



Ararat Rural City

# MINUTES

## COUNCIL MEETING

**Tuesday 27 May 2025**

**Held in the Council Chambers, Shire Offices  
(Livestreamed)**

**Commenced at 6.00pm**

**Council:**

**Cr Jo Armstrong (Mayor)**

**Cr Rob Armstrong**

**Cr Peter Joyce**

**Cr Teli Kaur**

**Cr Luke Preston**

**Cr Bob Sanders**

**Cr Bill Waterston**

A recording of this meeting is being made for the purpose of verifying the accuracy of the minutes of the Council Meeting.

The recording is being streamed live via Facebook, to improve transparency between council and the community and give more people the opportunity to view what decisions are being made. You do not require a Facebook account to watch the live broadcast, simply enter [www.facebook.com/araratruralcitycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/araratruralcitycouncil) into your address bar.

Recordings of Council Meetings (excluding closed sessions) are made available on Council's website.

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## SECTION 1 - PROCEDURAL MATTERS

### 1.1 LIVE STREAMING

Council is keen to engage with members of the community and live streams the formal Council Meetings to make them accessible. The stream is available to view on Council's Facebook page from 6pm and on Council's website following the Council Meeting.

### 1.2 TRADITIONAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/OPENING PRAYER/COUNCILLORS PLEDGE

#### ***Traditional acknowledgement***

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, and pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

#### ***Opening Prayer***

Almighty God, we humbly ask you to help us, as elected Councillors of the Ararat Rural City Council. Guide our deliberations. Prosper what is your will for us, to your honour and glory and for the welfare and benefit of the people whom we serve in the Ararat Rural City.

#### ***Councillors Pledge***

We will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions invested in us under the *Local Government Act 2020* and any other Act to the best of our skill and judgement.

### 1.3 APOLOGIES

**There were no Apologies**

### 1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29 April 2025 be confirmed.*

**MOVED CR WATERSTON  
SECONDED CR SANDERS**

**That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29 April 2025 be confirmed.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5135/25**



## 1.5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a *Council meeting* at which he or she:

- 1 is present must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the *Council meeting* immediately before the matter is considered; or
- 2 intends to be present must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the *Chief Executive Officer* before the *Council meeting* commences a written notice:
  - (a) advising of the conflict of interest;
  - (b) explaining the nature of the conflict of interest; and
  - (c) detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person, the:
    - name of the other person;
    - nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
    - nature of that other person's interest in the matter,and then immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting announcing to those present that he or she has a conflict of interest and that a written notice has been given to the *Chief Executive Officer* under this sub-Rule.

The Councillor must, in either event, leave the *Council meeting* immediately after giving the explanation or making the announcement (as the case may be) and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

**There were no Declaration of Conflicts of Interests received.**

## SECTION 2 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### 2.1 PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

- 1 Unless *Council* determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion (other than a motion to receive the same) may be made on any petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application until the next *Council meeting* after that at which it has been presented.
- 2 It is incumbent on every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to acquaint himself or herself with the contents of that petition or joint letter, and to ascertain that it does not contain language disrespectful to *Council*.
- 3 Every Councillor presenting a petition or joint letter to *Council* must:
  - write or otherwise record his or her name at the beginning of the petition or joint letter; and
  - confine himself or herself to a statement of the persons from whom it comes, the number of signatories to it, the material matters expressed in it and the text of the prayer or request.
- 4 Every petition or joint letter presented to *Council* must be in *writing* (other than pencil), typing or printing, contain the request of the petitioners or signatories and be signed by at least 12 people.
- 5 Every petition or joint letter must be signed by the persons whose names are appended to it by their names or marks, and, except in cases of incapacity or sickness, by no one else and the address of every petitioner or signatory must be clearly stated.
- 6 Any signature appearing on a page which does not bear the text of the whole of the petition or request may not be considered by *Council*.
- 7 Every page of a petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter.
- 8 If a petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application relates to an operational matter, *Council* must refer it to the *Chief Executive Officer* for consideration.

**There were no Petitions or Joint Letters received.**

## 2.2 REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Questions to address the Council can be made without notice

The presenter will be allocated a maximum of three (3) minutes to present his or her address to the Council. An extension of time may be granted by a resolution of Council. During the presentation, the presenter may not address questions to Councillors or officers.

Two minutes will be allocated for Councillors to ask questions of the presenter, if required. Following the presentation, Council may request a further report on the matter from officers.

Members of the public gallery are not allowed to communicate with Councillors and officers whilst the meeting is in progress.

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Ms Jacqueline Gale submitted the following address brief:

*"I am aware that the total cost for the Ararat council to operate ALL transfer stations that they are responsible for (Ararat, Lake Bolac, Elmhurst, Pomonal, Moyston and Willaura) is*

*\$633,000 Gross*

*\$426,000 Net*

*Cost for Pomonal, Moyston, Willaura and Elmhurst stations are*

*\$100,000 Gross*

*\$ 96,000 Net*

*Cost for Elmhurst only*

*\$18,000 Gross*

*\$16,000 Net*

*The four transfer stations Pomonal, Willaura, Moyston and Elmhurst account for 22% of total transfer station costs with the remaining coming from Ararat and Lake Bolac.*

*Elmhurst accounts for 3.75 % of the total cost for waste removal*

*The running of the four transfer stations account for only 0.53% of the \$17,833,000 of rates paid to the Ararat City Council.*

*The running of the Elmhurst Transfer station only accounts for 0.89% of the \$17,833,000 of rates paid to the Ararat City Council.*

*As a member of the Elmhurst/Glenpatrick community I am asking on behalf of myself and all the residents of Elmhurst and district that the Elmhurst transfer station remain open being only 3.75 % of the total transfer station running costs for the Ararat City Council and only 0.089% of the \$17 million eight hundred and eighty three thousand dollars that is paid to the Ararat City Council in rates.*

*I would also like to advocate that the other stations remain open also as they account for only 22% of the total \$426,000 spent to run all the Transfer stations and account for only 0.53 % of the 17 million eight hundred and eighty three thousand dollars paid to the Ararat City Council in rates.*

*We would like to consider all options, such as the transfer stations looking to be closed, remain open with the option to be open, preferably weekly, possibly fortnightly (Elmhurst) and fortnightly/ possibly monthly for the others, depending on people's needs.*

*Also please note that Residents have concerns over the dumping of rubbish, which is currently a huge problem in certain suburbs of Melbourne where councils are paying large sums of money to clean up dumped rubbish. People who own vacant blocks of land are installing cameras to deter the dumping of rubbish on their land."*

The CEO spoke to the above question and will reply to Ms Gale regarding the matter within 7 days. Mayor Jo Armstrong will elaborate more on this matter in Item 3.4.

## SECTION 3 - REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

### 3.1 ADOPTION OF THE ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY VISION 2035 AND COUNCIL PLAN 2025-29

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21040

#### OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29 for adoption after it has been presented to community for community consultation and engagement.

#### DISCUSSION

The Community Vision 2035 captures the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality over the next 10 years. The previous Community Vision was carefully reviewed and was found to still strongly reflect the best long term outcomes for the local community, and the best future scenario that we can aim to achieve for the next generation.

The key aspirations outlined in the Community Vision 2035 are:

1. Strong population growth trajectories that buck trends in rural Victoria
2. Continuous and sustainable economic development which is focused on job creation through value adding in agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and tourism.
3. Leadership in pragmatic approaches to local environmental management
4. Sustainable and effective local transport networks underpinned by careful technical and financial planning undertaken jointly between asset users and asset owners.
5. Communities that are enhanced by access to artistic, cultural, sporting and recreational opportunities that meet needs and expectations.
6. Strong and robust democratic processes underpinned by transparent governance, good financial management and organisational innovation.

The Council Plan 2025-29 is guided by the Community Vision 2035 and sets the strategic direction and objectives of the Council, and strategies to achieve these for the next four years. The Council Plan also includes indicators for monitoring the achievement of these objectives and descriptions of initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity.

The Council Plan has six key strategic directions:

- 1 Growing our place
- 2 Building robust local economies
- 3 Preserving the environment
- 4 Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure
- 5 Enhancing community life; and
- 6 Strong and effective governance

The draft Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29 has been presented to the community for consultation and feedback. This occurred alongside the community engagement for the 2025/2026 Budget and included several mechanisms of engagement, such as:

- published on the Engage Ararat website from 28 March 2025
- distribution of copies of the draft Community Vision and Council Plan across the municipality
- face to face community consultation sessions (see table below)
- social media posts to encourage community engagement
- summaries be placed in local newspapers
- mainstream media engagement
- public submissions closed on 9 May 2025.

Community consultation sessions:

Township	Time, Date	Location
Ararat	11am - 12pm, Tuesday 29 April	Ararat Town Hall
Buangor	2pm - 3pm, Wednesday 30 April	Buangor Pavilion
Elmhurst	2pm - 3pm, Tuesday 29 April	Elmhurst Public Hall
Lake Bolac	7pm - 8pm, Thursday 01 May	Lake Bolac Golf Club
Moyston	11.30am - 12.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Moyston Hall
Pomonal	3pm - 4pm, Thursday 01 May	Pomonal Hall
Tatyoorn	7pm - 8pm, Monday 5 May	Tatyoorn Hall
Willaura	5.30pm - 6.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Willaura Memorial Hall
Drop-In Session	9am - 2pm, Friday 02 May	Ararat Rural City Council office

The following feedback and submissions were received:

Feedback for the Community Vision 2035
Promote tourism more, and improve our entrances to our city, advertise more of what we have to offer
The vision fails to acknowledge a declining population over the past 20 years and how growth will be achieved. Investment in small towns?
The draft vision seems to be very much Ararat focussed, with little to look forward to for Willaura residents.
Dear <span style="float: right;">Sir/Madam,</span> I would like to make a submission on the Community Vision 2035 and Draft Council Plan 2025-2029
There are two ways to achieve growth. The first is more of the same standard, the second is to improve the standard. Going by its current performance Council appears to favour the first which will ultimately lower the overall standard of living for Ararat Rural City residents. Liveability is a key driver for people choosing a place to live. A city's liveability is determined by access to essential services, environmental quality, safety, affordability, and the overall quality of life for residents. People won't move to Ararat if it's another Lucas or Winter Valley. Council should lead by example a develop attractive low rise housing opportunities near the CBD. Council's proposal to relocate the Ararat Fitness Centre to other sites including the outdoor pool would provide an opportunity to redevelop that site as a European style apartment block. A three story red brick building with basement carpark in a similar style to the form Terminus Hotel would complement the nearby historic building deliver much needed accommodation opportunities in central Ararat as well as create increased patronage for local businesses.
The Aradale Nurses Hostel offers a unique opportunity to create a significant number of apartments for short to medium term accommodation at minimal expense for Council. An identical facility in Beechworth now used for tourist accommodation. The Aradale institution itself is a very large area with historic buildings and grounds that include an extensive garden, large vegetable garden, golf course, tennis courts, bowling green and swimming pool. It could become a unique lifestyle village if sympathetically developed and provide a significant benefit to the local economy.



The Ararat Bioenergy project appears to have failed and the economics of using a high cost feedstock to produce renewable methane (biogas) was always questionable Unless you have access to low or zero cost feedstock then even "behind the meter" electricity only is going to be difficult to justify the cost. Combined heat and power does stack up but you need an industry that uses more heat than power. Heat only on the other hand can be economically viable and this option has the advantage of no legal restriction to exportation of heat. Council should obtain independent advice on potential bioenergy options.

Ararat sits on the Western Highway and is the junction of four rail lines, but Council continues to ignore the potential that holds. The municipality is a significant source of primary produce and could be a major intermodal freight hub if leadership was shown. The shortage of parking at the Ararat train station is also an inhibiting factor to greater use of the available train services.

Ararat needs a long-term alternative to the Pomonal Road Landfill which is already becoming a garbage mountain. It's naive to think there's a recycling/reuse option for composite materials like furniture or floor coverings, treated pine, contaminated materials, etc. Waste to energy is the only long-term solution and an Australian company, [Wildfire Energy](#), has developed an innovative, small-scale solution that would suit a municipality like Ararat Rural City. The large amount of compost being stockpiled around the Ararat Transfer Station indicates a lack of a market for this material. It seems odd that Council would have chosen this approach when it was common knowledge that the compost market was already saturated prior to their investment in the processing system. I did a small trial for Council some time ago which involved successfully turning green waste into fuel briquettes. They have a ready market at present and would sell for \$150 to \$200 per m3.

Ararat Rural City has the potential to an attractive, highly liveable municipality but it requires vision and proactive leadership.

[Personal information removed for privacy]

#### Feedback for the Council Plan 2025-29

The council plan is 80% cut and paste from the previous 4 year plan.

The document doesn't indicate any infrastructure builds or renovations - what will be completed over the 4 year period? They are just high level statements talking about asset 10 year plans etc? what from the asset plan will be complete in this term? Community should be aware of deliverables in the term so there is transparency on projects priorities.

Increase the emphasis on tourism, gateway to Grampians and surrounding areas. Improve the entrances to our city, make them more aesthetic and welcoming, improve our streets especially Barkly St, more colourful plants and more small trees.

The Measures of Success says to 'Increase participation in community organisations in Ararat Rural City by 5% per annum'. This is very much needed, but it has been very challenging trying to get more people involved in their communities. How will Council achieve this measure?

On behalf of the Lake Bolac Development Association I write this letter in support of the Lake Bolac township volunteers, non-profit organisations and committees of management who tirelessly support, maintain, and improve our local community assets and events.

The following items are put forward for inclusion in the Council Draft:

#### Enabling Infrastructure:

Lake Bolac Peter O'Rorke Memorial Outdoor Solar Heated Pool requires the **replacement of the main circulating pump**.

Requires **replacement of the roof solar circulating pump** (stopped working in March).

**Painting interior of both pools and fixing broken filters** - 25m pool and Toddler's Pool

This season pool attracted over 4,000 patrons and growing every year.

Lake Bolac Soldier's Memorial Hall - **Upgrade toilets, foyer, and disability access.**

There are currently no disabled toilet facilities, no disabled access, and consequently no hiring from state or federal organisations such as the Electoral Commissions (who require disabled access as a minimum). 200 people attended our annual Anzac Service this year, and last.

Recreation, Safety and Tourism:

Commence first stage **Walking Track around Lake Bolac**. A key activity to keep building on in coming years.

Infrastructure for Families:

**Build Family Day Care** facilities. Four places for College staff children are not enough.

Please consider all the municipal rural townships carefully when allocating ARCC resources, as they feed and support and contribute rates generously to the ARCC.

We look forward to council's co-operation to achieve our joint community goals.

Kind Regards,

Karen McIntyre, President  
Lake Bolac Development Association  
8 May 2025

### Responses to the Feedback

- There is a strong commitment to supporting and promoting tourism. This is stated in the Council Plan 2025-29 with the strategic objective '2.3 Engage with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism and local businesses to improve the quality of experience and drive growth in high yield tourist outcomes'. This commitment is also already reflected in the Draft Budget 2025/26. We will be contributing \$75,000 to Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism who deliver coordinated marketing campaigns for this region.
- Improvements to the entrances of townships and service centres, as well as the Lake Bolac Pool and Memorial Hall facilities will be considered as part of the capital works planning process for the annual budgets.
- The population of Ararat Rural City has increased from 11,075 in 2001 to 11,880 in 2021 according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data. However, we recognise that we need more population growth to remain viable as a municipality, hence the opening sentence of the Community Vision 2035 'Strong population growth that buck trends in rural Victoria'.
- The Community Vision describes the community's aspirations for the future of the municipality, while the Council Plan describes the 'how'.
- Every part of the Community Vision 2035 is about the aspirations of the whole municipality, not just the suburb of Ararat. For example, value adding in agriculture and tourism supports the social and economic development of townships like Willaura. The waste-to-energy power generation provides secondary income opportunities for agricultural producers in rural areas. Transport networks, artistic, cultural, sporting and recreational opportunities are also critical for rural communities.
- Organisations that are effective and delivering outcomes for their stakeholders do not drastically change their strategic directions, objectives and strategies every four years. Each and every word of the Council Plan 2021-25 was reviewed and considered in the development of the draft Council Plan 2025-29 and most of it is still relevant now.
- There are initiatives and priorities for services, infrastructure and amenity listed in the Draft Council Plan 2025-29. Examples include '1.1 Develop a strategic land use planning framework with annual targets to support sustainable urban growth', '2.1 Partner with Federation University to deliver the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct with a focus on engaging local agribusiness, industry and community', and so forth.
- The specific infrastructure projects and initiatives that are aligned to the strategic directions and delivered each year are captured in the Annual Action Plan. This is prepared once the Council Plan 2025-29 is adopted.

- Increasing volunteering and participation in community organisations is not something Council can achieve on its own. Each community has their own character and opportunities and the exact way this will be achieved will depend on each community and community organisation. Council plans to work with local communities to achieve this outcome.
- Council are currently liaising with private and not-for-profit sectors to deliver a new childcare centre in Lake Bolac.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### **Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives**

6. Strong and Effective Governance
- We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

### **Budget Implications**

As this item gives effect to the next four financial years from 2025/2026, and it has no direct or significant budget implications for the 2024/2025 Budget.

### **Policy/Relevant Law**

Sections 88 and 90 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires that Council develop or review and adopt a Community Vision is a period of at least the next 10 financial years, and a Council Plan for a period of at least the next 4 financial years in accordance with its Community Engagement Policy by the 31 October in the year following a general election.

### **Sustainability Implications**

One of the six strategic directions in the Council Plan 2025-29 is focused on preserving our environment and increasing our sustainability.

### **Risk Assessment**

The primary objective of Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions. Providing the timelines for development and engagement on the key strategic documents of Council helps to ensure the long term aspirations of the community are well considered and reflected in these documents.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

This agenda item relates directly to a process of community engagement around the development of the Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29.

## RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29

## MOVED CR KAUR SECONDED CR SANDERS

That Council:

1. Adopt the Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29

Cr Kaur, Cr Sanders, Cr Joyce and Cr J Armstrong spoke for the motion

CARRIED 7/0  
5134/25



## ATTACHMENTS

The Draft Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-29 are provided as Attachment 3.1



## ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY VISION 2035

Over the next ten years Ararat Rural City Council will develop into a community characterised by:

*Strong population growth trajectories that buck trends in rural Victoria.* This goal is underpinned by a planning scheme that provides certainty to the community while providing capacity for further residential, industrial, and commercial growth. Council is committed to continuous and sustainable economic development which is focused on job creation through value adding in agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and tourism. Ararat Rural City Council has a strategic advantage provided through the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct, a world leading example of a research partnership between a university and a rural community.

*Leadership in pragmatic approaches to local environmental management.* Ararat Rural City Council is a leader in managing a circular economy through a focus on local management of resource recovery. We are home to a number of successful bio-mass and waste-to-energy power generators which contribute significantly to our positioning as a net zero emissions community.

*Sustainable and effective local transport networks underpinned by careful technical and financial planning undertaken jointly between asset users and asset owners.* Enabling infrastructure in the form of roads, drainage and utilities is in place to support the social and economic growth of the municipality. Renewal of all asset classes is managed to ensure ongoing financial sustainability.

*Communities that are enhanced by access to artistic, cultural, sporting and recreational opportunities that meet needs and expectations.* Volunteering is a key part of community life and its resurgence has breathed new life into a range of community organisations and activities. Ararat Rural City is a place that is known for its cultural inclusion and connection to Traditional Owners.

*Strong and robust democratic processes underpinned by transparent governance, good financial management and organisational innovation.* Ararat Rural City Council is seen as an exemplar of what rural local government can be and achieve for its community. It is a place of strength, compassion, self-reliance and new ideas. It is a place that knows how to make things happen!

### Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, the Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagulk, and Wadawurrung peoples, and recognise their connection to the land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.





## ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL'S COUNCIL PLAN 2025 - 2029



Ararat Rural City

### 1. GROWING OUR PLACE

*We will create the settings to support growth across our municipality through an improved planning scheme, actively pursuing new housing options and exploring models for in-migration.*

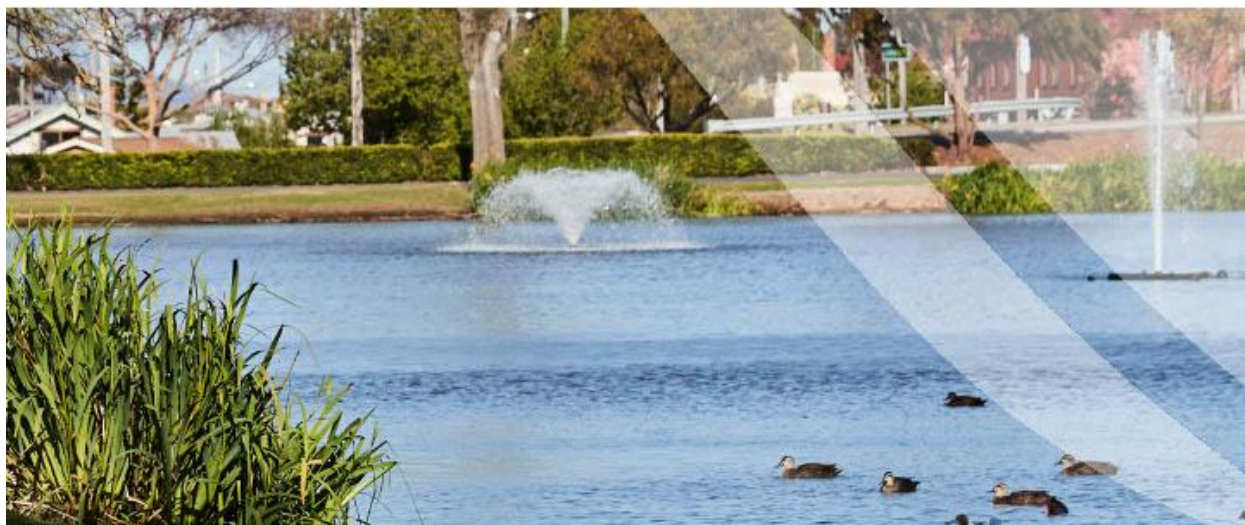
- 1.1 Develop a strategic land use planning framework with annual targets to support sustainable urban growth.
- 1.2 Support innovative housing models that work to overcome market failure and create the capacity to increase the population of Ararat Rural City.
- 1.3 Work with other levels of government, business, educational institutions and not-for-for profits to develop programs to increase in-migration to Ararat Rural City to grow our population.

### 2. BUILDING ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMIES

*We will develop strong relationships to build and strengthen a diverse local economy, focused on creating jobs and wealth through adding value to existing strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality.*

- 2.1 Partner with Federation University Australia to deliver the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct with a focus on engaging with local agribusiness, industry and community.
- 2.2 Work with other levels of government, local business, and private investors to develop a business park within Ararat Rural City, focused on agricultural value adding and advanced manufacturing, potentially leveraging "behind the meter" power.
- 2.3 Engage with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism and local businesses to improve the quality of experience and drive growth in high yield tourist outcomes.





### 3. PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT

*We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement with the circular economy.*

- 3.1 Position Ararat Rural City Council as a prime mover in driving circular economy policy in waste management, including local processing and management of recyclables, and in use of renewable energy for Council purposes.
- 3.2 Develop innovative energy solutions utilising locally produced waste.
- 3.3 Partner with local organisations and scientific experts to implement the Environment Strategy 2024-34, with a focus on circular economy, emissions reduction and sustainable management of Council assets.

### 4. DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING KEY ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

*We will ensure that we plan, fund and develop new infrastructure in ways that deliver strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.*

- 4.1 Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.
- 4.2 Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- 4.3 Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, are mindful of intergenerational equity and enhance community wellbeing and safety. These approaches will explore strategic use of debt to fund long-term assets and ensure Council's financial sustainability.

### 5. ENHANCING COMMUNITY LIFE

*We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.*

- 5.1 Open up Council's arts and culture assets to greater community participation, ownership and engagement in decision-making.
- 5.2 Develop models of volunteering that recognise, support and properly utilise the skills that community volunteers bring to community life.
- 5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits, and Traditional Owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City into a more inclusive, welcoming, tolerant and diverse community.

### 6. STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

*We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at their centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management, and implementation of effective community engagement practices.*

- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.
- 6.2 Ensure appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions. Council's internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.
- 6.3 Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while ensuring that Councillors' roles as elected community representatives are understood and reflected in decision-making.





#### GROWING OUR PLACE

- Achieve strategic land use planning framework targets on an annual basis.
- Increase available residential land to support housing availability by 600 lots by June 2029.
- Increase residential housing stock 300 properties by June 2029.
- Ensure that 25% of all new residential housing is affordable housing.
- Grow the population of the municipality by 1000 by June 2029.

#### BUILDING ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMIES

- Increase jobs in local economy by 15% by June 2029.
- Achieve Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct annual engagement and development targets.
- Establish circular economy business park and lead tenants in agricultural value add sector by June 2029.
- Increase tourism visitation and stays in Ararat Rural City by 50% by 30 June 2029.
- Increase 4 star and above accommodation options by 80 by 2029.
- Establish a municipal measure of economic growth for annual reporting.

#### PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT

- Decrease waste to landfill by 20% by June 2029.
- Decrease total waste and recyclables tonnage collected by 20% by 2029.
- Achieve annual Environment Strategy outcomes.

#### DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING KEY ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Progress the outcomes of the Aradale Development Strategy.
- Achieve quarterly meetings with the Rural Roads Group that will inform the annual capital works program.
- Meet annual targets for Urban Gravel to Seal Program.
- Implement key infrastructure projects from the Asset Plan 2025-2035 during the planning period.

#### ENHANCING COMMUNITY LIFE

- Increase annual visitation to Ararat Gallery TAMA by 20% p.a.
- Increase community use of Ararat Town Hall by 10% p.a.
- Increase audience sizes at commercial and funded performances at Ararat Town Hall by 20% p.a.
- Increase participation in community organisations in Ararat Rural City by 5% per annum.

#### STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

- Continue to deliver Council budgets which deliver public value and return efficiency dividends where appropriate.
- Continue to deliver effective risk management processes approved by Audit and Risk Committee.
- Continue to deliver community engagement processes which show longitudinal signs of improvement.

### 3.2 ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT FINANCIAL PLAN 2025-35

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** FINANCE COORDINATOR  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21041

#### OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 91 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to prepare and adopt a Financial Plan (the Plan) by 31 October 2025, for a period of at least ten financial years.

This report presents the draft Financial Plan 2025-2035 for adoption after it has been presented to community during the community consultation and engagement phase.

#### DISCUSSION

The Financial Plan 2025-2035 provides a financially sustainable projection to effectively support implementation of the Council Plan, and to achieve the Community Vision.

The Plan outlines the assumptions, policy and decisions of Council used to determine the allocation and management of Council resources over the next 10 years.

No changes have been made to the draft Financial Plan 2025-35 since it was released to for public consultation (see below).

#### KEY CONSIDERATIONS

##### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

The Financial Plan aligns with the Draft Council Plan 2025-29 in the following areas:

- 6. Strong and Effective Governance We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.

##### ***Budget Implications***

The Plan will support Council in meeting its obligations of economic sustainability and ongoing financial viability in accordance with Section 91 of Local Government Act 2020. Once adopted the Financial Plan will be used to guide the development of future budgets of Council.

##### ***Policy/Relevant Law***

This proposed policy meets Council's legislative requirement within the Local Government Act 2020, Section 91.

##### ***Sustainability Implications***

In developing the Financial Plan, all sustainability impacts have been considered.

### **Risk Assessment**

Council must implement the principles of sound financial management, which includes managing financial risks faced by Council and ensuring that decisions are made and actions taken having regard to their financial effects on future generations.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

The Financial Plan 2025-35 was presented alongside the Draft Budget 2025/26 at the community consultation sessions in the table below. It was also made available on the Engage Ararat website from 11 April 2025 for community review and feedback. Public submissions closed on 9 May 2025.

Community consultation sessions:

<b>Township</b>	<b>Time, Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Ararat	11am - 12pm, Tuesday 29 April	Ararat Town Hall
Buangor	2pm - 3pm, Wednesday 30 April	Buangor Pavilion
Elmhurst	2pm - 3pm, Tuesday 29 April	Elmhurst Public Hall
Lake Bolac	7pm - 8pm, Thursday 01 May	Lake Bolac Golf Club
Moyston	11.30am - 12.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Moyston Hall
Pomonal	3pm - 4pm, Thursday 01 May	Pomonal Hall
Tatooon	7pm - 8pm, Monday 5 May	Tatooon Hall
Willaura	5.30pm - 6.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Willaura Memorial Hall
Drop-In Session	9am - 2pm, Friday 02 May	Ararat Rural City Council office

One submission was received for the Financial Plan 2025-2035, this is provided below:

*"127.8 full-time equivalent staff employed by the council. The cost for this amount of staffing is \$13M and counting. Rates are forecast to increase by 2.5% in 2026/2027 onwards per year to cover staffing and other identified costs.*

*To service Ararat at that cost is not acceptable.*

*Alternatives to release staffing resources have to be proposed and implemented. What automation has been implemented to assist in releasing staffing resources?*

*What activities can be outsourced to private enterprise?*

*Has there been a cost-benefit analysis done to address outsourcing some activities performed by current staff?*

*Thanks*

*Rate Payer*

*Happy to provide my name and address upon request."*

Council thanks everyone who reviewed the Financial Plan 2025-35 and provided feedback. Council's response to this feedback is:

- The forecast rate increase of 2.5% per annum is indicative only and enables Council to model its long-term financial sustainability. The Financial Plan does not commit Council to adopting this rate in future financial years. Ararat Rural City Council has delivered a net 0% rate increase over the previous seven budget cycles.
- Ararat Rural City Council is one of the most efficient councils in Victoria. Other similar sized councils in Victoria have more full time equivalent (FTE) staff, Northern Grampians Shire Council for example had 212.94 FTE staff in their 2024/25 Budget. The Northern Grampians Shire Council's Draft 2025/26 Budget does not appear to have been released at the time of this briefing report. Central Goldfields Shire Council has 157 FTE staff in their Draft Budget 2025/26.
- Outsourcing has been tried in the past and it has been found to be less cost effective and lower quality than delivering activities directly. Examples of services that had previously been outsourced include kerbside waste collection and the Ararat Fitness Centre. These waste and

recreational facility services are now delivered by Council staff and the Customer Satisfaction Survey results for these individual service areas went from 'significantly lower than state-wide average' in 2017 to 'significantly higher than the state-wide average' in 2024.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Adopt the Financial Plan 2025-35*

**MOVED CR JOYCE  
SECONDED CR PRESTON**

**That Council:**

1. **Adopt the Financial Plan 2025-35**

**Cr Joyce and Cr Preston for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5135/25**

**ATTACHMENTS**

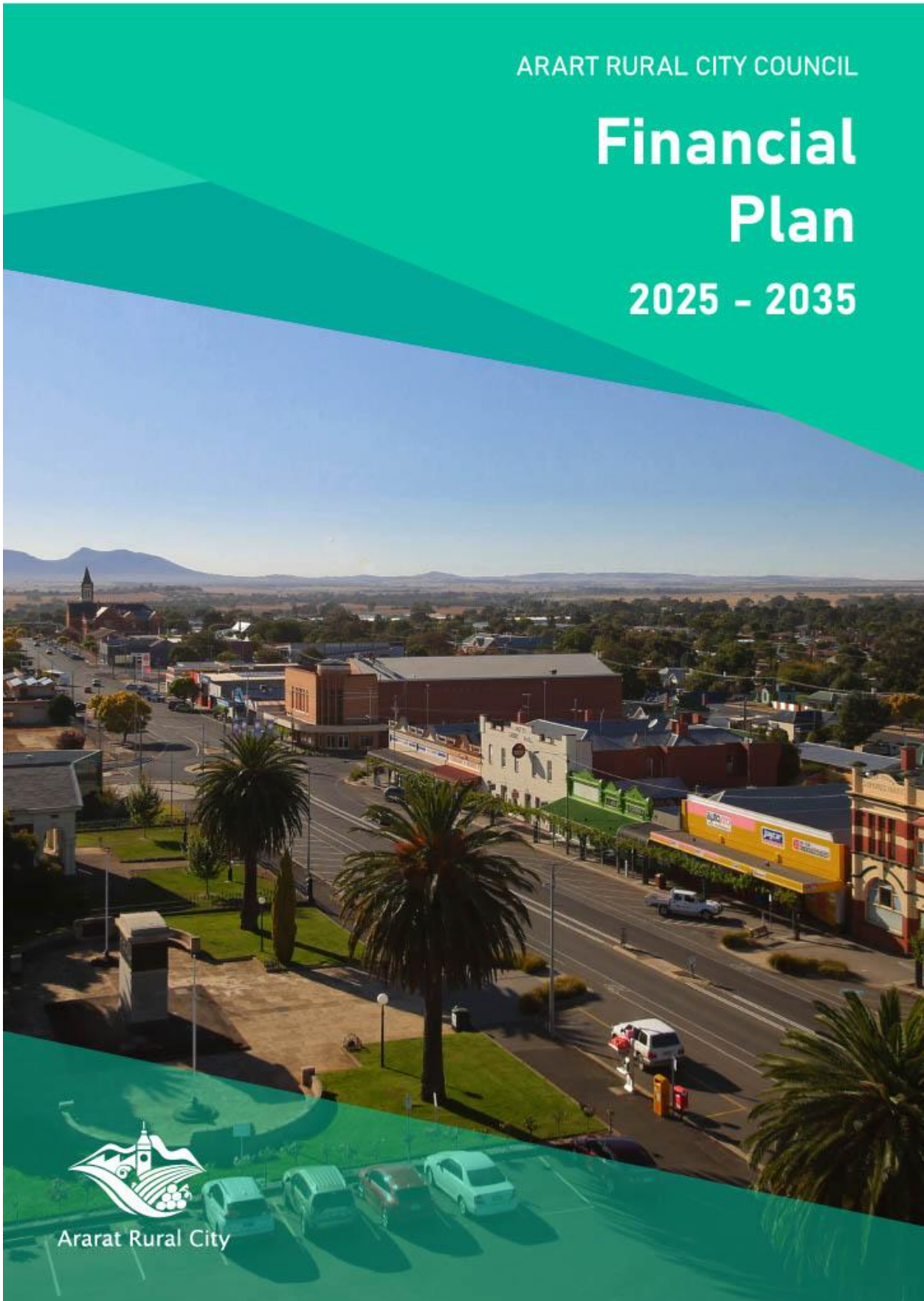
The Financial Plan 2025-35 is provided as Attachment 3.2



ARART RURAL CITY COUNCIL

# Financial Plan

2025 - 2035



Ararat Rural City

## **Traditional Acknowledgement**

Ararat Rural City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, the Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagulk, and Wadawurrung peoples, and recognise their connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



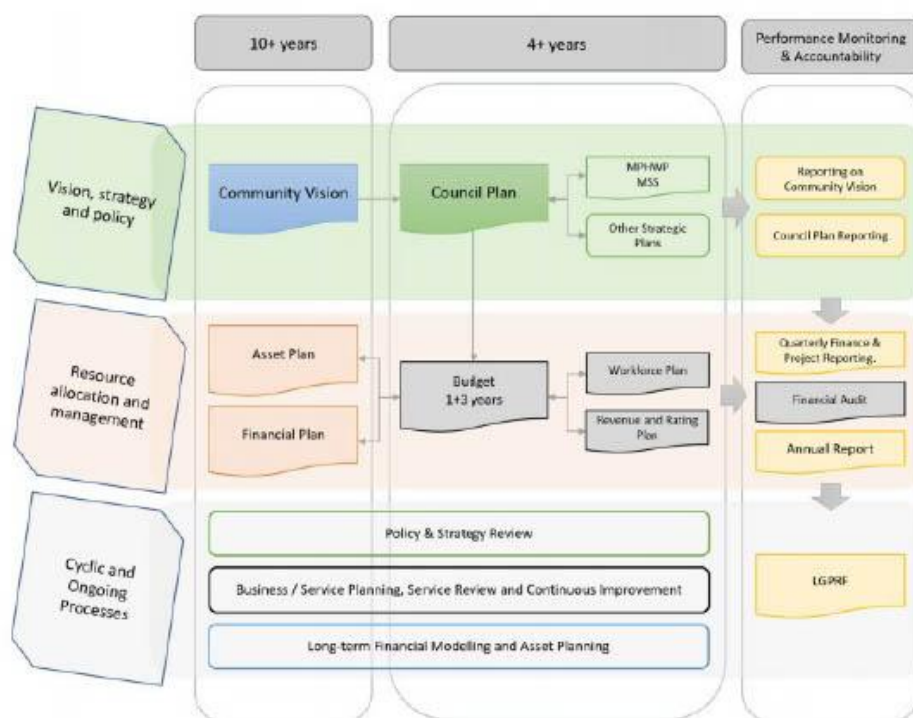
## Table of Contents

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# 1. Legislative Requirements

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

The diagram below depicts the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework that applies to local government in Victoria, and demonstrates how each element might inform or be informed by other parts of the integrated framework.



