,625</u> 698

## Service Performance Indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures. Comments are provided if the result differs significantly from previous years, or requires further clarification.

\*Please refer to color-coded guide on page 57 for explanation.

Service/Indicator/Measure	Result 2021	Result 2022	Result 2023	Result 2024*	Comments
<b>Governance</b> <b>Transparency</b> <i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i> [Number of Council meetings closed to the public / Number of Council resolutions made at meetings of Council x 100]	4.04%	4.93%	5.56%	11.40%	Less favourable - Increased number of capital projects necessitated increased level of sensitive decision making.
<b>Consultation and engagement</b> <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	51	48	50	48	
<b>Attendance</b> <i>Councillor attendance at Council Meetings</i> [The sum of the number of Councillors who attended each Council Meeting / (Number of council meetings) x (Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election)] x 100	94.44%	90.00%	89.52%	84.82%	
<b>Service cost</b> <i>Cost of elected representation</i> [Direct cost of the Governance service / Number of Councillors elected at the last Council general election]	\$43,117	\$52,315	\$53,993	\$52,767	
<b>Satisfaction</b> <i>Satisfaction with Council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the performance of Council in making decisions in the interest of the community]	48	45	45	43	





# Part Six

## *Corporate Governance*



## Council leadership

Swan Hill Rural City Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 2020* to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community. Council has a number of roles including:

- Taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision-making
- Providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- Ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- Advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- Fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

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

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

## Meetings of Council

Council conducts open public meetings on the third Tuesday of each month. Members of the community are welcome to attend these meetings and observe from the gallery. Council meetings also provide the opportunity for community members to submit a question of Council, make a submission or speak to an item.

For the 2023/24 year, Council held the following meetings:

- 11 Scheduled Council Meetings
- 4 Unscheduled Council Meetings

Below are the dates and locations of the Scheduled Council Meetings held in 2023/24:

Month	Location	Month	Location
18 July 2023	Swan Hill	20 February 2024	Swan Hill
15 August 2023	Swan Hill	19 March 2024	Robinvale
19 September 2023	Swan Hill	9 April 2024	Swan Hill
17 October 2023	Swan Hill	21 May 2024	Swan Hill
21 November 2023	Swan Hill	18 June 2024	Swan Hill
19 December 2023	Swan Hill		

## Councillor attendance at Council meetings

The following table provides a summary of Councillor attendance at Council Meetings and Unscheduled Council Meetings for the 2023/24 financial year.

Councillor	Scheduled Council Meetings	Scheduled Council Meetings	Unscheduled Council Meetings	Unscheduled Council Meetings
	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended
Cr Les McPhee	11	8	4	3
Cr Ann Young	11	10	4	2
Cr Bill Moar	11	11	4	2
Cr Stuart King	11	11	4	4
Cr Chris Jeffery	11	9	4	3
Cr Nicole McKay	11	9	4	3
Cr Jacquie Kelly	11	9	4	4

## Delegated committee and Community Asset Committees

The *Local Government Act* allows councils to establish one or more delegated and assets committees consisting of:

- Councillors
- Council staff
- Other persons
- Any combination of the above.

Council did not establish any delegated or Community Asset committees during 2023/24.



## Council representation on other committees

The following is the list of the annual appointments of Councillors to internal and external organisations and community groups.

### Cr Stuart King

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Chisholm Reserve Complex Inc
- Rail Freight Alliance
- Robinvale Euston Business Association
- Swan Hill Showgrounds Sport and Recreation Precinct Advisory Committee

### Cr Bill Moar

- Agribusiness Advisory Committee
- Event Support Fund
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water Customer and Stakeholder
- Pental Island Leaves Management Project Steering Committee
- Swan Hill Regional Livestock Exchange
- Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance—Board and General Committee
- Joint Bridge Committee—Murray River Council and Swan Hill Rural City Council

### Cr Les McPhee

- Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee
- Joint Bridge Committee—Murray River Council and Swan Hill Rural City Council
- Lake Boga and District Association Inc
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Piangil Community Group & Memorial Park Committee of Management

### Cr Chris Jeffery

- Community Development Fund
- Woorinen and District Progress Association Inc.

### Cr Nicole McKay

- Boundary Bend Progress Association
- Rural Councils Victoria Inc.
- Nyah District Action Group

### Cr Jacquie Kelly

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Manangatang Improvement Group
- Swan Hill Leisure Centre Committee of Management
- Pental Island Leaves Management Project Steering Committee

### Cr Ann Young

- Central Murray Regional Transport Forum
- Swan Hill Incorporated Board
- Ultima Progress Association
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee
- Swan Hill Regional Art Gallery Advisory Committee

### Mayor

- Community Development Fund
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee
- Event Support Fund
- Murray River Group of Councils

### Voluntary

- Swan Hill Residents and Rate Payers Association

## Conflict of interest

Councillors and staff are required by legislation to act in the best interests of the community. During the course of dealing with matters that come before Council for decision, individual Councillors and members of staff might find that they or their immediate family, have a financial or some other advantage that could be interpreted as having undue influence on the outcome. A conflict of interest occurs when personal or private interests might compromise the ability to act in the public interest.

To ensure transparency in the decision-making processes of Council, both Councillors and staff are required to declare and document their interest in a matter. Where Councillors have declared an interest, they take no part in the decision-making process.

During 2023/24, 11 conflicts of interest were declared at Council meetings.

A copy of the Department of Planning and Community Development guidance material 'Conflict of Interest: A Guide for Councillors,' October 2012, was provided to Councillors during their Councillor Induction Training.

## Councillor allowances

In accordance with Section 39 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councillors are entitled to receive an allowance while performing their duty as a Councillor. The Deputy Mayor and Mayor are also entitled to receive a higher allowance.

The State Government sets the upper and lower limits for all allowances paid to Councillors, Deputy Mayors and Mayors. Councils are divided into three categories based on the income and population of each council. In this instance Swan Hill Rural City Council is recognised as a category two council.

For the period 1 July 2023 to 17 December 2023, the Councillor annual allowance for a category 2 council (as defined by the Act) was up to \$31,980 per annum, Deputy Mayor was up to \$51,325 per annum and Mayor was up to \$102,650 per annum. For the period 18 December 2023 to 30 June 2024, the Councillor annual allowance for a category 2 council increased to \$32,877 per annum, Deputy Mayor \$52,713 and the allowance for the Mayor increased to \$105,424 per annum. The value of the allowance payable to Council members is inclusive of any Superannuation Guarantee Contribution amount, that is payable under Commonwealth law to the Council member.

The following table contains details of allowances paid to Councillors during the year.

Councillor	Allowance
Cr Stuart King (Mayor)	\$84,039.07
Cr Les McPhee	\$50,349.66
Cr Bill Moar	\$32,462.26
Cr Ann Young	\$32,462.26
Cr Chris Jeffery	\$32,462.26
Cr Nicole McKay	\$32,462.26
Cr Jacquie Kelly	\$32,462.26

## Councillor expenses

In accordance with Section 40 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to reimburse a Councillor for expenses incurred whilst performing his or her duties as a Councillor.

Council is also required to adopt and maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of expenses for Councillors.

The policy provides guidance for the payment of reimbursements of expenses and the provision of resources, facilities and other support to the Mayor and Councillors to enable them to discharge their duties.

The details of the expenses, including reimbursement of expenses for each Councillor and member of a Council Committee, paid by Council for the 2023/24 year are set out in the following table:

Councillor	Travel & Accommodation	Car Mileage	Catering & meals	Information & Communication	Conference & Training	Total \$
Cr Stuart King (Mayor)	\$2,545.08	\$3,397.53	\$119.09	\$792.00	\$1,591.00	\$8,444.70
Cr Les McPhee	\$607.71	\$993.53	-	\$876.00	-	\$2,477.24
Cr Bill Moar	-	-	-	\$876.00	-	\$876.00
Cr Ann Young	-	-	-	\$639.82	\$327.27	\$967.09
Cr Chris Jeffery	-	-	\$17.10	\$876.00	-	\$893.10
Cr Nicole McKay	\$263.04	\$504.05	-	\$792	-	\$1,559.09
Cr Jacquie Kelly	\$1,250.60	\$201.45	\$170.39	\$582.00	\$1,182.13	\$3,386.57

Note: No expenses were paid by Council, including reimbursements, to members of Council Committees during the 2023/24 year.

## Code of Conduct

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to review and adopt the Councillor Code of Conduct within 4 months after each general election. Swan Hill Rural City Council's Councillor Code of Conduct was reviewed and adopted on 23 February 2021.

After the review on 23 February 2021, Councillors signed the Code of Conduct declarations.

A copy of the code is available at [www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/about/overview/policies](http://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/about/overview/policies)



## Risk Management

Council's Risk Management Committee consists of members from all levels of the organisations. The Committee meets on a quarterly basis to review operational and strategic risks and provide information to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework provides an integrated and consistent approach to risk management to ensure that risks are identified and addressed during planning, decision-making and everyday operations. Each department has a risk profile with strategies to minimise and manage identified risks.

This year Council has continued to implement our Risk Management Framework, processes and systems which has further strengthened our ability to respond to changes in existing risks as well as respond to new risks that have been introduced through the increasing complex external environment, with particular focus on the areas outlined below:

- **Cybersecurity** - Council continued to invest in our cyber security risk management program to ensure we are prepared to respond to the increasing sophistication and frequency of external cyberattacks
- **Integrity, ethics and culture** - Council continues to make improvements to Council's fraud and corruption control framework
- **Insurance** - Council continues to monitor its increasing insurance renewals which is a result of the industry being impacted by events both national and international.



## Audit and Risk committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is an independent Advisory Committee to Council and is formed under Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The primary objective of the Audit and Risk Committee is to assist Council in the effective conduct of its responsibilities for:

- Enhancing the credibility and objectivity of internal and external financial reporting
- Effective management of financial processes, to ensure integrity and transparency
- Effective management of risks and the protection of Council assets
- Compliance with laws and regulations as well as use of best practice guidelines
- The effectiveness of the internal audit function
- The provision of an effective means of communication between the external auditor, internal auditor, management and the Council
- Facilitating the organisation's ethical development
- Maintaining a reliable system of internal controls

## Audit and Risk Committee Members

The Audit and Risk Committee consists of five members, three of whom are independent experts in a range of areas including financial management, business, and project management.

The members of the committee during the 2023/24 financial year were:

**Rosanne Kava (chairperson)** – appointed for three years, first term expires 30 September 2025.

**Greg Kuchel** – appointed for three years, first term expires 18 November 2024.

**Bradley Hutchinson** – appointed for three years, first term expires 6 April 2025.

**Cr Bill Moar** – appointed for one year at the Council Meeting in December 2022, term expired 31 December 2023.

**Cr Stuart King**— appointed for a second term at Council meeting in December 2023, term expires 26 October 2024.

**Cr Jacquie Kelly** – appointed for one year at Council meeting in December 2023, term expires 26 October 2024.

The following table contains details of attendance at Audit and Risk Committee meetings during 2023/24:

Member	Eligible to attend	Attended
Rosanne Kava, Independent member and Chairperson	4	4
Greg Kuchel, Independent member	4	4
Bradley Hutchinson, Independent member	4	4
Bill Moar, Councillor	2	1
Stuart King, Councillor	4	2
Jacquie Kelly, Councillor	2	2

## Internal Audit

Council's internal audit function is externally resourced to provide independent and objective assurance that appropriate processes and controls are in place across Council.

A three-year risk-based Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP) is revised annually to ensure the audit resources remain focused on the nominated areas.

The review process considers Council's risk framework, the Council Plan, the impact of any change on our operations, systems or the business environment, prior audit coverage and outcomes, and relies heavily on management directional input. The SIAP is revised and approved by the Audit Committee annually.

The Internal Auditor attends Audit Committee meetings to report on the status of the SIAP and to present findings of completed reviews.

The responsible Director and Manager for each area reviewed is required to attend the Audit Committee meeting to respond to questions in relation to the review. All audit issues identified are risk rated.

Recommendations are assigned to responsible managers and tracked through the Audit Committee agenda until all recommendations have been completed.

Quality assurance is measured through completion of the review recommendations and completion of the nominated annual SIAP reviews.

The SIAP for 2023/24 was completed with the following reviews conducted:

- Accounts payable
- Budget Monitoring and Management Controls
- Occupational Health Safety and Wellbeing
- Depot Operations

In order to attain a wider review of internal audit coverage, a mix of 'detailed' and 'insight' reviews are identified.

'Detailed' reviews typically include walk throughs, identification of key controls and sample testing of key controls to form a conclusion, resulting in a detailed report.

'Insight' reviews are high level discussions with those officers responsible for managing the area of focus, resulting in a brief report of observations and insights.

## External Audit

Council is externally audited by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO). For the 2023/24 financial year, the audit of Council's Financial Reports and Performance Statement was conducted on behalf of VAGO by Crowe Australasia (Albury).

The external auditors attend Audit and Risk Committee meetings to present the annual audit strategy and independent audit reports.

The external audit management letters and responses are also provided and discussed with the Audit and Risk Committee.



## Management

Council has implemented a number of statutory and better practice items to strengthen its management framework.

Having strong governance and management frameworks leads to better decision making by Council.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to undertake an assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist and include this in its report of operations.

Council's Governance and Management Checklist results are set out in this section. The following items have been highlighted as important components of the management framework.





# Governance and Management Checklist

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

Governance and Management Items	Assessment
<b>1. Community Engagement Policy</b> <i>Policy outlining Council's commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest.</i>	Date of operation of current policy: 23 February 2021.
<b>2. Community Engagement Guidelines</b> <i>Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community.</i>	Date of operation of current guidelines: 15 March 2022.
<b>3. Financial Plan</b> <i>Plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years.</i>	Date of adoption of current Financial Plan: 20 July 2021.
<b>4. Asset Plan</b> <i>Plan under section 92 of the Act setting out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years.</i>	Council is currently developing a long-term ten year plan. Council currently has a medium-term plan.
<b>5. Revenue and Rating Plan</b> <i>Plan under section 93 of the Act setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges.</i>	Date of adoption of revenue and Rating Plan: 15 June 2021
<b>6. Annual Budget</b> <i>Plan under section 94 of the Act setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required.</i>	Date of adoption of the Annual Budget: 18 June 2024.
<b>7. Risk Policy</b> <i>Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council's operations.</i>	Date of operation of the current policy: 20 June 2023.
<b>8. Fraud Policy</b> <i>Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to minimising the risk of fraud.</i>	Date of commencement of current policy: 16 March 2021.

Governance and Management Items	Assessment
<b>9. Municipal Emergency Management Planning</b> <i>Councils participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC).</i>	Dates of the MEMPC meetings attended by Council in 2023/24: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 August 2023</li> <li>• 26 October 2023</li> <li>• 7 March 2024</li> <li>• 16 May 2024.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Procurement Policy</b> <i>Policy under section 108 the Act outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to the purchase of goods and services by the Council.</i>	Date of adoption: 21 December 2021.
<b>11. Business Continuity Plan</b> <i>Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster.</i>	Date of operation of the current plan: 17 May 2023.
<b>12. Disaster Recovery Plan</b> <i>Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster.</i>	Date of operation of current plan: 22 March 2021.
<b>13. Complaint Policy</b> <i>Policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council's commitment and approach to managing complaints.</i>	Date of commencement of current policy: 5 January 2022.
<b>14. Workforce Plan</b> <i>Plan outlining Council's commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation.</i>	Date of commencement of current plan: 24 December 2021.
<b>15. Payment of rates and charges hardship policy</b> <i>Policy outlining Council's commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying rates.</i>	Date of operation of current policy: 26 April 2023.  Hardship provisions included in multiple documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revenue and Rating Plan 2021</li> <li>• Debt Collection Policy 2024</li> <li>• Financial Hardship Policy 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>16. Risk Management Framework</b> <i>Framework outlining Council's approach to managing risks to the Council's operations.</i>	Date of operation of current framework: 18 January 2021.