## 1.1 Strategic Planning Principles

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

- Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.

- b) Council's Financial Plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 1.2.2 below.
- e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of monitoring of progress and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

## 1.2 Financial Management Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- 1.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- 1.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
  - a) the financial viability of the Council (refer to section 2.1 Financial Policy Statements).
  - b) the management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10-year liabilities are disclosed in section 3.2 Balance Sheet projections.
  - c) the beneficial enterprises of Council
- 1.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- 1.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 3 Financial Statements)

## 1.3 Engagement Principles

Council has implemented the following consultation process to ensure due consideration and feedback is received from relevant stakeholders.

- a) Draft Financial Plan prepared by management.
- b) Community engagement around the Financial Plan 2025- 2035 is conducted using the Engage Ararat platform online, and in-person community meetings.
- c) Draft Financial Plan, including any revisions, presented to the June Council Meeting for adoption.

#### 1.4 Service Performance Principles

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

- a) Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. The Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council Plan may be funded.
- b) Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.
- c) Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate Council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
- d) Council has a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
- e) Council has a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regards service provision.

#### 1.5 Asset Plan Integration

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

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

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

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



## 2. Financial Plan Context

### 2. Financial Plan Context

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

#### 2.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the measures that demonstrate Council's financial sustainability in order to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Budget 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	\$0	\$2,320	\$560	\$1,048	\$1,251	\$1,283	\$1,292	\$1,324	\$1,358	\$1,395	\$1,424	\$1,463
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due.	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 1.25	1.25	1.58	2.35	2.42	2.60	2.83	2.92	3.01	3.11	3.21	3.31	3.41
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal of capital to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life.	Asset renewal and upgrade expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100%	200.2%	103.2%	106.5%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%

Ararat Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025 - 2035

Policy Statement	Measure	Target		Budget										
				2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality.	Total borrowings / Rate revenue to remain below 60%	60%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required.	80%	147.5%	163.9%	173.7%	192.2%	214.3%	226.3%	238.4%	250.4%	262.6%	274.7%	287.0%	287.0%
Council generates sufficient revenue from rates plus fees and charges to ensure a consistent funding for new and renewal capital.	Capital Outlays as a % of Own Source Revenue to remain above 30%	30%	75.8%	59.3%	53.9%	54.6%	54.7%	54.8%	54.9%	54.9%	55.0%	55.1%	55.1%	55.1%

## 2.2 Strategic Actions

Following a series of community engagement activities, Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the aspirations of the Council Plan. The strategic actions are included in the 10-year Financial Plan and, where appropriate, referenced in the commentary associated with the 10-year Comprehensive Income Statement and the 10-year Statement of Capital Works. The following are key strategic actions derived from the Community Vision 2025-2035 and the Council Plan 2025-2029:

- Maintaining investment in renewal capital works to ensure an effective local roads network that meets the economic and social needs of the municipal community.
- Ensuring ongoing organisational efficiencies are returned as a dividend to ratepayers through responsible rating.



- Investing in pragmatic approaches to environmental management and investment in local approaches to engaging in a circular economy.
- Maintaining and developing community, recreational and sporting facilities.
- Developing key industry and research partnerships to deliver cost effective, innovative approaches to health and wellbeing, economic growth and housing development.
- Demonstrating that small rural councils, like Ararat Rural City Council, can maintain assets, deliver effective community services and remain financially viable.

### 2.3 Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information in regard to the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2025/26 to 2034/35. The assumptions comprise the annual escalations / movement for each line item of the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors % movement	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
CPI	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Rates and charges	1.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Statutory fees and fines	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
User fees	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Grants - Operating	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Other income	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Employee costs	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
Materials and services	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Depreciation & Amortisation	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Other expenses	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

## 3. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information in regard to the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2025/26 to 2034/35.

Comprehensive Income Statement

Balance Sheet

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Capital Works

Statement of Human Resources

Statement of Changes in Equity

### 3.1 Comprehensive Income Statement For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

	Budget											
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Income												
Rates and charges	17,950	18,425	18,878	19,344	19,821	20,311	20,813	21,328	21,856	22,398	22,953	
Statutory fees and fines	272	277	284	291	298	306	313	321	329	337	346	
User fees	1,515	1,831	1,672	1,714	1,757	1,800	1,846	1,892	1,939	1,988	2,037	
Grants - Operating	8,323	9,528	9,428	9,538	9,798	10,075	10,370	10,674	10,988	11,310	11,642	
Grants - Capital	7,304	3,828	2,777	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	
Contributions - monetary	100	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	
Fair value adjustments for investment property	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other income	722	630	616	603	591	590	570	561	553	546	540	
Total income	36,186	34,430	33,766	34,524	35,291	36,108	36,948	37,812	38,701	39,615	40,554	
Expenses												
Employee costs	11,333	11,961	12,357	12,768	13,191	13,630	14,082	14,549	15,032	15,531	16,046	
Materials and services	8,259	9,198	8,876	8,781	8,955	9,193	9,251	9,307	9,361	9,424	9,478	
Depreciation	7,681	10,489	10,731	10,999	11,274	11,558	11,845	12,141	12,445	12,758	13,075	
Bad Debts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Borrowing costs	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Finance Costs - leases	74	80	42	23	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Other expenses	368	394	404	414	424	435	448	457	468	480	492	
Total expenses	28,023	32,380	32,718	33,273	34,008	34,816	35,624	36,454	37,306	38,191	39,091	
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	8,163	2,050	1,048	1,251	1,283	1,292	1,324	1,358	1,395	1,424	1,463	
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total comprehensive result	8,163	2,050	1,048	1,251	1,283	1,292	1,324	1,358	1,395	1,424	1,463	

### 3.2 Balance Sheet

For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

Budget											
2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	
\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Assets											
Current assets											
Cash and cash equivalents	7,808	6,498	6,889	7,288	7,707	8,117	8,529	8,943	9,382	9,777	10,189
Trade and other receivables	98	2,285	2,152	2,044	1,942	1,845	1,753	1,665	1,582	1,503	1,428
Inventories	64	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Other assets	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total current assets	7,983	8,813	9,101	9,402	9,709	10,022	10,342	10,668	11,004	11,340	11,687
Non-current assets											
Trade and other receivables	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	1,001	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	308,843	314,878	315,434	316,359	317,312	318,291	319,295	320,327	321,368	322,474	323,590
Right-of-use assets	1,071	778	470	162	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment property	1,661	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535
Total non-current assets	310,380	318,992	319,438	320,054	320,847	321,824	322,828	323,860	324,919	326,007	327,123
Total assets	318,363	327,805	328,539	329,456	330,556	331,846	333,170	334,528	335,923	337,347	338,810
Liabilities											
Current liabilities											
Trade and other payables	2,218	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024
Trust funds and deposits	305	303	303	303	303	303	303	303	303	303	303
Unearned income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provisions	2,084	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104
Interest-bearing liabilities	156	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lease liabilities	290	314	333	183	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total current liabilities	5,063	3,745	3,764	3,614	3,433	3,431	3,431	3,431	3,431	3,431	3,431

Ararat Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025 - 2035

	Budget											
	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000	
Non-current liabilities												
Provisions	123	293	293	293	293	293	293	293	293	293	293	
Interest-bearing liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lease liabilities	810	519	186	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total non-current liabilities	933	812	479	295	293	293	293	293	293	293	293	
Total liabilities	5,986	4,557	4,243	3,909	3,726	3,724	3,724	3,724	3,724	3,724	3,724	
Net assets	312,377	323,248	324,296	325,547	326,830	328,122	329,446	330,804	332,199	333,623	335,086	
Equity												
Accumulated surplus	107,944	108,959	110,743	111,723	112,729	113,737	114,770	115,829	116,918	118,028	119,169	
Reserves	204,433	213,289	213,553	213,824	214,101	214,385	214,676	214,975	215,281	215,595	215,917	
Total equity	312,377	323,248	324,296	325,547	326,830	328,122	329,446	330,804	332,199	333,623	335,086	



### 3.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
<b>2025 Forecast Actual</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	314,613	98,126	208,123	8,364
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	6,585	6,585	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(107)	-	107
Transfers from other reserves	-	3,745	-	(3,745)
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>321,198</b>	<b>108,349</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>4,726</b>
<b>2026</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	321,198	108,349	208,123	4,726
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,050	2,050	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(1,208)	-	1,208
Transfers from other reserves	-	768	-	(768)
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>323,248</b>	<b>109,959</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>5,166</b>
<b>2027</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	323,248	109,959	208,123	5,166
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,048	1,048	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(264)	-	264
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>324,296</b>	<b>110,743</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>5,430</b>
<b>2028</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	324,296	110,743	208,123	5,430
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,251	1,251	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(271)	-	271
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>325,547</b>	<b>111,723</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>5,701</b>

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	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
<b>2029</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	325,547	111,723	208,123	5,701
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,283	1,283	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(277)	-	277
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>326,830</b>	<b>112,729</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>5,978</b>
<b>2030</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	326,830	112,729	208,123	5,978
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,292	1,292	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(284)	-	284
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>328,122</b>	<b>113,737</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>6,262</b>
<b>2031</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	328,122	113,737	208,123	6,262
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,324	1,324	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(291)	-	291
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>329,446</b>	<b>114,770</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>6,553</b>
<b>2032</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	329,446	114,770	208,123	6,553
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,358	1,358	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(299)	-	299
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>330,804</b>	<b>115,829</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>6,852</b>



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	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
<b>2033</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	330,804	115,829	208,123	6,852
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,395	1,395	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(306)	-	306
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>332,199</b>	<b>116,918</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>7,158</b>
<b>2034</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	332,199	116,918	208,123	7,158
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,424	1,424	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(314)	-	314
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>333,623</b>	<b>118,028</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>7,472</b>
<b>2035</b>				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	333,623	118,028	208,123	7,472
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,463	1,463	-	-
Net asset revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	-	(322)	-	322
Transfers from other reserves	-	-	-	-
<b>Balance at end of the financial year</b>	<b>335,086</b>	<b>119,169</b>	<b>208,123</b>	<b>7,794</b>

### 3.4 Statement of Cash Flows

For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

Budget											
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows
	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities											
Rates and charges	17,943	18,545	18,984	19,453	19,923	20,408	20,907	21,415	21,939	22,479	23,030
Statutory fees and fines	272	277	284	291	298	306	313	321	329	337	346
User fees	1,515	1,794	1,839	1,885	1,932	1,981	2,030	2,081	2,133	2,188	2,241
Grants - operating	10,270	9,526	9,426	9,537	9,788	10,075	10,370	10,675	10,988	11,310	11,642
Grants - capital	7,304	3,828	2,777	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923
Contributions - monetary	100	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93	93
Interest received	500	400	380	361	343	328	310	294	279	265	252
Other receipts	222	253	259	266	272	279	286	293	301	308	316
Net GST refund / payment	-	733	697	680	685	714	715	715	715	716	715
Employee costs	(11,333)	(11,960)	(12,358)	(12,788)	(13,192)	(13,630)	(14,082)	(14,549)	(15,032)	(15,531)	(16,046)
Materials and services	(8,336)	(10,106)	(9,763)	(9,636)	(9,848)	(10,112)	(10,177)	(10,237)	(10,297)	(10,367)	(10,426)
Other payments	(368)	(394)	(404)	(414)	(424)	(435)	(446)	(457)	(468)	(480)	(492)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	18,089	12,989	12,224	12,671	12,803	12,926	13,242	13,567	13,903	14,239	14,594
Cash flows from investing activities											
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(15,513)	(12,437)	(11,567)	(12,006)	(12,308)	(12,614)	(12,930)	(13,253)	(13,584)	(13,924)	(14,272)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	-	1,050	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Payments for investments	-	(500)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	(15,513)	(11,887)	(11,467)	(11,906)	(12,206)	(12,514)	(12,830)	(13,153)	(13,484)	(13,824)	(14,172)

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	Budget											
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Cash flows from financing activities												
Finance costs	(6)	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Repayment of borrowings	(150)	(156)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Interest paid - lease liability	(74)	(80)	(42)	(23)	(5)	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Repayment of lease liabilities	(283)	(296)	(314)	(333)	(183)	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(513)	(514)	(356)	(356)	(188)	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	2,063	588	401	409	409	410	412	414	419	415	422	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	5,735	5,900	6,488	6,889	7,298	7,707	8,117	8,529	8,943	9,362	9,777	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	7,798	6,488	6,889	7,298	7,707	8,117	8,529	8,943	9,362	9,777	10,199	

### 3.5 Statement of Capital Works For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

Budget											
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property											
Buildings	550	2,040	584	578	582	607	622	638	654	670	687
Total property	550	2,040	584	578	592	607	622	638	654	670	687
Plant and equipment											
Plant, machinery and equipment	-	500	508	519	533	548	561	574	590	604	620
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	-	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Library books	40	40	45	48	48	50	50	52	52	54	54
Total plant and equipment	40	640	553	567	581	596	611	626	642	658	674
Infrastructure											
Roads	13,883	8,207	8,900	9,311	9,583	9,711	9,987	10,289	10,438	10,748	11,061
Bridges	80	400	400	400	400	450	450	450	500	500	500
Footpaths and cycleways	400	400	400	400	400	450	450	450	500	500	500
Drainage	750	750	750	750	750	800	800	800	850	850	850
Total infrastructure	14,923	9,757	10,450	10,861	11,133	11,411	11,697	11,989	12,288	12,596	12,911
Total capital works expenditure	15,513	12,437	11,567	12,006	12,306	12,614	12,930	13,253	13,584	13,924	14,272



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	Budget										
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Represented by:</b>											
New asset expenditure	138	1,628	141	145	148	152	156	159	163	168	172
Asset renewal expenditure	13,434	8,702	9,577	9,944	10,182	10,447	10,708	10,977	11,251	11,532	11,820
Asset upgrade expenditure	1,941	2,107	1,849	1,917	1,966	2,015	2,066	2,117	2,170	2,224	2,280
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>15,513</b>	<b>12,437</b>	<b>11,567</b>	<b>12,006</b>	<b>12,306</b>	<b>12,614</b>	<b>12,930</b>	<b>13,253</b>	<b>13,584</b>	<b>13,924</b>	<b>14,272</b>
<b>Funding sources represented by:</b>											
Grants	7,304	3,928	2,777	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923	2,923
Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Council cash	8,209	8,609	8,780	8,083	9,383	8,691	10,007	10,330	10,661	11,001	11,349
Borrowings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>15,513</b>	<b>12,437</b>	<b>11,567</b>	<b>12,006</b>	<b>12,306</b>	<b>12,614</b>	<b>12,930</b>	<b>13,253</b>	<b>13,584</b>	<b>13,924</b>	<b>14,272</b>

### 3.6 Statement of Human Resources

For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Staff expenditure</b>											
Employee costs - operating	11,333	11,860	12,358	12,768	13,192	13,630	14,082	14,549	15,032	15,531	16,046
Employee costs - capital	1,091	1,136	1,165	1,194	1,224	1,254	1,288	1,318	1,351	1,384	1,419
<b>Total staff expenditure</b>	<b>12,424</b>	<b>13,096</b>	<b>13,523</b>	<b>13,962</b>	<b>14,416</b>	<b>14,884</b>	<b>15,368</b>	<b>15,867</b>	<b>16,383</b>	<b>16,915</b>	<b>17,465</b>
<b>Staff numbers</b>											
Employees	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
	128.4	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8
<b>Total staff numbers</b>	<b>128.4</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>

A summary of Human Resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

Department	Budget 2025/26 \$'000	Comprises			
		Full Time \$'000	Part time \$'000	Casual \$'000	
Growing our place	676	525	151	-	
Building robust local economies	431	362	-	69	
Preserving our environment	2,047	1,751	84	232	
Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure	3,067	2,727	87	273	
Enhancing community life	2,569	1,297	776	496	
Strong and effective governance	3,171	2,834	513	24	
Total permanent staff expenditure	11,961	9,296	1,571	1,094	
Capitalised labour costs	1,136				
Total expenditure	13,097				

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Department	Budget 2025/26 FTE	Comprises			
		Full Time FTE	Part time FTE	Casual FTE	
Growing our place	5.5	4.0	1.5	-	
Building robust local economies	3.7	3.0	-	0.7	
Preserving our environment	22.5	20.0	0.8	1.7	
Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure	44.8	41.0	0.9	2.9	
Enhancing community life	26.0	14.0	6.9	5.1	
Strong and effective governance	25.3	20.0	5.0	0.3	
Total staff	127.8	102.0	15.1	10.7	

### 3.7 Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure For the 10 years ended 30 June 2035

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Growing our place</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	219	228	234	242	250	258	268	275	284	294
Male	305	315	328	336	348	359	371	383	396	409
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Female	152	157	162	168	173	179	185	191	197	204
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Growing our place</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>907</b>
<b>Building robust local economies</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	214	221	228	236	244	252	260	269	278	287
Male	148	153	158	163	169	174	180	186	192	199
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Building robust local economies</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>486</b>
<b>Preserving our environment</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male	1,751	1,809	1,869	1,931	1,995	2,061	2,130	2,201	2,274	2,349
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Female	64	66	68	71	73	75	78	80	83	86
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



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	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
<b>Total - Preserving our environment</b>	1,815	1,875	1,937	2,002	2,068	2,137	2,208	2,281	2,357	2,435
<b>Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	542	560	579	598	618	638	659	681	704	727
Male	2,185	2,257	2,332	2,410	2,490	2,572	2,658	2,746	2,837	2,931
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
Permanent - Part time										
Female	67	69	72	74	76	79	81	84	87	90
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
<b>Total - Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>	2,794	2,887	2,983	3,081	3,184	3,289	3,399	3,511	3,628	3,748
<b>Enhancing community life</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	575	584	614	634	655	677	699	723	747	771
Male	723	747	772	797	824	851	879	908	939	970
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
Permanent - Part time										
Female	746	771	798	823	850	878	907	938	969	1,001
Male	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	38	39	40
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
<b>Total - Enhancing community life</b>	2,074	2,143	2,214	2,287	2,363	2,442	2,523	2,607	2,693	2,782
<b>Strong and effective governance</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Female	1,887	1,949	2,014	2,081	2,150	2,222	2,295	2,371	2,450	2,531
Male	746	771	798	823	850	878	907	938	969	1,001
<b>Persons of self-described gender</b>										
Permanent - Part time										
Female	513	530	548	566	585	604	624	645	666	688

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	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total - Strong and effective governance	3,146	3,250	3,358	3,470	3,585	3,704	3,827	3,954	4,085	4,220
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	1,094	1,130	1,168	1,207	1,247	1,288	1,331	1,375	1,421	1,468
Capitalised labour costs	1,136	1,165	1,194	1,224	1,254	1,286	1,318	1,351	1,384	1,419
Total staff expenditure	13,097	13,522	13,962	14,415	14,884	15,368	15,867	16,383	16,915	17,465

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
<b>Growing our place</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Men	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Growing our place</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Building robust local economies</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Men	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Building robust local economies</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Preserving our environment</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Men	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Preserving our environment</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>

Ararat Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025 - 2035

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
<b>Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Men	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>
<b>Enhancing community life</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Men	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6
Men	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Enhancing community life</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>
<b>Strong and effective governance</b>										
Permanent - Full time										
Women	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Men	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time										
Women	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Men	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Strong and effective governance</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>Casuals and temporary staff</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>
<b>Capitalised labour</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>Total staff numbers</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>

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## 4. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Budget										Trend	
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34		2034/35
Operating position														
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / adjusted underlying revenue	1	7.8%	1.7%	3.1%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	o
Liquidity														
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	2	158.0%	235.3%	241.8%	260.2%	282.8%	292.1%	301.4%	310.9%	320.7%	330.5%	340.8%	+
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	3	147.5%	183.9%	173.7%	192.2%	214.3%	226.3%	238.4%	250.4%	262.6%	274.7%	287.0%	+
Obligations														
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	4	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	o
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	o
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		4.6%	3.9%	2.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	o
Asset renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / asset depreciation	5	200.2%	103.2%	106.5%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	107.8%	o
Stability														
Rates concentration	Rates revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	6	59.2%	55.9%	55.9%	56.0%	56.2%	56.3%	56.3%	56.4%	56.5%	56.5%	56.6%	o
Rates effort	Rates revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality		0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	o

Ararat Rural City Council Financial Plan 2025 - 2035

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Indicator	Measure	Notes	Budget 2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	Trend +/-
<b>Efficiency</b>														
Expenditure level	Total expenses / no. of property assessments		\$3,787	\$4,347	\$4,349	\$4,379	\$4,432	\$4,482	\$4,550	\$4,610	\$4,671	\$4,735	\$4,798	+
Revenue level	Total rate revenue / no. of property assessments		\$1,987	\$2,035	\$2,065	\$2,096	\$2,127	\$2,158	\$2,190	\$2,223	\$2,256	\$2,289	\$2,323	+
Workforce turnover	No. of permanent staff resignations & terminations / average no. of permanent staff for the financial year		10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	o
<b>Sustainable Capacity</b>														
Population	Total rate revenue / Municipal population		\$1,490	\$1,537	\$1,554	\$1,572	\$1,590	\$1,609	\$1,627	\$1,646	\$1,665	\$1,685	\$1,704	+
Population	Total expenses / Municipal population		\$2,326	\$2,701	\$2,694	\$2,704	\$2,729	\$2,758	\$2,786	\$2,814	\$2,843	\$2,873	\$2,903	+
Population	Value of infrastructure / Municipal population		\$25,450	\$26,247	\$25,972	\$25,714	\$25,480	\$25,211	\$24,966	\$24,728	\$24,490	\$24,257	\$24,028	+
Population	Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads		4.9	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.5	+
Own-source revenue	Own source revenue / Municipal population		\$1,698	\$1,750	\$1,768	\$1,786	\$1,804	\$1,823	\$1,842	\$1,862	\$1,882	\$1,902	\$1,923	+
Recurrent grants	Recurrent grants / Municipal population		\$607	\$938	\$684	\$1,005	\$1,014	\$1,024	\$1,034	\$1,044	\$1,055	\$1,068	\$1,077	o

### Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

### Notes to Indicators

#### 1. Adjusted underlying result

An indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. The adjusted underlying result calculation includes recurrent capital funding such as Roads to Recovery funding.

#### 2. Working capital

The proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. Working capital is forecast to steadily increase in future years.

#### 3. Unrestricted cash

Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use, which includes trust funds and deposits, and funds held in statutory reserves. This indicator measures the proportion of current liabilities represented by unrestricted cash.

#### 4. Debt compared to rates

This indicator measures the level of Council's total debt as a percentage of rate revenue.

#### 5. Asset renewal

This percentage indicates the extent of Council's renewal and upgrade of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and upgraded and future capital expenditure will be required to renew and upgrade assets.

#### 6. Rates concentration

Reflects extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. This indicator confirms Council relies heavily on rates as a source of income. The trend indicates Council will continue to be reliant on rate revenue compared to all other revenue sources.

## 5. Strategies and Plans

This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10-year financial projections included in the Financial Plan.

### 5.1 Borrowing Strategy

#### 5.1.1 Current Debt Position

The total amount borrowed as at 30 June 2025 is \$156,400.

#### 5.1.2 Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

	Budget										
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance	307	157	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plus New loans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Less Principal repayment	(150)	(157)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	157	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest payment	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-





Ararat Rural City

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

### 3.3 ADOPTION OF THE RATING AND REVENUE PLAN 2025-29

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** FINANCE COORDINATOR  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21042

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

---

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to prepare and adopt a Revenue and Rating Plan (the Plan) by 30 June 2025, for a period of at least four financial years.

This report presents the final Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 for adoption after it has been presented to community during the community consultation and engagement phase.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The Revenue and Rating Plan outlines the assumptions, policy, and decisions of Council in relation to generating the required income to effectively support implementation of the Council Plan and budget for a 4-year period.

Whilst the Plan covers all sources of income it also sets out decisions that Council has made in relation to rating options available to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates across property owners.

The Plan does not set revenue targets for Council, it outlines the strategic framework and decisions that informs how Council will calculate and collect its revenue.

A key change from the Rating and Revenue Plan 2021-2025 is the inclusion of a new Trust for Nature rebate on the area of land protected under the Trust for Nature conservation covenant on their property.

Minor amendments to the number of assessments, CIV and rates figures in Appendix 3 have been made since the Draft Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-29 was released for public consultation as a result of updated valuation information from the Valuer-General Victoria Office. These amendments do not have an impact on the Rating and Revenue Plan itself, only the demonstration of the Plan in Appendix 3.

#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

The Revenue and Rating Plan aligns with the Draft Council Plan 2025-29 in the following areas:

6. Strong and Effective Governance We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.

##### ***Budget Implications***

The Plan will support Council in meeting its obligations of economic sustainability and ongoing financial viability in accordance with Section 9(2)(c) and (g) of Local Government Act 2020. Once adopted the Revenue and Rating Plan will be used to guide the development of future budgets of Council.

### **Policy/Relevant Law**

This proposed policy meets Council's legislative requirement within the Local Government Act 2020, sections Section 9(2)(a) and Section 93.

### **Sustainability Implications**

In developing the Revenue and Rating Plan, all sustainability impacts have been considered.

### **Risk Assessment**

Council must implement the principles of sound financial management, which includes managing financial risks faced by Council and ensuring that decisions are made and actions taken having regard to their financial effects on future generations.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

The Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 was presented alongside the Draft Budget 2025/26 at the community consultation sessions in the table below. It was also made available on the Engage Ararat website from 11 April 2025 for community review and feedback. Public submissions closed on 9 May 2025.

Community consultation sessions:

<b>Township</b>	<b>Time, Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Ararat	11am - 12pm, Tuesday 29 April	Ararat Town Hall
Buangor	2pm - 3pm, Wednesday 30 April	Buangor Pavilion
Elmhurst	2pm - 3pm, Tuesday 29 April	Elmhurst Public Hall
Lake Bolac	7pm - 8pm, Thursday 01 May	Lake Bolac Golf Club
Moyston	11.30am - 12.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Moyston Hall
Pomonal	3pm - 4pm, Thursday 01 May	Pomonal Hall
Tatyoona	7pm - 8pm, Monday 5 May	Tatyoona Hall
Willaura	5.30pm - 6.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Willaura Memorial Hall
Drop-In Session	9am - 2pm, Friday 02 May	Ararat Rural City Council office

Council thanks everyone who reviewed the Rating and Revenue Plan 2025-29. No feedback was received directly relating to the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *Adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29*

### **MOVED CR SANDERS SECONDED CR WATERSTON**

**That Council:**

1. **Adopt the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29**

**Cr Sanders and Cr Waterston spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5136/25**

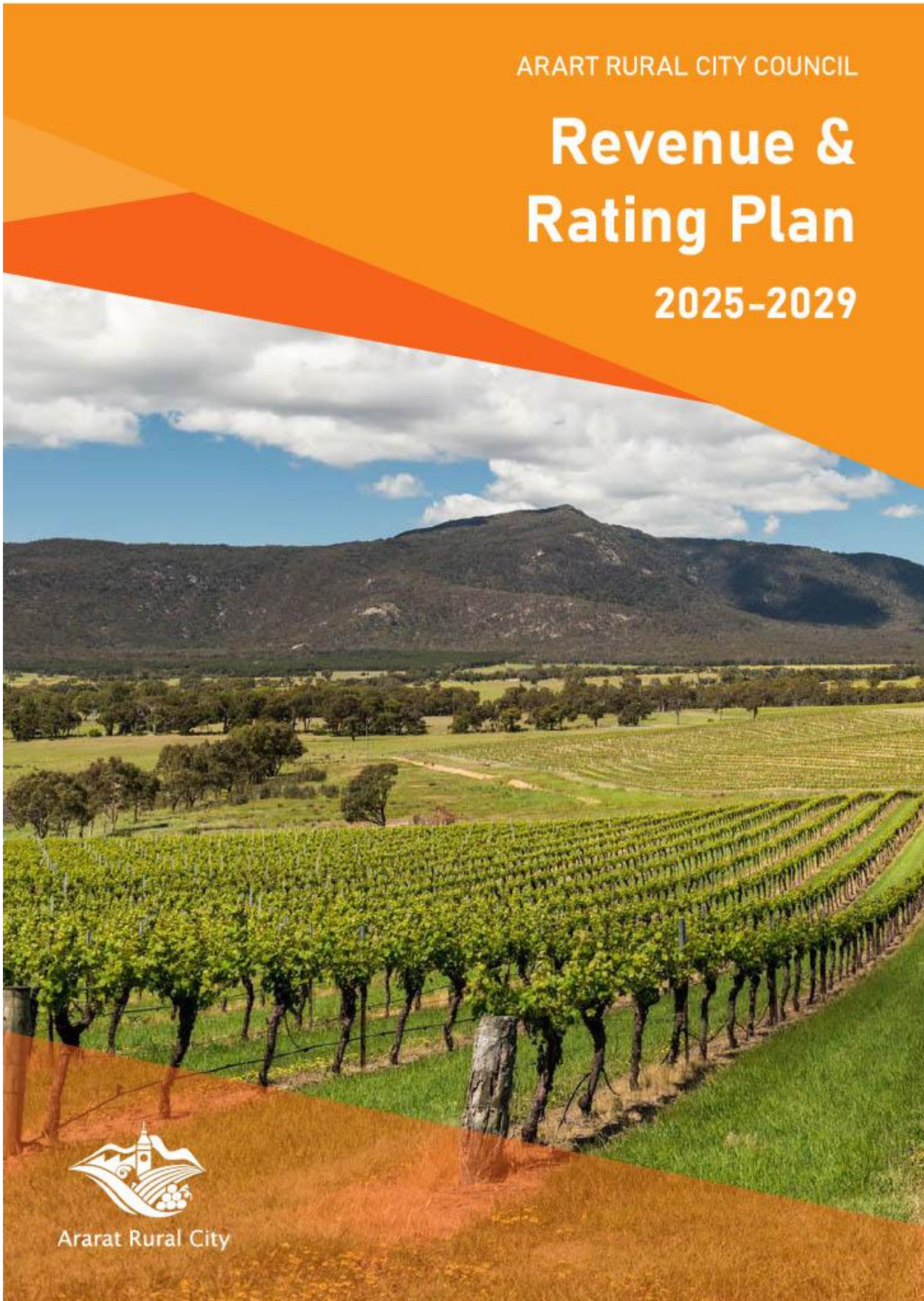
### **ATTACHMENTS**

The Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-29 is provided as Attachment 3.3

ARART RURAL CITY COUNCIL

# Revenue & Rating Plan

2025-2029





## **Traditional Acknowledgement**

Ararat Rural City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, the Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagulk, and Wadawurrung peoples, and recognise their connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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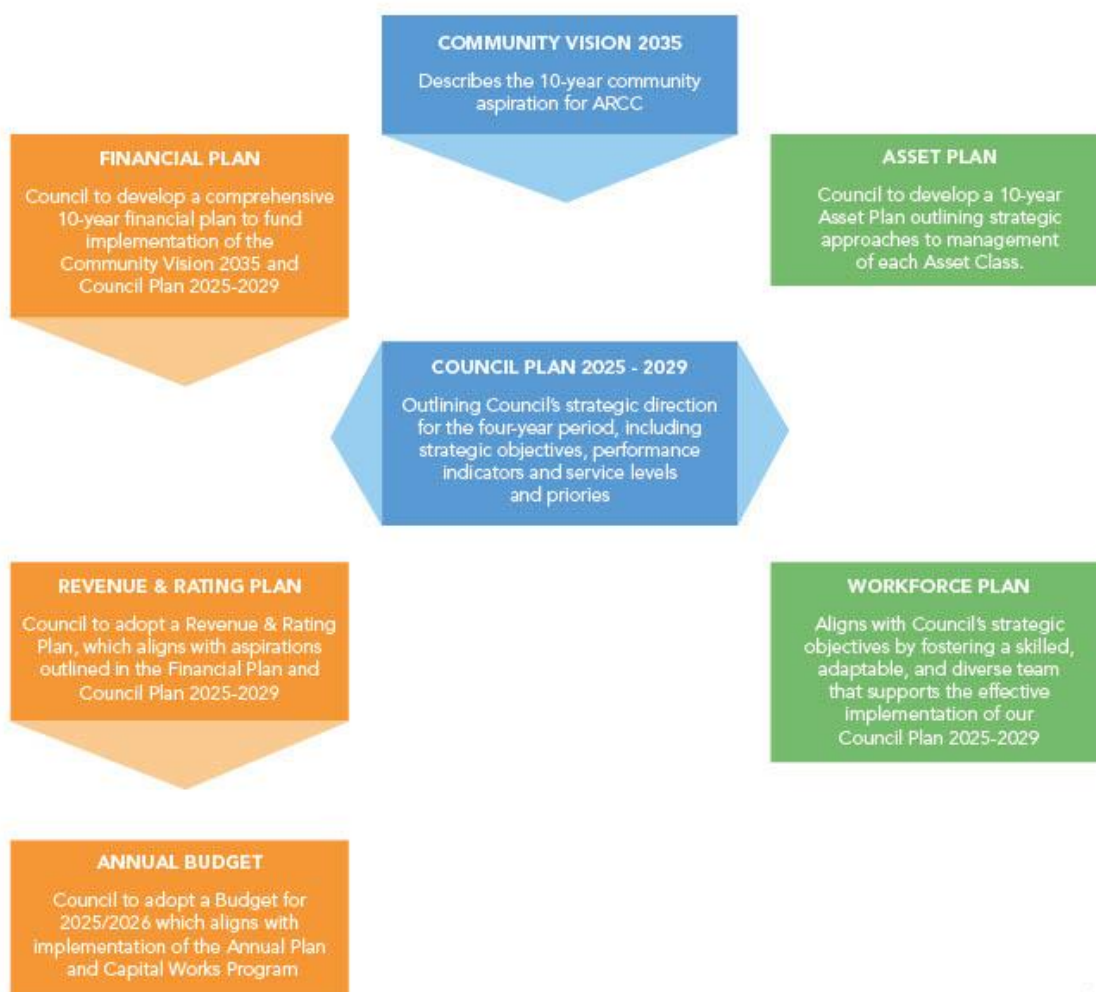
## Introduction

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Ararat Rural City Council to prepare a Revenue and Rating Plan to cover a minimum period of four years following each Council election. The Revenue and Rating Plan establishes the revenue raising framework within which the Council proposes to work.