Governance and Management Items	Assessment
<p><b>17. Audit and Risk Committee</b></p> <p><i>Advisory committee of Council under section 53 and section 54 of the Act, whose role is to monitor the compliance of council policies and procedures, monitor Councils financial reporting, monitor and provide advice on risk management, and provide oversight on internal and external audit functions.</i></p>	<p>Audit and Risk Committee established under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>: 26 July 2023.</p> <p>Current Audit &amp; Risk Committee Charter reviewed 2024.</p> <p>Meeting minutes presented to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 July 2023</li> <li>• 7 Sept 2023</li> <li>• 20 Feb 2024</li> <li>• 6 June 2024 .</li> </ul>
<p><b>18. Internal Audit</b></p> <p><i>Independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council's governance, risk and management controls.</i></p>	<p>Date of engagement of current provider: August 2023.</p>
<p><b>19. Performance Reporting Framework</b></p> <p><i>A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act.</i></p>	<p>Date of operation of current framework: 20 June 2022.</p>
<p><b>20. Council Plan Reporting</b></p> <p><i>Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the reporting year.</i></p>	<p>Council Plan Progress Reports are provided on a quarterly basis, The last report presented to Council during the 2023/24 financial year, was on 21 May 2024, for the quarter to 31 March 2024.</p>
<p><b>21. Quarterly budget reports</b></p> <p><i>Quarterly reports presented to Council under section 97 of the Act 2020, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations.</i></p>	<p>Dates reports presented to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2023 – 19/09/2023</li> <li>• September 2023 – 21/11/2023</li> <li>• December 2023 – 20/02/2024</li> <li>• March 2023 – 21/05/2024.</li> </ul>
<p><b>22. Risk Reports</b></p> <p><i>Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council's operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies.</i></p>	<p>Reports are presented quarterly to the Audit &amp; Risk Committee.</p> <p>Last two meeting dates were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 April 2024</li> <li>• 6 June 2024.</li> </ul>



Governance and Management Items	Assessment
<b>23. Performance Reports</b> <i>Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring the results against financial and non-financial performance, including performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act 2020.</i>	Annual Reporting under <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> : 17/10/2023. Multiple performance reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• s 98 Annual Report</li> <li>• s 106 Service Performance Indicators</li> </ul> Quarterly Reporting under <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S 97 Financial Indicators</li> </ul> Annual Reporting under Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020: Reporting on Council Plan Progress is done quarterly.
<b>24. Annual Report</b> <i>Annual report under sections 98, 99 and 100 of the Act 2020 the community containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements.</i>	Annual Report 2022/23 presented to Council: 17 October 2023.
<b>25. Councillor Code of Conduct</b> <i>Code under section 139 of the Act setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters</i>	Reviewed and adopted in accordance with section 139 of the Act. Reviewed: 23 February 2021.
<b>26. Delegations</b> <i>Documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act.</i>	Delegations reviewed: 9 April 2024.
<b>27. Meeting procedures</b> <i>Governance Rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees.</i>	Governance Rules adopted in accordance with section 60 of the Act: 18 August 2020. Reviewed: 21 April 2023.

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



**Scott Barber**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Cr Stuart King**  
Mayor

**Dated:** 10 September 2024

**Dated:** 10 September 2024

### Freedom of Information Act 1982

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* provides the opportunity for public access to Council documents.

The Act establishes a legally enforceable right for the community to request information, in document form, held by Council.

The Act has four principles:

1. the public has a right of access to documents subject to certain exceptions or exemptions.
2. Local Governments are required to publish information on the documents they hold.
3. individuals may request that inaccurate, incomplete, out-of-date or misleading information about themselves be amended.
4. individuals may appeal against a decision not to give access to the document (s) or not to amend personal information.

Written requests must be made to Councils Freedom of Information Officer, be accompanied by an application fee, and specify the documents required, or provide sufficient detail to enable documents to be located.

In December 2019, the Victorian Information Commissioner issued Professional Standards relating to the conduct of an agency in performing its functions under the Act, and the administration and operation of the Act by an agency.

Council received five valid quests in 2023/24 and one request was carried over from 2022/23 three requests were released in full for 2023/24, two requests were released in-part and one request was not concluded due to non-payment of access charges. In addition, five requests lapsed due to lack of response to requests for clarification or requests for payment of the application fee. Four additional requests were answered informally outside of the Act.

Year	Number of valid requests	Fees and charges	Costs
2023/24	5	\$234	\$11,361
2022/23	8	\$208	\$4,525
2021/22	3	\$155	\$939
2020/21	8	\$287	\$5,125

### Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Council respects the privacy of its citizens, ratepayers and clients. Council is committed to the privacy principles prescribed by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Council has adopted a Privacy Policy that addresses the requirements of both Acts.

Council received no privacy complaints in the 2023/24 financial year.

### Documents available for public inspection

Council's Public Transparency Policy now provides details of how and what Council information is available to the public. This policy is available on Council's website.

Council's website contains a wide array of Council information including all policies, plans and reports required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act.

An extensive list of publicly available information is provided in Council's Part II Statement provided under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. This statement is also available on Council's website and is required to be updated annually.

### Local Laws

Council has the following Local Laws in place:

Local Law	Date adopted	Date operational
Community Local Law No. 2	16 May 2017	2 June 2017
Regional Livestock Exchange Local Law No. 3	16 November 2021	16 November 2021

## Domestic Animal Act 1994

Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, requires Council to prepare Domestic Animal Management Plan, and evaluate its implementation in the Annual Report. The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022–2025 was adopted by Council in November 2021. The plan was developed through consultation with the community and key stakeholders including veterinarians, animal businesses and other service providers.

The key achievements of 2024 were the completion of Stage Two of the Swan Hill Dog Park with the installation of shade sails, new dog waste bins and agility equipment and the implementation of the 24 hour Cat Containment Order which comes into effect on January 1 2025.

In May 2024, the 24 hour cat containment proposal was released to the community. The submission period was open for two-weeks. A total of 97 submissions were received, with 59% in support of the 24/7 cat containment proposal.

The Cat Containment Order requires all cats within the municipality to be confined to their owner's property, unless the cat is appropriately restrained in a cat carrier or leashed. The process of implementing the order involved extensive community consultation and education including surveys, community pop up sessions, multi-lingual factsheets, radio interviews, social media posts, as well as benchmarking with other councils.

At the June Council Meeting, the 24-hour Cat Containment Order was approved. The Order will help protect native wildlife, prevent nuisance behaviours like spraying, fighting and property damage, reduce the feral cat population and protect cats from injury and illness.

## Food Act 1984

Section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, requires Council to publish a summary of any ministerial directions received in its Annual Report. No Ministerial Directions were received in 2023/24.

## Road Management Act 2004

Section 22 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, requires Council to publish a copy or summary of any ministerial direction received in its Annual Report. No Ministerial Directions were received in 2023/24.

## Contracts

During the 2023/24 period, the Council did not enter into any contracts for works valued at \$200,000 or more without first conducting a competitive process. For the same period, the Council awarded the following contracts, each valued above \$200,000, which required a tender invitation in accordance with its Procurement Policy:

Contract Type	Description
Construction Works	Nyah West Revitalisation - Footpath Construction
Construction Works	Tresco West Road Reconstruction
Construction Works	Fish Point Road Reconstruction
Construction Works	Butterworth Street Drainage & Road Upgrade Works
Supply of Services	Labour Hire Services
Design & Construct	Lake Boga Foreshore Beautification Project - Irrigation
Supply of Goods	Supply and Delivery of One Asphalt Road Maintenance Unit
Supply of Services	Supply of Hire & Plant Equipment (Wet & Dry) - Panel
Supply of Services	Internal Audit Services
Supply of Services	Provision of Tree Inspection & Maintenance
Construction Works	Robinvale Centenary Park Playground - Playground Equipment
Supply of Goods	Supply & Delivery of One Trommel Mobile Screen
Supply of Goods	Supply & Delivery of One Telehandler
Supply of Goods	Supply & Delivery of Concrete, Quarry & Bituminous Products - Panel
Construction Works	Woorinen Road Reconstruction
Construction Works	Boundary Bend - Kooloonong Road Reconstruction
Design & Construct	Design & Installation of Floating Boat Pontoon Lake Boga
Supply of Services	Provision of Temporary Staffing Services - Panel
Supply of Services	Management & Operation of the PS Pyap

Section 106 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, requires Council to plan and deliver services to the community in accordance with the service performance principles. The principles are:

1. services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community
2. services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended
3. quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community
4. a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring
5. service delivery must include a fair and effective process for considering and responding to complaints about service provision.

## Carers Recognition Act 2012

Section 12 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*, requires Council to report on its compliance with the care relationship principles in its Annual Report.

Council promotes the principles to people in care relationships who receive Council services, and to the wider community by providing links to State Government resource materials on Council's website and providing information to organisations represented in Council networks.

Council staff, its agents and volunteers are informed about the principles by including information on the care relationship in Council induction and training programs for staff working in Community Care Services, and induction and training programs for volunteers working directly with the community.

Council has taken all practicable measures to review and modify policies, procedures and supports to include recognition of the carer relationship.

Council transitioned the delivery of community-based aged care services on 31 May 2024.

## Community Access and Inclusion Strategy

Section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*, requires Council to prepare a Disability Action Plan to:

1. reduce barriers to accessing services, programs and facilities
2. reduce barriers to people with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
3. promote inclusion and participation in the community for people with a disability; and
4. change community attitudes and practices that discriminate against persons with a disability.

Council is currently reviewing its Community Access and Inclusion Strategy.

## Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* commenced on 6 April 2020. Council has developed procedures that provide for the making of disclosures. The procedures encourage the disclosure of improper conduct undertaken by Council or its employees, provide protections for the person making a disclosure, and require the reporting of assessable disclosures to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC).

Council takes its role and responsibilities under the Act very seriously. Public Interest Disclosure procedures also form part of the staff induction process. Staff and members of the public are encouraged to report matters to the public interest disclosures co-ordinator, if they believe on reasonable grounds that improper conduct or detrimental action has occurred or is occurring.

No reportable matters were received in the 2023/24 financial year.



## Council documents — Policies and Plans

Council develops publicly available policies to explain to its community why Council is responsible for a particular subject area or service, and its obligations. Council develops procedures to explain how Council intends to discharge its responsibilities, and meet those obligations. Council also develops internal policies and procedures to guide Council operations.

Councils are usually required to develop policies and procedures in response to a legislative requirement, or to meet a particular Standard or Code. Plans and Strategies are typically longer term documents, that articulate and guide Council actions to achieve specific objectives and outcomes.

Most Council policies are reviewed every three years. New policies are reviewed after the first year of operation. Plans and strategies are either medium or long term, and reviewed in the final year of operation, or earlier if required.

The following publicly available policies, procedures, plans and strategies were reviewed and/or adopted by Council in 2023/24.

Policy/Strategy/Plan	Date reviewed/adopted
Asset Naming Guidelines	November 2023
Asset Naming Policy	December 2023
Asset Protection Policy and Procedure	April 2024
Chain of Responsibility Policy	May 2024
Economic Development Strategy 2024—2030	June 2024
Health Management Plan—Swan Hill and Robinvale Pounds	March 2024
Private Assets in Road Reserves Policy	May 2024
Infringement Notice Internal Review Process	July 2023
Part II Statement— <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i>	January 2024
Private Assets in Road Reserves Policy	May 2024



# Part Seven

## *Performance Statement*

# Contents

Description of municipality	97
Operational summary	98
Sustainable Capacity Indicators	99
Service Performance Indicators	101
Financial Performance Indicators	102 to 109
Definitions	110
Other information	111
Certification of the performance statement	112
Auditor General's Report - Performance Statement	113

## Description of municipality

Swan Hill Rural City Council covers 6,116 square kilometres and is home to 21,212\* people.

It includes the townships of Swan Hill, Robinvale, Lake Boga, Nyah, Nyah West, Piangil, Beverford, Woorinen, Ultima, Manangatang and Boundary Bend.

The Swan Hill municipality has experienced significant growth over the past decade, led by the expansion of horticultural/agricultural practices and supported by an innovative manufacturing sector.

This success is depicted by the fact that irrigated areas have been increasing with a higher proportion of mature, high value crops such as almonds and table grapes. The region is one of Australia's largest producers of almond and table grape plantings, vegetables including potatoes and carrots, stone fruit, olives, avocados and field crops.

The region also boasts an impressive 69% of its municipality dedicated to cropping and associated dryland infrastructure, including wheat, barley, lentils, cereal/hay, pulses (including chickpeas and lupins), grazing, oats, and canola.

More than 20 per cent of all jobs in the city are directly related to agriculture.

Located along the Murray River, tourism plays an important role in our region's economy. Our climate and natural beauty attracts approximately 768,000 visitors each year as reported in the Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) Snapshot report, March 2023.



\*This population estimate figure is provided by Local Government Victoria for the performance reporting of 2023/24.

\*Swan Hill Region includes the Swan Hill Rural City, Gannawarra Shire and Balranald Shire



## Operational summary

The Comprehensive Income Statement reports a surplus of \$3.3m. This includes depreciation and other non-monetary contributions but excludes capital payments of \$17.1m and loan repayments of \$0.3m.

A number of this year's performance results have been affected by the prepayment of the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission Financial Assistance Grant. In June 2023, Council received 100% of its 2023/24 allocation. Reported Recurrent Grant income was therefore significantly below budget due to the funds received in the prior financial year and therefore affected a number of our Performance Statement results.

At 31 May 2024 Council ceased its involvement in providing Home and Community Care services. This involved the transition of clients to new providers and the redundancy of staff involved in providing the services.

The impact of CPI increases and the resultant increase in goods and services continued to be an issue. Contract renewals and tender submissions have increased significantly and have impacted on our ability to complete capital projects and provide services within budget.

The attraction and retention of staff has continued to be an issue. Council experienced a number of positions which remained vacant for extended periods due to issues faced with recruiting suitably qualified staff. For a number of Council services there are considerable shortages within the industry, and Council has been competing with private industry to attract these staff. Areas such as building and planning, engineers, and project management staff have been difficult to recruit.

Council continued its lead role in administering a Commonwealth Regional Growth Fund on behalf of six partner councils. Final receipt of this grant funding was received in June 2024 with the distribution to the partner Council's completed at this time. Council share of this funding is to be used to complete the Swan Hill Art Gallery Redevelopment and construction of the Tourism and Cultural Hub.

Council remains active in the residential land development at Tower Hill Estate in Swan Hill; with continued sales within the prepared stages. The development continues to be cash-flow positive, and provide a return on investment of \$350k.



## Sustainable Capacity Indicators

Service/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	Material variations
<b>Population</b>					
<i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i> [Total expenses/ Municipal population]	\$2,525.03	\$2,604.00	\$2,580.75	\$2,855.08	Unfavourable result - total expenses in 2023/24 increased considerably due to the payout of funding held by Council to the partner Councils of the Building Better Regions / Our Region Our Rivers Federal Grant Program (\$1.67M) and the final payments involved in Council's withdrawal from the Community Aged Care programs (\$0.9M). These are once off expenses.
<i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i> [Value of infrastructure/ Municipal population]	\$20,751.24	\$24,532.17	\$24,772.76	\$25,927.16	Favourable result - The cost/value of assets is increasing much greater than the population of the municipality. Revaluation of infrastructure assets increased their value of \$17.6M.
<i>Population density per length of road</i> [Municipal population/ Kilometres of local roads]	5.62	6.45	6.16	5.94	No material variation.
<b>Own-source revenue</b>					
<i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i> [Own-source revenue/Municipal population]	\$1,902.26	\$1,939.98	\$1,909.61	\$2,087.73	Interest income increased almost \$1.2M in 2023/24 due to higher cash holdings over the year and increased interest rates.

Service/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	Material variations
<b>Recurrent grants</b>					
<i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [Recurrent grants/ Municipal population]	\$586.59	\$662.68	\$682.18	\$273.81	Unfavourable result - Had the 2023/24 Victoria Grants Commission payment been made in the 2023/24 year this result would have been \$679.38 or a reduction of 5.91%.
<b>Disadvantage</b>					
<i>Relative socio-economic disadvantage</i> [Index of Relative Socio-economic disadvantage by decile]	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	No material variation.
<b>Workforce turnover</b>					
<i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x 100	14.40%	21.16%	22.09%	25.32%	Councils turnover rate of 15.61% increased to 25.32% with Council's decision to exit out of Aged Care Services in May 2024.

## Service Performance Indicators

Service/indicator/measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	
<b>Aquatic Facilities</b>						
<b>Utilisation</b>						
<i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	3.43	5.58	6.17	NA	8.68	Favourable result - The increase in patronage corresponds with upgrades to both the Swan Hill Aquatic and Recreation Centre and Robinvale Aquatic and Recreation Centre and it is pleasing to see a 40% increase in membership and usage.
<b>Animal management</b>						
<b>Health and safety</b>						
<i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions/ Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	NA	0.00%	No animal management prosecutions in the 2023/24 financial year.
<b>Food and safety</b>						
<b>Health and safety</b>						
<i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance notifications and major non-compliance notifications about food premises] x 100	66.67%	40.00%	100.00%	NA	100.00%	No material variation.
<b>Governance</b>						
<b>Satisfaction</b>						
<i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement (community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council)</i>	51.00	48.00	50.00	50.00	48.00	No material variation.



## Financial Performance Indicators

Service/indicator/measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	
<b>Libraries</b>						
<b>Participation</b>	-	-	-	NA	27.24%	New measure in 2023/24.
<i>Library membership</i>						
<i>[percentage of the population that are registered library members] x100</i>						
<b>Maternal and Child Health</b>						
<b>Participation</b>						
<i>Participation in the MCH service</i>	80.05%	82.74%	89.19%	NA	86.79%	No material variation.
<i>[Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100</i>						
<i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i>	76.26%	77.50%	83.57%	NA	91.49%	
<i>[Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x 100</i>						Favourable result - This effort keeps families engaged with the service and receiving the care and support needed.
<b>Roads</b>						
<b>Condition</b>						
<i>Sealed local roads below the intervention level</i>	99.43%	99.37%	99.27%	99.20%	98.95%	No material variation.
<i>(percentage of sealed local roads that are below the renewal intervention level set by Council and not requiring renewal)</i>						

Service/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	
<b>Statutory Planning</b>						
<b>Service standard</b>						
<i>Planning applications decided within the relevant required time</i>	91.85%	70.49%	61.31%	70.00%	75.73%	Favourable result - Council has engaged planning consultants to assist with the assessment of planning permit applications and this has improved the statutory timeframes for the assessment of the applications.
<i>(percentage of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time)</i>						
<b>Waste collection</b>						
<b>Waste diversion</b>						
<i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x 100	29.51%	30.92%	29.28%	30.50%	28.38%	No material variation.

## Financial Performance Indicators

Dimension/ indicator/measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Efficiency</b>										
<b>Expenditure level</b>										
Expenditures per property assessment	\$4,276.56	\$4,309.14	\$4,486.07		\$4,964.10	\$4,896.89	\$4,832.85	\$4,972.18	\$5,104.16	Unfavourable result - Council forecasts 60 additional rated properties each year. Costs to council are rising more than 3% each year (CPI forecasts) however rated properties are increasing 0.5%. The 2023/24 result increased due to the once off expenditure of redundancy payments as Council withdrew from providing aged care services.
[Total expenses / Number of property assessments]										
<b>Revenue level</b>										
Average rate per property assessment	\$2,060.62	\$2,113.86	\$2,173.93	N/A	\$2,310.33	\$2,345.57	\$2,399.61	\$2,450.15	\$2,500.36	No material variation.
[General rates and Municipal charges / Number of property assessments]										

Dimension/ indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Liquidity</b>											The 2024 result is high due to the significant value of cash held for projects incomplete at the end of the year. These projects are forecast to be completed in 2025 and following this the ratio result remains stable.
<b>Working capital</b>											
<i>Current assets compared to current liabilities</i> [Current assets / Current liabilities] x100	388.38%	417.74%	391.16%	204.00%	428.23%	261.64%	291.36%	283.83%	285.29%		
<b>Unrestricted cash</b>											Unfavourable result - Prior year result was much higher due to the prepayment of Victoria Grants Commission payment for the 2023/24 year received in June. No prepayment was received in the 2023/24 year.
<i>Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities</i> [Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100	266.18%	269.46%	269.09%	N/A	80.74%	191.47%	219.27%	213.42%	218.01%		



Dimension/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target		Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Obligations</b>											
<b>Loans and borrowings</b>											
Loans and borrowings compared to rates	27.00%	8.81%	7.71%	N/A		6.42%	5.42%	2.84%	1.94%	1.07%	Favourable result - Ratio continues to reduce as Council pays off current loans and has no new loans forecast.
[[Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100											
<b>Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates</b>											
[[Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	3.08%	17.93%	1.12%	N/A		1.06%	1.04%	2.39%	0.88%	0.86%	No material variation.

Dimension/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Indebtedness</b>											Actual 2023/24 year is high due to the prepayment of Victoria Grants Commission received at the end of the 2022-23 year. Council has continued its plan of no future borrowings from the 2021 year, therefore this ratio will continue to reduce until all loans are repaid in full in the 2030/31 year.
<i>Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i>	11.54%	14.70%	8.47%	N/A	11.14%	5.77%	4.39%	3.44%	2.64%		
<i>[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100</i>											
<b>Asset renewal and upgrade</b>											No material variation.
<i>Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation</i>	101.54%	95.15%	81.44%	88.00%	84.31%	117.00%	133.45%	72.07%	92.16%		
<i>[Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100</i>											

## Performance Statement

Dimension/indicator/ measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Operating position</b>											
<b>Adjusted underlying result</b>	12.71%	5.76%	8.34%	N/A	-16.14%	1.49%	3.18%	2.34%	1.57%		Unfavourable result - The 2023/24 income doesn't include \$8.6M in Victoria Grants Commission Income which was received in June 2023. Had this been received in 2023/24 the result would be more favourable at 0.39%.
<i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i> [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100											
<b>Stability</b>											
<b>Rates concentration</b>	48.54%	53.38%	50.96%	55.90%	61.88%	54.27%	57.18%	57.29%	57.46%		Unfavourable result - Prepayment of the 2023/24 Victoria Grants Commission funding received in June 2023 of \$8.6M reduced the reported recurrent grant income, therefore significantly increasing this ratio. Had the funding been received in the relevant financial year this result would have been 53.07% and inline with prior results and forecasts.
<i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100											

Dimension/ indicator/measure	2021	2022	2023	2024	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Material variations
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	
<b>Rates effort</b>										
<i>Rates compared to property values</i>	0.64%	0.62%	0.55%	N/A	0.51%	0.48%	0.51%	0.52%	0.52%	No material variation.
[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality ] x100										



## Definitions

<b>Aboriginal children</b>	means a child who is an Aboriginal person
<b>Aboriginal person</b>	has the same meaning as in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
<b>adjusted underlying revenue</b>	means total income other than: non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and non-monetary asset contributions; and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
<b>adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</b>	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
<b>annual report</b>	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
<b>asset renewal expenditure</b>	means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
<b>asset upgrade expenditure</b>	means expenditure that— (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
<b>critical non-compliance outcome notification</b>	means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
<b>current assets</b>	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
<b>current liabilities</b>	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
<b>food premises</b>	has the same meaning as in the <i>Food Act 1984</i>
<b>intervention level</b>	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
<b>local road</b>	means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the <i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
<b>major non-compliance outcome notification</b>	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorised officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken
<b>MCH</b>	means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
<b>non-current liabilities</b>	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
<b>own-source revenue</b>	means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
<b>population</b>	means the resident population estimated by council
<b>rate revenue</b>	means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
<b>relative socio-economic disadvantage</b>	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
<b>restricted cash</b>	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
<b>SEIFA</b>	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
<b>unrestricted cash</b>	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

## Other information

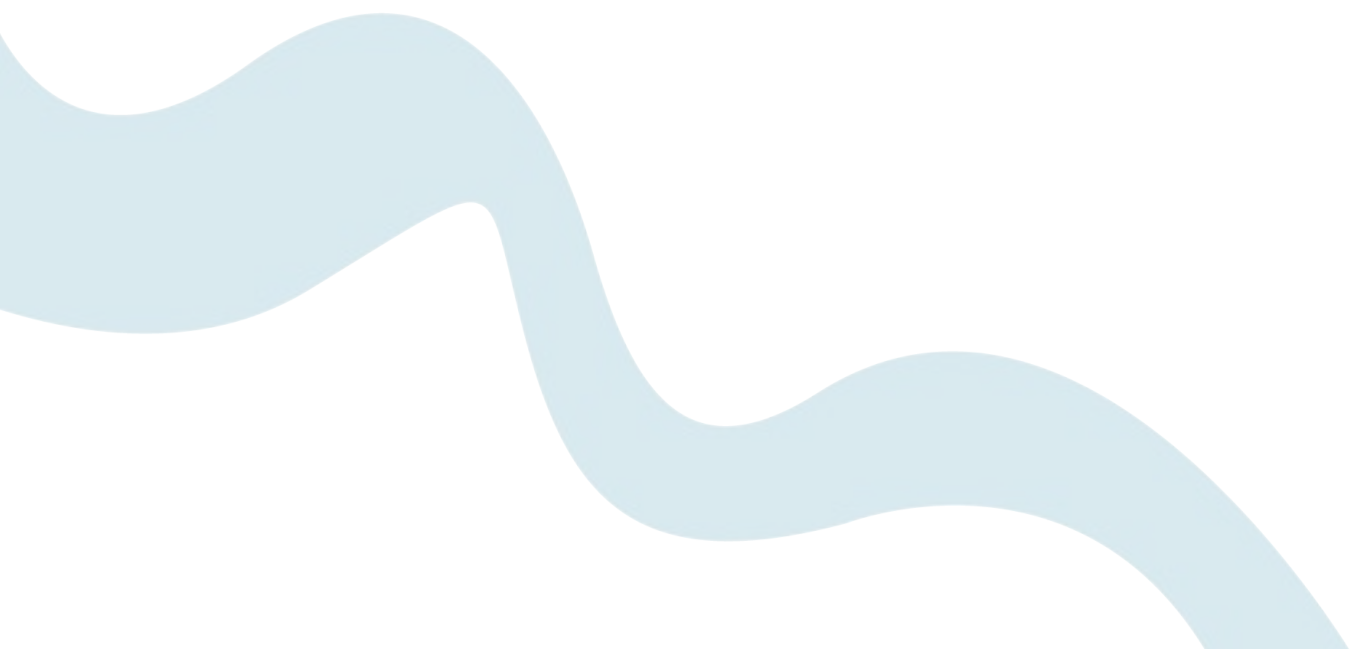
### 1. Basis of preparation

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

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

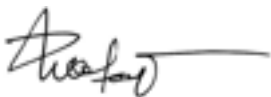
The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year and the results forecast for the period 2024-25 to 2027-28 by the council's financial plan.

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



## Certification of the performance statement

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



Bhan Pratap FCPA

**Principal Accounting Officer**

**Dated:** 10 September 2024

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the Swan Hill Rural City Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 presents fairly the results of Council's performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

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

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

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



Stuart King

**Councillor (Mayor)**

**Dated:** 10 September 2024



Les McPhee

**Councillor**

**Dated:** 10 September 2024



Scott Barber

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Dated:** 10 September 2024



Victorian Auditor-General's Office

## Independent Auditor's Report

### *To the Councillors of Swan Hill Rural City Council*

<b>Opinion</b>	<p>I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Swan Hill Rural City Council (the council) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of municipality</li> <li>• operational summary</li> <li>• sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024</li> <li>• service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024</li> <li>• financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2024</li> <li>• definitions</li> <li>• other information</li> <li>• certification of the performance statement.</li> </ul> <p>In my opinion, the performance statement of Swan Hill Rural City Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2024 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.</p>
<b>Basis for Opinion</b>	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's <i>APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
<b>Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement</b>	<p>The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p>



**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement**

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE  
18 September 2024

Travis Derricott  
*as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria*

### Appendix 1: Donations and contributions

Organisation	Purpose	Amount
Australia Day Activities	Contributions	\$10,667.44
Agenda Entertainment	Contributions	\$7,000.00
Agenda Entertainment	Support	\$3,145.16
Bigger Better Beverford	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Boundary Bend Progress Association	Contributions	\$3,000.00
Chinkapook Reserves Committee of Management Inc	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Colman Education Foundation	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Fight Cancer Foundation Ltd	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Lake Boga Bowling Club Inc	Contributions	\$5,000.00
Lake Boga Flying Boat Museum	Contributions	\$2,500.00
Lake Boga Football Netball Club	Contributions	\$3,000.00
Lake Boga Inc	Contributions	\$2,500.00
Lake Boga Waterski Club	Contributions	\$3,000.00
Lake Boga Yacht Club Inc	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Lakeside Golf Club Inc	Contributions	\$3,100.00
Lead Loddon Murray Inc	Contributions	\$8,000.00
Lions Club of Lake Boga Inc	Contributions	\$4,500.00
Mallee Almond Blossom Festival Committee	Support	\$2,073.00
Manangatang & District Bowling Club	Contributions	\$5,000.00
Murray Downs Golf & Country Club	Contributions	\$22,727.28
Noahs Ark	Support	\$30.00
Nyah District Action Group	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Nyah District Action Group	Support	\$364.00
Nyah District Cricket Club Inc	Contributions	\$2,500.00
Nyah District Pool Committee Inc	Contributions	\$5,000.00
Pasifika Community of Australia Inc	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Reclink Australia	Contributions	\$727.27
Robinvale Lawn Tennis Club Inc	Contributions	\$5,000.00
Robinvale Network House	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Robinvale Network House	Support	\$1,061.80
Robinvale Pistol Club	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Rotary Club of Swan Hill	Support	\$414.50
Smoke on the Water	Support	\$372.73
Speewa Heritage Collectors Club Inc	Contributions	\$3,000.00

Organisation	Purpose	Amount
St Mary MacKillop College	Contributions	\$500.00
Swan Hill Badminton Association	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Swan Hill Bowls Club Inc	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Swan Hill Child Care Co-Op Ltd	Contributions	\$5,000.00
Swan Hill College	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Swan Hill Community Toy Library Inc	Contributions	\$1,985.00
Swan Hill Cricket Club Inc	Contributions	\$1,015.00
Swan Hill District Agricultural & Pastoral Society Inc	Contributions	\$4,500.00
Swan Hill District Agricultural & Pastoral Society Inc	Support	\$982.72
Swan Hill Football Club Inc	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Swan Hill Inc	Contributions	\$4,000.00
Swan Hill Inc	Support	\$5,058.40
Swan Hill Invitational Basketball Tournament ESF	Support	\$590.91
Swan Hill Kart Club Inc	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Swan Hill Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club Inc	Contributions	\$3,500.00
Swan Hill Motor Racing Club	Contributions	\$3,400.00
Swan Hill Neighbourhood House Inc	Contributions	\$3,500.00
Swan Hill Pony Club	Contributions	\$3,500.00
Swan Hill RSL Cricket Club Inc	Contributions	\$3,000.00
Swan Hill Soccer League	Contributions	\$5,000.00
The Rural Foundation Ltd	Contributions	\$500.00
The Rural Foundation Ltd	Support	\$629.20
The Rural Youth Network	Support	\$88.00
The Scout Association of Australia Victorian Branch	Contributions	\$3,500.00
Cinema Pop-Up Pty Ltd	Support	\$2,698.16
Tyntynder Football Netball Club Inc	Contributions	\$2,000.00
Ultima Progress Association	Contributions	\$1,000.00
Woorinen & District Progress Association Inc	Contributions	\$2,500.00
Woorinen Cricket Club	Contributions	\$2,500.00

## Appendix 2: Organisations of which Council is a financial member

Organisation	Amount
Australasian Fleet Managers Association	\$453.64
Australian Livestock Markets Association	\$675.08
Australian Livestock Saleyards Association Inc.	\$1,504.03
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance	\$12,973.00
Community Childcare Assn	\$344.55
Rail Freight Alliance - Glenelg Shire	\$6,925.00
Local Government Professionals	\$2,700.00
Local Government Infrastructure Design Association	\$500.00
Murray River Group of Councils	\$8,266.59
Municipal Works Operations Association	\$250.00
Municipal Association of Victoria General Account	\$31,120.00
Murray River Regional Tourism Ltd	\$31,380.00
National Saleyards Quality Assurance Inc	\$605.00
Public Galleries Association Of Victoria	\$899.09
Public Libraries Victoria Network Inc	\$2,038.00
Rural Councils Victoria Inc	\$5,000.00
School Crossings Victoria Inc	\$100.00
The Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres	\$1,633.64
Victorian Maternal Child & Health	\$75.00
Victorian Tourism Industry Limited	\$1,200.00





# *General Purpose Financial Statements*

# Understanding the Financial Statements

## Introduction

The financial report is a key report by the Swan Hill Rural City Council. It shows how Council performed financially during the 2023/24 financial year and the overall position at the end of the financial year (30 June 2024).