The purpose of the Revenue and Rating Plan is to determine the most appropriate and affordable revenue and rating approach for Council which in conjunction with other income sources will adequately finance the objectives in the Council Plan 2025-2029.

This plan is an important part of Council's integrated planning framework, all of which is created to help Council achieve the outcomes of the Community Vision 2035.

Strategies outlined in this plan align with the objectives contained in the Council Plan and will feed into Council's budgeting and long-term financial planning documents, as well as other strategic planning documents under Council's strategic planning framework.



Ararat Rural City Council Reporting & Rating Plan 2025 – 2029

This Plan will explain how Council calculates the revenue needed to fund its activities, and how the funding burden will be apportioned between ratepayers and other users of Council facilities and services.

This plan will set out decisions that Council has made in relation to its available rating options under the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Local Government Act 2020* to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of rates across property owners. It will also set out principles that are used in decision-making for other revenue sources such as fees and charges.

It is important to note that the approach to rating equity utilised in this plan is heavily influenced by the deliberations of the Rating Strategy Advisory Group (RSAG) during 2017 and 2018 and endorsed by the subsequent Citizen's Jury convened in 2018.

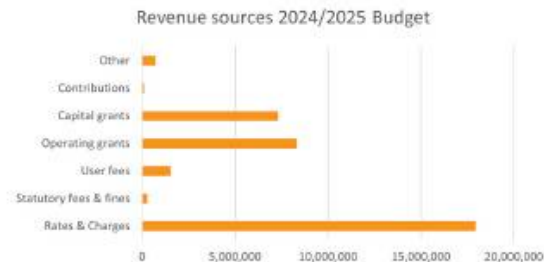
It must also be noted that this plan does not set revenue targets for Council. Rather, it outlines the strategic framework and decisions which inform how Council will go about calculating and collecting its revenue.





## Background

Council provides several services to the community that are funded through a range of different mechanisms. The revenue to maintain Ararat Rural City Council's activity is funded from a range of different sources. The graph below indicates sources of revenue from the 2024/2025 Budget.



Council's revenue sources identified in the 2024-2025 Budget were:

Source	Value (\$)
Rates and charges	17,950,000
Operating grants	8,323,000
Capital grants	7,304,000
Statutory fees and fines	272,000
User fees	1,515,000
Contributions	100,000
Other	722,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36,186,000</b>

As indicated above, Council relies heavily on rates as a revenue source, representing 49.6% of total revenue in the 2024/2025 Budget. It must be understood that a small rural council has few other significant revenue sources open to it beyond rates and government grants. Increasing the levels of statutory fines and fees or user fees only continues to levy revenue from the municipal community, albeit through a different mechanism to rates and charges.

Council's Community Plan 2025-2029 identifies maintenance of Council service provision, development of community assets and enabling infrastructure, circular economy outcomes and economic growth as key outcomes.

Council have a strong commitment to driving organisational efficiencies and returning ongoing savings as a dividend to the community. In the last seven financial years this has yielded a net rate increase of 0% compared to an increase of 16.25% available under the Fair Go Rates System (FGRS).

Council proposes a 1.5% increase in the 2025/2026 budget compared to an increase of 3% available under FGRS, as seen in the table below.

Year	ARCC Rate Increase	FGRS Increase
2018/2019	0.00%	2.25%
2019/2020	2.50%	2.50%
2020/2021	-1.00%	2.00%
2021/2022	-1.50%	1.50%
2022/2023	0.00%	1.75%
2023/2024	0.00%	3.50%
2024/2025	0.00%	2.75%
2025/2026	1.50%	3.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.50%</b>	<b>19.25%</b>

## Community Engagement

The Revenue and Rating Plan outlines Ararat Rural City Council's decision-making process on how revenues are calculated and collected. The following public consultation processes will be followed for the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029:

- Draft Revenue and Rating Plan developed by CEO, Councillors and Council officers.
- Draft Revenue and Rating Plan posted to [engage.ararat.vic.gov.au](https://engage.ararat.vic.gov.au) on 11 April 2025 for community engagement, suggested inclusions and public comment. Online engagement and submission process ends on Friday 9 May 2025.
- Face-to-face community engagement sessions will be held in Ararat, Buangor, Elmhurst, Tatyoon, Lake Bolac, Moyston, Pomonal, Tatyoon and Willaura to seek feedback on the Plan in the week commencing 28 April 2025.

- Final Revenue and Rating Plan adopted by Council on Tuesday 24 June 2025.

It is important to acknowledge that the underpinning philosophy of Council's Revenue and Rating Plan rests in the outcomes of extensive deliberative engagement processes undertaken through the RSAG and the Citizen's Jury in 2017 and 2018. These processes established a very clear model of rating fairness based on consistent sharing of the rate burden among the four rating sectors established through Council's differential rating model. These four rating sectors are General, Industrial, Commercial and Farm. The model for distribution of the rating burden is colloquially named the "pie model", and will be discussed in more detail later in this document.





## Rates and Charges

Rates are essentially property taxes that allow Ararat Rural City Council to raise revenue to fund delivery of a range of services for the municipal community. Importantly, it is a taxation system that includes flexibility for councils to utilise different tools in its rating structure to accommodate issues of equity and to ensure fairness in rating for all ratepayers. Councils can use these tools in different ways to yield results seen as fair by their communities.

Council utilises a rating structure comprised of three key elements. These are:

- **General Rates** – Based on property values (using the Capital Improved Valuation methodology), which are indicative of capacity to pay and form the central basis of rating under the *Local Government Act 1989*. Within the general rating model are four differentiated rating sectors: General, Industrial, Commercial and Farm.
- **Service Charges** – A ‘user pays’ a component of Council services to reflect benefits provided by Council to ratepayers who benefit from a service. The only Service Charge applied by Council is the Waste Charge, applied to domestic waste management.
- **Municipal Charge** – Council applies a Municipal Charge as a ‘fixed rate’ portion per property or single farm enterprise to cover some of the fixed administrative costs of Council.

### GENERAL RATES

The formula for calculating General Rates, excluding any additional charges, arrears or additional supplementary rates is:

*Valuation (Capital Improved Value) x Rate in the Dollar (Differential Rate Type)*

The rate in the dollar for each rating differential category is included in Council’s annual Budget and represents Council’s key mechanism for building a rating model which shares rating burden predictably and fairly between the four rating sectors.

Rates and charges are an important source of revenue, accounting for 49.6% of the budgeted operating revenue for 2024/25. The collection of rates is a considerable factor in funding Council services. Planning for future rate increases is therefore an essential component of the long-term financial planning process and plays a significant role in funding both additional service delivery and the increasing costs related to providing Council services.

Council makes a further distinction when administering General Rates by applying a rating differential based on the purpose for which the property is used; that is, whether the property is used for general, commercial, industrial, or farming purposes. This distinction is based on the concept that different property categories should pay a fair and equitable contribution, taking into account the benefits those properties derive from the local community.

Council have made a clear decision, supported by the outcomes of the Rating Strategy Advisory Group (RSAG) and Citizen’s Jury, and by the community more generally, that rating fairness is measured by a consistent sharing of “rates burden” between rating sectors from year to year. It has become known as the “pie model” through the RSAG process. The model mandates that each year, each rating sector should contribute a very similar amount of the rating “pie”. This reflects the intent of Section 101(1)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires that councils “seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the municipal community”.

Within Ararat Rural City Council, the model’s outcome describes a rating system which should support the following rating burden among the four sectors:

Rating Sectors	Rates “burden”
General	51.60%
Commercial	5.30%
Industrial	1.70%
Farm Land	41.40%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

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These figures are based on the rates burden data from the 2024/2025 Budget, adjusted annually to uphold consistent equalisation of the rates burden.

To maintain consistency in the percentage of rating burden across the four rating sectors, it is critical to understand that the differential is not a “discount” or a fixed element which underpins rating fairness. Rather, it is an economic lever to be used to ensure that the current rates burden is maintained between rating sectors.

This equilibrium in burden between rating sectors is often disturbed through asymmetric changes in property valuations between rating sectors. If valuations in one sector increase or decrease disproportionately to the overall movement in valuations, the proportion of rates paid by one sector becomes skewed, requiring adjustment through alteration of one or more differentials.

Council will continue to attempt to minimise the impact of rating burden on the entire municipal community through seeking ongoing organisational efficiencies during the life of the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029. These savings will be returned as a dividend to community.

There is a general “understanding” in the local government sector that forgoing the opportunity to increase rates to the maximum allowed under the FGRS results in significant losses in future revenue which undermines ongoing organisational sustainability, particularly in small rural councils. Council challenges this thinking on the basis that delivering ongoing and sustainable efficiencies has the same impact on long-term sustainability as increasing the rate base. There may be rate increases in the period 2025-2029 to meet increased costs, but the first option to be exercised will always be efficiency dividends.

### RATING LEGISLATION

The legislative framework set out in the *Local Government Act 1989* determines Ararat Rural City Council's ability to develop a rating system. The framework provides significant flexibility for Council to tailor a system that suits its needs.

Section 155 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides that a council may declare the following rates and charges on rateable land:

- General Rates under Section 158
- Municipal Charges under Section 159
- Service Rates and Charges under Section 162
- Special Rates and Charges under Section 163

The recommended strategy in relation to Municipal Charges, Service Rates and Charges, and Special Rates and Charges, is discussed later in this document.

In raising council rates, Council is required to primarily use the valuation of the rateable property to levy rates. Section 157 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides Council with three choices in terms of which valuation base to utilise: Site Value (SV), Capital Improved Value (CIV) and Net Annual Value (NAV).

The advantages and disadvantages of the respective valuation bases are discussed later in this document. Whilst this document outlines Council's strategy regarding rates revenue, rates data is contained in Council's Annual Budget as required by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Section 94(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that Council must adopt a budget by 30 June each year (or at another time fixed by the Minister) to include:

- a) the total amount that the Council intends to raise by rates and charges.
- b) a statement as to whether the rates will be raised by the application of a uniform rate or a differential rate.
- c) a description of any fixed component of the rates, if applicable.
- d) if the Council proposes to declare a uniform rate, the matters specified in section 160 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- e) if the Council proposes to declare a differential rate for any land, the matters specified in section 161(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*.



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Section 94(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020* also states that Council must ensure that, if applicable, the Budget also contains a statement –

- a) that the Council intends to apply for a special Order to increase the Council's average rate cap for the financial year or any other financial year; or
- b) that the Council has made an application to the ESC for a special Order and is waiting for the outcome of the application; or
- c) that a special Order has been made in respect of the Council and specifying the average rate cap that applies for the financial year or any other financial year.

This plan outlines the principles and strategic framework that Council will utilise in calculating and distributing the rating burden to property owners, however, the quantum of rate revenue and rating differential amounts will be determined in the annual Council Budget.

### RATING PRINCIPLES

When developing differential rates within a Revenue and Rating Plan, Ararat Rural City Council gives consideration to the following good practice taxation principles:

- Wealth Tax
- Equity
- Efficiency
- Simplicity
- Benefit
- Capacity to Pay
- Diversity

#### Wealth Tax

The "wealth tax" principle implies that the rates paid are dependent upon the value of a ratepayer's real property and have no correlation to the individual ratepayer's consumption of services or the perceived benefits derived by individual ratepayers from the expenditures funded from rates.

#### Equity

*Horizontal equity* – posits that ratepayers in similar situations should pay similar amounts of rates, primarily ensured through accurate property valuations undertaken in a consistent manner, their classification into homogeneous property classes and the right of appeal against valuation.

*Vertical equity* – posits that those who are better

off should pay greater rates than those worse off. The rationale applies for the use of progressive and proportional income taxation and implies a "relativity" dimension to the fairness of the tax burden.

#### Efficiency

Economic efficiency is measured by the extent to which rates are affected by residents' production and consumption decisions.

#### Simplicity

Simplicity denotes how easily a rates system can be understood by ratepayers alongside the practicality and ease of its administration.

#### Benefit

Benefit refers to the extent to which there is a nexus between consumption/benefit and the rate burden.

#### Capacity to Pay

Capacity refers to the capacity of ratepayers or groups of ratepayers to pay rates.

#### Diversity

Diversity denotes the capacity of ratepayers within a group to pay rates.

The rating challenge for Council is to determine the appropriate balancing of these competing considerations.

#### Rates and Charges Revenue Principles:

Property rates will:

- be reviewed annually.
- not change dramatically from one year to next; and
- be sufficient to fund current expenditure commitments and deliverables outlined in the Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Differential rating will be applied as equitably as is practical and will comply with the *Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating 2013*.

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### PROPERTY VALUATION BASE

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, Ararat Rural City Council has three options as to the valuation base it elects to use. They are:

- **Capital Improved Value (CIV)** – Value of land and improvements upon the land.
- **Site Value (SV)** – Value of land only.
- **Net Annual Value (NAV)** – Rental valuation based on CIV.

For residential and farm properties, NAV is calculated at 5 per cent of the Capital Improved Value. For commercial and industrial properties, NAV is calculated as the greater of the estimated annual rental value or 5 per cent of the CIV.

#### Capital Improved Value (CIV)

Capital Improved Value is the valuation base most commonly used by local government, and Victorian councils. Based on the value of both land and all improvements on the land, it is generally easily understood by ratepayers as it equates to the market value of the property.

Section 161 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides that a council may raise any General Rates by the application of a differential rate if –

- a) it uses the capital improved value system of valuing land; and
- b) it considers that a differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of its functions.

Where a council does not utilise CIV, it may only apply limited differential rates in relation to farm land, urban farm land or residential use land.

#### Advantages of using Capital Improved Value (CIV)

- CIV includes all property improvements and is therefore often supported on the basis that it more closely reflects “capacity to pay”. The CIV rating method considers the full development value of the property, and more closely meets the equity criteria than Site Value and NAV.
- The increased frequency of valuations (previously two-year intervals, now annual intervals) has resulted in more predictable market values, reducing the level of objections resulting from valuations.

- The concept of a property’s market value is more easily understood under the CIV rather than NAV or SV.
- Most councils in Victoria have now adopted CIV making it simpler to compare relative movements in rates and valuations across councils.
- The use of CIV allows Council to apply differential rates which greatly improves Council’s ability to equitably distribute the rating burden based on ability to afford Council rates. CIV allows Council to apply higher rating differentials to the commercial and industrial sectors, which offset residential rates.

#### Disadvantages of using CIV

- The main disadvantage of CIV is that rates are based on the total property value which may not necessarily reflect the income level of the property owner as with pensioners and low-income earners.

#### Site value (SV)

As the Site Value methodology is based solely on the valuation of land with only very limited ability to apply the differential rates, the implementation of Site Value within Ararat Rural City Council context would cause a shift in rate burden from the industrial/commercial sectors onto the residential sector, hindering Council’s objective of a fair and equitable rating system.

SV would cause further rating movements away from modern townhouse style developments on relatively small land parcels to older established homes on quarter acre residential blocks. An equity argument would not be well served by the implementation of SV within Ararat Rural City Council.

#### Advantages of Site Value

- There is a perception that under SV, a uniform rate would promote development of land, particularly commercial and industrial developments. However, there is little evidence to support this case.
- SV provides scope for possible concessions for urban farmland and residential use land.



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**Disadvantages of using Site Value**

- SV would prompt a significant shift of the rating burden from the industrial/commercial sector onto the residential sector. In many cases, the percentage increases would fall in the 'extreme' range.
- SV is a major burden on property owners who hold large areas of land. Some of these owners may have much smaller/older dwellings compared to those who own smaller land areas but well developed dwellings, though the former pay more rates. An A typical example is the owners of flats, units, or townhouses paying low rates compared to owners of traditional housing styles.
- The use of SV can place pressure on a council to give concessions to categories of landowners on whom the rating burden is seen to fall disproportionately (e.g., farming and residential use properties). Large landowners, such as farmers, are disadvantaged under the SV methodology.
- SV will reduce Council's rating flexibility and options to deal with any rating inequities due to the removal of the ability to levy differential rates.
- The community may have greater difficulty in understanding the SV valuation on their rate notices, as indicated by many inquiries from ratepayers on this issue handled by Council's customer service and property revenue staff each year.

**Net Annual Value (NAV)**

In concept, NAV represents the annual rental value of a property. However, in practice, NAV is loosely linked to Capital Improved Value for Residential and Farm properties. Valuers derive the NAV directly as 5 per cent of CIV.

In contrast to the treatment of Residential and Farm properties, the NAV for Commercial and Industrial properties is assessed against actual market rental. This differing treatment of commercial versus residential and farm properties has led to some suggestions that all properties should be valued on a rental basis.

Overall, the use of NAV is not largely supported. For Residential and Farm ratepayers, actual rental values pose problems, the artificial rental estimate used

may not represent actual market value, and means the base is the same as CIV but is harder to understand.

**Recommended valuation base**

In choosing a valuation base, councils must decide whether they wish to adopt a differential rating system (different rates in the dollar for different property categories) or a uniform rating system (same rate in the dollar). If a council were to choose the former, under the *Local Government Act 1989* it must adopt either of the CIV or NAV methods of rating.

Ararat Rural City Council applies Capital Improved Value (CIV) to all properties within the municipality to take into account the fully developed value of the property. This basis of valuation considers the total market value of the land plus buildings and other improvements.

Under the CIV method, differential rating allows Council to shift part of the rate burden from some groups of ratepayers to others, through different "rates in the dollar" for each class of property.

Section 161(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* outlines the requirements relating to differential rates, which include:

- A council may raise any General Rates by the application of a differential rate, if Council considers that the differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of its functions.
- If a council declares a differential rate for any land, the council must specify the objectives of the differential rate, which must be consistent with the equitable and efficient carrying out of the council's functions and must include the following:
  - A definition of the types or classes of land which are subject to the rate and a statement of the reasons for the use and level of that rate.
  - An identification of the type or classes of land which are subject to the rate in respect of the uses, geographic location (other than location based on whether the land is within a specific ward in the council's district).
  - Specify the characteristics of the land, which are the criteria for declaring the differential rate.

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Once the council has declared a differential rate for any land, the council must:

- a) Specify the objectives of the differential rates;
- b) Specify the characteristics of the land which are the criteria for declaring the differential rate.

The purpose is to ensure that a council has a sound basis on which to develop the various charging features when determining its revenue strategies and to ensure that these are consistent with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The general objectives of each of the differential rates are to ensure that all rateable land makes an equitable financial contribution to the cost of carrying out the functions of Council. There is no limit on the number or types of differential rates that can be levied, but the highest differential rate can be no more than four times the lowest differential rate.

#### Property Valuations

The *Valuation of Land Act 1960* is the principal legislation in determining property valuations. Under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*, the Victorian Valuer-General conducts property valuations on an annual basis. Ararat Rural City Council applies a Capital Improved Value (CIV) to all properties within the municipality to take into account the full development value of the property. This basis of valuation considers the total market value of the land including buildings and other improvements.

The value of land is always derived by the principle of valuing land for its highest and best use at the relevant time of valuation.

Council must be mindful of the impacts of revaluations on the various property types in implementing the differential rating strategy outlined in the previous section to ensure that rises and falls in Council Rates remain affordable and that rating 'shocks' are mitigated to some degree.

#### Supplementary Valuations

Supplementary valuations are carried out for a variety of reasons including rezoning, subdivisions, amalgamations, renovations, new constructions, extensions, occupancy changes and corrections. The Valuer-General Victoria is tasked with undertaking supplementary valuations and advises Council monthly of valuation and Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC) changes.

Supplementary valuations bring the value of the affected property into line with the general valuation of other properties within the municipality. Objections to supplementary valuations can be lodged in accordance with Part 3 of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*. Any objections must be lodged with Council within two months of the issue of the supplementary rate notice.

#### Objections to property valuations

Part 3 of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* provides that a property owner may lodge an objection against the valuation of a property or the Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC) within two months of the issue of the original or amended (supplementary) Rates and Valuation Charges Notice (Rates Notice), or within four months if the notice was not originally issued to the occupier of the land.

A property owner must lodge their objection to the valuation or the AVPCC in writing to Ararat Rural City Council, or via the rating valuation objections portal.

Property owners also have the ability to object to the site valuations on receipt of their Land Tax Assessment. Property owners can appeal their land valuation within two months of receipt of their Council Rate Notice (via Council) or within two months of receipt of their Land Tax Assessment (via the State Revenue Office).

#### RATING DIFFERENTIALS

Ararat Rural City Council believes each differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of Council Functions. The application of the "pie model" in terms of a generally accepted community measure of rating equity has been discussed previously as a key driver of the rating sectors developed under Council's Revenue and Rating plan 2025-2029.

Details of the objectives of each differential rate, the classes of land which are subject to each differential rate and the uses of each differential rate, are set out below.



## General Rate

**Definition:** General land is any rateable land which does not have the characteristics of Farm Rate land and Commercial/Industrial Rate land.

**Objectives:** The objectives are to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined General Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services.

**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate of residential land. The vacant land affected by this rate is that which is zoned Residential under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and Classes:** Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- a) used primarily for residential purposes; or
- b) any land that is not defined as Farm Land or Commercial/Industrial Land.

**Use of Rate:** The General Differential Rate is the default rate in instances where land does not meet the characteristics of any other differential rate. It will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

**Level of Rate:** 100% of General Rate.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic Location:** Wherever located within the municipal district.

**Planning Scheme Zoning:** The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referenced in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

## Farm Rate

**Definition:** Farm Land means any rateable land within Council's municipal district defined as Farm Land under Section 2 of the Valuation of Land Act 1960, on the condition that the owner or occupier of the land is a person carrying on the activities defined by the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*, and who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office.

Section 2(1) of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* states:

- a) Farm Land means any rateable land that is 2 or more hectares in area.
- b) Used primarily for primary producing purposes from its activities on the land; used primarily for grazing (including agistment), dairying, pig farming, poultry farming, fish farming, tree farming, bee keeping, viticulture, horticulture, fruit growing or the growing of crops of any kind or for any combination of those activities; and  
That is used by a business –
  - That has a significant and substantial commercial purpose of character
  - That seeks to make a profit on a continuous or repetitive basis from its activities on the land; and
  - That is making a profit from its activities on the land, or that has a reasonable prospect of making a profit from its activities on the land if it continues to operate in the way that it is operating.

**Objectives:** The objectives are to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined Farm Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services with considerations to maintain agriculture as a major industry in the municipal district, to facilitate the longevity of the farm sector, and to achieve a balance between providing for municipal growth and retaining the important agricultural economic base.

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**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of Farm Land which will be subject to the rate of Farm Land. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and Classes:** Farm Land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- a) used primarily for primary production purposes by an owner or occupier who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office; or
- b) any land that is not defined as General Land or Commercial/Industrial Land.

**Use of Rate:** The differential rate will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which the Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

**Level of Rate:** The level of the rate will be determined annually by Council and the community in preparation and adoption of Council's Budget. The Farm differential is an economic lever required to maintain consistency in rating burden between rating sectors. It is proposed to be 39% of the General Rate in 2025/26.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic Location:** Wherever located within the municipal district.

**Planning Scheme Zoning:** The zoning applicable to each ratable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

Ratepayers who wish to claim the Farm Rate are required to complete the Application for Farm Land Classification provided in Appendix 2.

## Commercial/Industrial Rate

Although acknowledged as two separate rating sectors, the rationale for striking a Commercial/Industrial differential rate is the same and will be described as a single class in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

**Definition:** Commercial/Industrial Land is any land which is:

- a) Used primarily for carrying out the manufacture or production of, or trade in goods or services (including tourist facilities and in the case of a business providing accommodation for tourists, is prescribed accommodation under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (Vic) 2008*; or
- b) Unoccupied building erected which is zoned Commercial or Industrial under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme; or
- c) Unoccupied land which is zoned Commercial or Industrial under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Objectives:** The objectives are to ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined Commercial/Industrial Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services.

The commercial businesses of Council benefit from significant ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Commercial differential rate is applied to promote the economic development objectives for Ararat Rural City Council as outlined in the Council Plan. These objectives include a significant ongoing investment to create a vibrant economy and include the maintenance and improvement of tourism infrastructure, construction and maintenance of public infrastructure, development and provision of health and community services, and the general provision of support services and promotion of business in the municipality.



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**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate applicable to Commercial/Industrial Land. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and Classes:** Commercial/Industrial having the relevant characteristics described below:

- a) used primarily for commercial purposes; or
- b) any land that is not defined as General Land or Farm Land.

**Use of Rate:** The differential rate will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

**Level of Rate:** The level of the rate will be determined annually by Council and the community in preparation and adoption of Council's Budget. The differential rate is an economic lever required to maintain consistency in rating burden between rating sectors. It is proposed to be 135% of the General Rate in 2025/26. It is less likely that the Commercial/Industrial differential will need to be altered significantly from Budget to Budget as there are much less volatile property markets in these two rating sectors.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic Location:** Wherever located within the municipal district.

**Planning Scheme Zoning:** The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

### MUNICIPAL CHARGE

Another principal rating option available to Council is the application of a Municipal Charge. Under Section 159 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council may declare a Municipal Charge to cover some of the administrative costs of Council. The legislation is not

definitive on what comprises administrative costs and does not require Council to specify what is covered by the charge. The application of a Municipal Charge represents a choice to raise a portion of the rates by a flat fee for all properties and farm enterprises, rather than sole use of the CIV valuation method.

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, a council's total revenue from a Municipal Charge in a financial year must not exceed 20 per cent of Council's total revenue from the Municipal Charge and the revenue from General Rates (total rates).

The Municipal Charge is based on the recovery of a fixed cost of providing administrative services irrespective of valuation. The same contribution amount per assessment to cover a portion of Council's administrative costs can be seen as an equitable method of recovering these costs.

### SPECIAL CHARGE SCHEMES

The *Local Government Act 1989* recognises that councils need help to provide improved infrastructure for their local communities. Legislation allows councils to pass on the cost of capital infrastructure to the owner of a property that generally receives a unique benefit from the construction works. The technical explanation of a Special Charge comes from legislation (under the *Local Government Act 1989*) which allows councils to recover the cost of works from property owners who will gain special benefit from that work.

The purposes for which Special Rates and Special Charges may be used include road construction, kerb and channelling, footpath provision, drainage, and other capital improvement projects.

The Special Rate or Special Charges may be declared based on any criteria specified by the council in the rate (Section 163 (2)). In accordance with Section 163 (3), council must specify:

- a) the wards, groups, uses or areas for which the special rate or charge is declared; and
- b) the land in relation to which the Special Rate or Special Charge is declared;
- c) the way the Special Rate or Special Charge will be assessed and levied; and
- d) details of the period for which the Special Rate or Special Charge remains in force.

The Special Rates and Charges provisions are flexible and can be used to achieve a wide range of community objectives. The fundamental principle of Special Rates and Charges is proof “special benefit” applies to those being levied. For example, these charges could be used to fund the construction of footpaths for specific properties.

### SERVICE RATES AND CHARGES

Section 162 of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides Ararat Rural City Council with the opportunity to raise service rates and charges for any of the following services:

- The provision of a water supply.
- The collection and disposal of refuse.
- The provision of sewage services.
- Any other prescribed service.

Council currently applies a service charge for the collection and disposal of garbage, recycling, glass, and organics for residences located on both urban and rural properties. Council retains the objective of setting the service charge for waste at a level that fully recovers the cost of the waste services, including providing for future landfill rehabilitation costs. Waste charges are not capped under the Fair Go Rates System, however, Council will continue to minimise future increases in waste and recycling charges based on efficiencies, services review, and effective implementation of Circular Economy Policy.





## Collection and Administration of Rates

Ararat Rural City Council is committed to providing the most flexible, fair, and equitable approach to collection of rates and charges that is reasonably possible. The purpose of this section is to outline the rate payment options, processes, and the support provided to ratepayers facing financial hardship. A recent Ombudsman's inquiry into ratepayers facing financial hardship highlighted ARCC as one of the more responsive councils in managing these issues.

### Payment options

In accordance with section 167(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* ratepayers must be allowed to pay rates and charges by way of four instalments. Payments are due on the prescribed dates below:

- 1st Instalment: 30 September
- 2nd Instalment: 30 November
- 3rd Instalment: 28 February
- 4th Instalment: 31 May

Council also allows payment in a lump sum on 15 February each year.

Should any person pay an amount equivalent to their first instalment on or before 20 October each year, Council will consider the payment as an instalment payment. Should any person pay an amount equivalent to their first instalment after 20 October each year, Council will consider the payment as an amount towards the lump sum option and the rates will then be due by 15 February.

Council offers a range of payment options including:

- In person at Council offices via cheque, money order, EFTPOS, credit/debit card or cash,
- Direct debit – Ratepayers have the option to pay rates and charges by monthly, fortnightly or weekly payments, free of interest. Ratepayers can also pay by lump sum or by instalments,
- BPAY,
- Australia Post – over the counter, over the phone via credit card and on the internet,
- Mail – cheque and money order only,
- Online – on Councils website ([ararat.vic.gov.au](http://ararat.vic.gov.au)), or
- Online – directly from an eNotices email or by using the QR Code on rate notices.

### Interest on arrears and overdue rates

Interest is charged on all overdue rates in accordance with Section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. The maximum interest rate applied is determined by the Minister and published by notice in the Government Gazette.

Council may exempt any person from paying the whole or part of any interest amount generally or specifically under Section 172 (3).

To assist ratepayers further in the payment of rates and charges, Council will allow a grace period of 30 days before interest is applied to late instalments and late lump sum payments. This will allow reminder notices to be sent free of interest which will assist in the administration of payments.

Council officers have the authority to write off property balances of \$10 or less if the balance is related to interest now being calculated daily.

### Pensioner rebates

Holders of a Centrelink or Veterans' Affairs Pension Concession card or a Veterans' Affairs Gold card which stipulates TPI or War Widow may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence. Upon initial application, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs during the annual verification procedure. Upon confirmation of an eligible pensioner concession status, the pensioner rebate is deducted from the rate account before payment is required by the ratepayer.

New pensioner applicants may, after being granted a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC), apply for the rebate at any time throughout the rating year. Retrospective claims up to a maximum of one previous financial year can be approved by Council on verification of eligibility criteria. For periods prior to this, claims may be approved by the relevant government department.

#### Trust for Nature Rebate

A conservation covenant is a voluntary agreement between Trust for Nature and a property owner. It is placed on the title of the land to ensure that the natural bushland is permanently protected.

In 2025/2026, in accordance with section 169(1) (c) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council has proposed to offer a rate rebate to property owners who register a Trust for Nature conservation covenant on their property. The rebate acknowledges the long-term commitment of these property owners to conserving the biodiversity of their land. Landowners will receive a rebate of up to \$20 per hectare of land placed under covenant, with a maximum payment of \$500.

#### Rates Assistance, Waivers and Deferrals

Council acknowledges that ratepayers may experience financial hardship for a wide range of issues and that meeting rate obligations constitutes just one element of several difficulties that a ratepayer may face. The simplest description of hardship is "a customer or ratepayer who wants to pay but cannot".

Any ratepayer who is experiencing financial difficulty is advised that Council is sympathetic to their financial situation and that flexible repayment plans can be developed based on their ability to pay.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 171A of the *Local Government Act 1989*, a person who is suffering financial hardship or would suffer financial hardship if that person had to pay the full rate may apply to Council for the waiver of the whole or part of the rates or interest charged for late payment.

Council may require the person to give further details or to verify particulars. An application form to facilitate consideration of a request for deferral or waiver of rates is required to be completed [Appendix 1].

Applications for the waiver of rates will only be considered based on genuine hardship, supported by another government agency, welfare group or financial counsellor. The intent of providing a waiver will be to allow the ratepayer to overcome immediate financial difficulties with a supported financial plan to ensure that future commitments to rates and other household payments can be accommodated.

Waiver of rates will only apply to rates on the ratepayer's primary residence. This excludes commercial properties, industrial properties, residential investment properties - and in most cases - farm properties. Applications for waiver will be considered as a confidential report to Council.

Applications for the deferral of rates will be considered based on genuine hardship. The deferred payment option means rates, charges and interest will still be charged, but the ratepayer does not have to pay the amount until Council considers the payment will not cause the ratepayer financial hardship, or the ratepayer no longer owns or occupies the land. Deferral of rates will apply to all classes of property.

#### Debt recovery

Council makes every effort to contact ratepayers at their correct address, but it is the ratepayers' responsibility to properly advise Council of their contact details. The *Local Government Act 2020* Section 122 requires the purchaser of property, or their agents (e.g., solicitors and/or conveyancers), to notify Council by way of notice of acquisition of an interest in land.

If an account becomes overdue, Council will issue an overdue reminder notice. If the account remains unpaid, and a payment plan has not been established, Council may take legal action without further notice to recover the overdue amount. All fees and court costs incurred will be recoverable from the ratepayer.

If an amount payable by way of rates in respect to land has been in arrears for three years or more, Council may take action to sell the property in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* Section 181.



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### Payment Plans

Any ratepayer who is experiencing financial difficulty is advised that Council is sympathetic to their financial situation and that flexible payment plans can be developed based on their ability to pay. Ratepayers wishing to make a payment plan are required to make application.

Council will consider all reasonable payment plan applications. However, efforts should be made to negotiate full payment of overdue debts by the end of the current financial year or before the issuance of the next annual rates and valuation notices.

A payment plan for overdue rates older than one financial year should aim to settle all outstanding balances, including current and arrears, within a maximum period of four (4) years. Council Officers can provide assistance in calculating appropriate payment amounts to achieve this objective.

After agreeing to a suitable payment plan, Council will send an acceptance letter to the applicant outlining the terms of the arrangement. A waiver of interest will then apply to the account.

If rates remain outstanding or if there is a default in an agreed payment plan, interest will be reinstated, and the account may be referred to Council's debt collection agency for further action.

Additional information is available in Council's Rate Collection Policy.



## Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund

In 2012 the Victorian State Government passed legislation requiring the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) to be collected from ratepayers. This levy was previously collected through building and property insurance premiums. From 1 July 2025, the FSPL will be replaced by the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF). Like the FSPL, the ESVF will be calculated based on a fixed charge that varies by property type, and a variable charge based on property value.

The ESVF will fund up to 95% of the annual budgets for VICSES, Triple Zero Victoria, Emergency Management Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria, and all levies collected by Council will be passed through to the State Government.