Council presents its financial report in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards.

Particular terms required by the standards might not be familiar to some readers. Council is committed to accountability and it is in this context that the following explanations have been developed to assist readers understand and analyse the financial report.

## What is contained in the Annual Financial Report?

Council's financial report has two main sections, namely the report and the notes. There are five statements and 10 notes. These are prepared by Council staff, examined by the Audit and Risk Committee and Council, and are audited by the Victorian Auditor-General.

The five statements included in the first few pages of the report are the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Capital Works.

The notes detail Council's accounting policies and the make-up of values contained in the statements.

## 1. Comprehensive Income Statement

The Comprehensive Income Statement measures Council's performance over the year and shows if a surplus or a deficit has been made in delivering services.

The statement includes all sources of income, less all operating expenses incurred in delivering Council services. This includes depreciation, or the writing down, of the value of buildings, roads, footpaths, drains and all other infrastructure assets that are used to deliver Council services.

These assets are depreciated over the life of the asset or as they are consumed. Capital costs or new assets purchased or created during the year are excluded from the statement but, as indicated above, are depreciated as they are used.

The statement is prepared on an accrual basis. This means that generally all income and costs for the year are recognised even though the income may not yet be received (such as interest on bank deposits) or expenses not yet paid (invoices not yet received for goods and services already used).

## 2. Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet is an important financial statement. This one-page summary is a snapshot of the financial position as at 30 June 2024. It shows what the Council owns as assets and what it owes as liabilities.

The bottom line of this statement is net assets. This is the net worth of Council that has been built up over many years.

The assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current. Current means those assets or liabilities that will fall due or be consumed in the next 12 months. The components of the Balance Sheet are described on the following page.

## Current and non-current assets

- Cash includes cash and cash equivalents i.e. cash held in the bank, petty cash and term deposits.
- Receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and other debtors.
- Other assets include income earned but not yet received and accounts which have been prepaid.
- Property, plant and equipment, infrastructure is the largest component of Council's worth and represents the value of all land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment, and other items which have been invested in by Council over many years.

## Current and non-current liabilities

- Payables are those to whom Council owes money as at 30 June 2024.
- Provisions include employee benefits, which is the accounting term for accrued long service and annual leave. Landfill restoration works are also grouped under provisions.
- Interest bearing loans and borrowings, which are repaid over a set period of time, finance leases that are leases of assets where ownership of the asset is transferred to the Council.

## Net assets

This term is used to describe the difference between the value of total assets and the value of total liabilities. It represents the net worth of Council as at 30 June 2024. The net value of the Council is also synonymous with total equity.

## Total equity

- Asset revaluation reserve is the difference between the previously recorded value of property and infrastructure assets and their current valuations.

Accumulated surplus is the value of all net assets accumulated over time, including other reserve allocations for specific projects.

## 3. Statement of Changes in Equity

During the course of the year, the value of total ratepayers equity as set out in the Balance Sheet changes. This statement shows the values of such changes and how these changes arose.

The main reason for a change in equity stem from:

- The surplus/(deficit) for the year from operations, described in the Comprehensive Income Statement as the surplus/(deficit) for the year.
- Revaluation of assets; takes on a regular schedule basis on average every three years. It also occurs when existing assets are taken up in the books for the first time.

## 4. Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows summarises Council's cash payments and cash receipts for the year. This statement is presented according to a very specific accounting standard and needs some care in analysis.

The values may differ from those shown in the Comprehensive Income Statement because the Comprehensive Income Statement is prepared on an accrual accounting basis.

Cash in this statement refers to bank deposits and other forms of highly liquid investments that can readily be converted to cash.

Council's cash arises from, and is used in, three main areas:

### Cash flow operating activities

- Receipts – all cash received into Council's bank account from ratepayers and others that owed money to Council. Receipts also include the interest earned from Council's cash investments. It does not include the costs associated with the sale of assets.
- Payments – all cash paid by Council from its bank account to staff, creditors and other persons. It does not include the costs associated with the creation of assets.



## Cash flow from investing activities

The accounting term investing activities relates to payments for the acquisition and creation of assets, such as new plant, roads and other long-term revenue producing assets, and the proceeds from the sale of assets such as plant and land.

## Cash flow from financing activities

This is where the receipt and repayment of borrowed funds are recorded. The bottom line of the Cash Flow Statement is the cash at end of financial year. This shows the capacity of Council to meet its debts and other liabilities.

## 5. Statement of Capital Works

Each year a significant portion of Council budget gets allocated to Capital Works projects. This Statement aims to give readers an understanding of what capital works assets have been built, upgraded or renewed throughout the financial year.

This Statement is broken down by asset category to provide further information as to what asset category these funds have been spent.

## Notes to the Accounts

The notes are a very important and informative section of the report. The Australian Accounting Standards are not prescriptive in a lot of issues. Therefore, to enable the reader to understand the basis on which the values shown in the statements are established, it is necessary to provide details of Council's accounting policies within the notes.

The notes give details behind many of the summary figures contained in the statements. The note numbers are shown beside the relevant items in the Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Capital Works.

Where Council wishes to disclose other information that cannot be incorporated onto the face of the Statements, this is shown in the notes.

The notes also include a comparison to budget (note 2). This note reports on the actual performance of Council to its adopted budget, and provides commentary to all material variances.

The notes should be read at the same time as, and together with, the other parts of the financial statements to get a clear picture of the accounts.

## Statements by Principal Accounting Officer and Councillors

The Certification of the Principal Accounting Officer is made by the person responsible for the financial management of Council that, in his opinion, the financial statements have met all the statutory and professional reporting requirements.

The Certification of Councillors is made by two Councillors on behalf of Council that, in their opinion, the financial statements are fair and not misleading. The Chief Executive Officer also endorses and signs the certification.

## Auditor General's Report

The Independent Audit Report is the external and independent opinion on the financial statements. It provides the reader with a totally independent opinion on the financial statements. The opinion covers both the statutory and professional requirements and also the fairness aspects of the financial statements.



# Swan Hill Rural City Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

---



## Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2024

---

Contents	Page
<b>Certification of the Financial Statements</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Victorian Auditor-General's Office Report</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Understanding Council's Financial Statements</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Financial Statements:</b>	
Comprehensive Income Statement	129
Balance Sheet	130
Statement of Changes in Equity	131
Statement of Cash Flows	132
Statement of Capital Works	133
<b>Notes to the Financial Statements</b>	
<b>Note 1 Overview</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Note 2 Analysis of our results</b>	<b>136</b>
2.1 Performance against budget	136
2.2 Analysis of Council results by program	140
<b>Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services</b>	<b>141</b>
3.1 Rates and charges	141
3.2 Statutory fees and fines	141
3.3 User fees	142
3.4 Funding from other levels of government	143
3.5 Contributions	146

# Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2024

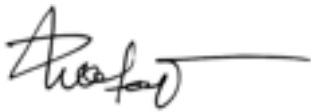
Contents	Page
3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	146
3.7 Other income	147
<b>Note 4 The cost of delivering services</b>	<b>148</b>
4.1 Employee costs	148
4.2 Materials and services	148
4.3 Depreciation	150
4.4 Depreciation – Right of use assets	150
4.5 Allowance for impairment losses	151
4.6 Borrowing costs	151
4.7 Finance Costs – Leases	151
4.8 Other expenses	152
<b>Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations</b>	<b>153</b>
5.1 Financial assets	153
5.2 Non-financial assets	156
5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities	157
5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities	159
5.5 Provisions	160
5.6 Financing arrangements	162
5.7 Commitments	163
5.8 Leases	166
<b>Note 6 Assets we manage</b>	<b>168</b>
6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	168
<b>Note 7 People and relationships</b>	<b>176</b>
7.1 Council and key management remuneration	176
7.2 Related party disclosure	179
<b>Note 8 Managing uncertainties</b>	<b>180</b>
8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities	180
8.2 Change in accounting standards	181
8.3 Financial instruments	181
8.4 Fair value measurement	184
8.5 Events occurring after balance date	185
<b>Note 9 Other matters</b>	<b>186</b>
9.1 Reserves	186
9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)	188
9.3 Superannuation	188
<b>Note 10 Change in accounting policy</b>	<b>191</b>

## Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Certification of the Financial Statements

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




---

Bhan Pratap FCPA  
**Principal Accounting Officer**  
**Date:** 10 September 2024  
 Swan Hill Rural City Council

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

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

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




---

Mr Stuart King  
**Councillor (Mayor)**  
**Date:** 10 September 2024  
 Swan Hill Rural City Council




---

Mr Les McPhee  
**Councillor**  
**Date:** 10 September 2024  
 Swan Hill Rural City Council




---

Mr Scott Barber  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Date:** 10 September 2024  
 Swan Hill Rural City Council



# Independent Auditor's Report

## To the Councillors of Swan Hill Rural City Council

<b>Opinion</b>	<p>I have audited the financial report of Swan Hill Rural City Council (the council) which comprises the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• balance sheet as at 30 June 2024</li> <li>• comprehensive income statement for the year then ended</li> <li>• statement of changes in equity for the year then ended</li> <li>• statement of cash flows for the year then ended</li> <li>• statement of capital works for the year then ended</li> <li>• notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information</li> <li>• certification of the financial statements.</li> </ul> <p>In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2024 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.</p>
<b>Basis for Opinion</b>	<p>I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report.</p> <p>My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.</p>
<b>Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report</b>	<p>The Councillors of the council are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.</p> <p>In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.</p>

**Auditor's  
responsibilities  
for the audit of  
the financial  
report**

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council's internal control
- evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors
- conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



MELBOURNE  
18 September 2024

Travis Derricott  
*as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria*

# Annual Financial Report

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Understanding Council's Financial Statements

---

### Introduction

Each year, individual Local Governments across Victoria are required to present a set of audited financial statements to their council and community.

### What you will find in the Report

The financial report set out the financial performance, financial position and cash flows of Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2024.

The format of the financial report is standard across all Victorian Councils and complies with both the accounting and reporting requirements of Australian Accounting Standards and requirements as set down by Local Government Victoria.

### About the Certification of the Financial Statements

The financial statements must be certified by senior staff and Councillors as "presenting fairly" the Council's financial results for the year as well as Council's financial position, and are required to be adopted by Council - ensuring both responsibility for and ownership of the financial statements.

### About the Primary Financial Statements

The financial statements incorporate 5 "primary" financial statements:

#### 1. Comprehensive Income Statement

Summarises Council's financial performance for the year, listing all income & expenses.

Includes other comprehensive income which primarily records changes in the fair values of Council's property, infrastructure, plant and equipment.

#### 2. Balance Sheet

A 30 June snapshot of Council's financial position indicating its assets, liabilities and "net wealth".

#### 3. Statement of Changes in Equity

The overall change for the year (in dollars) of Council's "net wealth".

#### 4. Statement of Cash Flows

Indicates where Council's cash came from and where it was spent.

#### 5. Statement of Capital Works

This statement details all amounts expended by Council on capital works.

### About the Notes to the Financial Report

The Notes to the financial statements provide greater detail and additional information on the 5 primary financial statements.

### About the Auditor's Reports

Council's financial statements are required to be audited by the Victorian Auditor General's office.

The auditor provides an audit report which gives an opinion on whether the financial statements present fairly the Council's financial performance and position.

### Who uses the Financial Report?

The financial report is a publicly available document and is used by (but not limited to) Councillors, residents and ratepayers, employees, suppliers, contractors, customers, Local Government Victoria, state and federal governments, and financiers including banks and other financial institutions.

The financial statements must be presented at a Council meeting no later than 1 month after submitting the annual report to the Minister.

# Comprehensive Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>Income / Revenue</b>			
Rates and charges	3.1	32,267	30,809
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	834	955
User fees	3.3	4,723	4,497
Grants - operating	3.4	5,294	18,142
Grants - capital	3.4	13,896	2,520
Contributions - monetary	3.5	261	337
Contributions - non monetary	3.5	114	33
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6	434	60
Other income	3.7	6,027	4,176
<b>Total income / revenue</b>		<b>63,850</b>	<b>61,529</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee costs	4.1	22,512	20,570
Materials and services	4.2	22,997	19,821
Depreciation	4.3	13,723	12,400
Depreciation - Right of use assets	4.4	176	277
Allowance for impairment losses	4.5	116	45
Borrowing costs	4.6	64	70
Finance Costs - Leases	4.7	14	14
Other expenses	4.8	960	1,533
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>60,562</b>	<b>54,730</b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>3,288</b>	<b>6,799</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>			
<b>Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods</b>			
Net asset revaluation gain	9.1	20,939	45,359
<b>Total other comprehensive income</b>		<b>20,939</b>	<b>45,359</b>
<b>Total comprehensive result</b>		<b>24,227</b>	<b>52,158</b>

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



# Balance Sheet

as at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1	4,067	5,348
Trade and other receivables	5.1	8,203	4,805
Other financial assets	5.1	43,393	50,450
Inventories	5.2	156	184
Contract assets	5.1	6,792	1,780
Other assets	5.2	677	312
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>63,288</b>	<b>62,879</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	641,875	617,264
Right-of-use assets	5.8	60	236
Intangible assets	5.2	3,430	3,840
Other assets	5.2	50	50
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>645,415</b>	<b>621,390</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>708,703</b>	<b>684,269</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	5.3	6,444	2,880
Trust funds and deposits	5.3	414	485
Contract and other liabilities	5.3	2,747	5,442
Provisions	5.5	4,591	6,858
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	532	278
Lease liabilities	5.8	51	132
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>14,779</b>	<b>16,075</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	5.5	3,380	1,243
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	1,538	2,069
Lease liabilities	5.8	17	120
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>4,935</b>	<b>3,432</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>19,714</b>	<b>19,507</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>688,989</b>	<b>664,762</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Accumulated surplus		341,249	337,961
Reserves	9.1	347,740	326,801
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>688,989</b>	<b>664,762</b>

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

# Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	Total \$ '000	Accumulated Surplus \$ '000	Revaluation Reserves \$ '000
<b>2024</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year		664,762	337,961	326,801
Surplus		3,288	3,288	—
Other comprehensive income				
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1	20,939	—	20,939
Other comprehensive income		20,939	—	20,939
Total comprehensive income		24,227	3,288	20,939
Balance at end of the financial year		688,989	341,249	347,740
<b>2023</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year		612,604	331,162	281,442
Surplus		6,799	6,799	—
Other comprehensive income				
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1	45,359	—	45,359
Other comprehensive income		45,359	—	45,359
Total comprehensive income		52,158	6,799	45,359
Balance at end of the financial year		664,762	337,961	326,801

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

# Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2024

		2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$ '000	2023 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$ '000
	Note		
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Rates and charges		30,635	29,957
Statutory fees and fines		807	895
User fees		4,735	4,479
Grants - operating		3,508	18,398
Grants - capital		7,640	3,448
Contributions - monetary		261	337
Interest received		3,019	1,822
Trust funds and deposits taken/(repaid)		(71)	17
Other receipts		2,238	1,431
Net GST refund		2,872	2,596
Employee costs		(22,800)	(20,585)
Materials and services		(23,131)	(19,129)
Other payments		(977)	(5,331)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	9.2	<b>8,736</b>	<b>18,335</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	(17,064)	(14,961)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		528	1,914
Payments for investments		—	(9,896)
Proceeds from sale of investments		7,058	—
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>		<b>(9,478)</b>	<b>(22,943)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Finance costs		(64)	(70)
Repayment of borrowings		(277)	(271)
Interest paid - lease liability		(14)	(14)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(184)	(279)
<b>Net cash flow provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>		<b>(539)</b>	<b>(634)</b>
<b>Net Increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>(1,281)</b>	<b>(5,242)</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		5,348	10,590
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year</b>		<b>4,067</b>	<b>5,348</b>
Financing arrangements	5.6	2,270	2,547

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

# Statement of Capital Works

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>Property</b>		
Land	—	539
<b>Total land</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>539</b>
Buildings	2,997	5,434
<b>Total buildings</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>5,434</b>
<b>Total property</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>5,973</b>
<b>Plant and equipment</b>		
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,247	913
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	33	472
Computers and telecommunications	158	530
Artworks	4	1
Library books	175	125
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<b>2,617</b>	<b>2,041</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Sealed Roads	4,709	3,050
Unsealed Roads	1,494	1,119
Footpaths and cycleways	446	617
Drainage	697	234
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,236	197
Waste management	757	31
Parks, open space and streetscapes	852	845
Other infrastructure	1,259	996
<b>Total infrastructure</b>	<b>11,450</b>	<b>7,089</b>
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>15,103</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
New asset expenditure	5,494	5,005
Asset renewal expenditure	10,095	6,780
Asset upgrade expenditure	1,475	3,318
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>15,103</b>

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



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 1. Overview

### Introduction

The Swan Hill Rural City Council was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 20 January 1995 and is a body corporate.

The Council's main office is located at 45 Splatt St Swan Hill.

### Statement of compliance

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

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

### Accounting policy information

#### 1.1 Basis of accounting

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

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

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

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

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

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

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1.)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1.).
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5.).
- the determination of landfill provisions (refer to Note 5.5.)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with *AASB 16 Leases*, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- whether or not *AASB 1059 Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors* is applicable
- other areas requiring judgements

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 1. Overview (continued)

---

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

#### **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 2. Analysis of our results

### Note 2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget notes compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance. The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold of the lower of 10 percent or \$1,000,000 where further explanation is warranted. Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

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

	Budget 2024 \$ '000	Actual 2024 \$ '000	Variance \$ '000	Variance %	Ref
<b>2.1.1 Income / Revenue and expenditure</b>					
<b>Income / Revenue</b>					
Rates and charges	32,182	32,267	85	0.26%	
Statutory fees and fines	1,101	834	(267)	(24.25)%	1
User fees	5,421	4,723	(698)	(12.88)%	2
Grants - operating	11,572	5,294	(6,278)	(54.25)%	3
Grants - capital	3,973	13,896	9,923	249.76%	4
Contributions - monetary	135	261	126	93.33%	5
Contributions - non monetary	–	114	114	∞	6
Net gain on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	452	434	(18)	(3.98)%	
Other income	4,109	6,027	1,918	46.68%	7
<b>Total income / revenue</b>	<b>58,945</b>	<b>63,850</b>	<b>4,905</b>	<b>8.32%</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>					
Employee costs	22,215	22,512	(297)	(1.34)%	
Materials and services	20,526	22,997	(2,471)	(12.04)%	8
Depreciation	13,849	13,723	126	0.91%	
Depreciation - right of use assets	127	176	(49)	(38.58)%	9
Allowance for impairment losses	22	116	(94)	(427.27)%	10
Borrowing costs	64	64	–	0.00%	
Finance costs - leases	9	14	(5)	(55.56)%	11
Other expenses	1,016	960	56	5.51%	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>57,828</b>	<b>60,562</b>	<b>(2,734)</b>	<b>(4.73)%</b>	
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>1,117</b>	<b>3,288</b>	<b>2,171</b>	<b>194.36%</b>	

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

### (i) Explanation of material variations

#### Variance Explanation

##### Ref

1. Building and planning fees were \$271,000 below forecast due to a downturn in the levels of building activity and also a reduction in the services provided by Council due to the issues associated with recruiting suitably qualified building and planning staff.
2. The Swan Hill Livestock Exchange income was \$331,000 below forecast due to a reduction in numbers and values of stock passing through the exchange throughout the year. The Performing Arts program was \$117,000 below forecast due to reduced attendances and the postponing of the Under the Stars event which is one of the biggest events of the year. Parking fees and fines were \$72,000 below forecast. Home and Community Care income was \$126,000 below forecast due to Council electing to withdraw from the service as of 31 May 2024.
3. The operating grants unfavourable variance relates to Grants Commission funding received in advance (\$7,567,000) in June 2023, this was slightly offset by funds received for the Our Region Our Rivers projects. Our Region Our Rivers funds were received by Council and passed on to partner Councils as their projects were completed (\$1,349,000).
4. Capital grants favourable variance relates to grants received in the current financial year, for carried over projects including; Our Regions Our Rivers (\$5,831,000), Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Rounds 1 and 2 (\$1,557,000), Monash Drive upgrade stage 2 (\$500,000), Ken Harrison Sporting Complex Soccer Pavilion (\$279,000), Swan Hill Leisure Centre Group Fitness Room (\$250,000), Robinvale Leisure Centre Expansion and Splash Park (\$687,000). Council received additional funding for the Lake Boga Floating Pontoon (\$434,000) and Disaster Ready Fund (\$426,000) which were not included in the budget.
5. Additional funding was sourced for the Riverlights event (\$47,000), purchasing of Christmas decorations for the Swan Hill CBD (\$15,000) and a contribution was received for the Robinvale Leisure Centre virtual fitness equipment (\$35,000).
6. The Swan Hill Art Gallery received donated artworks to the value of \$110,000 and the Swan Hill Library received donated books to the value of \$4,000.
7. Other income was favourable to budget, due to increases in interest rates and above forecast cash holdings, resulting in interest income being (\$1.9m) above forecast.
8. This variance is the result of works budgeted as capital expenditure, but deemed not to meet capitalisation thresholds and requirements and was therefore expensed (\$1,585,000) and the payment of the Regional Growth Fund allocations to the partner Councils of the Our Region Our Rivers grant (\$1,667,000). The repayment of the grant funds was forecast to occur in 2022/23, however the final funding was not received until 2023/24. The receipt of funding is referred to in note 3 & 4 above.
9. Council renegotiated an existing building lease agreement.
10. The increase in allowance for impairment losses is due to higher than forecast rates and other debtors, along with a community club debt being forgiven.
11. As per note 9 above, the renegotiation of the building lease was not forecast.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

	Budget 2024 \$ '000	Actual 2024 \$ '000	Variance \$ '000	Variance %	Ref
<b>2.1.2 Capital works</b>					
<b>Property</b>					
Land	3,242	–	(3,242)	(100.00)%	1
<b>Total land</b>	<b>3,242</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(3,242)</b>	<b>(100.00)%</b>	
Buildings	12,841	2,997	(9,844)	(76.66)%	2
<b>Total buildings</b>	<b>12,841</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>(9,844)</b>	<b>(76.66)%</b>	
<b>Total property</b>	<b>16,083</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>(13,086)</b>	<b>(81.37)%</b>	
<b>Plant and equipment &amp; Culture and heritage</b>					
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,930	2,247	317	16.42%	3
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	50	33	(17)	(34.00)%	4
Computers and telecommunications	1,186	158	(1,028)	(86.68)%	5
Library books	168	175	7	4.17%	
Artworks	–	4	4	∞	6
<b>Total plant and equipment &amp; Culture and heritage</b>	<b>3,334</b>	<b>2,617</b>	<b>(717)</b>	<b>(21.51)%</b>	
<b>Infrastructure</b>					
Sealed Roads	4,983	4,709	(274)	(5.50)%	
Unsealed Roads	1,140	1,494	354	31.05%	7
Footpaths and cycleways	597	446	(151)	(25.29)%	8
Drainage	77	697	620	805.19%	9
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	718	1,236	518	72.14%	10
Waste management	1,650	757	(893)	(54.12)%	11
Parks, open space and streetscapes	2,734	852	(1,882)	(68.84)%	12
Other infrastructure	525	1,259	734	139.81%	13
<b>Total infrastructure</b>	<b>12,424</b>	<b>11,450</b>	<b>(974)</b>	<b>(7.84)%</b>	
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>31,841</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>(14,777)</b>	<b>(46.41)%</b>	
<b>Represented by:</b>					
New asset expenditure	19,672	5,494	(14,178)	(72.07)%	
Asset renewal expenditure	11,261	10,095	(1,166)	(10.35)%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	908	1,475	567	62.44%	
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>31,841</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>(14,777)</b>	<b>(46.41)%</b>	

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 2.1 Performance against budget (continued)

### (i) Explanation of material variations

#### Variance Explanation Ref

1. The budget allowed \$1,443,000 for the Ronald Street Housing Development, these works were capitalised as Buildings, and \$1,800,000 for the Tower Hill Development which was capitalised as roads and drainage.
2. The Art Gallery redevelopment (\$6,648,000) and construction of the Tourism & Cultural Hub (\$5,000,000) were yet to commence at 30 June 2024.
3. Council received grant funding for the purchase of equipment to recycle on-farm plastics (\$278,000). This grant and subsequent purchase of equipment had not been budgeted.
4. The budget included \$40,000 for the installation of Radio Frequency ID at the Library. This work was undertaken, but the recognition of the assets is reported in the computers and telecommunications assets category.
5. The Data & Technology Strategy had a budget of \$1,058,000, of which \$565,000 has been spent and not capitalised due to not meeting capitalisation rules or thresholds.
6. Council was able to purchase Artwork funded by donations to the Art Gallery acquisitions trust.
7. Additional funding received from the Victoria Grants Commission was expended on additional unsealed road renewal works.
8. Completion of the footpath replacement program was delayed and will be carried forward to be completed in 2024/25.
9. As per note 1, \$645,000 new drainage works from the Tower Hill Estate Development were originally budgeted in the land category.
10. Council was successful in obtaining a grant for the construction of a floating pontoon for Lake Boga (\$434,000).
11. The budget included \$1,387,000 for the Compost Facility Establishment. At year end this project is underway and to be completed in 2024/25.
12. Robinvale Centenary Park Nature Play Precinct project is yet to commence (\$1,389,000).
13. The Monash Drive Viewing Platform was completed in 2023/24. This project was carried over from the prior year.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

## 2.2.1 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

**Economic growth**

Economic growth will encourage new business development, provide support for business expansion and will continuously seek to help our existing businesses to prosper. This function provides, building and planning statutory services, management of caravan parks, economic development programs, regulatory services and parking control, management of the Pioneer Settlement and regional visitor information centre.

**Community enrichment**

Community enrichment function will provide a range of services to individuals and to the broader community that assist all in our community to live healthy, fulfilling lives. We will embrace our role as a regional centre by providing a range of cultural opportunities. The community enrichment function includes aged care services, maternal and child health, after school and vacation programs, libraries, art gallery and performing arts.

**Infrastructure**

Infrastructure will provide and maintain publicly accessible infrastructure that is appropriate for the community's needs in the most effective and efficient manner possible. The infrastructure function is responsible for constructing new infrastructure and maintaining existing infrastructure across the municipality.

**Governance and leadership**

Governance and leadership provides efficient, effective and proactive support services across Council to enable the delivery of policy commitments, Council vision and mission. The function will plan for our municipality's long term growth and development by committing to a robust program of strategic planning while representing our community's interests and conducting our affairs openly and with integrity, reflecting the high levels of governance our community expects.

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

Functions/activities	Income / Revenue \$ '000	Expenses \$ '000	Surplus / (Deficit) \$ '000	Grants included in income / revenue \$ '000	Total assets \$ '000
<b>2024</b>					
Economic Growth	11,799	15,671	(3,872)	7,502	13,774
Community enrichment	4,857	9,882	(5,025)	3,227	2,474
Infrastructure	12,300	25,589	(13,289)	5,505	632,531
Governance and leadership	34,894	9,420	25,474	2,956	59,924
<b>Total functions and activities</b>	<b>63,850</b>	<b>60,562</b>	<b>3,288</b>	<b>19,190</b>	<b>708,703</b>
<b>2023</b>					
Economic Growth	6,766	17,964	(11,198)	2,680	8,448
Community enrichment	5,589	9,050	(3,461)	4,088	2,818
Infrastructure	13,964	19,862	(5,898)	7,945	608,311
Governance and leadership	35,210	7,854	27,356	5,949	64,692
<b>Total functions and activities</b>	<b>61,529</b>	<b>54,730</b>	<b>6,799</b>	<b>20,662</b>	<b>684,269</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 3. Funding for the delivery of our services

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### 3.1 Rates and charges

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

The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2023/24 was \$6,364 million (2022/23 \$5,561 million).