This levy is not included in the rate cap and increases in the levy are at the discretion of the State Government. However, at the time of publication the changes have not yet been adopted as legislation.

## Other Revenue Sources

### User Fees and Charges

User fees and charges are those that Ararat Rural City Council will charge for the delivery of services and the use of community infrastructure. Examples of Council's user fees and charges include:

- Waste management fees
- Fitness Centre, gym, and pool visitation and membership fees
- Facility income – Ararat Town Hall, Great Hall, Alexandra Oval Community Centre, Gordon Street Recreation Reserve
- Building Services
- Registration fees – health, animal

The provision of infrastructure and services form a key part of Council's role in supporting the local community. In providing these facilities, Council must consider a range of principles including service cost and quality standards, value for money, and community expectations and values. Council must also balance the affordability and accessibility of infrastructure and services with its financial capacity and the interests of long-term financial sustainability.

Each year, Council develops a table of fees and charges as part of its annual Budget. Pricing changes are included in the Budget and are available for community engagement before the Budget is adopted, giving stakeholders the chance to review and provide feedback before the fees are finalised.

In determining charges for community services, Council must determine if the extent of cost recovery for services is consistent with the individual and collective benefit that the service provides and the community's expectations.

Services are provided based on one of the following pricing methods:

- a) **Zero cost recovery** – This service is provided at no cost. The costs are met entirely from rates and general-purpose income.
- b) **Partial cost recovery** – Pricing for this service is set as a mix of user contribution and subsidy from Council revenue.
- c) **Full cost recovery** – The full cost of the service is paid by the user.
- d) **Market Price** – The price is set by comparisons with like services delivered by like Councils or competitors.



### Statutory Fees and Fines

Statutory fees and fines are those which Council collects where price is set through legislative or regulatory mechanisms. Pricing is generally established through penalty units or fee units.

Examples of statutory fees and fines include:

- Planning and subdivision fees
- Building and inspection fees
- Infringements and fines
- Waste management fees
- Land Information Certificate fees

### Penalty units

Penalty units are used to define the amount payable for fines for many offences. The rate for penalty units is indexed each financial year. One penalty unit is currently \$197.59, from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

### Fee units

Fee units are used to calculate the cost of a certificate, registration or licence that is set in legislation or regulation. The value of one fee unit is currently \$16.33 and is reviewed each financial year.

The cost of fees and penalties is calculated by multiplying the number of units by the current value of the fee or unit. The exact cost may be rounded up or down. For example, the Building Request for Information fee for 2024-25 is based on 3.19 units x \$16.33 per unit = \$52.10 (rounded).

### Grants

Grant revenue represents income usually received from other levels of government. Some grants are singular and attached to the delivery of specific projects, whilst others can be of a recurrent nature and may or may not be linked to the delivery of projects.

Council will pro-actively advocate for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community. Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities.

### Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by Council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects.

Contributions can be made to Council in the form of either cash payments or asset handovers.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements.
- Contributions from user groups towards upgrade of facilities.
- Assets handed over to Council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and public open space.

### Interest on investments

Council receives interest on funds managed as part of its investment portfolio, where funds are held in advance of expenditure, or for special purposes. The investment portfolio is managed per Council's investment policy, which seeks to earn the best return on funds, whilst minimising risk.

## Appendix 1

# Application for Waiver/Deferral of Rates and Interest

The *Local Government Act 1989* specifies Council's obligations for deferring payment of rates and the waiver of rates and interest:

### Section 170. Deferred payment

1. A Council may defer in whole or in part the payment by a person of any rate or charge which is due and payable for a specified period and subject to any conditions determined by the Council if it considers that an application by that person shows that the payment would cause hardship to the person.
2. On deferral of the payment the person who is liable to make the payment is not liable until the Council sends the person a notice under sub-section (3).
3. A Council may by a notice sent to a person—
  - (a) require that person to pay the whole or part of any deferred rate or charge by a specified date if —
    - (i) it considers that the person's circumstances have so changed that the payment would no longer cause hardship to the person; or
    - (ii) the person no longer owns or occupies the land in relation to which the rate or charge was levied; and
  - (b) requires the payment of interest for the late payment of the rate or charge, as if the deferral had not occurred.

**Note:** The deferred payment option means rates, charges and interest are still charged, but the ratepayer does not have to pay the amount until Council considers the payment will not cause the ratepayer financial hardship, or the ratepayer no longer owns or occupies the land.

### Section 171A. Waiver

1. A person who—
  - (a) is suffering financial hardship; or
  - (b) would suffer financial hardship if that person paid the full amount of a rate or charge for which he or she is liable— may apply to a

Council for the waiver of the whole or part of any rate or charge or of any interest imposed for late payment.

2. The Council may require the applicant—
  - (a) to give further particulars; or
  - (b) to verify particulars— in relation to the application.
3. The Council may waive the whole or part of any rate or charge or interest.

**Note:** The waiver option means Council reduces the whole or part of any rate, charge, or interest.

External resources that may assist ratepayers who cannot afford to pay their rates include:

- Consumer Action Law Centre - <https://consumeraction.org.au/>
- Financial Counselling Australia - <https://www.debtsselfhelp.org.au/>
- CAFS - <https://www.cafs.org.au/Listing/Category/financial-counselling>

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If you are a ratepayer and you wish to have your rates deferred or waived, please complete the following questions and submit to Ararat Rural City Council offices at 59 Vincent St, Ararat VIC 3377:

	Questions	Answers
1	What is the amount of rates-interest you owe?	
2	What is the amount of rates-arrears you owe?	
3	What is the amount of rates-current you owe?	
4	Are you seeking a waiver of rates and interest? If so, how much? (A waiver means Council reduces the whole or part of any rate, charge or interest and the ratepayer does not need to pay the amount waived)	
5	Are you seeking a deferral of rates? If so, until when? (A deferral of rates means rates, charges and interest are still charged, but the ratepayer does not have to pay the amount until an appropriate time in the future determined by Council)	
6	What is your full name?	
7	What is your phone number?	
8	What is the address of the property on which you are seeking a waiver/deferral of rates?	
9	Is the property used exclusively for residential purposes and is it your sole or principal place of residence?	
Financial Assessment		
10	What income do you receive each month?	
11	What expenses do you have each month?	
12	What is the difference between income and expenses each month?	
13	Can you provide a financial statement that details your monthly income and expenses if we require this?	
14	How much money do you have in the bank, including any investments?	
15	Do you have any other assets? e.g., investment properties	
16	Are you owed any money? If yes, give details	
17	What other moneys do you owe, not previously mentioned? E.g., mortgage, car loans	

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18	Please provide the reason/s why you cannot pay your rates.	
19	Do you have an offer to pay this debt?	
20	Do you believe you would suffer financial hardship if you had to pay the full amount of the rates for which you are liable? Hardship does not generally apply to ratepayers who have short-term cash flow problems.	
Signature of applicant:		Dated:
Signature of witness:		Dated:

External resources that may assist ratepayers who cannot afford to pay their rates include:

- Consumer Action Law Centre - <https://consumeraction.org.au/>
- Financial Counselling Australia - <https://www.debtselphelp.org.au/>
- CAFS - <https://www.cafs.org.au/Listing/Category/financial-counselling>



## Appendix 2

# Application for Farm Land Classification

### Farm Land Eligibility Criteria

In 2018 as part of the recommendation from the Rating Strategy Advisory Group and the Citizen's Jury, Council resolved to make a change to eligibility of properties which can claim the farming differential rate.

To be eligible for the farm differential, Farm Land must meet the definition under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* and be used for the carrying out of primary production by an owner or occupier who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office.

Property owners who wish to claim the farming rate are asked to consider the eligibility information provided below and complete the Statutory Declaration if applicable.

### Valuation Land Act 1960

Under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* Farm Land means any rateable land –

- (a) That is not less than 2 hectares in area; and
- (b) That is used primarily for grazing (including agistment), dairying, pig farming, poultry farming, fish farming, tree farming, beekeeping, viticulture, horticulture, fruit-growing, or the growing of crops of any kind or for any combination of those activities; and
- (c) That is used by a business –
  - i. That has significant and substantial commercial purpose or character and
  - ii. That seeks to make a profit on a continuous or repetitive basis from its activities on the land; and

- iii. That is making a profit from its activities on the land, or that has a reasonable prospect of making a profit from its activities on the land if it continues to operate in the way that it is operating.

For the purpose of differential rating as determined by Council, Farm Land must also be used for the carrying on of primary production by an owner or an occupier who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office.

### Australian Taxation Office

Summary of main indicators of carrying on a business of primary production:

- A significant commercial activity
- Purpose and intention of the taxpayer in engaging in the activity
- An intention to make a profit from the activity
- The activity is or will be profitable
- Repetition and regularity of activity
- Activity is carried on in a similar manner to that of the ordinary trade
- Activity organised in a businesslike manner with records kept
- Size and scale of the activity
- Not a hobby, recreation, or sporting activity
- A business plan exists
- Commercial sales of product
- Taxpayer has knowledge or skill in the business

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**Eligibility Checklist**

The following questions are to assist you to determine if the land included is Farm Land and is eligible for the Farm Rate. Is each property listed on your property details form?	
Used for primary production activity as described by the ATO	Yes / No
Greater than 2 hectares (not including land devoted to domestic use or uncleared land)	Yes / No
Used to carry on a business of primary production that has a significant and substantial commercial purpose	Yes / No
Seeking to make a profit on a continuous basis from its activities on the land	Yes / No
Operating with a reasonable prospect of making a profit if it continues to operate in its current form.	Yes / No
If you answered yes to all of these questions you are eligible for the Farm Rate. If you answered no to any you will not be eligible.	

**Farm Rate Statutory Declaration**

After reading the Farm Rate Eligibility Criteria, please complete the table below and Statutory Declaration for all properties you deem eligible for the Farm Rate and return to PO Box 246, Ararat VIC 3377, or email: [rates@ararat.vic.gov.au](mailto:rates@ararat.vic.gov.au)

**Property Details**

Assessment No	Property Address	Status – Owner, Occupier/ Rate Payer	Area in hectares
e.g., 618111.111	e.g., 1234 Ararat-Halls Gap Road	e.g., lease	e.g., 30.46ha

*If space provided is insufficient, please attach a list of additional properties or complete additional application(s)*

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**Instructions for completing a statutory declaration**

Please complete the following form using the notes in the left-hand margin for guidance. More guidance on making statutory declarations can be found at [www.justice.vic.gov.au](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au).

When making the statutory declaration the declarant must say aloud:

I, [full name of person making declaration] of [address], declare that the contents of this statutory declaration are true and correct.

**Statutory Declaration**

Insert the name, address, and occupation (or alternatively, unemployed or retired or child) of person making the statutory declaration	I,  make the following statutory declaration under the <b>Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018</b> :		
Set out matter declared to in numbered paragraphs. Add numbers, as necessary.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I have read the Farm Land Eligibility Criteria;</li> <li>2. I believe that the land listed in the property details table can be defined as Farm Land and is used for farming purposes.</li> <li>3. The land is used for these purposes by a Primary Producer as defined by the Australian Taxation Office.</li> <li>4. I will advise Council if the circumstances relating to my land changes.</li> <li>5. The information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief;</li> </ol> <p><b>I declare that the contents of this statutory declaration are true and correct and I make it knowing that making a statutory declaration that I know to be untrue is an offence.</b></p>		
Signature of person making the declaration			
Place (City, town, or suburb)	<b>Declared at:</b>		<b>*In the state of Victoria</b>
Date	on		
Signature of authorised statutory declaration witness	<b>I am an authorised statutory declaration witness and I sign this document in the presence of the person making the declaration:</b>		
Date	on		
Name, capacity in which authorised person has authority to witness statutory declaration, and address (writing, typing or stamp)	A person authorised under section 30(2) of the <b>Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018</b> to witness the signing of a statutory declaration.		



## Appendix 3

# Equalising Rating Burden

2024/2025 Council Budget					
Rating segment	Number of assessments	Total CIV (\$)	Differential	Total rates (inc. MC) (\$)	Rates "burden"
General	5367	2,025,125,000	1.00	\$7,617,345	51.6%
Commercial	307	153,962,000	1.40	\$785,425	5.3%
Industrial	115	49,899,000	1.40	\$256,044	1.7%
Farm Land	1610	4,468,650,500	0.385	\$6,115,910	41.4%

SOME "SUPPLEMENTARY" RATES  
MAINLY IN GENERAL CATEGORY

2024/2025 Actuals					
Rating segment	Number of assessments	Total CIV (\$)	Differential	Total rates (inc. MC) (\$)	Rates "burden"
General	5410	2,056,802,000	1.00	\$7,732,565	51.8%
Commercial	308	155,895,000	1.40	\$795,012	5.3%
Industrial	114	51,370,000	1.40	\$263,171	1.8%
Farm Land	1615	4,484,775,000	0.385	\$6,137,678	41.1%

MINOR DECREASE IN GENERAL AND FARM LAND VALUATIONS

MOVE COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL DIFFERENTIAL FROM 1.40  
TO 1.35 AND FARM LAND DIFFERENTIAL FROM 0.385 TO 0.39  
TO "EQUALISE" RATES BURDEN

PROPOSED 1.5% RATE INCREASE

2025/2026 Proposed Council Budget					
Rating segment	Number of assessments	Total CIV (\$)	Differential	Total rates (inc. MC) (\$)	Rates "burden"
General	5410	2,011,804,000	1.00	\$7,848,362	51.80%
Commercial	308	159,240,000	1.35	\$812,710	5.40%
Industrial	114	51,378,000	1.35	\$263,621	1.70%
Farm Land	1615	4,324,012,000	0.39	\$6,227,653	41.10%





Ararat Rural City

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

### 3.4 ADOPTION OF THE ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET 2025/2026

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21043

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In accordance with Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council is required to prepare a budget for each financial year and the subsequent 3 financial years by 30 June each year, or any other date fixed by the Minister by notice published in the Government Gazette.

Section 96 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to develop the budget in accordance with the financial management principles and its community engagement policy.

This report presents the Budget 2025/26 for adoption after it has been presented to community for community consultation and engagement.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Council's 2025/26 Draft Budget represents a continuation of Council's fiscally responsible approach that has been in place over the past seven budget cycles. The headlines of the 2025/26 Budget continue to revolve around returning an efficiency dividend to the community through a minimal rate rise and an ongoing dedication to renewing the community's assets through a \$12,437,000 investment in capital works.

Council will ensure strong financial management, high-quality services, and on-time completion of projects through focusing on service delivery and capital works programs, and on in-house service provision.

Council's commitment to ensuring financial sustainability of the municipality is illustrated through delivering a budget result that projects a comprehensive operating surplus of \$2,050,000, an underlying operating surplus of \$560,000 and a net cash increase of \$588,000 for 2025/26.

#### **Key Budget Influences include:**

- a. Ararat Rural City Council's 2025/26 Budget has a 1.5 percent rate rise, which is half the rate cap for 2025/26 of 3 percent and the first net increase in seven years.

By contrast, had Council increased rates to the level allowable under the State Government's Fair Go Rates System over the eight-year period including 2025/26, this would have increased the total burden to ratepayers by 19.25% during that same period.

- b. In July 2022, Council adopted key drivers of financial sustainability, which form the basis for developing the 2025/2026 Budget. These drivers of financial sustainability are:

#### **Rating**

Maintenance of the "pie model" to provide some form of long-term rating equity and reduce rate shock across rating sectors based on annual valuation fluctuations.

**Debt**

Debt is only used to fund strategic infrastructure outcomes with an emphasis on intergenerational equity.

**Asset Preservation**

Maintain the asset renewal and upgrade ratio to at least 110% of depreciation.

**Surplus Budgets**

Maintain cash and operating surpluses in each financial year.

**Managing Expenditure**

Managing expenditure is a key driver of financial sustainability at Ararat Rural City Council.

**Rate Rises**

Rate rises will be kept to a minimum based on seeking organisational efficiency. These efficiencies will be returned to the ratepayer as a dividend through lower rate rises or rate cuts.

**Service Standards**

Expenditure savings and ratepayer dividends will not come at the price of lower service standards.

Key elements of Council's 2025/2026 Budget are:

- \$1,490,000 secured in grant funding for a new covered sports arena for the Ararat Pony Club
- \$683,000 contribution towards the Woorndoo-Streatham Road reconstruction project
- \$500,000 contribution to an ongoing partnership commitment to Ararat Housing Enterprise P/L.
- \$148,760 Pomonal Community Hall Battery Project, supported by the 100 Neighbourhood Batteries grants program
- \$133,000 Council contribution towards a \$399,000 upgrade of the Ararat Active Transport Bicycle Network
- \$100,000 for young people's programs across schools, largely through the Crazy Ideas College
- \$100,000 for Community Support Grants
- \$100,000 for the successful business Façade Improvement and Kick Start Grants Programs
- \$100,000 towards planning for a new indoor sports facility and the outdoor pool upgrade
- \$100,000 of grant funding secured for a new dog park in Ararat
- \$60,000 secured for repair works to the former Cobb & Co Staging Stables in Buangor
- \$1,000,000 to reconstruct a section of Buangor – Ben Nevis Road, on top of the \$2,143,000 previous reconstruction works on this road
- \$1,800,000 renewing rural gravel roads through resheeting or sealing treatments such as OTTA Seal
- \$750,000 to fund Year 4 of Council's five-year commitment to improve urban drainage systems
- \$400,000 to upgrade footpath network
- \$312,232 secured in grant funding for pedestrian safety upgrades in the Ararat CBD
- \$300,000 to renew kerb and channel assets
- Continuing to fund free access to Outdoor Pools
- Continuing the delivery of the \$6.25 million Mount William Road reconstruction major infrastructure initiative

**Revenue**

Council's first considerations in framing the 2025/2026 Budget are on the revenue side. Key considerations are:

- returning efficiency dividends to the community through a 1.5 percent rate rise
- ensuring a commitment to maintaining relativities in rating burden by each identified rating sector

- attempting to ease the impact of rates rises on individual ratepayers
- avoiding where possible "rate shock" experiences of large and unexpected rate increases.

It is proposed that the best mechanism for ensuring this is to propose a rating approach in 2025/2026 that, as far as possible, provides similar revenue outcomes across each sector as 2024/2025. Council believes that the approach taken is perfectly consistent with Section 101 (1) (c) where *"the financial policies and strategic plans, including the Revenue and Rating Plan, must seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the municipal community"*.

In the 2025 valuation there have again been some shifts in valuations across the classes of properties, although these have not been as significant as 2021/2022 and 2022/2023. The 2025 valuation has again yielded some asymmetry in valuations compared to the previous year. The table below demonstrates the nature of this uneven distribution of revaluations between 2024 and 2025:

Rates Sector	Total 2024 CIV	Total 2025 CIV	Increase/Decrease in CIV - 2024 to 2025	Average % change in CIV
General	\$2,056,802,000	\$2,011,804,000	-\$44,998,000	-2.19%
Commercial	\$155,895,000	\$159,240,000	\$3,345,000	2.15%
Industrial	\$51,370,000	\$51,378,000	\$8,000	0.02%
Farm	\$4,484,775,000	\$4,324,012,000	-\$160,763,000	-3.58%
Total	\$6,748,842,000	\$6,546,434,000	-\$202,408,000	-3.00%

If the current 0.385 farm differential rate and 1.4 commercial/ industrial differential rates are maintained there will be a change in relativities in rates burden between farm, commercial/industrial and general rates between 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 (assuming a 1.5% rate cap increase), as shown in the table below.

Rates Sector	Rating Differential	2024/2025	2025/2026
General	1.00	51.8%	51.9%
Commercial	1.40	5.3%	5.6%
Industrial	1.40	1.8%	1.8%
Farm	0.385	41.1%	40.7%

The mechanism for maintaining relativities in rate burden between rating sectors, created through asymmetries in valuation movement is through alteration of rating differentials. The table below demonstrates the impact of a movement in farm rate differential from 0.385 to 0.39 and a movement in commercial/industrial rate from 1.40 to 1.35 on adjusting the relative rate burden.

Rates Sector	Rating Differential 2024/2025	2024/2025 Rates Burden	Rating Differential 2025/2026	2025/2026 Rates Burden
General	1.00	51.8%	1.00	51.8%
Commercial	1.40	5.3%	1.35	5.4%
Industrial	1.40	1.8%	1.35	1.7%
Farm	0.385	41.1%	0.39	41.1%

Council is proposing a change in the farm rate differential from 0.385 to 0.39 and a change in the commercial/industrial differential from 1.40 to 1.35 in order to ensure relative burden between rating sectors is maintained from 2023/2024 to 2025/2026.

Minor amendments to the number of assessments, CIV and rates figures in Section 4.1.1 have been made since the Draft Budget 2025/2026 was released for public consultation as a result of updated



valuation information from the Valuer-General Victoria Office. These amendments have also resulted in changes to some indicators in Section 5.

### A 1.5 percent rate increase in 2025/2026

Council has budgeted for a 1.5 percent increase to rates in 2025/2026, which is half the rate cap of 3 percent, in order to ensure that the community receives a dividend for improved organisational efficiency and cost savings

### Expenditure

The key driver of the 2025/2026 Draft Budget expenditure is to continue to deliver long-term, sustainable value to the Ararat Rural City community. This will be achieved by focussing on the following key areas:

- strategic renewal of Council's key assets
- driving organisational effectiveness through managing performance and efficiency
- implementing a digital transformation program
- implementation of key projects contained in Council's adopted advocacy program
- ongoing commitment to service review

The proposed Ararat Rural City Council Budget 2025/2026 document outlines the key expenditure areas, which are informed by Council's operational activity, key projects and the Council Plan 2025-2029.

### Other considerations

The waste management kerbside collection charges for residential properties will increase by approximately 1.7%, with fees rounded up to the nearest dollar, to contribute to increased costs for waste management services.

The Municipal Charge will be fixed at \$96 for 2025/2026.

The budgeted operating result for 2025/2026 is a surplus of \$2.050 million, compared to a budgeted result of \$8.163 million surplus in 2024/2025.

The budgeted cash flow statement indicates an increase in cash & cash equivalents of \$0.588 million.

### Community Consultation Summary

The Draft Budget 2025/26 was presented at the community consultation sessions in the table below. These sessions spread throughout the municipality between the period from Tuesday 29 April to Monday 5 May 2025. Commencement times for the sessions varied from 11am to 7pm to provide different options for people to be able to attend around personal and work commitments. The sessions were 1 hour in duration to provide adequate time for discussion. The Draft Budget 2025/26 was also made available online on the Engage Ararat website from 11 April 2025 for community review and feedback. Public submissions closed on 9 May 2025.

Community consultation sessions:

Township	Time, Date	Location
Ararat	11am - 12pm, Tuesday 29 April	Ararat Town Hall
Buangor	2pm - 3pm, Wednesday 30 April	Buangor Pavilion
Elmhurst	2pm - 3pm, Tuesday 29 April	Elmhurst Public Hall
Lake Bolac	7pm - 8pm, Thursday 01 May	Lake Bolac Golf Club
Moyston	11.30am - 12.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Moyston Hall
Pomonal	3pm - 4pm, Thursday 01 May	Pomonal Hall
Tatyoorn	7pm - 8pm, Monday 5 May	Tatyoorn Hall
Willaura	5.30pm - 6.30pm, Thursday 01 May	Willaura Memorial Hall
Drop-In Session	9am - 2pm, Friday 02 May	Ararat Rural City Council office

Council thanks everyone who reviewed the Draft Budget 2025/26 and provided feedback.

#### Summary of the Submissions

A total of 44 people engaged with Council on the Budget 2025/26 during the community consultation period. This included 24 attendees at the face-to-face community consultation sessions, phone conversations with 2 people, 9 submissions online via Engage Ararat, 8 emails and 1 note received at the Council office.

The closure of the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations was discussed during the community consultation sessions at these four locations. Of the 20 people who phoned, made online submissions via Engage Ararat, emailed or wrote a note, 10 were related to Elmhurst Transfer Station and 5 were related to the Moyston Transfer Station.

Queries and suggestions on a range of other issues were also received or discussed at the consultation sessions, including regarding the future of the A&J McDonald Centre, the Cobb & Co building in Buangor, major road projects, supporting the arts sector, more community spaces and maintenance of facilities and community assets.

Details of the submissions is provided in the attachment to this report.

#### Discussion on Waste-Related Submissions

There were queries on why there is a rate increase if there is a reduction in transfer station services. The usage of the transfer stations has been declining since the introduction of the rural kerbside bin collection service. It has reached a point where keeping the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations open no longer made financial sense. For example, the Elmhurst Transfer Station had a net loss of \$16,698 in the previous 12 month. This site had 53 customer visits over 12 months and received a total tonnage of waste of 3.62 tonnes. On a per person basis, based on the population of Elmhurst of 185 at the 2021 ABS Census, this net loss costs each resident approx. \$90 per year.

In terms of the 1.5% rate increase, the reason is that, even though Council has made every effort to find efficiencies and keep costs down, the costs to run Council's other core services and keep on top of the infrastructure needs of the Ararat Rural City are still increasing. The savings from the closure of the four transfer stations does not cover the increased costs of operation and a 1.5% rate increase is required to cover these rising costs. The rate increase that would be required to keep all four transfer stations open is estimated to be 2.5%.

Some community members used the transfer stations because they regularly had more waste than the bins were able to cater for. It was suggested that these residents opt to have a second bin of the type that they regularly filled. This would reduce the need for them to put the waste into the car and travel to a transfer stations. This waste can instead be collected as part of the kerbside bin collection. The costs for an additional kerbside bin is provided below and this can be arranged by filling in the Additional Waste Services Request Form on Council's [website](https://www.ararat.vic.gov.au), or contacting Council on (03) 5355 0200 or [council@ararat.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@ararat.vic.gov.au)

Ararat Rural City Council 2025/26 rates for additional kerbside bins:

Type of Bin	Rate Per Annum
Additional 140 litre Garbage (red)	\$165
Additional 240 litre Recycling (yellow)	\$142
Additional 240 litre Organics (green)	\$142
Additional 80 litre Glass (purple)	\$24

Some residents in the Elmhurst region live in the Pyrenees Shire where the rural general waste (red-lidded) bins are 240L and collected fortnightly, whereas the Ararat Rural City general waste bins are

140L and collected weekly. Pyrenees Shire Council also has the option to have additional kerbside bins. Pyrenees Shire residents can find out more information on the Pyrenees Shire Council's [website](#).

Challenges around larger general waste items and other items that could not go into the general (red) waste kerbside bins were mentioned in multiple submissions and during consultations. The frequency of these types of wastes was identified as infrequent and not a weekly requirement. The height of the skip bins at the four transfer stations was also raised as an issue for people who were unable to lift their waste into the bins. The Ararat and Lake Bolac Transfer Stations were suggested as better locations for this purpose since these sites have ramps that provide better ergonomics for disposing of very large items.

Concerns were raised regarding the disposal of damaged items after an emergency or natural disaster event, such as bushfire or flood. In these instances, provisions for waste disposal and clean up will be made so that they are designed specifically for the disaster event, such as providing options for disposing of damaged assets at sites close to the disaster and in liaison with affected landowners.

Compromise suggestions were made to have the transfer stations opened less frequently rather than closed altogether. Council has considered this suggestion and estimated the costs for running the transfer stations in various different arrangements, such as one day per week, fortnight, month, and per quarter. The costs to run all four transfer stations on this less frequent basis would still require an increase in revenue (ie rates) to cover the costs.

The Elmhurst and Moyston Transfer Stations can be opened twice a year to enable the disposal of items that cannot go into the kerbside bins. The gross cost for this biannual arrangement for two transfer stations is estimated to be approx. \$6,400, which would be reduced by fees and charges 'at the gate' and should be able to be managed within the existing Draft Budget 2025/26. Residents are still encouraged to utilise the kerbside bins where possible and request an additional bin if they require it. The Elmhurst and Moyston Transfer Stations would be open on a weekday and a weekend day during the same week every approx. six months, the days will be confirmed and communicated with local residents. The opening hours on those days will increase from the existing 2.5-3 hours per day to 6 hours per day. The fees and charges will be the same as the Ararat and Lake Bolac Transfer Stations. Section 2.3.1 of the Draft Budget 2025/26 has been updated to reflect this change to these services.

One of the issues that was unique to Elmhurst was that there had been a number of other service closures in the town in recent years and there are deeper concerns around the viability of the town if the transfer station were to close as well. The level of engagement from the Elmhurst community suggests there is a lot of potential for the Elmhurst community to work together to create a thriving town. Council encourages the people of Elmhurst to continue to talk to each other and pursue ideas. The Elmhurst Public Hall can be used as a venue for meetings and gatherings. The Hall is managed by the Elmhurst Public Hall Community Asset Committee and locals are encouraged to reach out to the Committee. The Draft Budget 2025/26 provides an increase of funding to the Community Asset Committees from \$4,400 per annum to \$6,600 per annum to support their activities.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

This report aligns with the Draft Council Plan 2025-29 in the following areas:

#### **6. STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at their centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management, and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation and rating fairness.

6.2 Ensure appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions. Council's internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.

6.3 Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while ensuring that Councillors' roles as elected community representatives are understood and reflected in decision-making.

### **Budget Implications**

The Draft Budget has been prepared within the following parameters:

- The Draft Budget proposes the following differential rates - general rate - 100%, commercial and industrial rate - 135% of the general rate and farm rate - 39% of the general rate
- A 1.5% increase in the total amount received from general rates and charges;
- No increase in the Municipal Charge which will remain at \$96 per rateable property in 2025/2026;
- A balanced budget in terms of a cash result and an operating surplus of \$2.050 million in terms of an accrual accounting result;
- A net increase in cash and cash equivalents of \$0.588 million;
- A capital works program of \$12.437 million;
- No new loan borrowings; and
- Capital budgets have been prepared in accordance with good asset management principles.

More detailed information is contained in the Budget document.

### **Policy/Relevant Law**

Council is required under Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020 to prepare a budget for each financial year. The budget contains the Financial Statements, a description of services and initiatives to be funded in the budget, service outcome indicators, and major initiatives to be undertaken during the financial year and the performance measures in relation to each major initiative.

### **Sustainability Implications**

In developing the Draft Budget 2025/2026 all environmental, social and economic impacts have been considered.

### **Risk Assessment**

Council must implement the principles of sound financial management, which includes managing financial risks faced by Council and ensuring that decisions are made and actions taken having regard to their financial effects on future generations.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

A summary of the engagement process and the submissions received is presented above.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council, having considered the Draft Budget 2025/2026 and having distributed the budget for community consultation, resolves as follows:*

- 1 *To adopt the Budget 2025/2026, comprising the 2025/2026 financial year plus the subsequent three financial years 2026/2027 to 2028/2029, pursuant to Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020*
- 2 *To declares Rates and Charges for the 2025/2026 financial year as follows*
  - a. *An amount of \$17,657,218 be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by General Rates, Municipal Charge and Annual Service Charges which amount is calculated as follows:*



	Amount
General Rates	
Residential	\$7,329,002
Commercial	\$783,142
Industrial	\$252,677
Farm	\$6,144,421
Municipal Charge	\$643,104
Annual Service Charges	
Kerbside Collection Charges	\$2,504,872
TOTAL	\$17,657,218

- b. A general residential rate of 0.3643 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value be declared for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
- c. A commercial/industrial differential rate of 0.4918 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value be declared for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
- d. A farm differential rate of 0.1421 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value be declared for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
- e. Council resolves to adopt a municipal charge of \$96 per rateable assessment for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
- f. Annual Service Charge be declared for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 on properties where the service is provided, as follows:
  - i. Kerbside collection - 4 bin system \$470
  - ii. Kerbside collection - 3 bin system \$417
  - iii. Kerbside collection - additional 140 litre garbage \$165
  - iv. Kerbside collection - additional 240 litre recycling \$142
  - v. Kerbside collection - additional 240 litre organics \$142
  - vi. Kerbside collection - additional 80 litre glass \$24
- 3 To declare the Fees and Charges for the 2025/2026 financial year, contained in Section 6- Schedule of Fees and Charges of the Budget document.

**MOVED CR WATERSTON  
SECONDED CR KAUR**

**That Council, having considered the Draft Budget 2025/2026 and having distributed the budget for community consultation, resolves as follows:**

- 1 To adopt the Budget 2025/2026, comprising the 2025/2026 financial year plus the subsequent three financial years 2026/2027 to 2028/2029, pursuant to Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020**
- 2 To declares Rates and Charges for the 2025/2026 financial year as follows**

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	Amount
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Municipal Charge	\$643,104
<b>Annual Service Charges</b>	
Kerbside Collection Charges	\$2,504,872
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,657,218</b>

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- f. **Annual Service Charge be declared for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 on properties where the service is provided, as follows:**
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- v. **Kerbside collection - additional 240 litre organics \$142**
- vi. **Kerbside collection - additional 80 litre glass \$24**
- 3 **To declare the Fees and Charges for the 2025/2026 financial year, contained in Section 6- Schedule of Fees and Charges of the Budget document.**

**Cr Waterston, Cr Kaur, Cr Joyce and Cr Sanders spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5137/25**

## ATTACHMENTS

The Ararat Rural City Council Budget 2025/26 is provided is Attachment 3.4a  
The Budget 2025/26 Community Consultation Summary is provided as Attachment 3.4b

ARART RURAL CITY COUNCIL

# Budget

2025/2026



Ararat Rural City

## **Traditional Acknowledgement**

Ararat Rural City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, the Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagulk, and Wadawurrung peoples, and recognise their connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



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## Executive Summary

Council's 2025/26 Draft Budget represents a continuation of Council's fiscally responsible approach that has been in place over the past seven budget cycles. The headlines of the 2025/26 Budget continue to revolve around returning an efficiency dividend to the community through a minimal rate rise and an ongoing dedication to renewing the community's assets through a \$12,437,000 investment in capital works.

Council will ensure strong financial management, high-quality services, and on-time completion of projects through focusing on service delivery and capital works programs, and on in-house service provision.

Council's commitment to ensuring financial sustainability of the municipality is illustrated through delivering a budget result that projects a comprehensive operating surplus of \$2,050,000, an underlying operating surplus of \$560,000 and a net cash increase of \$588,000 for 2025/26.

## Key things we are funding

The 2025/26 Budget reflects Council's continued commitment to support service delivery, economic development and responsible delivery of community and transport infrastructure during a period of volatile markets in the construction sector.

## Highlights and new initiatives for 2025/26

- \$1,490,000 secured in grant funding for a new covered sports arena for the Ararat Pony Club
- \$683,000 contribution towards the Woorndoo-Streatham Road reconstruction project
- \$500,000 contribution to an ongoing partnership commitment to Ararat Housing Enterprise P/L
- \$148,760 Pomonal Community Hall Battery Project, supported by the 100 Neighbourhood Batteries grants program
- \$133,000 Council contribution towards a \$399,000 upgrade of the Ararat Active Transport Bicycle Network
- \$100,000 for young people's programs across schools, largely through the Crazy Ideas College
- \$100,000 for Community Support Grants
- \$100,000 for the successful business Façade Improvement and Kick Start Grants Programs
- \$100,000 towards planning for a new indoor sports facility and the outdoor pool upgrade
- \$100,000 of grant funding secured for a new dog park in Ararat
- \$60,000 secured for repair works to the former Cobb & Co Staging Stables in Buangor
- \$1,000,000 to reconstruct a section of Buangor – Ben Nevis Road, on top of the \$2,143,000 previous reconstruction works on this road
- \$1,800,000 renewing rural gravel roads through resheeting or sealing treatments such as OTTA Seal
- \$750,000 to fund Year 4 of Council's five-year commitment to improve urban drainage systems
- \$400,000 to upgrade footpath network
- \$312,232 secured in grant funding for pedestrian safety upgrades in the Ararat CBD
- \$300,000 to renew kerb and channel assets
- Continuing to fund free access to Outdoor Pools
- Continuing the delivery of the \$6.25 million Mount William Road reconstruction major infrastructure initiative



### Key Budget Influences

- a) Ararat Rural City Council's 2025/26 Budget has a 1.5 percent rate rise, which is half the rate cap for 2025/26 of 3 percent and the first net increase in seven years.

By contrast, had Council increased rates to the level allowable under the State Government's Fair Go Rates System over the eight-year period including 2025/26, this would have increased the total burden to ratepayers by 19.25% during that same period.

Year	ARCC Rate increase	FGRS increase
2018/2019	0.00%	2.25%
2019/2020	2.50%	2.50%
2020/2021	-1.00%	2.00%
2021/2022	-1.50%	1.50%
2022/2023	0.00%	1.75%
2023/2024	0.00%	3.50%
2024/2025	0.00%	2.75%
2025/2026	1.50%	3.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.50%</b>	<b>19.25%</b>

- b) In July 2022, Council adopted key drivers of financial sustainability, which form the basis for developing the 2025/26 Budget. These drivers of financial sustainability are:

#### Rating

Maintenance of the "pie model" to provide some form of long-term rating equity and reduce rate shock across rating sectors based on annual valuation fluctuations.

#### Debt

Debt is only used to fund strategic infrastructure outcomes with an emphasis on intergenerational equity.

#### Asset Preservation

Maintain the asset renewal and upgrade ratio to at least 110% of depreciation.

#### Surplus Budgets

Maintain cash and operating surpluses in each financial year.

#### Managing Expenditure

Managing expenditure is a key driver of financial sustainability at Ararat Rural City Council.

#### Rate Rises

Rate rises will be kept to a minimum based on seeking organisational efficiency. These efficiencies will be returned to the ratepayer as a dividend through lower rate rises or rate cuts.

#### Service Standards

Expenditure savings and ratepayer dividends will not come at the price of lower service standards.

### Key Statistics

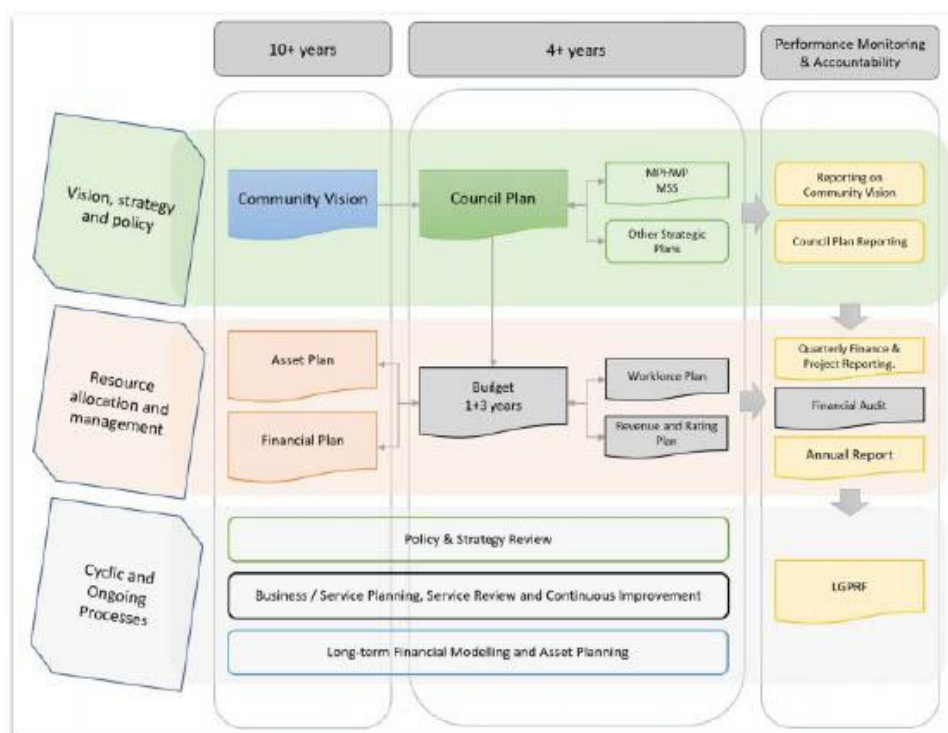
Key Statistics	2024/25 Budget \$million	2025/26 Budget \$million
Total Revenue	\$36.186	\$34.430
Total Expenditure	\$28.023	\$32.380
Accounting Result	\$8.163 Surplus	\$2.050 Surplus
(Refer Income Statement in Section 3)		
Underlying operating result:		
(Note: Underlying operating result is an important measure of financial sustainability as it excludes income which is to be used for capital from being allocated to cover operating expenses)	\$2.320 Surplus	\$0.560 Surplus
Cash result:		
(Refer Statement of Cash Flows in Section 3)		
This is the net funding result after considering the funding requirements to meet loan principal repayments and the reserve transfers.	\$2.063 Surplus	\$0.588 Surplus
Total Capital Works Program	\$15.513	\$12.437
- Council operations (rates funded)	\$8.209	\$8.609
- External grants	\$7.304	\$3.828

## 1 Links to the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The Budget is closely associated with three key long term Council plans: Community Vision 2035, Asset Plan 2025-2035, and the Financial Plan 2025-2035. There are links to the planning window of the current Council through the Council Plan 2025-2029 and the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

### 1.1 Legislative Planning and Accountability Framework

The diagram below depicts the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework that applies to local government in Victoria. At each stage of the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input. This is important to ensure transparency and accountability to both residents and ratepayers. The Council Budget is a key element of resource planning both for the current financial year and for its projected impact over a four-year planning cycle. The Council Budget 2025/26 will provide the basis for Council planning across the 2025-2029 window.



Source - Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

To provide focus in resource planning Council has developed a local model, ARCC Planning and Budgeting Framework, which picks up the key elements of the planning and accountability model. This is shown on the model provided on the next page.



### 1.1.1 Key Planning Considerations

#### Service Level Planning

During 2018/2019, Council undertook a substantial internal review of all services. The review provided an opportunity to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of Council services, and yielded significant organisational savings.

The implementation of the Local Government Act 2020, and Council's adoption of the Community Engagement Policy and Public Transparency Policy provided a timely juncture for Council to undertake more broad-based reviews of its services, involving higher levels of community engagement and participation. Reviews of key community-facing services will continue in 2025/26.



## 1.2 Our Purpose

Council's purpose is defined by the Community Vision 2035.

Over the next ten years Ararat Rural City Council will develop into a community characterised by:

- Strong population growth trajectories that buck trends in rural Victoria.
- Continuous and sustainable economic development, which is focussed on job creation, through value adding in agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and tourism.
- Leadership in pragmatic approaches to local environmental management.
- Sustainable and effective local transport networks underpinned by careful technical and financial planning undertaken jointly between asset users and asset owners.
- Communities that are enhanced by access to artistic, cultural, sporting, and recreational opportunities that meet needs and expectations.
- Strong and robust democratic processes underpinned by transparent governance, good financial management and organisational innovation.

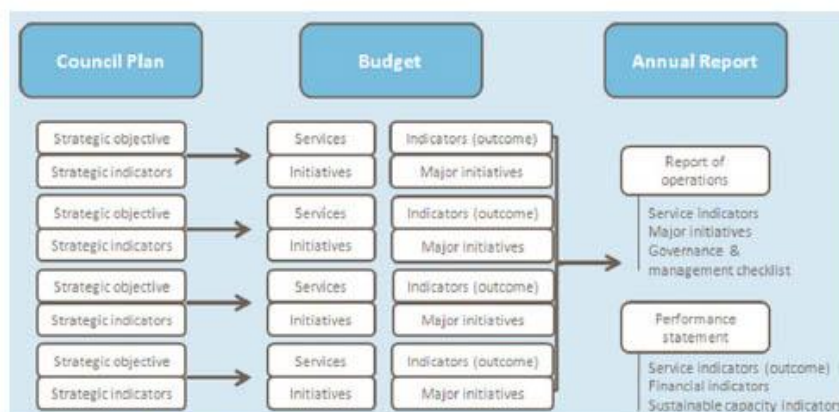
## 1.3 Strategic Objectives

The following table identifies and describes Council's six strategic objectives for the period 2025-2029.

Strategic Objective	Description
1. Growing our place	We will create the settings to support growth across our municipality through an improved planning scheme, actively pursuing new housing options and exploring models for immigration.
2. Building robust local economies	We will develop strong relationships to build and strengthen a diverse local economy, focussed on creating jobs and wealth through adding value to existing strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality.
3. Preserving our environment	We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement with the circular economy.
4. Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure	We will ensure that we plan, fund, and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.
5. Enhancing community life	We will work with the communities of the Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.
6. Strong and effective governance	We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices

## 2 Services and service performance indicators

This section identifies the alignment between strategic objectives in the Council Plan 2025-2029, key areas of Council service delivery, new initiatives related to strategic outcomes, and the budget allocated to the key services and activities. To support transparency and accountability, Council is required by legislation to identify major initiatives and major service outcome indicators in the Budget and report against them in the Annual Report. The relationship between these accountability requirements in the Council Plan, Budget and Annual Report is shown below.



Source: Department of Job, Precincts and Regions

### 2.1 Strategic Objective One – Growing Our Place

We will create the settings to support growth across our municipality through an improved planning scheme, actively pursuing new housing options and exploring models for in-migration.

We will do this through:

- Developing a strategic land use planning framework with annual targets to support sustainable urban growth.
- Supporting innovative housing models that work to overcome market failure and create the capacity to increase the population of Ararat Rural City.
- Working with other levels of government, business, educational institutions and not-for profits to develop programs to increase in-migration to Ararat Rural City to grow our population.

### 2.1.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25	2025/26
		Budget Income Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Budget Income Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Planning	The statutory planning service is responsible for administering the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme. It considers new planning scheme amendment proposals and reviews the Municipal Strategic Statement of the Ararat Planning Scheme.	215 (626) (411)	233 (536) (303)
Building Control	This service provides statutory building services to the Council community including processing of building permits, fire safety inspections, audits of swimming pool barriers and investigations of complaints and illegal works.	62 (297) (235)	72 (335) (263)
Environmental Health	This service protects the community's health and well-being by coordinating food safety programs, Tobacco Act activities, and oversees wastewater systems and installations. The service also works to rectify any public health concerns relating to unreasonable noise emissions, housing standards and pest controls.	85 (219) (134)	80 (241) (161)

### 2.1.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

	Performance Indicator	Expected range	2025/26 target
FS1	Time taken to action food complaints	1 to 10 days	1 day
FS2	Food safety assessments	50% to 120%	98%
FS3	Cost of food safety service	\$300 to \$1,200	\$350
FS4	Critical and major food safety non-compliance outcome notifications	60% to 100%	100%
SP1	Time taken to decide planning applications	30 to 110 days	30
SP2	Planning applications decided within required time frames	40% to 100%	90%
SP3	Cost of statutory planning service	\$500 to \$4,000	\$2,100
SP4	Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT	30% to 100%	100%
	CSS Planning and Building Permits	-	60

### 2.1.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Growing Our Place**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Partnership in the Ararat Housing Enterprise P/L	\$500,000

#### 2.1.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Strategic land use planning framework targets	Annual targets met	Develop framework
Available residential land increase	600 lots	150 lots
Residential housing stock increase	300 properties	75 properties
% of new residential housing is affordable	25%	25%
ARCC population increase	1000	250



## 2.2 Strategic Objective Two - Building Robust Local Economies

We will develop strong relationships to build and strengthen a diverse local economy, focused on creating jobs and wealth through adding value to existing strengths in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality.

We will do this through:

- Partnering with Federation University Australia to deliver the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct with a focus on engaging with local agribusiness, industry and community.
- Working with other levels of government, local business, and private investors to develop a business park within Ararat Rural City, focused on agricultural value adding and advanced manufacturing, potentially leveraging “behind the meter” power.
- Engaging with Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism and local businesses to improve the quality of experience and drive growth in high yield tourist outcomes.

### 2.2.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Budget Income	2025/26 Budget Income
		Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Economic Development	The economic development service assists in facilitation of business opportunity across the municipality. It aims to grow the local business sector and provide support for growth and development in employment. This service includes the Visitor Information Centre operations.	23	28
		(764)	(606)
		(741)	(578)

### 2.2.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

Performance Indicator			Expected range	2025/26 target
Community	Satisfaction	Survey	-	67
Business/community development tourism				

### 2.2.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Building Robust Local Economies**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Contribution to Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism	\$75,000
Continuation of business Facade Improvement and Kick Start Grants programs	\$100,000

### 2.2.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Percentage increase in jobs in local economy	15%	5%
Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct annual engagement and development targets	8	2
Circular economy business park and lead tenants in agricultural value-add sector established	2	1
Increase in tourism visitation to Ararat Rural City	50%	10%
Increase 4 star and above accommodation options	80	20
Establish a municipal measure of economic growth for annual reporting.	Economic growth on target	Targets met for 2025/26

## 2.3 Strategic Objective Three - Preserving our Environment

We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement within the circular economy.

We will do this through:

- Positioning Ararat Rural City Council as a prime mover in driving circular economy policy in waste management, including local processing and management of recyclables, and in use of renewable energy for Council purposes.
- Developing innovative energy solutions utilising locally produced waste.
- Partnering with local organisations and scientific experts to implement the Environment Strategy 2024-34, with a focus on the circular economy, emissions reduction and sustainable management of Council assets.

### 2.3.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	202/25 Budget Income	2025/26 Budget Income
		Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Waste Management	This service provides for collection and processing of four materials streams from household collection: general waste, mixed recyclables, glass, and green organics. Council has committed to local processing where possible. Council has local processing of green organics and glass at the Ararat Transfer Station.	2,852 (3,010) (158)	2,962 (3,054) (92)
	To achieve budget efficiencies and maintain low rates, Council will consolidate waste services by closing the Willaura and Pomonal Transfer Stations on 30 June 2025. Declining usage alongside ongoing operational costs renders the sites no longer financially viable. Elmhurst and Moyston Transfer Stations will transition to opening biannually from 30 June 2025. Ararat and Lake Bolac Transfer Stations will remain open to serve the community's needs.		
Natural Resources & Sustainability	This service promotes environmentally sustainable development principles, coordinates and implements environmental projects and works with other services to improve Council's environmental performance. Projects include roadside pest, plant and animal and renewable energy projects.	70 (79) (9)	74 (79) (5)
Parks & Gardens	This service covers a range of areas such as grass and turf cutting, tree pruning, planting, removal, planning and street tree strategies, management of conservation and parkland areas, creeks, and other areas of environmental significance. The function is responsible for playground maintenance and safety improvement programs.	0 (1,552) (1,552)	0 (1,538) (1,538)
Emergency Management	This service includes emergency services management and fire prevention. Additional grant-funding will assist with funding the service in 2025-26.	63 (145) (82)	180 (155) 25

### 2.3.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

	Performance Indicator	Expected range	2025/26 target
WC1	Kerbside bin collection requests	10 to 300 requests	30 requests
WC2	Kerbside collection bins missed	1 to 20 bins	2 bins
WC3	Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service	\$40 to \$150	\$135
WC4	Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service	\$10 to \$80	\$75
WC5	Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	20% to 60%	40%
	CSS Waste management	-	68
	CSS Appearance of public areas	-	78
	CSS Disaster and emergency management		80

### 2.3.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Preserving Our Environment**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Pomonal Hall Community Battery Project, supported by the 100 Neighbourhood Batteries grants program	\$148,760
Seek environmentally and economically beneficial outcomes for compost derived from Garden Organics processing	Existing internal resources and grant funding
Implement Year One Initiatives from the Environmental Strategy	Existing internal resources and grant funding

### 2.3.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Decrease waste to landfill	20%	5%
Decrease total waste and recyclables tonnage collected	20%	5%
Achieve annual Environment Strategy outcomes	Implementation Plan on target	Year 1 initiatives completed



## 2.4 Service Objective Four - Developing and Maintaining Key Enabling Infrastructure

We will ensure that we plan, fund, and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed, and maintained to ensure that it continues to serve identified public needs.

We will do this through:

- Ensuring that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2025-2035.
- Working directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- Delivering infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, are mindful of intergenerational equity and enhance community wellbeing and safety. These approaches will explore strategic use of debt to fund long-term assets and ensure Council's financial sustainability.

### 2.4.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25	2025/26
		Budget	Budget
		Income	Income
		Expenses	Expenses
		Surplus/(deficit)	Surplus/(deficit)
		\$'000	\$'000
Design & Project Management	This service conducts capital works planning for Council's main civil infrastructure assets including roads, laneways, car parks, foot/bike paths, drains, and bridges. This service undertakes design and supervision of Council's capital works program. Most staffing and design costs are capitalised within completed projects.	21 (478) (457)	21 (534) (513)
Property Maintenance & Capital	This service prepares maintenance management programs for Council's property assets including municipal buildings, pavilions, and other community buildings. The service also includes emergency building and facility maintenance. This service includes capital expenditure on Council's property assets to optimise their strategic value and service potential.	0 (1,001) (1,001)	0 (925) (925)
City Services	This service includes street lighting, aerodrome operations and operations, maintenance, and cleaning of public conveniences throughout the municipality.	8 (823) (815)	5 (776) (771)
Infrastructure Miscellaneous	This service includes private works, maintenance of water supplies and emergency bores.	3 (75) (72)	0 (75) (75)

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25	2025/26
		Budget	Budget
		Income Expenses Surplus/(deficit)	Income Expenses Surplus/(deficit)
Road Maintenance	This service provides for management and maintenance on Council's infrastructure incorporating roads, bridges, drainage, footpaths, kerb and channel, street furniture, line marking and signage.	0 (3,344) (3,344)	0 (3,335) (3,335)
Major Plant	This service operates, maintains & purchases Council's major plant and equipment, to meet functionality and safety needs and to maximise the performance and minimise operational cost of the fleet.	0 (1,040) (1,040)	0 (1,450) (1,450)
Major Plant Recoups	Plant used on works generates plant hire income used to fund operations and maintenance and the replacement of the major plant.	0 1,450 1,450	0 1,450 1,450
Minor Plant	This service purchases and maintains Council's minor plant and equipment, including trailers.	0 (56) (56)	0 (56) (56)
Infrastructure - Capital	This service provides for capital expenditure on Council's infrastructure incorporating roads, bridges, drainage, footpaths, kerb and channel, streetscapes, and car parks. This budget includes recurrent grants from Victorian Grants Commission and Roads to Recovery.	4,375 (7,107) (2,732)	5,516 (9,858) (4,342)
Funded Infrastructure Projects - Capital	This service provides for capital expenditure on Council's infrastructure incorporating roads, bridges, drainage, footpaths, kerb and channel, streetscapes, and car parks.	5,843 (7,393) (1,550)	0 0 0
There are no non-recurrent capital grants for infrastructure projects included in the budget for 2025/26.			

#### 2.4.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

	Performance Indicator	Expected range	2025/26 target
R1	Sealed local road requests	10 to 120 requests	8 requests
R2	Sealed local roads maintained to condition standards	80% to 100%	100%
R3	Cost of sealed local road reconstruction	\$20 to \$200	\$85
R4	Cost of sealed local road resealing	\$4 to \$30	\$6
	CSS sealed local roads	-	60
	CSS unsealed local roads	-	50
	CSS local roads and footpaths	-	65

### 2.4.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Developing and Maintaining Key Enabling Infrastructure**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Gravel road resheeting or alternative treatment	\$1,800,000
Road resealing	\$1,000,000
Urban Road and Laneway Sealing or alternative treatment	\$1,000,000
Contribution to Woorndoo-Streatham Road reconstruction, delivered in partnership with Moyne Shire Council	\$683,000
Buangor-Ben Nevis Road reconstruction	\$1,000,000
Road reconstruction program	\$2,324,000
Kerb and channel	\$300,000
Bridge renewal program	\$400,000
Footpath and cycleway improvement program	\$400,000
Urban drainage renewal	\$750,000
Community Projects – Property	\$550,000

### 2.4.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Staged progress on Aradale Development Strategy implementation	Implementation Plan on target	Targets met for 2025/26
Quarterly meetings with the Rural Roads Group	Quarterly meetings achieved	Meetings held for 2025/26
Completion of 2025/26 Capital Work program		Complete by 30 June 2026



## 2.5 Service Objective Five - Enhancing Community Life

We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.

We will do this through:

- Opening up Council's arts and culture assets to greater community participation, ownership, and engagement in decision-making.
- Developing models of volunteering that recognise, support, and properly utilise the skills that community volunteers bring to community life.
- Partnering with community groups, not-for-profits, and Traditional Owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City into a more inclusive, welcoming, tolerant and diverse community.

### 2.5.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25	2025/26
		Budget	Budget
		Income	Income
		Expenses	Expenses
		Surplus/(deficit)	Surplus/(deficit)
		\$'000	\$'000
Gallery TAMA	This service includes the operations, projects, exhibitions, acquisitions, and administration of the Ararat Gallery TAMA.	103	100
		(446)	(451)
		(343)	(351)
Town Hall	This service operates and manages the Ararat Town Hall which provides artistic programs for the region. Savings have been made through projected increases in usage and bar sales.	175	210
		(615)	(738)
		(440)	(528)
Gum San Chinese Heritage Museum	Management of Gum San has been handed over to the Friends of Gum San. Council has an MOU with the group and continues to provide financial and maintenance support.	0	0
		(25)	(24)
		(25)	(24)
Community & Events Support	This service provides for the employment of community development staff who work with communities to develop community action plans and implement other community building initiatives.	75	75
		(131)	(131)
		(56)	(56)
Community Support Grants	This service provides grants to community organisations for projects, events, sponsorships, and minor capital and community infrastructure.	0	0
		(100)	(100)
		(100)	(100)
Youth Services	This service provides services to young people.	0	0
		(100)	(100)
		(100)	(100)
Ararat Fitness Centre & Outdoor Pools	This service operates and maintains a range of recreational facilities including aquatic facilities, indoor (1) and outdoor swimming pools (3). The Ararat Fitness Centre provides an extensive range of recreational programs and opportunities accessible to individuals of all ages, sexes and abilities which contribute to the general wellbeing of the community.	534	539
		(1,210)	(1,251)
		(676)	(712)



Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Budget Income	2025/26 Budget Income
		Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Alexandra Oval Community Centre, Gordon Street Recreation Reserve & Great Hall	This service operates and maintains the Alexandra Oval Community Centre, Gordon Street Recreation Reserve and Great Hall. The facilities provide the Ararat and greater Grampians community, clubs, and businesses with a centrally located, high quality, modern, flexible, dynamic, multipurpose community and recreation spaces.	115 (136) (21)	155 (196) (41)
Library Services	This service provides public library services at the Ararat Library, the Lake Bolac Business and Information Centre and through the mobile library outreach service to rural communities.	169 (459) (290)	165 (476) (311)
Children Services	This service provides family-oriented support services including maternal and child health, immunisation and early childhood education and support.	334 (384) (50)	365 (409) (44)
Community Safety	This service maintains and improves the health and safety of people, animals, and the environment in the municipality by providing animal management services including a cat trapping program, a dog and cat collection service, a pound service, a registration and administration service, and an after-hours emergency service. This service also includes the operations of school crossings and parking enforcement.	137 (268) (131)	139 (280) (141)
Funded Recreation Projects - Capital	This service includes the delivery of one-off capital building projects partly or wholly funded by non-recurrent government grants.	0 0 0	1,490 (1,490) 0

### 2.5.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

	Performance Indicator	Expected range	2025/26 target
AF2	Health inspections of aquatic facilities	1 to 4 inspections	4 inspections
AF6	Utilisation of aquatic facilities	1 to 10 visits	4 visits
AF7	Cost of aquatic facilities per visit	\$0 to \$30	\$20
AM1	Time taken to action animal management requests	1 to 10 days	1 day
AM2	Animals reclaimed	30% to 90%	60%
AM5	Animals rehomed	30% to 90%	45%
AM6	Cost of animal management service per population	\$3 to \$40	\$16
AM7	Animal management prosecutions	50% to 200%	0%
LB1	Physical library collection usage	1 to 9 items	3 items
LB2	Recently purchased library collection (< 5 years old)	40% to 90%	65%
LB4	Active library borrowers in municipality	7% to 40%	20%
LB5	Cost of library service per population	\$10 to \$90	\$25
MC2	Infant enrolments in the MCH service	90% to 110%	100%
MC3	Cost of the MCH service	\$50 to \$200	\$75
MC4	Participation in the MCH service	70% to 100%	85%
MC5	Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children	60% to 100%	85%
MC6	Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit	90% to 110%	100%
	CSS Art centre and libraries	-	80%
	CSS Recreational facilities	-	75%
	CSS Elderly support services	-	75%
	CSS Community and cultural	-	75%

### 2.5.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Enhancing Community Life**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Continuation of Community and Events Grants Programs	\$100,000
Early Years CALD Outreach Initiative, supported by the Victorian Department of Education	\$129,400
Programs for young people through Crazy Ideas College	\$100,000
New multicultural events	\$10,000
New covered sports arena at the Ararat Pony Club, supported by the Play Our Way Grants Program	\$1,490,000

#### 2.5.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Increase in annual visitation to the Ararat Art Gallery	80%	20%
Increase in community use of the Town Hall	40%	10%
Increase in audience sizes at commercial and funded performances at the Town Hall	80%	20%
Increase participation in community organisations in Ararat Rural City	20%	5%

## 2.6 Service Objective Six - Strong and Effective Governance

We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at their centre through effective financial management, well measured risk management, and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

We will do this by:

- Delivering responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.
- Ensuring appropriate risk management is applied to Council and organisational decisions. Council's internal function is applied to areas of perceived risk.
- Continuously improving Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while ensuring that Councillors' roles as elected community representatives are understood and reflected in decision making.

### 2.6.1 Services

Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25	2025/26
		Budget Income Expenses	Budget Income Expenses
		Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Corporate Revenue	This service includes Council's rates and charges revenue, interest income and general-purpose grant funds received from the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission.	20,556 0 20,556	21,194 0 21,194
Financial Services & Corporate Support	This service predominantly provides financial based services to both internal and external customers including the management of Council's finances, procurement practices and contracting of services, raising rates and charges and the processing of accounts payable and receivables. This service includes corporate expenses including stationery, telecommunications, revenue collection fees and valuations.	60 (970) (910)	76 (981) (905)
Customer Services	This service includes the customer service function.	0 (244) (244)	0 (252) (252)
Property Operations	This service is responsible for the operations of Council's assets, including insurances and utility charges such as water and electricity. The service also includes Council's building, land and property leases and licenses.	234 (152) 82	243 (164) 79
Property Development - Capital	This service includes the purchase and sale of Council properties. In 2025-26 Council proposes to sell an industrial block of land on the East side of Ararat, and will review further land which is surplus to Council requirements.	0 0 0	950 (950) 0
Vehicles	This service operates, maintains and purchases Council vehicles, excluding major plant and equipment, to meet functionality and safety needs and to maximise the performance and minimise operational cost of the fleet.	12 (207) (195)	108 (447) (339)



Business area	Description of services provided	2024/25 Budget Income	2025/26 Budget Income
		Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000	Expenses Surplus/(deficit) \$'000
Strategy, Advocacy and Engagement (CEO's Office)	This area includes Chief Executive Officer and executive support. It also includes communications, marketing, strategy, community engagement and government relations.	0 (1,129) (1,129)	0 (1,202) (1,202)
CEO Projects	The funding of all significant Council funded projects is managed from the CEO's Office.	65 (43) 22	750 (771) (21)
Human Resources	This service provides Council with strategic and operational organisation development support. The service develops and implements strategies, policies, and procedures through the provision of human resources and industrial relations services. The service includes training programs and business excellence. This service also includes payment of salaries and wages to Council employees.	0 (407) (407)	0 (389) (389)
Governance	This service provides support to the Mayor, Councillors, and executive support. This service provides statutory and corporate support services to Council, including coordination of business papers for meetings of the Council and maintenance of statutory registers. This service also provides facilities maintenance grants for recreation reserves & public halls and coordinates risk management.	0 (1,279) (1,279)	0 (1,329) (1,329)
Business Transformation	This service includes service reviews and business improvement.	0 (492) (492)	0 (492) (492)
Information Services	This service provides, supports, and maintains reliable and cost-effective communications and computing systems, facilities and infrastructure to Council staff enabling them to deliver services in a smart, productive, and efficient way.	0 (738) (738)	0 (975) (975)

### 2.6.2 Service Performance Outcome Indicators and 2025/26 targets

These indicators are currently based on appropriate LGPRF performance measures with targets set for 2025/26.

	Performance Indicator	Expected range	2025/26 target
G1	Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public	0% to 30%	15%
G3	Councillor attendance at council meetings	80% to 100%	95%
G4	Cost of elected representation	\$30k to \$80K	\$42,500
	CSS Overall performance	-	75%
	CSS Overall council direction	-	75%
	CSS Customer service	-	75%
	CSS Informing the community	-	75%
	CSS Community decisions	-	75%
	CSS Consultation & engagement	-	75%
	CSS Lobbying	-	75%

### 2.6.3 Major Initiatives

Council will undertake the following major initiatives during 2025/26 to support **Strong and Effective Governance**:

Initiative	Budget 2025/26
Investment in information services for improved organisational capability and productivity	\$100,000

### 2.6.4 Strategic Performance Indicators and 2025/26 targets

Performance Indicator	2025-2029 target	2025/26 target
Return efficiency dividends to community through rate reduction	Annual rate rise within the rate cap	1.5% rate rise, half the rate cap of 3%
Maintenance of effective risk management regime	Annual approval by Audit and Risk Committee	Annual approval by Audit and Risk Committee
Growth in participation in engage.ararat.vic.gov.au	Growth of 40%	Annual growth of 25%

## 2.7 Reconciliation with Budgeted Operating Result

Strategic Objective	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Expenditure	Revenue
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Growing our place	(727)	1,112	385
Building robust local economies	(578)	808	28
Preserving our environment	(4,111)	4,828	715
Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure	(13,198)	15,580	2,384
Enhancing community life	(2,408)	5,848	3,238
Strong and effective governance	(5,424)	7,952	2,528
<b>Total</b>	<b>(26,444)</b>	<b>35,702</b>	<b>9,258</b>
<b>Expenses added in:</b>			
Capital expenditure	12,437		
Depreciation	(10,469)		
Amortisation – right of use assets	(308)		
Written down value on assets sold	(1,030)		
Loan repayment	156		
Lease repayment	296		
Transfer from reserves	(768)		
Transfer to reserves	1,208		
Contribution to joint venture	500		
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) before funding sources</b>	<b>(24,422)</b>		
<b>Funding sources added in:</b>			
Rates and charges revenue	15,924		
Waste charge revenue	2,501		
General purpose financial assistance grant	8,047		
<b>Total funding sources</b>	<b>26,472</b>		
<b>Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>	<b>2,050</b>		

### 3 Financial Statements

This section presents information regarding the Financial Statements and Statement of Human Resources. The budget information for the year 2025/26 has been supplemented with projections to 2028/29.