Residential	11,665	11,212
Commercial	1,669	1,691
Industrial	919	795
Farm/rural	13,295	12,580
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	176	244
Garbage charge	4,081	3,822
Special Marketing Rates	374	379
Rate agreements - Electricity Industry Act	85	82
Abandonments	(13)	(13)
Other	16	17
<b>Total rates and charges</b>	<b>32,267</b>	<b>30,809</b>

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

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

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### 3.2 Statutory fees and fines

Infringements and costs	97	47
Building and planning fees	392	523
Animal registration and release fees	160	167
Health registration fees	141	134
Other fees and fines	44	84
<b>Total statutory fees and fines</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>955</b>

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



## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>3.3 User fees</b>		
Aged and health services	612	687
Administration fees	125	134
Child care/children's programs	177	144
Parking	199	182
Sales - Admissions	1,319	1,345
Sales - merchandising, catering, other sales	628	596
Hire & Leasing fees	790	724
Livestock Exchange	323	414
Other fees and charges	550	271
<b>Total user fees</b>	<b>4,723</b>	<b>4,497</b>
<b>User fees by timing of revenue recognition</b>		
User fees recognised over time	790	724
User fees recognised at a point in time	3,933	3,773
<b>Total user fees</b>	<b>4,723</b>	<b>4,497</b>

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>3.4 Funding from other levels of government</b>		
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
<b>Summary of grants</b>		
Commonwealth funded grants	13,577	15,252
State funded grants	5,613	5,410
<b>Total grants received</b>	<b>19,190</b>	<b>20,662</b>
<b>(a) Operating Grants</b>		
<b>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</b>		
Financial Assistance Grants - general purpose *	255	7,306
Financial Assistance Grants - local roads *	120	3,391
Home and community care	1,378	1,583
Out of school hours care	290	259
<b>Recurrent - State Government</b>		
Art Gallery and performing arts	150	100
Libraries	217	217
Maternal and child health	734	545
Public health	53	98
School crossing supervisors	61	59
Other	109	116
<b>Total recurrent operating grants</b>	<b>3,367</b>	<b>13,674</b>
<b>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</b>		
Home & community care	111	112
Our Region Our Rivers	1,349	1,318
<b>Non-recurrent - State Government</b>		
Community projects	80	870
Cultural heritage	86	50
Economic development	88	124
Emergency management/response	–	1,500
Environmental protection	–	85
Family and children	207	359
Libraries	5	31
Waste management	1	–
Other	–	19
<b>Total non-recurrent operating grants</b>	<b>1,927</b>	<b>4,468</b>
<b>Total operating grants</b>	<b>5,294</b>	<b>18,142</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>(b) Capital Grants</b>		
<b>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</b>		
Roads to recovery	2,441	793
<b>Total recurrent capital grants</b>	<b>2,441</b>	<b>793</b>
<b>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</b>		
Aerodrome	245	—
Local roads and community infrastructure program	1,557	160
Our Region Our Rivers	5,831	330
<b>Non-recurrent - State Government</b>		
Buildings	967	94
Art and heritage	71	43
Livestock exchange	21	—
Parks playgrounds and street beautification	2,097	640
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	279	302
Waste management	387	25
Other	—	133
<b>Total non-recurrent capital grants</b>	<b>11,455</b>	<b>1,727</b>
<b>Total capital grants</b>	<b>13,896</b>	<b>2,520</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### (c) Recognition of grant income

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

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

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

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

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

General purpose	255	7,306
Other specific purpose grants	4,802	8,813
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	13,896	2,519

#### Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

Specific purpose grants	237	2,023
	<b>19,190</b>	<b>20,661</b>

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

#### Operating

Balance at start of year	2,023	1,767
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	196	350
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(1,982)	(94)

#### Balance at year end

	<b>237</b>	<b>2,023</b>
--	------------	--------------

#### Capital

Balance at start of year	3,418	2,490
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	2,241	1,782
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(3,162)	(854)

#### Balance at year end

	<b>2,497</b>	<b>3,418</b>
--	--------------	--------------

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

(\*) 2024 majority of allocation received in 2023.

(\*) 2023, 100% of the 2023/24 allocation was received prior to June 30 2023



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>3.5 Contributions</b>		
<b>Monetary contributions</b>		
Monetary	261	337
<b>Total monetary contributions</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>337</b>
<b>Non-monetary contributions</b>		
Non-monetary	114	33
<b>Total non-monetary contributions</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Total contributions</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>370</b>

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

Library Books	4	5
Artworks	110	28
<b>Total non-monetary contributions</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>33</b>

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

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

### Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Proceeds of sale	528	1,914
Written down value of assets disposed	(94)	(1,854)
<b>Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>60</b>

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>3.7 Other income</b>		
Interest	3,019	1,822
Reimbursements	1,632	960
Tower Hill land sales	959	936
Less - Tower Hill costs of goods sold	(17)	(51)
Revenue from volunteer services	319	329
Other	115	180
<b>Total other income</b>	<b>6,027</b>	<b>4,176</b>

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 4. The cost of delivering services

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### 4.1 Employee costs

#### (a) Employee costs

Wages and salaries	17,102	16,475
WorkCover	407	224
Superannuation	2,372	2,357
Fringe benefits tax	64	40
Agency staff	777	897
Long service leave	450	291
Staff training	189	168
Redundancy payments	945	–
Other	206	118
<b>Total employee costs</b>	<b>22,512</b>	<b>20,570</b>

As at 31 May 2024 council ceased its involvement in providing home and community care services. Redundancy of effected staff were processed at this date.

#### (b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

##### Defined benefit fund

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	58	73
	<b>58</b>	<b>73</b>

##### Accumulation funds

Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	2,324	2,209
	<b>2,324</b>	<b>2,209</b>

#### Total superannuation costs

	<b>2,382</b>	<b>2,282</b>
--	--------------	--------------

Refer to Note 9.3. for further information relating to Council's superannuation obligations.

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### 4.2 Materials and services

Contract payments	9,674	7,756
Building maintenance	891	913
General maintenance	3,101	2,443
Utilities	1,627	1,294
Office administration	642	777
Information technology	940	708
Insurance	1,125	1,047
Consultants	994	769
Community grants sponsorship and contributions	2,547	2,244
Volunteer services - cost of service	319	329
Other	1,137	1,541
<b>Total materials and services</b>	<b>22,997</b>	<b>19,821</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 4. The cost of delivering services (continued)

---

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



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 4. The cost of delivering services (continued)

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>4.3 Depreciation</b>		
<b>Property</b>		
Buildings - specialised	2,246	1,295
Buildings - non specialised	81	80
<b>Total depreciation - property</b>	<b>2,327</b>	<b>1,375</b>
<b>Plant and equipment</b>		
Plant machinery and equipment	984	933
Fixtures fittings and furniture	273	286
Computers and telecomms	240	98
Artworks	19	18
Library Collection	126	130
Pioneer Settlement vehicles & vessels	58	58
Pioneer Settlement site exhibits	26	26
Pioneer Settlement buildings	1	11
<b>Total depreciation - plant and equipment</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>1,560</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Footpaths and cycleways	477	516
Drainage	655	650
Recreational, leisure and community	421	368
Waste management	25	97
Parks open spaces and streetscapes	519	417
Sealed roads	5,291	5,325
Unsealed roads	1,993	1,861
Other infrastructure	288	231
<b>Total depreciation - infrastructure</b>	<b>9,669</b>	<b>9,465</b>
<b>Total depreciation</b>	<b>13,723</b>	<b>12,400</b>

Refer to note 5.2( c ), 5.8 and 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>4.4 Depreciation - Right of use assets</b>		
Property	176	277
<b>Total Depreciation - Right of use assets</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>277</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 4. The cost of delivering services (continued)

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### 4.5 Allowance for impairment losses

Parking fine debtors	49	43
Rates debtors	18	–
Other debtors	49	2
<b>Total allowance for impairment losses</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>45</b>

#### Movement in allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors

Balance at the beginning of the year	373	338
New allowances recognised during the year	116	35
Amounts already allowed for and written off as uncollectible	(63)	(10)
Amounts allowed for but recovered during the year	–	10
<b>Balance at end of year</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>373</b>

An allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historic and forward looking information in determining the level of impairment.

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### 4.6 Borrowing costs

Interest - Borrowings	64	70
<b>Total borrowing costs</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>70</b>

Borrowing costs are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred, except where they are capitalised as part of a qualifying asset constructed by Council.

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### 4.7 Finance Costs - Leases

Interest - Lease Liabilities	14	14
<b>Total finance costs</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 4. The cost of delivering services (continued)

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>4.8 Other expenses</b>		
Auditors' remuneration - VAGO - audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	64	56
Auditors' remuneration - Internal Audit	51	62
Councillors' allowances	301	256
Assets written-off / impaired	98	574
Operating lease rentals	25	190
Vehicle registrations	95	109
Bank Charges	79	62
Legal Costs	107	77
Fire Services Levy	82	80
Others	58	67
<b>Total other expenses</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>1,533</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 5. Investing in and financing our operations

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### 5.1 Financial assets

#### (a) Cash and cash equivalents

##### Current

Cash on hand	13	13
Cash at bank	4,054	5,335
<b>Total current cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>4,067</b>	<b>5,348</b>

#### (b) Other financial assets

##### Current

Term deposits	43,393	50,450
<b>Total current other financial assets</b>	<b>43,393</b>	<b>50,450</b>

<b>Total current financial assets</b>	<b>47,460</b>	<b>55,798</b>
---------------------------------------	---------------	---------------

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

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

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>(c) Trade &amp; Other Receivables</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
<i>Statutory receivables</i>		
Rates debtors	4,999	3,367
Infringement debtors	402	389
Private scheme debtors	4	4
Net GST receivable	378	135
<i>Non-statutory receivables</i>		
Loans and advances to community organisations	—	48
Other debtors	2,846	1,235
Provision for doubtful debts - rates debtors	(90)	(77)
Allowance for expected credit loss - infringements	(325)	(290)
Allowance for expected credit loss - other debtors	(11)	(6)
<b>Total current trade and other receivables</b>	<b>8,203</b>	<b>4,805</b>
<b>Total trade and other receivables</b>	<b>8,203</b>	<b>4,805</b>

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



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### (d) Ageing of receivables

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

Current (not yet due)	1,801	467
Past due between 31 and 180 days	786	215
Past due between 181 and 365 days	60	71
Past due by more than 1 year	188	524
<b>Total trade and other receivables</b>	<b>2,835</b>	<b>1,277</b>

### (e) Ageing of individually impaired receivables

At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of \$11,180 (2023: \$6,414) were impaired. The amount of the provision raised against these debtors was \$11,180 (2023: \$6,414). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection. Many of the long outstanding past due amounts have been lodged with Council's debt collectors or are on payment arrangements.

The ageing of receivables that have been individually determined as impaired at reporting date was:

Past due by more than 1 year	11	6
<b>Total trade and other receivables</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>

### (f) Contract assets

#### Current

Contract Assets	6,792	1,780
<b>Total Current</b>	<b>6,792</b>	<b>1,780</b>
<b>Total contract assets</b>	<b>6,792</b>	<b>1,780</b>

Contract assets are recognised when Council has transferred goods or services to the customer but where Council is yet to establish an unconditional right to consideration.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
--	-----------------	-----------------

### 5.2 Non-financial assets

#### (a) Inventories

##### Current

Inventories held for distribution	19	39
Inventories held for sale	57	47
Tower Hill Estate	80	98
<b>Total current inventories</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>184</b>

Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential. All other inventories, including land held for sale, are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Where inventories are acquired for no cost or nominal consideration, they are measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.

#### (b) Other assets

##### Current

Prepayments	642	277
Other	35	35
<b>Total current other assets</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>312</b>

##### Non-current

Other	50	50
<b>Total non-current other assets</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>

#### (c) Intangible assets

Water rights	3,430	3,840
<b>Total intangible assets</b>	<b>3,430</b>	<b>3,840</b>

	<b>Water Rights \$ '000</b>
--	---------------------------------

#### Gross Carrying Amount

Balance at 1 July 2023	3,840
Asset revaluations	(410)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	<b>3,430</b>

#### Net book value at 30 June 2023

3,840

#### Net book value at 30 June 2024

3,430

Water rights are valued at current market rates. The valuation is based on market transactions being the trading of water shares within the relevant water trading region. Prices are sourced from the Victorian Water Register for water traded within trading zone 7 VIC Murray - Barmah to SA.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities</b>		
<b>(a) Trade and other payables</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
Trade payables	1,380	1,177
Salaries and wages	376	391
Accrued expenses	3,918	1,312
Overpaid rate debtors	770	—
<b>Total current trade and other payables</b>	<b>6,444</b>	<b>2,880</b>
<b>(b) Trust funds and deposits</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Refundable deposits	286	213
Fire services property levy	14	12
Retention amounts	108	260
Other refundable deposits	6	—
<b>Total current trust funds and deposits</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>485</b>
<b>(c) Contract and other liabilities</b>		
<b>Contract liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
<b>Grants received in advance:</b>		
Grants received in advance - operating	237	2,023
Grants received in advance - capital	2,497	3,418
<b>Total grants received in advance</b>	<b>2,734</b>	<b>5,441</b>
<b>User fees received in advance:</b>		
Other	13	1
<b>Total user fees received in advance</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total current contract liabilities</b>	<b>2,747</b>	<b>5,442</b>
<b>Total current contract and other liabilities</b>	<b>2,747</b>	<b>5,442</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

---

#### *Trust funds and deposits*

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

#### *Contract liabilities*

Contract liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of grants received of which council has an outstanding obligation. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer or council obligation completed. Refer to Note 3.

#### **Purpose and nature of items**

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

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

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Other borrowings - secured	532	278
<b>Total current interest-bearing liabilities</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Other borrowings - secured	1,538	2,069
<b>Total non-current interest-bearing liabilities</b>	<b>1,538</b>	<b>2,069</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,070</b>	<b>2,347</b>

Borrowings are secured by Swan Hill Rural City Council General Rates.

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

Not later than one year	532	278
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,538	1,913
Later than five years	–	156
	<b>2,070</b>	<b>2,347</b>

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

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. The Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities at initial recognition.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	Employee provisions \$ '000	Landfill restoration \$ '000	Total \$ '000
<b>5.5 Provisions</b>			
<b>2024</b>			
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	5,141	2,960	8,101
Additional provisions	1,483	374	1,857
Amounts used	(1,572)	–	(1,572)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	(199)	(216)	(415)
<b>Balance at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>4,853</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>7,971</b>
<b>Provisions</b>			
Provisions - current	4,591	–	4,591
Provisions - non-current	262	3,118	3,380
<b>Total Provisions</b>	<b>4,853</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>7,971</b>
<b>2023</b>			
Balance at the beginning of the financial year	5,156	3,094	8,250
Additional provisions	1,468	(53)	1,415
Amounts used	(1,672)	–	(1,672)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	189	(81)	108
<b>Balance at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>5,141</b>	<b>2,960</b>	<b>8,101</b>
<b>Provisions</b>			
Provisions - current	4,976	1,882	6,858
Provisions - non-current	165	1,078	1,243
<b>Total Provisions</b>	<b>5,141</b>	<b>2,960</b>	<b>8,101</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>(a) Employee provisions</b>		
<b>Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months</b>		
Annual leave	1,222	1,322
Long service leave	305	280
	<u>1,527</u>	<u>1,602</u>
<b>Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months</b>		
Annual leave	341	300
Long service leave	2,723	3,074
	<u>3,064</u>	<u>3,374</u>
<b>Total current employee provisions</b>	<u>4,591</u>	<u>4,976</u>
<b>Non-Current</b>		
Long service leave	262	165
<b>Total Non-Current Employee Provisions</b>	<u>262</u>	<u>165</u>
Aggregate Carrying Amount of Employee Provisions:		
Current	4,591	4,976
Non-current	262	165
<b>Total Aggregate Carrying Amount of Employee Provisions</b>	<u>4,853</u>	<u>5,141</u>

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

### Annual leave

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

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

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

### Long service leave

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

### Key assumptions:

- discount rate	4.44%	4.06%
- index rate	4.50%	4.35%

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>(b) Landfill restoration</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Current	–	1,882
<b>Total current</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,882</b>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Non-current	3,118	1,078
<b>Total non-current</b>	<b>3,118</b>	<b>1,078</b>

Council is obligated to restore Swan Hill and Robinvale landfill sites to a particular standard. The forecast life of the site is based on current estimates of remaining capacity and the forecast rate of infill. The provision for landfill restoration has been calculated based on the present value of the expected cost of works to be undertaken. The expected cost of works has been estimated based on current understanding of work required to reinstate the site to a suitable standard. Accordingly, the estimation of the provision required is dependent on the accuracy of the forecast timing of the work, work required and related costs. Council reviews the landfill restoration provision on an annual basis, including the key assumptions listed below.

Key assumptions:

- discount rate	4.09%	4.03%
- index rate	3.60%	6.00%

### Total provisions

<b>Current</b>		
Employee provisions	4,591	4,976
Landfill restoration	–	1,882
<b>Total current provisions</b>	<b>4,591</b>	<b>6,858</b>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Employee provisions	262	165
Landfill restoration	3,118	1,078
<b>Total non-current provisions</b>	<b>3,380</b>	<b>1,243</b>

## 5.6 Financing arrangements

The Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2024.