This section includes the following financial statements prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources



### Comprehensive Income Statement

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

		Budget		Projections		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	NOTES	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Income</b>						
Rates and charges	4.1.1	17,950	18,425	18,878	19,344	19,821
Statutory fees and fines	4.1.2	272	277	284	291	298
User fees	4.1.3	1,515	1,631	1,672	1,714	1,757
Grants - Operating	4.1.4	8,323	9,526	9,426	9,536	9,788
Grants - Capital	4.1.4	7,304	3,828	2,777	2,923	2,923
Contributions - monetary	4.1.5	100	93	93	93	93
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment		-	20	20	20	20
Other income	4.1.8	722	630	616	603	591
<b>Total income</b>		<b>36,186</b>	<b>34,430</b>	<b>33,766</b>	<b>34,524</b>	<b>35,291</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Employee costs	4.1.7	11,333	11,961	12,357	12,768	13,191
Materials and services	4.1.8	8,259	9,186	8,876	8,761	8,955
Depreciation	4.1.9	7,681	10,469	10,731	10,999	11,274
Depreciation - right of use assets	4.1.10	302	308	308	308	159
Borrowing costs		8	2	-	-	-
Finance costs - leases		74	60	42	23	5
Other expenses	4.1.11	368	394	404	414	424
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>28,023</b>	<b>32,380</b>	<b>32,718</b>	<b>33,273</b>	<b>34,008</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		<b>8,163</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,283</b>
<b>Total comprehensive result</b>		<b>8,163</b>	<b>2,050</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>1,283</b>

## Balance Sheet

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

		Budget	Budget	Projections		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	NOTES	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Assets</b>						
<b>Current assets</b>						
Cash and cash equivalents		7,808	6,488	6,889	7,298	7,707
Trade and other receivables		98	2,265	2,152	2,044	1,942
Inventories		84	60	60	60	60
Prepayments		13	-	-	-	-
<b>Total current assets</b>	4.2.1	<b>7,983</b>	<b>8,813</b>	<b>9,101</b>	<b>9,402</b>	<b>9,709</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>						
Trade and other receivables		4	3	1	-	-
Investments in associates, joint arrangement, and subsidiaries		1,001	1,998	1,998	1,998	1,998
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment		306,643	314,678	315,434	316,359	317,312
Right-of-use assets		1,071	778	470	162	2
Investment property		1,661	1,535	1,535	1,535	1,535
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	4.2.1	<b>310,380</b>	<b>318,992</b>	<b>319,438</b>	<b>320,054</b>	<b>320,847</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>318,363</b>	<b>327,805</b>	<b>328,539</b>	<b>329,456</b>	<b>330,556</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>						
<b>Current liabilities</b>						
Trade and other payables		2,218	1,024	1,024	1,024	1,024
Trust funds and deposits		305	303	303	303	303
Contract and other liabilities		-	-	-	-	-
Provisions		2,084	2,104	2,104	2,104	2,104
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	156	-	-	-	-
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	290	314	333	183	-
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	4.2.2	<b>5,053</b>	<b>3,745</b>	<b>3,764</b>	<b>3,614</b>	<b>3,431</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>						
Provisions		123	293	293	293	293
Interest-bearing liabilities	4.2.3	-	-	-	-	-
Lease liabilities	4.2.4	810	519	186	2	-
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	4.2.2	<b>933</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>293</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>5,986</b>	<b>4,557</b>	<b>4,243</b>	<b>3,909</b>	<b>3,724</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	4.2.5	<b>312,377</b>	<b>323,248</b>	<b>324,296</b>	<b>325,547</b>	<b>326,830</b>
<b>Equity</b>						
Accumulated surplus		107,944	109,959	110,743	111,723	112,729
Reserves		204,433	213,289	213,553	213,824	214,101
<b>Total equity</b>	4.3.1	<b>312,377</b>	<b>323,248</b>	<b>324,296</b>	<b>325,547</b>	<b>326,830</b>

**Statement of Changes in Equity**  
For the four years ending 30 June 2029

		NOTES	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
<b>2025 Forecast</b>						
Balance at beginning of the financial year			314,813	98,126	208,123	8,364
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			6,585	6,585	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)			-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves			-	(107)	-	107
Transfers from other reserves			-	3,745	-	(3,745)
Balance at end of the financial year			<u>321,198</u>	<u>108,349</u>	<u>208,123</u>	<u>4,726</u>
<b>2026 Budget</b>						
Balance at beginning of the financial year			321,198	108,349	208,123	4,726
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			2,050	2,050	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)			-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves			-	(1,208)	-	1,208
Transfers from other reserves			-	768	-	(768)
Balance at end of the financial year	4.3.1		<u>323,248</u>	<u>109,959</u>	<u>208,123</u>	<u>5,166</u>
<b>2027</b>						
Balance at beginning of the financial year			323,248	109,959	208,123	5,166
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			1,048	1,048	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)			-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves			-	(264)	-	264
Transfers from other reserves			-	-	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year			<u>324,296</u>	<u>110,743</u>	<u>208,123</u>	<u>5,430</u>
<b>2028</b>						
Balance at beginning of the financial year			324,296	110,743	208,123	5,430
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			1,251	1,251	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)			-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves			-	(271)	-	271
Transfers from other reserves			-	-	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year			<u>325,547</u>	<u>111,723</u>	<u>208,123</u>	<u>5,701</u>
<b>2029</b>						
Balance at beginning of the financial year			325,547	111,723	208,123	5,701
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			1,283	1,283	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)			-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves			-	(277)	-	277
Transfers from other reserves			-	-	-	-
Balance at end of the financial year			<u>326,830</u>	<u>112,729</u>	<u>208,123</u>	<u>5,978</u>

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

		Budget	Budget	Projections		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
		Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
Cash flows from operating activities						
Rates and charges		17,943	18,545	18,994	19,453	19,923
Statutory fees and fines		272	277	284	291	298
User fees		1,515	1,794	1,839	1,885	1,932
Grants - operating		10,270	9,526	9,426	9,537	9,788
Grants - capital		7,304	3,828	2,777	2,923	2,923
Contributions - monetary		100	93	93	93	93
Interest received		500	400	380	361	343
Other receipts		222	253	259	266	272
Net GST refund / payment		-	733	697	680	695
Employee costs		(11,333)	(11,960)	(12,358)	(12,768)	(13,192)
Materials and services		(8,336)	(10,106)	(9,763)	(9,636)	(9,848)
Other payments		(368)	(394)	(404)	(414)	(424)
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities	4.4.1	18,089	12,989	12,224	12,671	12,803
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment		(15,513)	(12,437)	(11,567)	(12,006)	(12,306)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment		-	1,050	100	100	100
Payments for investments		-	(500)	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities	4.4.2	(15,513)	(11,887)	(11,467)	(11,906)	(12,206)
Cash flows from financing activities						
Finance costs		(6)	(2)	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings		(150)	(156)	-	-	-
Interest paid - lease liabilities		(74)	(60)	(42)	(23)	(5)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(283)	(296)	(314)	(333)	(183)
Net cash provided by/ (used in) financing activities	4.4.3	(513)	(514)	(356)	(356)	(188)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents						
		2,063	588	401	409	409
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		5,735	5,900	6,488	6,889	7,298
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		7,798	6,488	6,889	7,298	7,707



### Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	NOTES	Budget	Budget	Projections		
		2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property						
Buildings		550	2,040	564	578	592
Total property		550	2,040	564	578	592
Plant and equipment						
Plant, machinery and equipment		-	500	508	519	533
Fixtures, fittings and furniture		-	100	-	-	-
Library books		40	40	45	48	48
Total plant and equipment		40	640	553	567	581
Infrastructure						
Roads		13,693	8,207	8,900	9,311	9,583
Bridges		80	400	400	400	400
Footpaths and cycleways		400	400	400	400	400
Drainage		750	750	750	750	750
Total infrastructure		14,923	9,757	10,450	10,861	11,133
Total capital works expenditure	4.5	15,513	12,437	11,567	12,006	12,306
Represented by:						
New asset expenditure		138	1,628	141	145	148
Asset renewal expenditure		13,434	8,702	9,577	9,944	10,193
Asset upgrade expenditure		1,941	2,107	1,849	1,917	1,965
Total capital works expenditure	4.5	15,513	12,437	11,567	12,006	12,306
Funding sources represented by:						
Grants		7,304	3,828	2,777	2,923	2,923
Council cash		8,209	8,609	8,790	9,083	9,383
Total capital works expenditure	4.5	15,513	12,437	11,567	12,006	12,306

**Statement of Human Resources**  
For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	Budget	Budget	Projections		
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Staff expenditure</b>					
Employee costs - operating	11,333	11,961	12,357	12,768	13,191
Employee costs - capital	1,091	1,136	1,185	1,194	1,224
<b>Total staff expenditure</b>	<b>12,424</b>	<b>13,097</b>	<b>13,522</b>	<b>13,962</b>	<b>14,415</b>
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
<b>Staff numbers</b>					
Employees	128.4	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8
<b>Total staff numbers</b>	<b>128.4</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>

A summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council is included below:

Department		Comprises			
		Budget	Full Time	Part time	Casual
		2025/26			
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Growing our place		676	525	151	-
Building robust local economies		431	362	-	69
Preserving our environment		2,047	1,751	64	232
Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure		3,067	2,727	67	273
Enhancing community life		2,569	1,297	776	496
Strong and effective governance		3,171	2,634	513	24
<b>Total permanent staff expenditure</b>		<b>11,961</b>	<b>9,296</b>	<b>1,571</b>	<b>1,094</b>
<b>Capitalised labour costs</b>		<b>1,136</b>			
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>13,097</b>			

A summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the above expenditure is included below:

Department		Comprises			
		Budget	Full Time	Part time	Casual
		2025/26			
		FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
Growing our place		5.5	4.0	1.5	-
Building robust local economies		3.7	3.0	-	0.7
Preserving our environment		22.5	20.0	0.8	1.7
Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure		44.8	41.0	0.9	2.9
Enhancing community life		26.0	14.0	6.9	5.1
Strong and effective governance		25.3	20.0	5.0	0.3
<b>Total staff</b>		<b>127.8</b>	<b>102.0</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>10.7</b>

### 3.1 Summary of Planned Human Resources Expenditure

For the four years ending 30 June 2029

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Growing our place</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	219	228	234	242
Men	305	315	326	336
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	152	157	162	168
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Growing our place</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>746</b>
<b>Building robust local economies</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	214	221	228	236
Men	148	153	158	163
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	-	-	-	-
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Building robust local economies</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>399</b>
<b>Preserving our environment</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	-	-	-	-
Men	1,751	1,809	1,869	1,931
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	64	66	68	71
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Preserving our environment</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>1,937</b>	<b>2,002</b>
<b>Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	542	560	579	598
Men	2,185	2,257	2,332	2,410
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	67	69	72	74
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>	<b>2,794</b>	<b>2,887</b>	<b>2,983</b>	<b>3,081</b>

	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
<b>Enhancing community life</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	575	594	614	634
Men	723	747	772	797
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	746	771	796	823
Men	30	31	32	33
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Enhancing community life</b>	<b>2,074</b>	<b>2,143</b>	<b>2,214</b>	<b>2,287</b>
<b>Strong and effective governance</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	1,887	1,949	2,014	2,081
Men	746	771	796	823
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	513	530	548	566
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Strong and effective governance</b>	<b>3,146</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>3,358</b>	<b>3,470</b>
<b>Casuals, temporary and other expenditure</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>1,207</b>
<b>Capitalised labour costs</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>1,224</b>
<b>Total staff expenditure</b>	<b>13,097</b>	<b>13,522</b>	<b>13,962</b>	<b>14,415</b>



	2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE
<b>Growing our place</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Men	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Growing our place</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Building robust local economies</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Men	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	-	-	-	-
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Building robust local economies</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Preserving our environment</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	-	-	-	-
Men	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Preserving our environment</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>20.8</b>
<b>Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Men	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Developing and maintaining key enabling infrastructure</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>29.9</b>
<b>Enhancing community life</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Men	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6
Men	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Enhancing community life</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>20.9</b>

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
<b>Strong and effective governance</b>				
Permanent - Full time				
Women	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Men	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
Permanent - Part time				
Women	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Men	-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender	-	-	-	-
<b>Total - Strong and effective governance</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>Casuals and temporary staff</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.7</b>
<b>Capitalised labour</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>Total staff numbers</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>	<b>127.8</b>

## 4 Notes to the Financial Statements

### 4.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

#### 4.1.1 Rates and charges

It is required by the Act and the Regulations that rates and charges are disclosed in Council's Budget.

As per the Local Government Act 2020, Council is required to have a Revenue and Rating Plan: a four-year plan describing how Council will generate income to deliver the Council Plan, programs and services, and capital works commitments over a four-year period.

In developing the Budget, rates and charges were identified as an important source of revenue. Planning for future rate increases has therefore been a vital component of the financial planning process. The Fair Go Rates System (FGRS) sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. For 2025/26 the FGRS cap has been set at 3.00%. The cap applies to both general rates and municipal charges and is calculated based on Council's average rates and charges.

The level of required rates and charges has been considered in this context, with reference to Council's other sources of income and the planned expenditure on services and works to be undertaken within the community.

Council has prepared the Budget based on a 1.5% increase in the amount raised by general rates and municipal charges.

This will raise total rates and charges for 2025/26 of \$18.425 million.

4.1.1(a) The reconciliation of the total rates and charges to the Comprehensive Income Statement is as follows:

	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Change	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
General rates*	14,138	14,509	373	2.6%
Municipal charge*	639	643	4	0.6%
Service rates and charges	2,423	2,505	82	3.4%
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	100	100	-	0.0%
Trust for Nature rebate	-	-11	-11	100.0%
Interest on rates and charges	96	96	-	0.0%
Revenue in lieu of rates	558	583	27	4.9%
<b>Total rates and charges</b>	<b>17,950</b>	<b>18,425</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

\*These items are subject to the rate cap established under the FGRS

**4.1.1(b)** The rate in the dollar to be levied as general rates under section 158 of the Act for each type or class of land compared with the previous financial year:

Type or class of land	Budget 2024/25 cents/\$CIV	Budget 2025/26 cents/\$CIV	Change
General rate for rateable general properties	0.3507	0.3643	3.9%
General rate for rateable commercial properties	0.4910	0.4918	0.2%
General rate for rateable industrial properties	0.4910	0.4918	0.2%
General rate for rateable farm properties	0.1350	0.1421	5.3%

**4.1.1(c)** The estimated total amount to be raised by general rates in relation to each type or class of land, and the estimated total amount to be raised by general rates, compared with the previous financial year:

Type or class of land	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Budget 2025/26 \$'000	Change	
			\$'000	%
General	7,102	7,329	227	3.2%
Commercial	756	783	27	3.6%
Industrial	245	253	8	3.3%
Farm	6,033	6,144	111	1.8%
Total amount to be raised by general rates	14,136	14,509	373	2.6%

**4.1.1(d)** The number of assessments in relation to each type or class of land, and the total number of assessments, compared with the previous financial year.

Type or class of land	Budget 2024/25 Number	Budget 2025/26 Number	Change	
			Number	%
General	5,387	5,410	43	0.8%
Commercial	307	308	1	0.3%
Industrial	115	114	-1	-0.9%
Farm	1,610	1,615	5	0.3%
Total number of assessments	7,399	7,447	48	0.6%

**4.1.1(e)** The basis of valuation to be used is the Capital Improved Value (CIV).

**4.1.1(f)** The estimated total value of each type or class of land, and the estimated total value of land, compared with the previous financial year:

Type or class of land	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Budget 2025/26 \$'000	Change	
			\$'000	%
General	2,025,125	2,011,804	-13,321	-0.7%
Commercial	153,982	159,240	5,278	3.4%
Industrial	49,899	51,378	1,479	3.0%
Farm	4,488,650	4,324,012	-144,638	-3.2%
Total value of land	6,697,636	6,546,434	-151,202	-2.3%



4.1.1(g) The municipal charge under Section 159 of the Act compared with the previous financial year:

Type of Charge	Per Rateable Property 2024/25	Per Rateable Property 2025/26	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Municipal	96	96	-	0.0%

4.1.1(h) The estimated total amount to be raised by municipal charges compared with the previous financial year:

Type of Charge	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Municipal	638,976	643,104	4,128	0.6%

4.1.1(i) The rate or unit amount to be levied for each type of service rate or charge under Section 162 of the Act compared with the previous financial year:

Type of Charge	Per Rateable Property 2024/25	Per Rateable Property 2025/26	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Kerbside collection - 4 Bin System	482	470	8	1.7%
Kerbside collection - 3 Bin System	410	417	7	1.7%
Kerbside collection – additional 140 litre Garbage	162	165	3	1.9%
Kerbside collection – additional 240 litre Recycling	139	142	3	2.2%
Kerbside collection – additional 240 litre Organics	139	142	3	2.2%
Kerbside collection – additional 80 litre Glass	22	24	2	9.1%

4.1.1(j) The estimated total amount to be raised by each type of service rate or charge, and the estimated total amount to be raised by service rates and charges, compared with the previous financial year:

Type of Charge	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Change	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Kerbside collection - 4 Bin System	2,010,624	2,083,510	72,886	3.6%
Kerbside collection - 3 Bin System	387,040	392,814	5,774	1.5%
Kerbside collection – additional 140 litre Garbage	16,362	18,810	2,448	15.0%
Kerbside collection – additional 240 litre Recycling	7,506	7,668	162	2.2%
Kerbside collection – additional 240 litre Organics	834	1,278	444	53.2%
Kerbside collection – additional 80 litre Glass	726	792	66	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,423,092</b>	<b>2,504,872</b>	<b>81,780</b>	<b>3.4%</b>

**4.1.1(k)** The estimated total amount to be raised by all rates and charges compared with the previous financial year:

	Forecast 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Change	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
General rates	14,136	14,509	373	2.6%
Municipal charge	639	643	4	0.6%
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	2,423	2,505	82	3.4%
Trust for Nature rebate	100	100	-	0.0%
Revenue in lieu of rates	-	-11	-11	100.0%
Service rates and charges	96	96	-	0.0%
Interest on rates and charges	556	583	27	4.9%
<b>Total Rates and charges</b>	<b>17,950</b>	<b>18,425</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

**4.1.1(l)** Fair Go Rates System Compliance

Ararat Rural City Council is required to comply with the State Government's Fair Go Rates System (FGRS). The table below details the Budget assumptions consistent with the requirements of the Fair Go Rates System.

	2024/25	2025/26
Total Annualised General Rates & Municipal Charges	\$14,774,420	\$14,928,426
Number of rateable properties	7,399	7,447
Base Average Rate	\$1,996.95	\$2,004.62
Maximum Rate Increase (set by the State Government)	2.75%	3.00%
Capped Average Rate	\$2,051.86	\$2,064.76
Maximum General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$15,181,744	\$15,376,279
Budgeted General Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$14,774,725	\$15,152,346
Budgeted Supplementary Rates	\$100,000	\$100,000
Budgeted Total Rates and Municipal Charges Revenue	\$14,874,725	\$15,252,346

**4.1.1(m)** Any significant changes that may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges.

There are no known significant changes which may affect the estimated amounts to be raised by rates and charges. However, the total amount to be raised by rates and charges may be affected by:

- The making of supplementary valuations.
- The variation of returned levels of value (e.g., valuation objections and appeals).
- Changes of use of land such that rateable land becomes non-rateable land and vice versa.
- Changes of use of land such that farm land becomes general land and vice versa.
- Granting single farm enterprises the exemption from payment of the municipal charge.
- Granting of Trust for Nature rebates.

**4.1.1(n)** Differential Rates

Rates are essentially property taxes that allow Council to raise revenue to fund delivery of a range of services to their municipal community. Importantly, it is a taxation system that includes flexibility for councils to utilise different tools in its rating structure to accommodate issues of equity and to ensure fairness in rating for all ratepayers. Councils can use these tools in different ways to yield results seen as fair by their communities.

Council utilises a rating structure comprised of three key elements. These are:

- **General Rates** – Based on property values (using the Capital Improved Valuation methodology), which are indicative of capacity to pay and form the central basis of rating under the *Local Government Act 1989*. Within the General rating model are four differentiated rating sectors: General, Industrial, Commercial and Farm.
- **Service Charges** – A ‘user pays’ component for Council services to reflect benefits provided by Council to ratepayers who benefit from a service. The only Service Charge applied by Council is the Waste Charge, applied to domestic waste management.
- **Municipal Charge** – Council applies a Municipal Charge as a ‘fixed rate’ portion per property or single farm enterprise, to cover some of the fixed administrative costs of Council.

#### Impact of 2025 Valuation

The expected final outcome of the 2025 general revaluation has been a 2.19% decrease in valuations for general/residential properties, a 2.15% increase in commercial valuations, a 0.02% increase in industrial valuations and a 3.58% decrease in farming valuations.

The following table illustrates the expected changes in capital improved valuations for each class of property as a result of the revaluation.

Class of Property	2024 Capital Improved Value (CIV) \$	2025 Capital Improved Value (CIV) \$	% Change in CIV from 2024 to 2025
General	2,056,802,000	2,011,804,000	-2.19%
Commercial	155,895,000	159,240,000	2.15%
Industrial	51,370,000	51,378,000	0.02%
Farm	4,484,775,000	4,324,012,000	-3.58%
Totals	6,748,842,000	6,546,434,000	-3.00%

A revaluation does not result in additional rate income for Council; even with no increase in the total amount raised by rates and municipal charges, some ratepayers may pay more in rates and others may pay less than the previous year, depending on the percentage change in the value of the individual properties.

#### General Rates

The formula for calculating General Rates, excluding any additional charges, arrears or additional supplementary rates is:

$$\text{Valuation (Capital Improved Value)} \times \text{Rate in the Dollar (Differential Rate Type)}$$

The rate in the dollar for each rating differential category is included in Council’s annual Budget and represents Council’s key mechanism for building a rating model that shares rating burden predictably and fairly between the four rating sectors.

Rates and charges are an important source of revenue, accounting for 53.5% of the budgeted operating revenue expected to be received by Council in 2025/26. The collection of rates is an important factor in funding Council services. Planning for future rate increases is therefore an essential component of the long-term financial planning process and plays a significant role in funding both additional service delivery and the increasing costs related to providing Council services.



Council makes a further distinction when administering general rates by applying a rating differential based on the purpose for which the property is used; that is, whether the property is used for general, commercial, industrial, or farming purposes. This distinction is based on the concept that different property categories should pay a fair and equitable contribution, taking into account the benefits those properties derive from the local community.

Ararat Rural City Council has made a clear decision, supported by the outcomes of the Rating Strategy Advisory Group (RSAG) and Citizen's Jury, and by the community more generally, that rating fairness is measured by a consistent sharing of "rates burden" between rating sectors from year to year. It has become known as the "pie model" through the RSAG process. It means that each year, each rating sector should contribute a very similar amount of the rating "pie". This reflects the intent of Section 101(1)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020 which requires that councils "seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the municipal community".

To maintain consistency in the percentage of rating burden across the four rating sectors, it is critical to understand that the differential is not a "discount" or a fixed element that underpins rating fairness. Rather, it is an economic lever to be used to ensure that the current rates burden is maintained between rating sectors.

This equilibrium in burden between rating sectors is often disturbed through asymmetric changes in property valuations between rating sectors. If valuations in one sector increase or decrease disproportionately to the overall movement in valuations, the proportion of rates paid by one sector becomes skewed, and this needs to be adjusted through alteration of one or more differentials.

Council will continue to attempt to minimise the impact of rating burden on the entire municipal community through seeking ongoing organisational efficiencies during the life of the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029. These savings will be returned as a dividend to community.

There is a general "understanding" in the local government sector that forgoing the opportunity to increase rates to the maximum allowed under the FGRS results in significant losses in future revenue which undermines ongoing organisational sustainability, particularly in small rural councils. ARCC challenges this thinking; delivering ongoing and sustainable efficiencies has the same impact on long term sustainability as increasing the rate base. There may be rate increases in the period 2025-2029, to meet increased costs, but the first option to be exercised will always be efficiency dividends.

#### **Valuation Methodology**

Ararat Rural City Council applies Capital Improved Value (CIV) to all properties within the municipality to take into account the fully developed value of the property. This basis of valuation considers the total market value of the land plus buildings and other improvements. The CIV approach also provides the most effective mechanism for Council to raise differential rates under the *Ministerial Guidelines for Differential Rating, 2013*.

#### **Rationale for Differential Rating Sectors**

Council believes each differential rate will contribute to the equitable and efficient carrying out of council functions. The application of the "pie model" in terms of a generally accepted community measure of rating equity has been discussed previously as a key driver of the rating sectors developed under Council's Revenue and Rating plan 2025-2029.

Details of the objectives of each differential rate, the classes of land which are subject to each differential rate and the uses of each differential rate, are set out below.



#### GENERAL RATE

**Definition:** General land is any rateable land which does not have the characteristics of Farm Rate land and Commercial/Industrial Rate land.

**Objectives:** To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined General Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services.

**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate of residential land. The vacant land affected by this rate is that which is zoned residential under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and Classes:** Rateable land having the relevant characteristics described below:  
a) used primarily for residential purposes; or  
b) any land that is not defined as Farmland or Commercial/Industrial Land.

**Use of Rate:** The General Differential Rate is the default rate in instances where land does not meet the characteristics of any other differential rate. It will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

**Level of Rate:** 100% of General Rate.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic Location:** Wherever located within the municipal district.

#### **Planning Scheme**

**Zoning:** The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

#### FARM RATE

**Definition:** Farm Land means any rateable land within Council's municipal district defined as farm land under Section 2 of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*, on the condition that the owner or occupier of the land is a person carrying on the activities defined by the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*, and who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office.

Section 2(1) of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960* states:

- a) Farm Land means any rateable land that is 2 or more hectares in area.
- b) Used primarily for primary producing purposes from its activities on the land; used primarily for grazing (including agistment), dairying, pig farming, poultry farming, fish farming, tree farming, bee keeping, viticulture, horticulture, fruit growing or the growing of crops of any kind or for any combination of those activities; and

That is used by a business –

- That has a significant and substantial commercial purpose of character
- That seeks to make a profit on a continuous or repetitive basis from its activities on the land; and
- That is making a profit from its activities on the land, or that has a reasonable prospect of making a profit from its activities on the land if it continues to operate in the way that it is operating.

**Objectives:** To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined Farm Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services with considerations to maintain agriculture as a major industry in the municipal district, to facilitate the longevity of the farm sector, and to achieve a balance between providing for municipal growth and retaining the important agricultural economic base.

**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of farm land which will be subject to the rate of Farm land. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and**

**Classes:**

Farm land having the relevant characteristics described below:

- a) used primarily for primary production purposes by an owner or occupier who is regarded as a Primary Producer by the Australian Taxation Office; or
- b) any land that is not defined as General Land or Commercial/Industrial Land.

**Use of Rate:** The differential rate will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which the Council considers is necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.

**Level of Rate:** The level of the rate will be determined annually by Council and the community in preparation and adoption of Council's Budget. The Farm differential is an economic lever required to maintain consistency in rating burden between rating sectors. It is proposed to be 39% of the General Rate in 2025/26.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic**

**Location:**

Wherever located within the municipal district.

**Planning Scheme**

**Zoning:**

The zoning applicable to each ratable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of**

**Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.

**COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL RATE**

Although acknowledged as two separate rating sectors, the rationale for striking a Commercial/Industrial differential rate is the same and will be described as a single class in the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029.

**Definition:** Commercial/Industrial Land is any land which is:

- a) Used primarily for carrying out the manufacture or production of, or trade in goods or services (including tourist facilities and in the case of a business providing accommodation for tourists, is prescribed accommodation under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act (Vic) 2008*; or
- b) Unoccupied building erected which is zoned Commercial or Industrial under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme; or
- c) Unoccupied land which is zoned Commercial or Industrial under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Objectives:** To ensure that Council has adequate funding to undertake its strategic, statutory, service provision and community services obligations and to ensure that the differential rate in the dollar declared for defined Commercial/Industrial Rate land properties is fair and equitable, having regard to the cost and the level of benefits derived from provision of Council services.

The commercial businesses of Ararat Rural City Council benefit from significant ongoing investment by Council in services and infrastructure. Council also notes the tax deductibility of Council rates for commercial properties which is not available to the residential sector, and the income generating capability of commercial based properties.

The Commercial differential rate is applied to promote the economic development objectives for the Ararat Rural City Council as outlined in the Council Plan. These objectives include a significant ongoing investment to create a vibrant economy and include the maintenance and improvement of tourism infrastructure, construction and maintenance of public infrastructure, development and provision of health and community services, and the general provision of support services and promotion of business in the municipality.

**Characteristics:** The characteristics of the planning scheme zoning are applicable to the determination of vacant land which will be subject to the rate applicable to Commercial/Industrial Land. The classification of the land will be determined by the occupation of that land for its best use and have reference to the planning scheme zoning.

**Types and**

**Classes:** Commercial/Industrial having the relevant characteristics described below:  
a) used primarily for commercial purposes; or  
b) any land that is not defined as General Land or Farm Land.

**Use of Rate:** The differential rate will be used to fund items of expenditure described in the Budget adopted by Council. The level of the differential rate is the level which Council considers necessary to achieve the objectives specified above.



**Level of Rate:** The level of the rate will be determined annually by Council and the community in preparation and adoption of Council's Budget. The differential rate is an economic lever required to maintain consistency in rating burden between rating sectors. It is proposed to be 135% of the General Rate in 2025/26. It is less likely that the Commercial/Industrial differential will need to be altered significantly from budget to budget as there are much less volatile property markets in these two rating sectors.

**Use of Land:** Any use permitted under the Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Geographic**

**Location:** Wherever located within the municipal district.

**Planning Scheme**

**Zoning:** The zoning applicable to each rateable land within this category, as determined by consulting maps referred to in the relevant Ararat Rural City Council Planning Scheme.

**Types of**

**Buildings:** All buildings which are already constructed on the land, or which are constructed prior to the end of the financial year.



#### 4.1.2 Statutory Fees and Fines

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26		
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Infringements and costs	23	23	-	0.0%
Town planning fees	215	215	-	0.0%
Land information certificates	15	15	-	0.0%
Permits	19	24	5	26.3%
<b>Total statutory fees and fines</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1.8%</b>

Statutory fees relate mainly to fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation and include town planning fees, and animal and parking fines. Increases in statutory fees are made in accordance with legislative requirements.

Statutory fees are forecast to increase by 1.8% or \$0.005 million compared to 2024/25.

A detailed listing of statutory fees is included in Section 6.

#### 4.1.3 User Fees

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26		
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	%
Leisure centre	534	539	5	0.9%
Childcare/children's programs	8	11	3	83.3%
Registration and other permits	160	150	-10	-6.3%
Building services	60	70	10	16.7%
Waste management services	425	458	33	7.8%
Ararat Town Hall charges	125	160	35	28.0%
Visitor Information Centre	5	5	-	0.0%
Alexandra Oval	110	110	-	0.0%
Gordon St Oval	-	40	40	100.0%
Road occupancy	10	10	-	0.0%
Other fees and charges	80	78	-2	-2.5%
<b>Total user fees</b>	<b>1,515</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>7.7%</b>

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs through the charging of fees to users of Council's services. These include use of leisure, entertainment and other community facilities and the provision of waste management services.

User fees are projected to increase by 7.7% or \$0.116 million compared to 2024/25.

A detailed listing of user fees is included in Section 6.

#### 4.1.4 Grants

Grants are required by the Act and the Regulations to be disclosed in Council's Budget.

	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Budget 2025/26 \$'000	Change	
			\$'000	%
Grants were received in respect of the following:				
Summary of grants				
Commonwealth funded grants	14,745	10,385	-4,360	-29.6%
State funded grants	882	2,969	2,087	236.6%
<b>Total grants received</b>	<b>15,627</b>	<b>13,354</b>	<b>-2,273</b>	<b>-14.5%</b>
<b>(a) Operating Grants</b>				
<i>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>				
Financial Assistance Grants	7,441	8,047	606	8.1%
<i>Recurrent - State Government</i>				
Aged care	3	3	-	0.0%
School crossing supervisors	15	16	1	6.7%
Libraries	157	155	-2	-1.3%
Maternal and child health	328	354	26	7.9%
Culture	140	140	-	0.0%
Administration	44	60	16	36.4%
Emergency Management	60	60	-	0.0%
Environment	70	74	4	5.7%
<b>Total recurrent grants</b>	<b>8,258</b>	<b>8,909</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
<i>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>				
Community development				
<i>Non-recurrent - State Government</i>				
Maternal and child health	65	67	2	3.1%
Community Development	-	184	184	100.0%
Recreation	-	366	366	100.0%
<b>Total non-recurrent grants</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>849.2%</b>
<b>Total operating grants</b>	<b>8,323</b>	<b>9,526</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>14.5%</b>
<b>(b) Capital Grants</b>				
<i>Recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>				
Roads to recovery	1,461	2,338	877	60.0%
<b>Total recurrent grants</b>	<b>1,461</b>	<b>2,338</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>60.0%</b>
<i>Non-recurrent - Commonwealth Government</i>				
Transport	5,843	-	-5,843	-100.0%
<i>Non-recurrent - State Government</i>				
Recreation	-	1,490	1,490	100.0%
<b>Total non-recurrent grants</b>	<b>5,843</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>-4,353</b>	<b>-74.5%</b>
<b>Total capital grants</b>	<b>7,304</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>-3,476</b>	<b>-47.6%</b>
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>15,627</b>	<b>13,354</b>	<b>-2,273</b>	<b>-14.5%</b>

Operating grants include all monies received from State and Federal sources for the purposes of funding the delivery of Council's services to ratepayers. Overall, the level of operating grants is projected to increase by 14.5% or \$1.203 million compared to 2024/25.

Capital grants include all monies received from State and Federal sources for the purposes of funding the capital works program. Overall, the level of capital grants is projected to decrease by 47.6% or \$3.476 million compared to 2024/25.

#### 4.1.5 Contributions

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000		
Monetary	100	93	-7	-7.0%
<b>Total contributions</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>-7</b>	<b>-7.0%</b>

Contributions relate to monies paid by the community in regard to community projects.

Contributions are projected to decrease by 7.0% or \$0.007 million compared to 2024/25.

#### 4.1.6 Other Income

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000		
Interest	500	400	-100	-20.0%
Investment property rental	222	230	8	3.6%
<b>Total other income</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>-92</b>	<b>-12.7%</b>

Other income relates to a range of items such as property rentals and other miscellaneous income items. It also includes interest revenue on investments.

Other income is forecast to decrease by 12.7% or \$0.092 million compared to 2024/25 mostly due to the expected decrease in market interest rates.

#### 4.1.7 Employee costs

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	\$'000	%
Wages and salaries	10,812	11,398	486	4.5%
Less capitalised wages and salaries	-1,091	-1,136	-45	4.1%
WorkCover	245	316	71	29.0%
Superannuation	1,211	1,320	109	9.0%
Fringe benefits tax	58	63	7	12.5%
<b>Total employee costs</b>	<b>11,333</b>	<b>11,961</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>5.5%</b>

Employee costs include all labour related expenditure such as wages, salaries, and on-costs such as allowances, leave entitlements, employer superannuation, etc.

Employee costs are forecast to increase by 5.5% or \$0.628 million compared to 2024/25.

Movements in employee costs are influenced by a number of factors:

- Renegotiation of Council's Enterprise Agreement (EA).
- An increase in Council's WorkCover premiums.
- Movement of some staff in line with the Local Government Award upon their work anniversary.
- Various externally funded positions impact on employment staff costs from year to year.
- An increase in the Superannuation Guarantee percentage from 11.5% to 12.0%.

Refer to Section 3 for the Statement of Human Resources, along with a summary of human resources expenditure categorised according to the organisational structure of Council and a summary of the number of full time equivalent (FTE) Council staff in relation to the expenditure.

#### 4.1.8 Materials and services

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	\$'000	%
Materials and services	4,828	5,699	871	18.0%
Contract Payments	804	839	35	4.4%
Plant and equipment maintenance	1,448	1,450	2	0.1%
Utilities	764	768	4	0.5%
Consultants	415	430	15	3.6%
<b>Total materials and services</b>	<b>8,259</b>	<b>9,186</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>11.2%</b>

Materials and services include the purchases of consumables, payments to contractors for the provision of services and utility costs.

Materials and services are forecast to increase by 11.2% or \$0.927 million compared to 2024/25.



#### 4.1.9 Depreciation

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000		
Property	1,243	2,626	1,383	111.3%
Plant & equipment	789	776	7	0.9%
Infrastructure	5,669	7,067	1,398	24.7%
<b>Total depreciation</b>	<b>7,681</b>	<b>10,469</b>	<b>2,788</b>	<b>36.3%</b>

Depreciation is an accounting measure which attempts to allocate the value of an asset over its useful life for Council's property, plant and equipment including infrastructure assets such as roads and drains. The increase of \$2.788 million for 2025/26 has resulted from a revaluation of Council's assets undertaken during 2024/25, and is primarily due to significant market increases in the cost to replace property and infrastructure assets.

#### 4.1.10 Amortisation – Right of Use Assets

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000		
Right of use assets	302	308	6	2.0%
<b>Total amortisation - right of use assets</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.0%</b>

Amortisation is an accounting measure to allocate the value of the right of use asset across the life of the asset. Council has entered into leases for several major plant items with the right to use the vehicles amortised over the term of the leases.

#### 4.1.11 Other Expenses

	Budget	Budget	Change	
	2024/25	2025/26	\$'000	%
	\$'000	\$'000		
Auditors' remuneration - External (Victorian Auditor-General)	50	50	-	0.0%
Auditors' remuneration - Internal	65	65	-	0.0%
Councillors' allowances	253	279	26	10.3%
<b>Total other expenses</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7.1%</b>

Other items of expense relate to a range of unclassified items including Councillors allowances, Mayoral allowance, and audit fees. Other expenses are forecast to increase by 7.1% or \$0.026 million compared to 2024/25.

## **4.2 Balance Sheet**

### **4.2.1 Assets**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash and investments such as cash held in the bank and in cash on hand, and the value of investments in deposits or other highly liquid investments with short term maturities of three months or less. These balances are projected to decrease by \$1.320 million compared to 2024/25.

Trade and other receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and others. Short term debtors are not expected to change significantly in the Budget.

Prepayments are expenses that Council has paid in advance of service delivery.

By 2025/26 Council will have invested \$2.000 million in a joint venture with a private investor to address the availability of affordable housing for the growing labour force within the municipality. The venture will see four new houses constructed per year over the next 15 years, for a total of 60 new homes, to be leased for a period of four years and then sold.

Property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment is the largest component of Council's worth and represents the value of all the land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment, etc which has been built up by Council over many years.

A right of use asset has been included in the 2025/26 budget due to Council holding five leases for major plant items. The right of use asset will be amortised over the term of the leases.

### **4.2.2 Liabilities**

Trade and other payables are those to whom Council owes money as at 30 June. These liabilities are budgeted to remain consistent with 2024/25 levels.

Provisions include accrued long service leave, annual leave and rostered days owing to employees. These employee entitlements are expected to remain consistent during 2025/26.

Interest-bearing loans and borrowings are borrowings of Council. Council is budgeting to take out no new loans in 2025/26 and loan principal repayments of \$0.150 million will become due, resulting in Council's current loan being fully repaid.

Council holds five leases for major plant and equipment. Balances are separated into current and non-current lease liabilities.

#### 4.2.3 Borrowings

The table below shows information on borrowings specifically required by the Regulations.

	Budget	Budget	Projections		
	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Amount borrowed as at 30 June of the prior year	307	157	-	-	-
Amount proposed to be borrowed	-	-	-	-	-
Amount projected to be redeemed	-150	-157	-	-	-
Amount of borrowings as at 30 June	157	-	-	-	-

#### 4.2.4 Leases by Category

As a result of the introduction of AASB 16 Leases, right-of-use assets and lease liabilities have been recognised as outlined in the table below.

	Budget	Budget
	2024/25 \$	2025/26 \$
<b>Right-of-use assets</b>	-	-
Plant and equipment	1,057,712	777,718
<b>Total right-of-use assets</b>	<b>1,057,712</b>	<b>777,718</b>
<b>Lease liabilities</b>		
<b>Current lease Liabilities</b>		
Plant and equipment	290,454	313,819
<b>Total current lease liabilities</b>	<b>290,454</b>	<b>313,819</b>
<b>Non-current lease liabilities</b>		
Plant and equipment	809,645	518,550
<b>Total non-current lease liabilities</b>	<b>809,645</b>	<b>518,550</b>
<b>Total lease liabilities</b>	<b>1,100,099</b>	<b>832,369</b>

#### 4.2.5 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.

The increase in net assets of \$10.871 million results predominantly from the operating surplus, asset revaluations and the net movement of non-current assets.

### **4.3 Statement of Changes in Equity**

#### **4.3.1 Equity**

Total equity is projected to increase by \$10.871 million during the year. Total equity always equals net assets and is made up of the following components:

- Asset revaluation reserve which represents the difference between the previously recorded value of assets and their current valuations.
- Other reserves that are funds that Council wishes to separately identify as being set aside to meet a specific purpose in the future and to which there is no existing liability. These amounts are transferred from the Accumulated Surplus of the Council to be separately disclosed.
- Accumulated surplus which is the value of all net assets less Reserves that have accumulated over time. \$2.050 million of the increase in accumulated surplus results directly from the surplus for the year. An amount of \$0.440 million (net) is budgeted to be transferred from accumulated surplus to other reserves as an allocation towards future building capital works projects. This is a transfer between equity balances only and does not impact on the total balance of equity.

### **4.4 Statement of Cash Flows**

#### **4.4.1 Net cash flows provided by/used in operating activities**

Operating activities refers to the cash generated or used in the normal service delivery functions of Council. Cash remaining after paying for the provision of services to the community may be available for investment in capital works, or repayment of debt.

The decrease in net cash flows from operating activities of \$5.100 million is mostly due to a decrease in capital grants of \$3.476 million, and an increase in materials and services of \$1.770 million to complete grant-funded projects carried forward from 2023/24.

The net cash flows from operating activities does not equal the surplus (deficit) for the year as the expected revenues and expenses of Council include non-cash items which have been excluded from the Cash Flow Statement.

#### **4.4.2 Net Cash Flows Provided by/used in Investing Activities**

Investing activities refers to cash generated or used in the enhancement or creation of infrastructure and other assets. These activities also include the acquisition and sale of other assets such as vehicles, property, and equipment.

The payments for investing activities represent the proposed capital works program disclosed in Section 4.5. The payments for property, infrastructure, plant, and equipment are budgeted to decrease by \$3.076 million due to the decrease in non-recurrent capital grants budgeted in 2025/26.

#### **4.4.3 Net Cash Flows Provided by/used in Financing Activities**

Financing activities refers to cash generated or used in the financing of Council functions and include borrowings from financial institutions. These activities also include repayment of the principal component of loan repayments for the year.



For 2025/26 the total principal repayments will be \$0.156 million and finance costs will be \$0.002 million, resulting in Council's current loan being fully repaid. Council is budgeting to take out no new loans in 2025/26.

During 2023/24 Council entered into four leases for major plant items, and one further lease in 2024/25. For 2025/26 the interest for the lease liabilities will be \$0.060 million and the lease repayments will be \$0.296 million.

## 4.5 Capital Works Program

This section presents a listing of the capital works projects that will be undertaken for the 2025/26 year, classified by expenditure type and funding source.

### 4.5.1 Summary

	Budget 2024/25	Budget 2025/26	Change	%
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
Property	550	2,040	1,490	270.9%
Plant and equipment	40	640	600	1500.0%
Infrastructure	14,923	9,757	-5,166	-34.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,513</b>	<b>12,437</b>	<b>-3,076</b>	<b>-19.8%</b>

	Project Cost	Asset expenditure types				Summary of Funding Sources		
	\$'000	New	Renewal	Upgrade		Grants	Contrib.	Borrowings
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	2,040	1,628	138	274		1,490	-	550
Plant and equipment	640	-	640	-		-	-	640
Infrastructure	9,757	-	7,924	1,833		2,338	-	7,419
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,437</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>8,702</b>	<b>2,107</b>		<b>3,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,609</b>

#### 4.5.2 Capital Budget

Capital Works Area	Project Cost \$'000	Asset expenditure types			Summary of Funding Sources			
		New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contrib. \$'000	Council cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
<b>PROPERTY</b>								
Buildings								
Community projects	550	138	138	274	-	-	550	-
Ararat Pony Club-Covered Sports Arena	1,490	1,490	-	-	1,490	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY</b>	<b>2,040</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>1,490</b>	-	<b>550</b>	-
<b>PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>								
Plant, Machinery and Equipment								
Vehicle Purchases	240	-	240	-	-	-	240	-
Major Plant Purchases	260	-	260	-	-	-	260	-
Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture								
Computer Equipment	100	-	100	-	-	-	100	-
Library books								
Bookstock	40	-	40	-	-	-	40	-
<b>TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>								
Roads								
Gravel road resheeting and alternative surfacing	1,800	-	1,800	-	-	-	1,800	-
Reseal program	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	-	1,000	-
Woomdoo-Streatham Road reconstruction	683	-	581	102	-	-	683	-
Buangor-Ben Nevis Road reconstruction	1,000	-	850	150	1,000	-	-	-
Road reconstruction program	2,324	-	1,975	349	1,338	-	988	-
Urban gravel to seal	1,000	-	-	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
Major patching	100	-	100	-	-	-	100	-
Kerb and channel renewal program	300	-	300	-	-	-	300	-
Bridges								
Bridge renewal program	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Footpaths and Cycleways								
Footpaths and cycleways	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Drainage								
Urban drainage	750	-	638	112	-	-	750	-
<b>TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>9,757</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,924</b>	<b>1,833</b>	<b>2,338</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7,419</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS</b>	<b>12,437</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>8,702</b>	<b>2,107</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,609</b>	<b>-</b>

#### 4.6 Summary of Planned Capital Works Expenditure

For the four years ended 30 June 2029

2025/26	Asset Expenditure Types			Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property Buildings	564	141	141	282	-	-	564	-
Total Property	564	141	141	282	-	-	564	-
Plant and Equipment								
Plant, machinery and equipment	508	-	508	-	-	-	508	-
Library books	45	-	45	-	-	-	45	-
Total Plant and Equipment	553	-	553	-	-	-	553	-
Infrastructure								
Roads	8,000	-	7,565	1,335	2,777	-	6,123	-
Bridges	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Footpaths and cycleways	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Drainage	750	-	638	112	-	-	750	-
Total Infrastructure	10,450	-	8,883	1,567	2,777	-	7,673	-
Total Capital Works Expenditure	11,567	141	9,577	1,849	2,777	-	8,790	-



2026/27	Asset Expenditure Types			Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property								
Buildings	578	145	145	288	-	-	578	-
Total Property	578	145	145	288	-	-	578	-
Plant and Equipment								
Plant, machinery and equipment	519	-	519	-	-	-	519	-
Library books	48	-	48	-	-	-	48	-
Total Plant and Equipment	567	-	567	-	-	-	567	-
Infrastructure								
Roads	9,311	-	7,914	1,397	2,923	-	6,388	-
Bridges	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Footpaths and cycleways	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Drainage	750	-	638	112	-	-	750	-
Total Infrastructure	10,861	-	9,232	1,629	2,923	-	7,938	-
Total Capital Works Expenditure	12,006	145	9,944	1,917	2,923	-	9,083	-

2027/28	Asset Expenditure Types			Funding Sources				
	Total \$'000	New \$'000	Renewal \$'000	Upgrade \$'000	Grants \$'000	Contributions \$'000	Council Cash \$'000	Borrowings \$'000
Property Buildings	592	148	148	296	-	-	592	-
Total Property	592	148	148	296	-	-	592	-
Plant and Equipment								
Plant, machinery and equipment	533	-	533	-	-	-	533	-
Library books	48	-	48	-	-	-	48	-
Total Plant and Equipment	581	-	581	-	-	-	581	-
Infrastructure								
Roads	9,583	-	8,146	1,437	2,923	-	6,660	-
Bridges	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Footpaths and cycleways	400	-	340	60	-	-	400	-
Drainage	750	-	838	112	-	-	750	-
Total Infrastructure	11,133	-	9,464	1,669	2,923	-	8,210	-
Total Capital Works Expenditure	12,306	148	10,193	1,965	2,923	-	9,383	-

## 5a. Targeted Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a selection of targeted service and financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's intentions and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The targeted performance indicators below are the prescribed performance indicators contained in Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.

### Targeted Performance Indicators – Service

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual		Budget		Target		Target Projections			Trend	
			2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	+/-	2023/24	2024/25
Governance Consultation and Engagement (Council decisions made and implemented with community input)	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement												
	Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council	1	59	65	75	75	75	75	75	75	0		
Roads Condition (sealed local roads are maintained at the adopted condition standard)	Sealed local roads below the intervention level												
	Number of kms of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kms of sealed local roads	2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0		
Statutory Planning Service Standard (planning application processing and decisions are in accordance with legislative requirements)	Planning applications decided within the relevant required time												
	Number of planning application decisions made within the relevant required time / Number of planning application decisions made	3	78.9%	85.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%	0		
Waste Management Waste Diversion (amount of waste diverted from landfill is maximised)	Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill												
	Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins	4	25.1%	35.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	0		

#### Targeted performance indicators – Financial

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual	Budget	Target	Target Projections		Trend
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
<b>Liquidity</b> <b>Working Capital</b> (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Current assets compared to current liabilities	5	162.3%	158.0%	235.3%	241.8%	280.2%	282.8%
	Current assets / current liabilities							+
<b>Obligations</b> <b>Asset Renewal</b> (assets are renewed as planned)	Asset renewal compared to depreciation	6	124.8%	200.2%	103.2%	108.5%	107.8%	107.8%
	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation							+
<b>Stability</b> <b>Rates Concentration</b> (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue	7	73.8%	59.2%	55.9%	55.9%	56.0%	56.2%
	Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue							+
<b>Efficiency</b> <b>Expenditure Level</b> (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Expenses per property assessment	8	\$4,592	\$3,787	\$4,348	\$4,349	\$4,379	\$4,432
	Total expenses / no. of property assessments							+

#### 5b. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's current and projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives.

The financial performance indicators below are the prescribed financial performance indicators contained in Part 3 of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020. Results against these indicators and targets will be reported in Council's Performance Statement included in the Annual Report.



Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target Projections			Trend
						2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	
<b>Operating Position</b>									
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)								
(an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	9	-40.3%	7.6%	1.7%	3.1%	3.6%	3.6%	+
<b>Liquidity</b>									
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities								
(sufficient cash that is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	10	-13.0%	145.0%	163.9%	173.7%	182.2%	214.3%	+
<b>Obligations</b>									
Loans and borrowings	Loans and borrowings compared to rates								
(level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	11	1.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	+
Loans and borrowings	Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates								
(level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue		5.5%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	+
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue								
(level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue		7.5%	4.6%	3.9%	2.2%	1.3%	1.3%	+
<b>Stability</b>									
Rates effort	Rates compared to property values								
(rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipal district	12	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0
<b>Efficiency</b>									
Revenue level	Average rate per property assessment								
(resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	General rates and municipal charges / no. of property assessments	13	\$1,983	\$1,987	\$2,035	\$2,085	\$2,098	\$2,127	+
<b>Sustainability Capacity</b>									
Population	Rate revenue per head of population								
(population is a key driver of a Council's ability to fund the	Total rate revenue / Municipal population	14	\$1,531	\$1,490	\$1,537	\$1,554	\$1,572	\$1,590	+

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2023/24	Budget 2024/25	Target 2025/26	Target Projections 2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Trend
delivery of services to the community)									+/-
Population	Expenses per head of population								
(population is a key driver of a Council's ability to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Total expenses/ Population	15	\$2,808	\$2,326	\$2,701	\$2,694	\$2,704	\$2,728	+
Population	Infrastructure per head of population								
(population is a key driver of a Council's ability to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Value of infrastructure / Population	18	\$24,838	\$25,450	\$26,247	\$25,972	\$25,714	\$25,480	+
Population	Population density per length of road								
(population is a key driver of a Council's ability to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Population / Kilometres of local roads	17	4.8	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.1	+
Own-source revenue	Own-source revenue per head of population								
(revenue is generated from a range of sources in order to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Own source revenue / Population	18	\$1,771	\$1,688	\$1,750	\$1,768	\$1,786	\$1,804	+
Recurrent grants	Recurrent grants per head of population								
(revenue is generated from a range of sources in order to fund the delivery of services to the community)	Recurrent grants / Population	19	\$124	\$807	\$938	\$984	\$1,005	\$1,014	+
Workforce turnover	Resignations and terminations compared to average staff								
(resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations for the financial year / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year	20	7.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%	o

#### Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

## Notes to Indicators

### 5a

#### 1. Asset Renewal

This percentage indicates the extent of Council's renewal and upgrade of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and upgraded, and future capital expenditure will be required to renew and upgrade assets. The total capital works program for 2025/26 is \$12.437 million.

#### 2. Rates Concentration

Reflects the extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. This indicator demonstrates Council relies heavily on rates as a source of income. The trend indicates Council will continue to be reliant on rate revenue compared to all other revenue sources.

### 5b

#### 3. Adjusted Underlying Result

An indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. The adjusted underlying result calculation includes recurrent capital funding such as Roads to Recovery funding.

#### 4. Unrestricted Cash

Council's cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use, which includes trust funds and deposits. This indicator measures the proportion of current liabilities represented by unrestricted cash.

#### 5. Debt Compared to Rates

This indicator measures the level of Council's total debt as a percentage of rate revenue.



## 6 Schedule of Fees and Charges

Council provides a range of services and its main sources of income are Rates and Charges and Government Grants. Costing services is complex. The full cost of delivering services or providing a facility includes the direct cost, such as the cost of labour which could include part of the supervisor's wage, materials, and plant hire to provide that service; and indirect costs such as a range of "back office" operations that are not directly tied to the service, such as payroll processing, information technology costs.

Pricing services is also complex as Council provides numerous "public" services (eg. public parks) as well as "private" services (eg. waste collection, leisure centres and pools). Ideally, full cost recovery should be applied to "private" services. In reality, recipients of the service may not be able to afford the full cost recovery. As full cost recovery is not possible for a number of services, Council is required to use rate income and other sources of income, such as the Victorian Grants Commission general assistance grant, to subsidise the cost of providing these services.

Council reviews the income generated from fees and charges every year as part of the Budget process. Council recognises statutory fees are set by legislation/regulation but attempts to maximise the amount of income generated from other user fees.

This schedule presents the fees and charges of a statutory/non-statutory nature which will be charged in respect to various goods and services during the financial year 2025/26.

Fees and charges are based on information available at the time of publishing and may vary during the financial year subject to any changes in Council's policy or legislation.

PRICING BASIS	
(Z) Zero Cost Recovery	This good/service is provided at no cost. The costs are met entirely from rates and general purpose income. Generally, where there is no fee or charge, the service provided is not mentioned in the fees and charges list.
(P) Partial Cost Recovery	The price for this good/service is set to make a significant contribution towards the cost-of-service provision. The remainder of the costs are met from rate and general purpose income.
(F) Full Cost Recovery	The price for this good/service is set to recover the cost-of-service provision.
(R) Regulatory	The price for this good/service is a statutory charge set by government regulation.
(M) Market Price	The price for this good/service is set by reference to prices charged for similar goods/services by like Councils or competitors.



Description of Fees and Charges									
Unit of Measure			2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)		Pricing Basis
GST Status		Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	%		
Administration									
Freedom of Information Application Fee	Per Request	Non-Taxable	\$32.70		\$32.70	-	-	Statutory	R
Access Charge - Search Time	Per Hour	Non-Taxable	\$24.50		\$24.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Access Charge - Printing (A4)	Per Page	Non-Taxable	\$0.20		\$0.20	-	-	Statutory	P
Land Information Certificate	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$28.70		\$28.70	-	-	Statutory	R
Priority Request - Land Information Certificate	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$80.00		\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Direct Debit Rejection Fee	Per Rejection	Taxable	\$6.00		\$6.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Request for Refund	Per Refund	Taxable	\$25.00		\$25.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Reprint Rate Notice Fee	Per Notice	Taxable	\$10.00		\$10.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Library									
Library - Damaged/lost items	Per Item	Taxable	cost of replacement		cost of replacement			Non-statutory	F
Library - Processing	Per Item	Taxable	\$6.00		\$6.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Library - Book Club per person	Per Person	Taxable	\$44.00		\$44.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Library - Bags	Per Item	Taxable	\$3.00		\$3.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Library - Debt collection	Per Item	Taxable	\$15.00		\$15.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Gum San Great Hall Hire									
Day Rate									
Community	Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (Less than 3 hours)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00		\$100.00	-\$100.00	(50.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Commercial	Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00		\$500.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (Less than 3 hours)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00		\$200.00	-\$300.00	(60.0%)	Non-statutory	P

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Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
<b>Evening Rate</b>									
Community	Per Hire	Taxable		\$200.00	\$200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (Less than 3 hours)	Per Hire	Taxable		\$200.00	\$100.00	-\$100.00	(50.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Commercial	Per Hire	Taxable		\$500.00	\$500.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (Less than 3 hours)	Per Hire	Taxable		\$500.00	\$200.00	-\$300.00	(60.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Upstairs Meeting Room	Per Hire	Taxable		\$100.00	\$100.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
<b>Ararat Gallery TAMA</b>									
Gallery membership									
Single	Per Person	Taxable		\$45.00	\$45.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Double/Family	Per Family	Taxable		\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Single (Concession)	Per Person	Taxable		\$35.00	\$35.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
<b>Ararat Town Hall</b>									
Whole Complex (kitchen, supper room, green room, dressing rooms, foyer)									
Standard	Per Event	Taxable		\$1,560.00	\$1,560.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable		\$500.00	\$500.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Main Auditorium									
Venue Hire - Ticketed Event / Performance	Per Event	Taxable		\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Standard	Per Event	Taxable		\$450.00	\$450.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable		\$450.00	\$450.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Rehearsals/ Bump In (non-performance day)									
Standard	Per Hour	Taxable		\$75.00	\$75.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Hour	Taxable		\$25.00	\$28.00	\$3.00	12.0%	Non-statutory	P
Built stage									

Description of Fees and Charges				2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)		Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
	Unit of Measure	GST Status	Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	\$	%		
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$450.00		\$450.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	\$250.00		\$250.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Piano - Steinway Baby Grand											
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	-		-		-		-	Non-statutory	Z
Piano Tuning											
Projector	Per Event	Taxable	Quoted		Quoted		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Festoon Lights	Per Event	Taxable	\$50.00		\$50.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Security (if required)	Per Event	Taxable	\$150.00		\$150.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Front of House Staff	Per Event	Taxable	Quoted		Quoted		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Technician	Per Event	Taxable	\$50.00		\$50.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Stand alone Art & Craft Room hire	Per Event	Taxable	\$70.00		\$70.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	\$100.00		\$100.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Stand alone Green Room hire											
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	\$100.00		\$100.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Stand alone Foyer Hire											
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	\$100.00		\$100.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Stand alone Supper Room Hire											
Standard	Per Event	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community	Per Event	Taxable	\$100.00		\$100.00		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Ticket Selling Commission											
Standard	Per Ticket	Taxable	\$4.50		\$4.50		-		-	Non-statutory	P
Community - Paid Ticket Event	Per Ticket	Taxable	\$0.50		\$0.50		-		-	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
All venues - catering tea and coffee		Per Person	Taxable	\$2.00	\$2.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Town Hall Auditorium - out of contracted hours		Per 15 mins	Taxable	\$200.00	\$200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
<b>Planning</b>									
Request copies of Planning permits		Per Request	Taxable	\$68.25	\$70.00	\$1.75	2.6%	Non-statutory	F
Request copies of Endorsed Plans - standard search fee (print fees apply)		Per Request	Taxable	\$68.25	\$70.00	\$1.75	2.6%	Non-statutory	F
<b>Reg 6 Fees for Amendment to Planning Scheme</b>									
Stage 1 - For considering a request to amend a planning scheme		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$3,364.00	\$3,364.00	-	-	Statutory	R
<b>Stage 2</b>									
For considering up to 10 submissions		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$16,872.90	\$16,872.90	-	-	Statutory	R
For considering 11 to 20 submissions		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$33,313.20	\$33,313.20	-	-	Statutory	R
For considering in excess of 20 submissions		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$44,531.90	\$44,531.90	-	-	Statutory	R
Stage 3 - For adopting the amendment		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$530.70	\$530.70	-	-	Statutory	R
<b>Reg 9 Fees for Applications for permits under Section 47</b>									
Class 1 - Use only		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
<b>To develop land or to use and develop land for a single dwelling per lot and undertake development ancillary to the use of land for a single dwelling per lot if the estimated cost of development is:</b>									
Class 2 - \$10,000 or less		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$220.50	\$220.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 3 - more than \$10,000 but not more than \$100,000		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$694.00	\$694.00	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 4 - more than \$100,000 but not more than \$500,000		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,420.70	\$1,420.70	-	-	Statutory	R



Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
			\$	GST	\$	GST				
Class 5 - more than \$500,000 but not more than \$1,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,535.00		\$1,535.00		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 6 - more than \$1,000,000 but not more than \$2,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,649.30		\$1,649.30		-	-	Statutory	R
VicSmart application if the estimated cost of development is										
Class 7 - \$10,000 or less	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$220.50		\$220.50		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 8 - more than \$10,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$473.60		\$473.60		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 9 - VicSmart application to subdivide or consolidate land	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$220.50		\$220.50		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 10 - VicSmart application (other than a class 7, 8 or 9 permit)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$220.50		\$220.50		-	-	Statutory	R
To develop land (other than for a single dwelling per lot) if the estimated cost of development is:										
Class 11 - less than \$100,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,285.60		\$1,285.60		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 12 - more than \$100,000 and not more than \$1,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,708.50		\$1,708.50		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 13 - more than \$1,000,000 and not more than \$5,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$3,784.10		\$3,784.10		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 14 - more than \$5,000,000 and not more than \$15,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$9,593.90		\$9,593.90		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 15 - more than \$15,000,000 and not more than \$50,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$28,291.70		\$28,291.70		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 16 - more than \$50,000,000*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$63,589.00		\$63,589.00		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 17 - To subdivide an existing building	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40		\$1,453.40		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 18 - To subdivide land into two lots	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40		\$1,453.40		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 19 - To effect a realignment of a common boundary between lots or consolidate two or more lots	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40		\$1,453.40		-	-	Statutory	R
Class 20 - All other subdivisions of land (per 100 lots created)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40		\$1,453.40		-	-	Statutory	R

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Class 21 To: a) create, vary or remove a restriction within the meaning of the Subdivision Act 1988; or b) create or remove a right of way; or c) create, vary or remove an easement other than a right of way; or d) vary or remove a condition in the nature of an easement (other than right of way) in a Crown grant.		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 22 - A permit not otherwise provided for in the regulation		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Reg 11 Fees for Applications to Amend Permits under Section 72									
Class 1 - Amendment to a permit to change the use of land allowed by the permit or allow a new use of land		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 2 - Amendment to a permit (other than a permit to develop land for a single dwelling per lot or to use and develop land for a single dwelling per lot or to undertake development ancillary to the use of land for a single dwelling per lot) to change the statement of what the permit allows or to change any or all of the conditions which apply to the permit.		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Amendment to a class 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 permit, * If the cost of any additional development permitted by the amendment is:									
Class 3 - \$10,000 or less		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$220.50	\$220.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 4 - more than \$10,000 but not more than \$100,000		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$684.00	\$684.00	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 5 - more than \$100,00 but not more than \$500,000		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,420.70	\$1,420.70	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 6 - more than \$500,000		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$1,535.00	\$1,535.00	-	-	Statutory	R

Description of Fees and Charges			Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST	2025/26 Fee Inc GST	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
					\$	\$	\$	%		
Amendment to a permit * that is the subject of VicSmart application, if the estimated cost of the additional development is:										
Class 7 - \$10,000 or less	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$220.50	\$220.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 8 - more than \$10,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$473.60	\$473.60	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 9 - Amendment to a class 9 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$220.50	\$220.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 10 - Amendment to a class 10 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$220.50	\$220.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Amendment to a class 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 or 16 permit * if the estimated cost of the additional development to be permitted by the amendment is:										
Class 11 - \$100,000 or less	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,265.60	\$1,265.60	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 12 - more than \$100,000 but not more than \$1,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,708.50	\$1,708.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 13 - more than \$1,000,000	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$3,764.10	\$3,764.10	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 14 - Amendment to a class 17 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 15 - Amendment to a class 18 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 16 - Amendment to a class 19 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 17 - Amendment to a class 20 permit * (per 100 lots created)	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 18 - Amendment to a class 21 permit *	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Class 19 - Amendment to a class 22 permit	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$1,453.40	\$1,453.40	-	-	Statutory	R
* Refer to Reg 9 Fees to see the relevant Class of permit										
Reg 15 For a Certificate of Compliance	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$359.30	\$359.30	-	-	Statutory	R
Reg 16 For an agreement to a proposal to amend or end an agreement under section 173	Per Application	Non-Taxable			\$726.70	\$726.70	-	-	Statutory	R



Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Pricing Basis
			\$	%	\$	%			
Reg 18 Where a planning scheme specifies that a matter must be done to the satisfaction of a responsible authority, Minister, public authority or municipal Council.	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$359.30	-	\$359.30	-	-	-	R
<b>Subdivision Fees</b>									
Reg 6 For Certification of a Plan of Subdivision	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$192.70	-	\$192.70	-	-	-	R
Reg 7 Alteration of plan under section 10(2) of the Act	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$122.50	-	\$122.50	-	-	-	R
Reg 8 Amendment of certified plan under section 11(1) of the Act	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$155.10	-	\$155.10	-	-	-	R
<b>Public Open Space Valuation</b>									
Statement of Compliance Final Inspection	Per Application	Taxable	\$625.00	4.8%	\$650.00	4.8%	\$25.00	4.8%	F
Advertising of Planning Application - letters only	Per Application	Taxable	\$273.00	2.8%	\$280.00	2.8%	\$7.00	2.8%	P
Advertising of Planning Application - letters and signs within Ararat	Per Application	Taxable	\$105.00	4.8%	\$110.00	4.8%	\$5.00	4.8%	F
Advertising of Planning Application - letters and signs outside Ararat	Per Application	Taxable	\$210.00	4.8%	\$220.00	4.8%	\$10.00	4.8%	F
Extension of Time - 1st Request	Per Application	Taxable	\$315.00	1.7%	\$330.00	1.7%	\$15.00	1.7%	P
Extension of Time - 2nd Request	Per Application	Taxable	\$482.00	1.7%	\$470.00	1.7%	\$12.00	1.7%	P
Extension of Time - 3rd Request	Per Application	Taxable	\$682.50	3.3%	\$705.00	3.3%	\$22.50	3.3%	P
Secondary Consent	Per Application	Taxable	\$315.00	4.8%	\$330.00	4.8%	\$15.00	4.8%	P
Planning Enquiry Fee	Per Enquiry	Taxable	\$52.50	4.8%	\$55.00	4.8%	\$2.50	4.8%	F
<b>Environmental Health</b>									
Septic Tank Application Fees	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$798.20	-	\$798.20	-	-	-	R
Construct, Install or alter - up to 8.2 hours assessment	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$798.20	-	\$798.20	-	-	-	R



Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
			Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Inc GST	\$				
Construct, Install or alter - addition hours or part thereof	Per hour or part	Non-Taxable	\$98.90		\$98.90		-	-	Statutory	R
Construct, Install or alter - Maximum fee		Non-Taxable	\$2,211.60		\$2,211.60		-	-	Statutory	R
Minor Alteration	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$608.30		\$608.30		-	-	Statutory	R
Transfer	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$162.20		\$162.20		-	-	Statutory	R
Amend permit	Per Amendment	Non-Taxable	\$168.50		\$168.50		-	-	Statutory	R
Exemption - up to 2.6 hours assessment	Per application	Non-Taxable	\$239.60		\$239.60		-	-	Statutory	R
Exemption - additional hours or part thereof	Per hour or part	Non-Taxable	\$97.00		\$97.00		-	-	Statutory	R
Exemption - Maximum fee		Non-Taxable	\$1,002.80		\$1,002.80		-	-	Statutory	R
Renewal of septic tank application	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$135.70		\$135.70		-	-	Statutory	R
Food Act Fixed Premises Registrations										
Class 1 - Food premises that predominantly handle potentially hazardous food that is served to vulnerable groups	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$538.65		\$545.00		\$6.35	1.2%	Non-statutory	F
Class 2 - Food premises handling any potentially hazardous unpackaged foods	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$452.55		\$460.00		\$7.45	1.6%	Non-statutory	F
Class 2 Community Group - Class 2 Premises, where the premises is primarily a community group or not for profit organisation	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$210.00		\$215.00		\$5.00	2.4%	Non-statutory	F
Class 3a - Accommodation getaway premises preparing and or cooking of potentially hazardous foods which are served to guests for immediate consumption. A home based premises preparing or cooking of potentially hazardous foods using hot fill process ie. chutney, relish, salsa, tomato sauce	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$388.50		\$395.00		\$6.50	1.7%	Non-statutory	F
Class 3 - Food premises handling unpackaged low risk foods or selling potentially hazardous pre-packaged foods	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$323.40		\$330.00		\$6.60	2.0%	Non-statutory	F

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Class 3 Community Group - Class 3 Premises, where the premises is primarily a community group or not for profit organisation		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$150.15	-	-\$150.15	(100.0%)	Non-statutory	Z
Class 4 Food premises handling pre-packaged low risk foods		Per Application	Non-Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Streetworker Registration									
Class 2c - Community Group - Streetworker per event		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$32.55	\$33.00	\$0.45	1.4%	Non-statutory	F
Class 2 & 3 - Temporary Stall (Fixed Premises as well as Streetworker) Annual fee		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$91.35	\$93.00	\$1.65	1.8%	Non-statutory	F
Class 2 - Streetworker - Community Group Temporary/Mobile		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$177.45	\$180.00	\$2.55	1.4%	Non-statutory	F
Class 3 - Streetworker - Community Group Temporary/Mobile		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$110.25	\$114.00	\$3.75	3.4%	Non-statutory	F
Class 2 - Streetworker - Temporary/Mobile		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$280.35	\$290.00	\$9.65	3.4%	Non-statutory	F
Class 3 - Streetworker - Temporary/Mobile		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$204.75	\$210.00	\$5.25	2.6%	Non-statutory	F
Class 4 - Streetworker - Mobile		Per Application	Non-Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Requested Inspection and Report on a Premises		Per Application	Taxable	50% of relevant Registration Fee	50% of relevant Registration Fee	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Urgent Requested Inspection and Report on a Premises (less than 7 days notice)		Per Application	Taxable	\$430.50	\$450.00	\$19.50	4.5%	Non-statutory	F
Initial Registration of New Premises		Per Application	Non-Taxable	Additional 50% of Relevant Registration Fee	Additional 50% of Relevant Registration Fee	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Late Payment Fee		Per Application	Non-Taxable	50% of relevant Registration Fee	50% of relevant Registration Fee	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Additional Fee for inspection due to non compliance		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$258.30	\$300.00	\$41.70	16.1%	Non-statutory	F

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Additional Fee for Sampling non compliance		Per Application	Non-Taxable	At cost + 40%	At cost + 40%	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Health Act Registrations									
Prescribed Accommodation		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$452.55	\$460.00	\$7.45	1.6%	Non-statutory	F
Tattooist/ Ear Piercing/ Beauty & Physical Therapies/ Barbers/ Electrolysis		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$380.15	\$370.00	\$9.85	2.7%	Non-statutory	F
Hairdresser/ Physical Therapies		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$182.70	\$185.00	\$2.30	1.3%	Non-statutory	F
Mobile/ Part Time/ Low Risk		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$182.70	\$185.00	\$2.30	1.3%	Non-statutory	F
Private Caravan Park		Per Application	Non-Taxable	As Prescribed in the Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks) Regulations 2010	As Prescribed in the Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks) Regulations 2010	-	-	Statutory	R
Archive Search of Documents & copy of plans/permits		Per Application	Taxable	Minimum \$65.00 plus printing	Minimum \$65.00 plus printing	-	-	Non-statutory	F
<b>Building</b>									
Building Permit Application Fees									
Item 1 Class 1B & 2-8 Residential & Commercial works other than Class 1A									
Up to \$50,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$1,732.50	\$1,900.00	\$167.50	9.7%	Non-statutory	F
\$50,001 to \$100,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$2,310.00	\$2,500.00	\$190.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$100,001 to \$150,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$3,485.00	\$3,700.00	\$235.00	6.8%	Non-statutory	F
\$150,001 to \$200,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$4,820.00	\$5,000.00	\$380.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
> \$200,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$5,775.00	\$6,300.00	\$525.00	9.1%	Non-statutory	F