Credit card facilities	200	200
Loans and borrowings	2,070	2,347
<b>Total Facilities</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>2,547</b>
Used facilities	2,094	2,378
<b>Used facilities</b>	<b>2,094</b>	<b>2,378</b>
<b>Unused facilities</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>169</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

### 5.7 Commitments

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

#### (a) Commitments for expenditure

	Not later than 1 year \$ '000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$ '000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$ '000	Later than 5 years \$ '000	Total \$ '000
<b>2024</b>					
<b>Operating</b>					
Building and property maintenance	169	18	—	—	187
Cleaning - council buildings, public toilets, barbeques	57	—	—	—	57
Cultural and heritage	—	—	—	—	—
Licenses	219	36	—	—	255
Management & operations of the PS Pyap	260	—	—	—	260
Materials and supplies	162	—	—	—	162
Office equipment and supplies	8	—	—	—	8
Other Infrastructure	66	—	—	—	66
Professional services	770	71	—	—	841
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	729	1,242	600	—	2,571
Uniforms	9	—	—	—	9
Waste management operation and kerbside collection	2,005	3,403	2,552	—	7,960
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,454</b>	<b>4,770</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>12,376</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
Buildings	172	—	—	—	172
Cultural and heritage	36	—	—	—	36
Drainage	123	—	—	—	123
Footpaths	53	—	—	—	53
Land	1,817	—	—	—	1,817
Other infrastructure	2,071	—	—	—	2,071
Materials and supplies	—	—	—	—	—
Parks and open spaces	150	—	—	—	150
Plant & equipment	1,540	—	—	—	1,540
Professional services	718	—	—	—	718
Recreation and leisure assets	280	—	—	—	280
Sealed Roads	5,064	—	—	—	5,064
Unsealed Roads	42	—	—	—	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,066</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>12,066</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	Not later than 1 year \$ '000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$ '000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$ '000	Later than 5 years \$ '000	Total \$ '000
<b>2023</b>					
<b>Operating</b>					
Building and property maintenance	110	—	—	—	110
Cleaning - council buildings, public toilets, barbeques	337	—	—	—	337
Cultural and heritage	14	—	—	—	14
Licenses	76	—	—	—	76
Management & operations of the PS Pyap	307	—	—	—	307
Materials and supplies	721	—	—	—	721
Office equipment and supplies	85	—	—	—	85
Other Infrastructure	35	—	—	—	35
Professional services	685	20	16	—	721
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	1,462	2,230	2,230	—	5,922
Uniforms	15	—	—	—	15
Waste management operation and kerbside collection	181	508	508	704	1,901
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,028</b>	<b>2,758</b>	<b>2,754</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>10,244</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
Buildings	722	—	—	—	722
Cultural and heritage	91	—	—	—	91
Drainage	34	—	—	—	34
Footpaths	—	—	—	—	—
Land	19	—	—	—	19
Other infrastructure	802	—	—	—	802
Materials and supplies	—	—	—	—	—
Parks and open spaces	115	—	—	—	115
Plant & equipment	618	—	—	—	618
Professional services	—	—	—	—	—
Recreation and leisure assets	3,461	—	—	—	3,461
Sealed Roads	3,895	1,303	—	—	5,198
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,757</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>11,060</b>



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

	2024	2023
	\$ '000	\$ '000

### (b) Operating lease receivables

#### *Operating lease receivables*

The Council has entered into commercial property leases on its investment property, consisting of surplus freehold office complexes. These properties held under operating leases have remaining non-cancellable lease terms of between 1 and 10 years. All leases include a CPI based revision of the rental charge annually.

Future undiscounted minimum rentals receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

Not later than one year	291	375
Later than one year and not later than five years	640	920
Later than five years	12	73
	<u>943</u>	<u>1,368</u>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

### 5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, Council assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- Council has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- Council has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- Fixed payments
- Variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- Amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- The exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under *AASB 16 Leases*, Council as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

Council has a number of Peppercorn Leases for parcels of crown land or land controlled by other entities. The leases of land are used to provide open space and recreation areas to residents along with a major tourist attraction in the area known as the Pioneer Settlement.

Details of Peppercorn Leases held by Council are as follows:

Land Details	Remaining Term of Lease	\$ Per Annum
Crown Land - Pioneer Settlement	24 years	\$0
Lake Boga Boat Ramps and Jetty	1 year	\$1
Various parcels of VicTrack Land (parks & reserves)	Various terms	\$1 each
Joint User Agreements - Department of Education	Various terms	\$0 - \$1 each

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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

### (a) Right-of-Use Assets

	Property \$ '000	Total \$ '000
<b>2024</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2023	236	236
Additions	—	—
Depreciation charge	(176)	(176)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>2023</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2022	408	408
Additions	104	104
Depreciation charge	(276)	(276)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>236</b>
	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>\$ '000</b>

### (b) Lease Liabilities

Maturity analysis - contractual undiscounted cash flows

Less than one year	41	132
One to five years	32	118
More than five years	—	6
<b>Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June:</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>256</b>

#### Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June:

Current	51	132
Non-current	17	120
<b>Total lease liabilities</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>252</b>

#### Short-term and low value leases

Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than existing capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of \$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Variable lease payments are those that depend on an index or a rate, for example payments linked to the consumer price index, a benchmark interest rate or changes in market rental rates.

#### Non-cancellable lease commitments - Short-term and low-value leases

Commitments for minimum lease payments for short-term and low-value leases are payable as follows:

Payable:

Within one year	4	1
Later than one year but not later than five years	2	2
Later than five years	4	3
<b>Total lease commitments</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage

## 6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	Carrying amount 30 June 2023 \$ '000	Additions \$ '000	Contributions \$ '000	Revaluation \$ '000	Disposal \$ '000	Depreciation \$ '000	Write-off \$ '000	Transfers \$ '000	Carrying amount 30 June 2024 \$ '000
Property	144,808	1,955	–	2,465	–	(2,327)	(13)	3,575	150,463
Plant and equipment/Culture and heritage assets	17,557	2,281	114	1,288	(94)	(1,727)	(76)	–	19,343
Infrastructure	448,395	9,641	–	17,599	–	(9,669)	–	1,441	467,407
Work in progress	6,504	3,187	–	–	–	–	(13)	(5,016)	4,662
<b>Total</b>	<b>617,264</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>21,352</b>	<b>(94)</b>	<b>(13,723)</b>	<b>(102)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>641,875</b>

Summary of Work in Progress	Opening WIP \$ '000	Additions \$ '000	Write-off \$ '000	Transfers \$ '000	Closing WIP \$ '000
Property	4,613	1,042	–	(3,575)	2,080
Plant and equipment	(41)	336	(4)	–	291
Infrastructure	1,932	1,809	(9)	(1,441)	2,291
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,504</b>	<b>3,187</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>(5,016)</b>	<b>4,662</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Land specialised \$ '000	Land non specialised \$ '000	Total land and land improvements \$ '000	Buildings specialised \$ '000	Buildings non specialised \$ '000	Total buildings \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total property \$ '000
<b>(a) Property</b>								
At fair value 1 July 2023	83,162	8,746	<b>91,908</b>	135,674	4,283	<b>139,957</b>	4,613	<b>236,478</b>
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	—	—	—	(83,861)	(3,196)	<b>(87,057)</b>	—	<b>(87,057)</b>
	<b>83,162</b>	<b>8,746</b>	<b>91,908</b>	<b>51,813</b>	<b>1,087</b>	<b>52,900</b>	<b>4,613</b>	<b>149,421</b>
<b>Movements in fair value</b>								
Additions	—	—	—	1,955	—	<b>1,955</b>	1,042	<b>2,997</b>
Revaluation	—	—	—	6,156	340	<b>6,496</b>	—	<b>6,496</b>
Write-off	—	—	—	(178)	—	<b>(178)</b>	—	<b>(178)</b>
Transfers	(980)	980	—	1,895	1,680	<b>3,575</b>	(3,575)	<b>—</b>
	<b>(980)</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9,828</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>11,848</b>	<b>(2,533)</b>	<b>9,315</b>
<b>Movements in accumulated depreciation</b>								
Depreciation and amortisation	—	—	—	(2,246)	(81)	<b>(2,327)</b>	—	<b>(2,327)</b>
Accumulated depreciation on revaluation	—	—	—	(3,852)	(179)	<b>(4,031)</b>	—	<b>(4,031)</b>
Accumulated depreciation of write offs	—	—	—	165	—	<b>165</b>	—	<b>165</b>
Transfers	—	—	—	(58)	58	<b>—</b>	—	<b>—</b>
	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>(5,991)</b>	<b>(202)</b>	<b>(6,193)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>(6,193)</b>
At fair value 30 June 2024	82,182	9,726	<b>91,908</b>	145,502	6,303	<b>151,805</b>	2,080	<b>245,793</b>
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	—	—	—	(89,852)	(3,398)	<b>(93,250)</b>	—	<b>(93,250)</b>
<b>Carrying amount</b>	<b>82,182</b>	<b>9,726</b>	<b>91,908</b>	<b>55,650</b>	<b>2,905</b>	<b>58,555</b>	<b>2,080</b>	<b>152,543</b>



# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Plant machinery and equipment \$ '000	Fixtures fittings and furniture \$ '000	Computers and telecomms \$ '000	Artworks \$ '000	Library Collection \$ '000	Pioneer Settlement vehicles & vessels \$ '000	Pioneer Settlement site exhibits \$ '000	Pioneer Settlement buildings \$ '000	Total \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total plant and equipment/c ulture and heritage assets \$ '000
<b>(b) Plant and Equipment &amp; Culture and heritage assets</b>											
At fair value 1 July 2023	12,837	4,986	1,880	1,857	2,285	5,729	2,607	5,599	37,780	(41)	37,739
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	(8,305)	(3,400)	(1,070)	(88)	(1,655)	(115)	(52)	(5,538)	(20,223)	–	(20,223)
	4,532	1,586	810	1,769	630	5,614	2,555	61	17,557	(41)	17,516
<b>Movements in fair value</b>											
Additions	1,911	33	158	4	175	–	–	–	2,281	336	2,617
Contributions	–	–	–	110	4	–	–	–	114	–	114
Revaluation	–	–	–	(166)	–	837	259	–	930	–	930
Disposal	(1,108)	–	(102)	–	(18)	–	–	–	(1,228)	–	(1,228)
Write-off	–	–	–	(76)	–	–	–	–	(76)	(4)	(80)
	803	33	56	(128)	161	837	259	–	2,021	332	2,353
<b>Movements in accumulated depreciation</b>											
Depreciation and amortisation	(984)	(273)	(240)	(19)	(126)	(58)	(26)	(1)	(1,727)	–	(1,727)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,013	–	103	–	18	–	–	–	1,134	–	1,134
Accumulated depreciation on revaluation	–	–	–	107	–	173	78	–	358	–	358
	29	(273)	(137)	88	(108)	115	52	(1)	(235)	–	(235)
At fair value 30 June 2024	13,640	5,019	1,936	1,729	2,446	6,566	2,866	5,599	39,801	291	40,092
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	(8,276)	(3,673)	(1,207)	–	(1,763)	–	–	(5,539)	(20,458)	–	(20,458)
<b>Carrying amount</b>	<b>5,364</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>1,729</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>2,866</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>19,343</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>19,634</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Sealed roads \$ '000	Unsealed roads \$ '000	Footpaths and cycleways \$ '000	Drainage \$ '000	Recreational, leisure and community \$ '000	Waste management \$ '000	Parks open spaces and streetscapes \$ '000	Other infrastructure \$ '000	Total \$ '000	Work in progress \$ '000	Total infrastructure \$ '000
<b>(c) Infrastructure</b>											
At fair value 1 July 2023	328,224	122,190	34,714	68,670	21,739	7,841	16,816	17,016	617,210	1,932	619,142
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2023	(81,965)	(17,216)	(16,481)	(25,292)	(7,826)	(7,715)	(7,422)	(4,898)	(168,815)	–	(168,815)
	246,259	104,974	18,233	43,378	13,913	126	9,394	12,118	448,395	1,932	450,327
<b>Movements in fair value</b>											
Additions	3,958	1,495	446	697	1,226	–	764	1,055	9,641	1,809	11,450
Revaluation	14,113	5,255	903	1,785	565	–	437	339	23,397	–	23,397
Write-off	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(9)	(9)
Transfers	496	8	32	30	206	–	235	434	1,441	(1,441)	–
	18,567	6,758	1,381	2,512	1,997	–	1,436	1,828	34,479	359	34,838
<b>Movements in accumulated depreciation</b>											
Depreciation and amortisation	(5,291)	(1,993)	(477)	(655)	(421)	(25)	(519)	(288)	(9,669)	–	(9,669)
Accumulated depreciation on revaluation	(3,525)	(740)	(429)	(658)	(203)	–	(193)	(50)	(5,798)	–	(5,798)
	(8,816)	(2,733)	(906)	(1,313)	(624)	(25)	(712)	(338)	(15,467)	–	(15,467)
At fair value 30 June 2024	346,791	128,948	36,095	71,182	23,736	7,841	18,252	18,844	651,689	2,291	653,980
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2024	(90,781)	(19,949)	(17,387)	(26,605)	(8,450)	(7,740)	(8,134)	(5,236)	(184,282)	–	(184,282)
<b>Carrying amount</b>	<b>256,010</b>	<b>108,999</b>	<b>18,708</b>	<b>44,577</b>	<b>15,286</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>10,118</b>	<b>13,608</b>	<b>467,407</b>	<b>2,291</b>	<b>469,698</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

### Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Refer also to Note 8.4 for further disclosure regarding fair value measurement.

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

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

### Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods

	Depreciation Period years	Threshold Limit \$ '000
<b>Land and land improvements</b>		
<b>Buildings</b>		
Buildings	30 to 100 years	10
Building improvements	30 to 100 years	10
Leasehold improvements	5 to 15 years	10
<b>Plant and Equipment</b>		
Plant machinery and equipment		
Large plant	10 years	3
Small plant	2 years	3
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	5 years	3
Computers and telecommunications	3 to 5 years	2
<b>Cultural and heritage</b>		
Artworks	100 years	—
Library Collection	5 to 100 years	—
Pioneer Settlement vehicles & vessels	100 years	5
Pioneer Settlement site exhibits	100 years	5
Pioneer Settlement buildings	100 years	10
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Sealed road formation	-	10
Sealed road pavements	60 to 100 years	10
Sealed road seals	15 to 80 years	10
Road ancillary assets	20 to 25 years	10
Unsealed road natural surface	-	10
Unsealed road gravel surface	30 years	10
Kerb and channel	25 to 50 years	10
Footpaths and cycleways	20 to 100 years	10
Drainage	20 to 100 years	10
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	10 to 90 years	10
Waste management	10 years	10
Parks, open space and streetscapes	10 to 60 years	10
Other infrastructure	10 to 150 years	10

### Land under roads

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

---

#### *Depreciation and amortisation*

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

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

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

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

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

#### *Repairs and maintenance*

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

#### *Leasehold improvements*

Leasehold improvements are recognised at cost and are amortised over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvement, whichever is the shorter. At balance date, leasehold improvements are amortised over a 5 to 15 year period.

#### *Valuation of land and buildings*

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken by a qualified independent valuer Campbell Kennon AAPI Reg. 103503 as at 30 June 2023. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

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

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

The fair value assessed may change significantly and unexpectedly over a relatively short period of time (including as a result of factors that the valuer could not reasonably have been aware of as at the date of valuation). Refer to Significant accounting policies under Overview section and Note 8.4 for further information on fair value measurement.

The date of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

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

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of valuation	Type of Valuation
Land	—	—	9,726	30/06/2024	Index based
Specialised land	—	—	82,182	30/06/2024	Index based
Buildings	—	—	2,905	30/06/2024	Index based
Building - specialised	—	—	55,650	30/06/2024	Index based
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>150,463</b>		

### Valuation of Infrastructure

Valuation of infrastructure assets has been determined in accordance by applying the most recent unit rates as calculated from a sample of internal and external projects.

The date of the current valuation is detailed in the following table.

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

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

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Date of valuation	Type of Valuation
Sealed roads	—	—	256,010	30/06/2024	Index based
Unsealed roads	—	—	108,999	30/06/2024	Index based
Footpaths and cycleways	—	—	18,708	30/06/2024	Index based
Drainage	—	—	44,577	30/06/2024	Index based
Recreational, leisure & community facilities	—	—	15,286	30/06/2024	Index based
Waste management	—	—	101	30/06/2024	Index based
Parks, open space & streetscapes	—	—	10,118	30/06/2024	Index based
Other Infrastructure	—	—	13,608	30/06/2024	Index based

### Cultural and heritage assets

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

Artworks	—	—	1,729	30/06/2024	Full revaluation
Pioneer Settlement vehicles and vessels	—	—	6,566	30/06/2024	Full revaluation
Pioneer Settlement site exhibits	—	—	2,866	30/06/2024	Full revaluation
Pioneer Settlement buildings	—	—	60	30/06/2024	Index based
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>478,628</b>		

### Valuation of cultural and heritage assets

#### Artworks

Valuation of artwork assets has been conducted by qualified independent valuer Mr David Freeman, member of Auctioneers and Valuers Association of Australia, and Chief Executive Officer of Amanda Adams Auctions, Bulleen, Victoria. The effective date of the valuation was 30 June 2024. Valuation of the assets was determined by analysing comparable sales of an artist's work, knowledge of the collections history and condition of the collection.

#### Pioneer Settlement

Valuation of Pioneer Settlement vehicles and vessels and site exhibit assets was conducted by qualified independent valuer Mr David Freeman, member of Auctioneers and Valuers Association of Australia, and Chief Executive Officer of Amanda Adams Auctions, Bulleen, Victoria. The valuation is based on average market realisation prices that should be obtained if the items were sold via private treaty or auction sales. The effective date of the valuation is 30 June 2024.

Valuation of Pioneer Settlement buildings were undertaken by qualified independent valuer, Campbell Kennon AAPI Reg. 103503 as at 30 June 2023.

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



## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 6. Assets we manage (continued)

**Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations**

**Specialised land and land under roads** is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 25% and 75% for specialised land and between 85% and 95% for land under roads. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between \$0.12 and \$450.10 per square metre.

**Specialised buildings** are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated on a square metre basis. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 10 years to 100 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings.

**Infrastructure assets** are valued based on the current replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 0 years to 100 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets.

**Artwork assets** are valued based on the market based direct comparison approach. Significant unobservable inputs include the rarity of the item, historical significance and the history of the artist. If there are events that determine certain pieces of the collection to be of historical significance, if the artist has works that have increased in popularity or the item is considered to be rare and in demand, this would result in a higher fair value.

**Pioneer Settlement vehicles** and vessels and site exhibit assets are valued based on the market based direct comparison approach. Significant unobservable inputs include the rarity of the item and historical significance. If there are events that determine certain pieces of the collection to be of historical significance or the item is considered to be rare and in demand, this would result in a higher fair value.

**Pioneer Settlement buildings** are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement cost is calculated on a square metre basis. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 1 year to 54 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend their useful lives.

**Reconciliation of specialised land**

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
Land under roads	52,195	52,195
Parks and reserves	18,985	19,894
Crown Land	11,002	11,073
<b>Total specialised land</b>	<b>82,182</b>	<b>83,162</b>

**(c) Community Asset Committee**

All entities controlled by Council that have material income, expenses, assets or liabilities, such as community asset committees, have been included in this financial report. Any transactions between these entities and Council have been eliminated in full.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 7. People and relationships

### 7.1 Council and key management remuneration

#### (a) Related Parties

##### *Parent entity*

Swan Hill Rural City Council is a single entity.

##### *Subsidiaries and Associates*

Council has no interests in subsidiaries and associates.

#### (b) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Swan Hill Rural City Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors are deemed KMP.

Details of KMP at any time during the year are:

##### Councillors

Mayor Stuart King	17/11/2020 to 30/06/2024
Cr Bill Moar	15/11/2016 to 30/06/2024
Cr Ann Young	15/11/2016 to 30/06/2024
Cr Les McPhee	08/12/2008 to 30/06/2024
Cr Chris Jeffery	15/11/2016 to 30/06/2024
Cr Nicole McKay	16/04/2019 to 30/06/2024
Cr Jacquie Kelly	24/01/2023 to 30/06/2024

##### Chief Executive Officer

Mr Scott Barber	06/06/2022 to 30/06/2024
-----------------	--------------------------

##### Directors

Mr Bruce Myers (Community and Cultural Services)	28/02/1994 to 30/06/2024
Ms Heather Green (Planning and Development)	03/07/2017 to 14/01/2024
Ms Michelle Grainger (Planning and Development)	15/01/2024 to 30/06/2024
Ms Leah Johnston (Infrastructure)	03/04/2023 to 30/06/2024
Mr Bhan Pratap (Corporate Services)	18/07/2022 to 30/06/2024

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Total Number of Councillors	7	8
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	6	7
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	13	15

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 7. People and relationships (continued)

### (c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of the Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

**Short-term employee benefits** include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

**Other long-term employee benefits** include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

**Post-employment benefits** include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

**Termination benefits** include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	1,312	1,186
Other long-term employee benefits	80	65
Post-employment benefits	130	115
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,522</b>	<b>1,366</b>

	2024 No.	2023 No.
The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:		
\$1 - \$9,999	—	1
\$10,000 - \$19,999	—	2
\$20,000 - \$29,999	—	1
\$30,000 - \$39,999	5	3
\$40,000 - \$49,999	—	2
\$50,000 - \$59,999	1	1
\$80,000 - \$89,999	1	—
\$90,000 - \$99,999	1	1
\$130,000 - \$139,999	1	—
\$190,000 - \$199,999	—	1
\$210,000 - \$219,999	1	—
\$220,000 - \$229,999	1	2
\$230,000 - \$239,999	1	—
\$300,000 - \$309,999	—	1
\$310,000 - \$319,999	1	—
	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 7. People and relationships (continued)

**(d) Remuneration of other senior staff**

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds \$160,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP. \*

Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>\$ '000</b>
Short-term employee benefits	985	872
Other long-term employee benefits	93	81
Post-employment benefits	129	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>1,062</b>

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

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Income Range:		
\$90,000 - \$99,999	1	—
\$170,000 - \$179,999	2	3
\$180,000 - \$189,999	3	3
\$190,000 - \$199,999	1	—
	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>\$ '000</b>
Total remuneration for the reporting year for other senior staff included above, amounted to:	1,207	1,062

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 7. People and relationships (continued)

7.2 Related party disclosure

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties:

Cr Stuart King	Swan Hill Hire - \$38,072 Plant and equipment hire. Cr King has a controlling interest in Swan Hill Hire.
----------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

The following balances are outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties:

2024 = Nil

2023 = Nil

(c) Loans to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of loans in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party as follows:

2024 = Nil

2023 = Nil

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

The aggregate amount of commitments in existence at balance date that have been made, guaranteed or secured by the council to a related party are as follows:

2024 = Nil

2023 = Nil



## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties

---

#### 8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

##### (a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council. At balance date the Council are not aware of any contingent assets.

##### (b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
- it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
- the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

##### Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

##### *Future superannuation contributions*

In addition to the disclosed contributions, Council has paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super totalling \$0 (2021/22 \$0). There were no contributions outstanding and no loans issued from or to the above schemes as at 30 June 2024. The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2025 are \$75,057.

##### Landfill

Council operates a landfill. Council will have to carry out site rehabilitation works in the future. At balance date Council has a provision in place for these remediation works.

##### Liability Mutual Insurance

Council is a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover. The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant's share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

##### MAV Workcare

Council was a participant of the MAV WorkCare Scheme. The MAV WorkCare Scheme provided workers compensation insurance. MAV WorkCare commenced business on 1 November 2017 and the last day the Scheme operated as a self-insurer was 30 June 2021. In accordance with the Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013, there is a six year liability period following the cessation of the Scheme (to 30 June 2027). During the liability period, adjustment payments may be required (or received). The determination of any adjustment payments is dependent upon revised actuarial assessments of the Scheme's tail claims liabilities as undertaken by Work Safe Victoria. If required, adjustments will occur at the 3-year and 6-year points during the liability period, and will affect participating members.

##### (c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

Council is not the guarantor for any loans.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or Council has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties

#### 8.2 Change in accounting standards

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

In December 2022 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities to modify AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement. AASB 2022-10 amends AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement for fair value measurements of non-financial assets of not-for-profit public sector entities not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows. The AASB 13 modifications:

- are applicable only to not-for-profit public sector entities;
- are limited to fair value measurements of non-financial assets not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows;
- are to be applied prospectively for annual periods beginning on or after 1 January 2024;
- would not necessarily change practice for some not-for-profit public sector entities; and
- do not indicate that entities changing practice in how they measure relevant assets made an error in applying the existing requirements of AASB 13.

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

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

#### 8.3 Financial instruments

##### (a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank borrowings. Details of the significant accounting policies and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements. Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

##### (b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of Council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

##### **Interest rate risk**

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes Council to fair value interest rate risk. Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the Local Government Act 2020.

Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

---

There has been no significant change in the Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate increases have significantly affected the return expected on invested funds during the year. This impacted the surplus by \$1.9m.

#### (c) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council has exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- Council has a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities Council deals with;
- Council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- Council only invests surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in Council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with the Council's financial assets is minimal because the main debtor is secured by a charge over the rateable property.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when Council provides a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any allowance for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

#### (d) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of Council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

The Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

---

#### (e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of + 0.50% and - 1.00% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.35%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

#### 8.4 Fair value measurement

##### *Fair Value Hierarchy*

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

Level 1 — Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities

Level 2 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and

Level 3 — Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

##### *Revaluation*

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). At balance date, the Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets on a regular basis ranging from 2 to 5 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts. The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

<b>Asset Class</b>	<b>Revaluation frequency</b>
Land	2 years
Buildings	2 years
Sealed Roads	3 years
Unsealed Roads	5 years
Bridges	3 years
Footpaths and cycleways	3 years
Drainage	5 years
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	5 years
Waste management	5 years
Parks, open space and streetscapes	5 years
Other infrastructure	5 years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increases are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increase reverses a prior year decrease for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increase is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense. Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increases and decreases within the year are offset.



## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 8. Managing uncertainties (continued)

---

#### *Impairment of assets*

At each reporting date, the Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

#### 8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 9. Other matters

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$ '000	Increase (decrease) \$ '000	Balance at end of reporting period \$ '000
<b>9.1 Reserves</b>			
<b>(a) Asset revaluation reserves</b>			
<b>2024</b>			
<b>Property</b>			
Land and land improvements	46,041	–	46,041
Buildings	32,044	2,303	34,347
Buildings - non specialised	–	161	161
	<b>78,085</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>80,549</b>
<b>Culture and heritage assets</b>			
Pioneer Settlement vehicles & vessels	1,674	1,008	2,682
Pioneer Settlement site exhibits	1,390	337	1,727
Artworks	1,635	(59)	1,576
Pioneer Settlement buildings	3,441	–	3,441
Water rights	3,196	(410)	2,786
	<b>11,336</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>12,212</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>			
Footpaths and cycleways	12,650	474	13,124
Drainage	24,086	1,127	25,213
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	9,388	362	9,750
Waste management	131	–	131
Parks, open space and streetscapes	4,033	244	4,277
Sealed roads	153,675	10,588	164,263
Unsealed roads	28,581	4,514	33,095
Other infrastructure	4,836	290	5,126
	<b>237,380</b>	<b>17,599</b>	<b>254,979</b>
<b>Total asset revaluation reserves</b>	<b>326,801</b>	<b>20,939</b>	<b>347,740</b>

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 9. Other matters (continued)

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$ '000	Increase (decrease) \$ '000	Balance at end of reporting period \$ '000
<b>2023</b>			
<b>Property</b>			
Land and land improvements	31,764	14,277	46,041
Buildings	29,320	2,724	32,044
	<b>61,084</b>	<b>17,001</b>	<b>78,085</b>
<b>Culture and heritage assets</b>			
Pioneer Settlement vehicles & vessels	1,674	–	1,674
Pioneer Settlement site exhibits	1,390	–	1,390
Artworks	1,635	–	1,635
Pioneer Settlement buildings	4,002	(561)	3,441
Water rights	3,196	–	3,196
	<b>11,897</b>	<b>(561)</b>	<b>11,336</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>			
Footpaths and cycleways	11,789	861	12,650
Drainage	17,723	6,363	24,086
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	7,374	2,014	9,388
Waste management	102	29	131
Parks, open space and streetscapes	2,831	1,202	4,033
Sealed roads	141,891	11,784	153,675
Unsealed roads	23,547	5,034	28,581
Other infrastructure	3,204	1,632	4,836
	<b>208,461</b>	<b>28,919</b>	<b>237,380</b>
<b>Total asset revaluation reserves</b>	<b>281,442</b>	<b>45,359</b>	<b>326,801</b>

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

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 9. Other matters (continued)

	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
<b>9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)</b>		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,288	6,799
<b>Non-cash adjustments:</b>		
Depreciation/amortisation	13,899	12,677
Impairment losses	98	574
Profit/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(434)	(60)
Contributions - non monetary assets	(114)	(33)
Amounts disclosed in financing activities	78	84
<b>Change in assets and liabilities:</b>		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(3,398)	(869)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	28	47
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(365)	(152)
Increase/(decrease) in contract assets	(5,012)	(1,621)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	3,564	(145)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	(130)	(149)
(Decrease)/increase in other liabilities	(71)	17
Increase/(decrease) in unearned income/revenue	(2,695)	1,166
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>8,736</b>	<b>18,335</b>

## 9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

**Accumulation**

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2024, this was 11.0% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2023: 10.5%).

**Defined Benefit**

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Council in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

**Funding Arrangements**

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary. A triennial actuarial investigation is currently underway for the Defined Benefit category which is expected to be completed by 31 December 2023. Council was notified of the 30 June 2023 VBI during August 2023 (2022: August 2022). The financial assumptions used to calculate the 30 June 2023 VBI were:

Net investment returns 5.7% pa

Salary information 3.5% pa

# Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

## Note 9. Other matters (continued)

Price inflation (CPI) 2.8% pa.

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2023 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

### Employer contributions

#### (a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2023 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee. For the year ended 30 June 2024, this rate was 11.0% of members' salaries (10.5% in 2022/23). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2023 triennial valuation.

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

#### (b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring. The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 97%).

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre-1 July 1993 and post-30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

### The 2023 triennial actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. A full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund's actuarial investigations identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

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

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund's assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2023.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2023.



## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 9. Other matters (continued)

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund's Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2023.

#### The 2024 interim actuarial investigation

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

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

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

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

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

#### The 2020 triennial investigation

The last triennial actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2023 was at 30 June 2020. This actuarial investigation was completed by 31 December 2020. The financial assumptions for the purposes of that investigation was:

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

#### Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2023 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of scheme	Rate	2024 \$ '000	2023 \$ '000
Vision Super	Defined benefit	11.0% (2023:10.5%)	58	73
Vision Super	Accumulation fund	11.0% (2023:10.5%)	2,324	2,209

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Note 10. Change in accounting policy

---

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