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
<b>Item 2 Class 1A</b>									
All Dwellings - Single Detached Houses or attached Multi-Units Development									
Up to \$100,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$2,310.00	\$2,500.00	\$190.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$100,001 to \$150,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$3,465.00	\$3,700.00	\$235.00	6.8%	Non-statutory	F
\$150,001 to \$200,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$4,620.00	\$5,000.00	\$380.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$200,001 to \$250,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$5,775.00	\$6,300.00	\$525.00	9.1%	Non-statutory	F
\$250,001 to \$300,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$6,352.50	\$6,900.00	\$547.50	8.6%	Non-statutory	F
> \$300,000	Per Application	Taxable		Large Projects Negotiable	Large Projects Negotiable	-	-	Non-statutory	F
<b>Item 3 Class 1A Dwellings - Extensions/ Alterations (including Demolitions)</b>									
Up to \$10,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$1,732.50	\$1,900.00	\$167.50	9.7%	Non-statutory	F
\$10,001 to \$20,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$2,310.00	\$2,500.00	\$190.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$20,001 to \$50,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$3,465.00	\$3,700.00	\$235.00	6.8%	Non-statutory	F
\$50,001 to \$100,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$4,620.00	\$5,000.00	\$380.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$100,001 to \$150,001	Per Application	Taxable		\$5,775.00	\$6,300.00	\$525.00	9.1%	Non-statutory	F
> \$150,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$6,352.50	\$6,900.00	\$547.50	8.6%	Non-statutory	F
<b>Item 4 Class 1A Dwellings - Internal Alterations/ Minor Works</b>									
Up to \$10,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$1,732.50	\$1,900.00	\$167.50	9.7%	Non-statutory	F
\$10,001 to \$20,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$2,310.00	\$2,500.00	\$190.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$20,001 to \$50,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$3,465.00	\$3,700.00	\$235.00	6.8%	Non-statutory	F
\$50,001 to \$100,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$4,620.00	\$5,000.00	\$380.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
> \$100,000	Per Application	Taxable		\$5,775.00	\$6,300.00	\$525.00	9.1%	Non-statutory	F



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Item 5 Class 10A/10B Minor Works - Garages, Carports, Pools, Fences, etc									
Up to \$5,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$1,732.50	\$1,900.00	\$167.50	9.7%	Non-statutory	F
\$5,001 to \$10,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$2,310.00	\$2,500.00	\$190.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$10,001 to \$20,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$3,465.00	\$3,700.00	\$235.00	6.8%	Non-statutory	F
\$20,001 to \$50,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$4,620.00	\$5,000.00	\$380.00	8.2%	Non-statutory	F
\$50,001 to \$100,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$5,775.00	\$6,300.00	\$525.00	9.1%	Non-statutory	F
> \$100,000		Per Application	Taxable	\$6,352.50	\$6,900.00	\$547.50	8.6%	Non-statutory	F
Item 7 Sundry Any Additional Inspections									
Domestic		Per Application	Taxable	\$500.00	\$550.00	\$50.00	10.0%	Non-statutory	F
Commercial		Per Application	Taxable	\$500.00	\$550.00	\$50.00	10.0%	Non-statutory	F
Pools and spas registration & compliance									
Registration fees		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$35.10	\$35.10	-	-	Statutory	R
Search fee		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$52.10	\$52.10	-	-	Statutory	R
Lodgement of certificate for pool barrier compliance		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$22.50	\$22.50	-	-	Statutory	R
Lodgement of certificate for pool barrier non-compliance		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$424.80	\$424.80	-	-	Statutory	R
Regulation 45(1) Lodgement Fees under section 30 of the Act and clause 1(d) of Schedule 2 to the Act		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$134.40	\$134.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Building Certificate Fees		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$52.10	\$52.10	-	-	Statutory	R
Regulation 52 Fees for Requests for Information under Regulation 51(1), 51(2) or 51(3) of the Regulations		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$52.10	\$52.10	-	-	Statutory	R
Additional Building Fees									
Regulation 38 - Maximum Fee for Report and Consent		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$83.90	\$83.90	-	-	Statutory	R
(1) Under section 28A of the Act									

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
(2) Permit referred under Parts 8 or 10 or under Regulation 132(1) or 134(2)		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$320.20	\$320.20	-	-	Statutory	R
(2A) Permit referred under Part 5		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$448.30	\$448.30	-	-	Statutory	R
(3) Permit referred under regulation 118(4)		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$325.00	\$325.00	-	-	Statutory	R
(4) Permit referred under regulation 133(2) (Legal Point of Discharge)		Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$231.40	\$231.40	-	-	Statutory	R
Amendment and/or extension of Building Permits, Amendment of Approved Plans		Per Application	Taxable	\$262.50	\$262.50	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Building Notice - Administration Fee		Per Application	Taxable	min \$250 + double building permit fee if applicable	min \$250 + double building permit fee if applicable	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Building Order - Administration Fee		Per Application	Taxable	min \$250 + double building permit fee if applicable	min \$250 + double building permit fee if applicable	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Temporary Structure Siting Approval		Per Application	Taxable	\$420.00	\$450.00	\$30.00	7.1%	Non-statutory	F
Temporary Structure Siting Approval - Community Activity		Per Application	Taxable	\$262.50	\$275.00	\$12.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	F
Places of Public Entertainment Occupancy Permit		Per Application	Taxable	\$388.50	\$410.00	\$21.50	5.5%	Non-statutory	F
Low Risk (less than 5,000 people)		Per Application	Taxable	\$1,333.50	\$1,400.00	\$66.50	5.0%	Non-statutory	F
Medium Risk (more than 5,000 but less than 15,000 people)		Per Application	Taxable	\$2,625.00	\$4,400.00	\$1,775.00	67.6%	Non-statutory	F
High Risk (more than 15,000 people)		Per Permit	Taxable	\$68.25	\$71.00	\$2.75	4.0%	Non-statutory	F
Provide Copy of Building Permit or Occupancy Permit (with owners consent)		Per Permit	Taxable	\$68.25	\$71.00	\$2.75	4.0%	Non-statutory	F
Provide Copy of Building Permit including plans (with owners consent)		Per Application	Taxable	\$500.00	\$550.00	\$50.00	10.0%	Non-statutory	F
Additional Inspection Fee - eg. for non-compliance		Per Application	Taxable	\$500.00	\$550.00	\$50.00	10.0%	Non-statutory	F
Additional Inspection Fee - Lapsed Permits		Per Application	Taxable	\$500.00	\$550.00	\$50.00	10.0%	Non-statutory	F
Essential Services Determination Report		Per Hour	Taxable	\$262.50	\$275.00	\$12.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	F
Reports other		Per Hour	Taxable	\$262.50	\$275.00	\$12.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	F
Request for Building Permits / Occupancy Certificate or Plans		Per Permit	Taxable	\$68.25	\$71.00	\$2.75	4.0%	Non-statutory	F

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Administration Fee (Change to a Permit Application)		Per Application	Taxable	25% of current fee	25% of current fee	-	-	Non-statutory	F
<b>Maternal &amp; Child Health</b>									
Immunisation Charges		Per Item	Non-Taxable	\$28.00	\$28.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Breast Pump Hire		Per Hire	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Meningococcal B vaccine		Per Dose	Taxable	-	\$130.00	\$130.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	F
<b>Waste Management</b>									
Transfer Station Charges									
Air conditioners, Refrigerators, Freezers - Ararat and Lake Bolac only		Per Item	Taxable	Free if de-gassed	Free if de-gassed	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Aluminium, brass, copper, steel, scrap metals		Per Item	Taxable	Free	Free	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Batteries (lead acid vehicle batteries)		Per Item	Taxable	Free	Free	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Chemical containers (drumMUSTER) triple rinse or pressure wash, dry, no lids		Per Item	Taxable	Free	Free	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Oil (waste automotive oil domestic quantities only)		Per Item (max 20L)	Taxable	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$2.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
Other recyclables (mixed/commingled): Cans, cardboard, glass bottles, drink cartons, paper, milk containers, plastics numbered 1-7		Per Load (240L bin or max 3m³)	Taxable	\$10.00	\$10.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Building or commercial waste		Per Cubic Metre (max 3m³)	Taxable	\$70.00	\$70.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Concrete/bricks (uncontaminated) - Ararat only.		Per Cubic Metre (max 3m³)	Taxable	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$10.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
E-Waste per item or bag of mixed items (eg. TVs, DVDs, PCs, printers) Ararat only		Per Item/Bag	Taxable	\$10.00	\$10.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Small		Per Item/Bag	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Medium		Per Item/Bag	Taxable	\$30.00	\$30.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Large		Per Item/Bag	Taxable	\$30.00	\$30.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST	2025/26 Fee Inc GST	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
				\$	\$	\$	%		
Extra-Large Photocopiers		Per Item/ Bag	Taxable	\$50.00	\$50.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Gas bottles		Per Item	Taxable	\$50.00	\$50.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
General waste (household/domestic and contaminated green waste):		Per Item	Taxable	\$10.00	\$10.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
120 Litre Bin		Per Load	Taxable	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$2.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
240 Litre bin		Per Load	Taxable	\$12.00	\$15.00	\$3.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
Car boot load		Per Load	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Single axle trailer / utility		Per Load	Taxable	\$30.00	\$30.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Tandem axle trailer		Per Load	Taxable	\$40.00	\$40.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Truck load		Per Cubic Metre (max 3m³)	Taxable	\$30.00	\$30.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Green waste (uncontaminated):		Per Load	Taxable	\$15.00	\$15.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Minimum load / car boot		Per Load	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Single axle trailer / utility		Per Load	Taxable	\$25.00	\$25.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Tandem axle trailer		Per Cubic Metre	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Mattresses:		Per Item	Taxable	\$30.00	\$50.00	\$20.00	66.7%	Non-statutory	P
Single mattress or smaller		Per Item	Taxable	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$10.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
Double / queen / king		Per Item	Taxable	\$15.00	\$15.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Tyres (not taken in commercial quantities, add \$3.00 per tyre if on rim):		Per Item	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Motor cycle		Per Item	Taxable	\$20.00	\$20.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Cars		Per Item	Taxable	\$30.00	\$30.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Light truck		Per Item	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Heavy truck		Per Item	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Super single		Per Item	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Small tractor / grader (up to 1m diameter)		Per Item	Taxable	\$140.00	\$140.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Large tractor (more than 1m diameter)		Per Item	Taxable	\$250.00	\$250.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Earth movers (# obtain price from site staff- dependant on tyre size).		Per Item	Taxable	as determined	as determined	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Non-residential – Optional Waste Collection Services									
Garbage – 140 Litre		Per Bin	Non-Taxable	\$520.00	\$538.00	\$18.00	3.1%	Non-statutory	P
Recycle – 240 Litre		Per Bin	Non-Taxable	\$440.00	\$453.00	\$13.00	3.0%	Non-statutory	P
Glass – 80 Litre		Per Bin	Non-Taxable	\$88.00	\$70.00	\$2.00	2.9%	Non-statutory	P
Organics – 240 Litre		Per Bin	Non-Taxable	\$440.00	\$453.00	\$13.00	3.0%	Non-statutory	P
Community Safety (Local Laws)									
State Government Animal Levy (included in Registrations)									
Dog		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$4.39	\$4.51	\$0.12	2.7%	Statutory	R
Cat		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$4.39	\$4.51	\$0.12	2.7%	Statutory	R
Dog Registrations									
Dogs (within category of reduced fee - prescribed by Act)		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$40.00	\$42.00	\$2.00	5.0%	Non-statutory	P
with Pensioner Concession		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$20.00	\$21.00	\$1.00	5.0%	Non-statutory	P
Dogs full fee		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$125.00	\$131.00	\$6.00	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
with Pensioner Concession		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$62.50	\$65.50	\$3.00	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
Restricted breed/declared menacing/dangerous		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$200.00	\$250.00	\$50.00	25.0%	Non-statutory	P
Cat Registrations									
Cats (within category of reduced fee - prescribed by Act)		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$35.00	\$36.00	\$1.00	2.9%	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
with Pensioner Concession		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$17.50	\$18.00	\$0.50	2.8%	Non-statutory	P
	Cats full fee	Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$100.00	\$108.00	\$8.00	8.0%	Non-statutory	P
	with Pensioner Concession	Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$50.00	\$54.00	\$4.00	8.0%	Non-statutory	P
Domestic Animal Business Registrations		Per Business	Non-Taxable	\$275.00	\$280.00	\$5.00	1.8%	Non-statutory	P
Registered Community Foster Care Network Registration		Per Person	Non-Taxable	\$15.00	\$15.50	\$0.50	3.3%	Non-statutory	P
Pound Fees		Per Animal	Non-Taxable	\$128 first day, plus \$36.00 for each additional day	\$128 first day, plus \$36.00 for each additional day	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Replacement dog/cat registration tags		Per Tag	Non-Taxable	\$15.00	\$15.00	-	-	Non-statutory	F
Parking Fines		Per Infraction	Non-Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Local Laws Permit Fees, Charges and Bonds Schedule 10									
NALL15, Burning of materials		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$28.25	\$28.00	\$1.75	6.7%	Non-statutory	P
NALL63 Lighting fires		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$157.50	\$166.00	\$7.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
NALL28, Motorbikes and Motorised Recreation Vehicles		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$52.50	\$55.00	\$2.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
Bond if required to protect Council asset (refundable)		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined	as determined	-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL39, Advertising signs		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined	as determined	-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL60, Activity within a Municipal Reserve - Permitted Activities		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50	\$75.00	\$1.50	2.0%	Non-statutory	P
NALL62, Camping Prohibited on Council Land		Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$78.75	\$80.00	\$1.25	1.6%	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
			Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Inc GST	\$	\$	%		
NALL18, Camping on Private Property	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$78.75		\$80.00		\$1.25	1.6%	Non-statutory	P
NALL64 Filming on Council Land	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$131.25		\$135.00		\$3.75	2.8%	Non-statutory	P
NALL65, Parking on Municipal Reserve	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined		as determined		-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL22, Keeping animals	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$52.50		\$54.00		\$1.50	2.8%	Non-statutory	P
or for life of animal or time kept at property	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$282.50		\$270.00		\$7.50	2.6%	Non-statutory	P
NALL43, Drainage tapping and Discharging Groundwater	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined		as determined		-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL45, Constructing a Vehicle Crossings	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50		\$75.00		\$1.50	2.0%	Non-statutory	P
Bond if required to protect/reinstate asset (refundable)	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined		as determined		-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL41, Collections	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50		\$75.00		\$1.50	2.0%	Non-statutory	P
Registered charities, religious or not for profit groups	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	-		-		-	-	Non-statutory	Z
NALL34, Roadside Trading or Performing	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$136.50		\$140.00		\$3.50	2.6%	Non-statutory	P
NALL38, Display of Goods for Sale	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$63.00		\$65.00		\$2.00	3.2%	Non-statutory	P
NALL37, Use of Council Land for Outdoor Eating Facilities - 3 tables & 12 chairs	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50		\$75.00		\$1.50	2.0%	Non-statutory	P
plus extra table & 4 chairs	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$28.25		\$27.00		\$0.75	2.6%	Non-statutory	P
plus place menu board	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$36.75		\$38.00		\$1.25	3.4%	Non-statutory	P
NALL27, Place bulk rubbish container	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50		\$76.00		\$2.50	3.4%	Non-statutory	P
each subsequent 7 days	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$31.50		\$33.00		\$1.50	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
NALL50, Occupation of Roads	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$68.25		\$70.00		\$1.75	2.6%	Non-statutory	P
Bond if required to protect/reinstate assets (refundable)	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined		as determined		-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL33, Street Parties & Street Festivals	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$73.50		\$75.00		\$1.50	2.0%	Non-statutory	P
NALL31, Heavy or Long Vehicles on a Road or Private Property	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$157.50		\$160.00		\$2.50	1.6%	Non-statutory	P
NALL48, Asset protection Generally	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$131.25		\$160.00		\$28.75	21.9%	Non-statutory	P
Bond if required to protect/reinstate asset (refundable)	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	as determined		as determined		-	-	Non-statutory	P
NALL19, Shipping Containers	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$75.00		\$80.00				Non-statutory	P



Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
			Fee Inc	GST	Fee Inc	GST	\$	%		
NALL30, Derelict, Abandoned and Unregistered Vehicles	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$75.00		\$80.00				Non-statutory	P
NALL32, Storing of Vehicles	Per Permit	Non-Taxable	\$75.00		\$80.00				Non-statutory	P
Fire Prevention Notice Contractor appointment administration fee	Per Notice	Taxable	\$183.75		\$185.00		\$1.25	0.7%	Non-statutory	P
Schedule 13 Permit to Burn	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$105.00		\$110.00		\$5.00	4.8%	Non-statutory	P
<b>Alexandra Oval Reserve</b>										
Ground Hire - Community Group Local										
Full Day Rate	Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$68.00		\$68.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Pre Season Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$68.00		\$68.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Commercial Group - more than 4 hrs	Per Hire	Taxable	\$350.00		\$350.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Commercial Group - half day rate	Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00		\$200.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Football Finals	Per Hire	Taxable	\$400.00		\$400.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Netball Courts - Community Group Local										
Full Day Rate	Per Hire	Taxable	\$80.00		\$80.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$50.00		\$50.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Pre Season Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$50.00		\$50.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Junior Clinics (SSA Provider)	Per Hire	Taxable	-		-		-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Group Fitness (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$50.00		\$50.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
Lights towers (Casual User - per hour)										
1 x tower	Per Hour	Taxable	\$20.00		\$20.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
2 x towers	Per Hour	Taxable	\$40.00		\$40.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P
4 x towers	Per Hour	Taxable	\$80.00		\$80.00		-	-	Non-statutory	P



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
6 x towers		Per Hour	Taxable	\$120.00	\$120.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Change rooms (Fiscalini pavilion)									
Training Session - half day up to four hours		Per Hire	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Full day more than four hours		Per Hour	Taxable	\$140.00	\$140.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Junior Clinics (SSA Provider)		Per Hire	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Group Fitness		Per Hire	Taxable	\$80.00	\$80.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Pre/post event inspection service		Per Hire	Taxable	\$100.00	\$100.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Canteen		Per Hire	Taxable	\$70.00	\$70.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Function Centre									
Community Group Local									
Day		Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00	\$200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)		Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00	\$100.00	-\$100.00	(50.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Evening		Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00	\$200.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)		Per Hire	Taxable	\$200.00	\$100.00	-\$100.00	(50.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Commercial/ Private									
Day		Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00	\$500.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)		Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00	\$200.00	-\$300.00	(60.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Evening		Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00	\$500.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)		Per Hire	Taxable	\$500.00	\$200.00	-\$300.00	(60.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Meeting Room									
Casual Community Group Local		Per Hire	Taxable	\$50.00	\$50.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)		Per Hire	Taxable	\$50.00	\$25.00	-\$25.00	(50.0%)	Non-statutory	P
Commercial/ Private		Per Hire	Taxable	\$125.00	\$125.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST	2025/26 Fee Inc GST	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Per Hire	Taxable	\$125.00	\$75.00	-\$50.00	40.0%	Non-statutory	P
<b>Asset Management</b>								
Road Discontinuance Fee	Per Application	Taxable	\$750.00	\$750.00	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Work Within Municipal Road Reserves								
Works within carriageway or pathway >50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$703.80	\$703.80	-	-	Statutory	R
Works within carriageway or pathway >50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$527.90	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Works within carriageway or pathway ≤ 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$383.80	\$383.80	-	-	Statutory	R
Works within carriageway or pathway ≤ 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$287.90	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Minor works within carriageway or pathway >50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$151.90	\$151.90	-	-	Statutory	R
Minor works within carriageway or pathway >50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$113.90	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Minor works within carriageway or pathway ≤ 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$151.90	\$151.90	-	-	Statutory	R
Minor works within carriageway or pathway ≤ 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$113.90	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Works within the verge > 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$383.80	\$383.80	-	-	Statutory	R
Works within the verge > 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$287.90	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Works within the verge ≤ 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$98.00	\$98.00	-	-	Statutory	R
Works within the verge ≤ 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$73.50	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Minor works within the verge > 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$98.00	\$98.00	-	-	Statutory	R
Minor works within the verge > 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$73.50	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P
Minor works within the verge ≤ 50km/h (statutory)*	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$98.00	\$98.00	-	-	Statutory	R
Minor works within the verge ≤ 50km/h (council)	Per Application	Non-Taxable	\$73.50	75% of statutory fee	-	-	Non-statutory	P

\*Statutory fees apply if council conditions are not met

Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
<b>Ararat Fitness Centre</b>									
Casual Visit									
Adult Swim		Per User	Taxable	\$6.00	\$6.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$5.00	\$5.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Child Swim		Per User	Taxable	\$4.50	\$4.50	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Family Swim		Per User	Taxable	\$16.00	\$16.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Sauna & Spa		Per User	Taxable	\$5.00	\$5.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Sauna & Spa Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$4.50	\$4.50	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Wet Area Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$8.00	\$8.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Gym		Per User	Taxable	\$13.00	\$13.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Gym Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$11.00	\$8.00	-\$3.00	(27.3%)	Non-statutory	M
Full Centre Direct Debit									
Adult		Per User	Taxable	\$17.50	\$17.50	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$15.00	\$15.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Family		Per User	Taxable	\$45.00	\$45.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Family Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$39.00	\$39.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Joining Fee		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Aquatic Only or Gym Only Prepaid									
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 12 month		Per User	Taxable	\$450.00	\$450.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 12 month Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$225.00	\$225.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 6 month		Per User	Taxable	\$203.00	\$203.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 6 month Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$113.00	\$113.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 3 month		Per User	Taxable	\$101.00	\$101.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only 3 month Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$37.00	\$37.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST \$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Aquatic Only or Gym Only Lessons term		Per User	Taxable	\$125.00	\$125.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only Direct Debit									
Aquatic Only or Gym Only Direct Debit		Per User	Taxable	\$12.00	\$12.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Aquatic Only or Gym Only Direct Debit Teen/Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$11.00	\$11.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Swim Lesson Direct Debit		Per User	Taxable	\$14.00	\$14.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
10 Visit Pass									
Adult Swim		Per User	Taxable	\$55.00	\$55.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Adult Swim Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$45.00	\$45.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Child Swim		Per User	Taxable	\$40.00	\$40.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Spa and Sauna		Per User	Taxable	\$45.00	\$45.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Spa and Sauna Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$41.00	\$41.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Wet Area Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$72.00	\$72.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Gym		Per User	Taxable	\$120.00	\$120.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Group Fitness - Gym Concession		Per User	Taxable	\$7.00	\$7.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Outdoor Pools Season Pass									
Adult		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Child		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Family		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Outdoor Pool Casual									
Adult		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Child		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Family		Per User	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Hire Fees									
Swimming Lane Hire		Per Lane Per Hour	Taxable	\$35.00	\$35.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
Swim Instructor		Per Hour	Taxable	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$5.00	11.1%	Non-statutory	M



Description of Fees and Charges		Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST	2025/26 Fee Inc GST	Fee Increase / (Decrease) \$	Fee Increase / (Decrease) %	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Life Guard		Per Hour	Taxable	\$45.00	\$50.00	\$5.00	11.1%	Non-statutory	M
	Basketball Court Hire (casual)	Per Court Per Hour	Taxable	\$40.00	\$40.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
	Basketball Court Hire (regular)	Per Court Per Hour	Taxable	\$38.00	\$38.00	-	-	Non-statutory	M
<b>Gordon Street Reserve</b>									
AFL Oval Ground Hire - Community Group Local									
	Full Day Rate	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$200.00	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$88.00	\$88.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Pre Season Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$88.00	\$88.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Football Pitch (x2) Ground Hire - Community Group Local									
	Full Day Rate	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$200.00	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$88.00	\$88.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Pre Season Training Session (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$88.00	\$88.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Commercial Group - more than 4 hrs (Both ovals)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$400.00	\$400.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Commercial Group - half day rate (both ovals)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$250.00	\$250.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Finals - per oval/pitch	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$400.00	\$400.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Junior Clinics (SSA Provider)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
	Group Fitness (2 Hrs)	Per Hire	Taxable	-	\$50.00	\$50.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	Athletics Line Marking	Per Event	Taxable	-	\$100.00	\$100.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Lights towers (Football) (Casual User - per hour)									
	1 x tower	Per Hour	Taxable	-	\$20.00	\$20.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
	2 x towers	Per Hour	Taxable	-	\$40.00	\$40.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges			2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25 Fee Inc GST	2024/25 GST	\$	2025/26 Fee Inc GST	2025/26 GST	\$	%		
4 x towers	Taxable	-	-	\$80.00	-	-	\$80.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Change rooms										
Training Session - half day up to four hours	Taxable	-	-	\$80.00	-	-	\$80.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Full day more than four hours	Taxable	-	-	\$140.00	-	-	\$140.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Junior Clinics (SSA Provider)	Taxable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Non-statutory	Z
Group Fitness	Taxable	-	-	\$80.00	-	-	\$80.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Pre/post event inspection service	Taxable	-	-	\$100.00	-	-	\$100.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Community Rooms										
Community Group Local	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Day	Taxable	-	-	\$100.00	-	-	\$100.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Evening	Taxable	-	-	\$100.00	-	-	\$100.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$500.00	-	-	\$500.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Commercial/ Private	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Day	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$500.00	-	-	\$500.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Evening	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$200.00	-	-	\$200.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Meeting Room (AFL Office)										
Casual Community Group Local	Taxable	-	-	\$50.00	-	-	\$50.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$25.00	-	-	\$25.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Commercial/ Private	Taxable	-	-	\$125.00	-	-	\$125.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P
Half Day (less than 3 hours)	Taxable	-	-	\$75.00	-	-	\$75.00	100.0%	Non-statutory	P

Description of Fees and Charges	Unit of Measure	GST Status	2024/25		2025/26		Fee Increase / (Decrease)		Basis of Fee	Pricing Basis
			Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Inc GST	\$	Fee Increase / (Decrease)	%		



Ararat Rural City

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





## Budget 2025/26 Community Consultation Summary

### Summary of Discussions During the Community Consultation Sessions

#### Ararat:

- Question was asked about what was happening with the A&J McDonald Centre, they would like to see the Centre refurbished so that it could be used. Response provided during the Engagement Session was that there had been inspections completed in 2009 that found the building did not meet the current standards for essential services and occupant safety. The cost to refurbish the building to make it compliant to current standards is significant. Council have identified the McDonald Centre as an advocacy priority for 2025.
- Other non-budget queries were discussed, these were noted by the Council officers for follow up.

#### Buangor:

- Attendees had questions about the Cobb & Co building works and the Buangor-Ben Nevis Road project. Other potential building works were also discussed.

#### Elmhurst:

- Council representatives presented budget highlights, the rising costs to operate necessitating the 1.5% rate increase and the proposed closure of the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations due to these becoming financially unviable.
- Attendees were against the closure of the Elmhurst Transfer Station.
- Community members discussed the distance to Ararat being a 70km round trip, which would cost them in fuel and generate emissions.
- Concerns around illegal rubbish dumping were raised. It was discussed that this was an issue everywhere and already happening in places that had transfer stations as well as places without them.
- One resident was not able to access the kerbside bin collection service and queried what the closure of the Transfer Station would mean for them. Council are liaising with the resident directly on possible solutions.
- Council provided details on the usage and costs of running the Elmhurst Transfer Station. This station received 3.6 tonnes of waste in 12 months. The gross cost to run the Station was \$18,518 and income from fees and charges was \$1,820, resulting in a net operating cost of \$16,698.
- Feedback was provided that the height of the skip bins made it challenging to dispose of waste into the bins.
- Some local residents had large volumes of waste they needed to dispose of but they could only transport waste in the boot of their car, so a closure of the local Transfer Station would

mean multiple trips into Ararat or other Transfer Stations. The option of hiring a skip bin for one-off large volumes of waste was suggested as being more economical for larger volumes.

- The community proposed a compromise of keeping the Transfer Station open one day per week, preferably on Sunday afternoons, to reduce costs for Council while still enabling them to access this service locally.
- The Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) was discussed and how this would severely financially impact on rate payers. The impact on Council if residents chose to simply not pay the ESVF was queried. The response provided was that Council would still be required to pay a proportion of its income from ratepayers to the State Government, even if ratepayers refused to pay the ESVF portion of their rates.
- Roads that were priorities for the Elmhurst community were discussed. It was acknowledged that the grading of gravel roads has been impacted by the lack of water available for these works.
- Other non-budget queries were discussed, these were noted by the Council officer for follow up.

#### **Lake Bolac:**

- Council representatives presented budget highlights, the rising costs to operate necessitating the 1.5% rate increase and the proposed closure of the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations due to these becoming financially unviable.
- Question was asked about different types of glass for the glass recycling bin. The reason why some glass is allowed and others, like window glass, is currently not is because of the different melting temperatures of the glass during the recycling process.
- There was a query about how to buy smaller amounts of compost. This will be considered by Council separately to the annual budget process.
- An attendee asked about disposing of large quantities of sump oil since the limit at the transfer stations is 20 litres. Options for coordinating a sump oil collection run between multiple sites was discussed.
- There was strong support for the continuation of the free pools.
- The need to replace the solar heating system for the pool was raised. This will be followed up as a maintenance request.
- The need for a road upgrade at an approx 300m section of Chatsworth-Wickliffe Road that was in very poor condition was raised. The road is also too narrow for agricultural vehicles.
- Other non-budget queries were discussed, these were noted by the Council officer for follow up.

#### **Moyston:**

- Council representatives presented budget highlights, the rising costs to operate necessitating the 1.5% rate increase and the proposed closure of the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations due to these becoming financially unviable.
- Concerns about the impact of the closure of the Moyston Transfer Station on illegal rubbish dumping was discussed. It was acknowledged this issue is a problem already.
- Issues around the disposal of larger items that do not fit into the kerbside bins and the frequency of needing to dispose of these was discussed. The larger items were not a weekly requirement.

- There would need to be a provision for larger amounts of waste during and after an emergency, such as bushfire or flood where residents may need to dispose of damaged items.
- There was discussion around the graduate and cadet appointments and development of a trades apprenticeship program that commenced in the previous financial year. Council are still employing graduates, cadets and trainees in this upcoming budget.
- The Community Support Grants vs sponsorships was discussed, and whether infrastructure funding could be considered in future.
- Road works was discussed, the OTTA seal received positive feedback.
- The need for a disabled toilet for visitors was mentioned.

**Pomonal:**

- A question was asked about their options for the closure of the Pomonal Transfer Station. Their waste needs were discussed and it was suggested that they could opt to have a second kerbside bin. They were happy with this option because it meant they did not need to load the waste into their car and travel.

**Tatyoona:**

- No attendees

**Willaura:**

- Council representatives presented budget highlights, the rising costs to operate necessitating the 1.5% rate increase and the proposed closure of the Elmhurst, Moyston, Pomonal and Willaura Transfer Stations due to these becoming financially unviable.
- Concerns were raised about the disposal of bigger pieces of rubbish if the Willaura Transfer Station were to close. This was already happening around Willaura, leading to properties that look like old car yards.
- Council explained that they are unable to force people to remove large items from their property, but can issue fire prevention notices if there were large numbers of flammable material.
- Promotion of arts in Willaura and a possible arts trail via Beaufort, Ararat, Willaura, Dunkeld and Glenthompson was suggested.
- There was strong support for the continuation of the free pools.

## Summary of Phone Conversations

Caller 1 - This conversation occurred over multiple phone calls due to follow ups.

Caller was concerned about how the closure of the Elmhurst Transfer Station would effect older people in the town. There had been an older person from Elmhurst who had a fatal car accident while travelling to Ararat for groceries within the past couple of years. The caller did not want to see older people forced to make extra trips into town if they did not have to. The option of having a second kerbside bin was suggested to reduce the need to travel to a transfer station. They were also concerned about people's mental health if they experienced barriers to getting rid of their rubbish waste and it built up.



The reason for the proposed closure was discussed, including the gross costs, income and net costs that is covered by rates.

There were different types of waste items that are generated on farm properties that can't go into the kerbside bins, including oils, batteries, metal parts. The frequency that this waste needs to be disposed of was discussed. The caller said they go to the Elmhurst Transfer Station regularly, but they suggested they could work around a reduced schedule for the opening hours, such as once a week, once a fortnight or even once a month.

They preferred a during the week rather than the weekend.

It was identified during the conversation that the caller had a fortnightly kerbside garbage collection, which meant they lived in the Pyrenees Shire. The rates that they pay goes to the Pyrenees Shire Council whereas Ararat Rural City Council operates the Elmhurst Transfer Station. This also meant that the caller's rates did not contribute to the cost of running the Elmhurst Transfer Station, only the fees and charges that they pay at the gates. Elmhurst is on the border of two local government areas, so there would be many others from the Elmhurst region who reside in the Pyrenees Shire as well.

The caller read a number of Facebook posts. The comments from these posts include:

They felt they receive very little services out here for the rates they pay

There are some people who only come to Elmhurst on weekends so they can't put their bins out for the kerbside collection and put them away again.

The caller asked for details on how many people use the Elmhurst Transfer Station at the moment. This information was not able to be found during the phone call, the answer is provided in the Council Report.

#### Caller 2

Caller saw a notice in the local community to call Council if they objected to the closure of the Elmhurst Transfer Station.

They use the tip frequently for domestic rubbish and recycling, and also the DRUMmuster program, that's an essential part of their operations. They have disposed of quite a few chemical drums and it's a very convenient and handy outlet. They don't need to drive far. They also use the tip for getting rid of metal and fencing material that was damaged due to flooding. They said they don't fully understand what the problem is with keeping it there.

Elmhurst is isolated as far as tip goes. They would have to travel 34 kms to Ararat to dispose of their waste.

Elmhurst has had the closure of the local store, local hotel, it's just another nail in the coffin for their district.

The cost of running the Elmhurst Transfer Station vs the income generated and the decreasing financial viability of the station was discussed, and they understood the challenges of this decision.



The caller was asked how often they disposed of chemical drums. They said they have an accumulation on the farm in a container and they dispose of them when it gets full, which was around four times a year.

Disposal of metals in normal year (no floods or bushfires) was infrequent, probably once a year or ad hoc.

The caller said that having things close down makes a small community life less viable. The town needs more support to get more community life.

### Feedback submitted online via Engage Ararat

To whom it might concern,

I would love to see more meeting spaces in Ararat in a non commercial environment. I am from Italy and I miss so much our squares which are places which every neighborhood has got usually around some cultural and historical landmarks. They are big open pedestrian-only spaces with a lot of trees and natural shade where people from every generation meet - you see kids kicking the ball, the elderly chatting sitting on benches, teenagers walking and chatting. I envision something similar to Alexandra gardens in a smaller scale but in every neighborhood. A safe and well shaded hub with maybe a food stall and no other commercial intent.

Some ideas, though different contexts:

-Playing in the square:

[https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10154920312402555&id=18429207554](https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10154920312402555&id=18429207554)

-People at eating places at the square (4th picture): <https://urbanpitch.com/genoa-the-best-football-city-you-havent-been-to-yet/>

This could be easily implemented in already existing areas where playgrounds are, though with more natural shade through trees, plus sitting spots and tables. This can also be implemented while creating affordable houses, for example having courtyards/meeting places in the middle of compounds / townhouses, something similar to this example:

<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/cityscape-of-a-residential-area-with-modern-apartment-buildings-new-green-and-gm1451442656-488126584>

Having more greenery meeting / multipurpose places fosters connections, safety, multigenerational contacts, improves people's physical and mental health, the environment and better and more affordable houses.

This could be tied up with having rooftop solar by default and community batteries, and bicycle tracks and parking. On the long run also electric car shares could be part of the compound and the whole community.

All in all, it is a vision of a more resilient and connected community, not just a dormitory.

<p>With thanks, [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>Another idea that I really really would love to see in Ararat is: weekly fruit and vegetable local markets in town: a hub where small local producers can sell and exchange produce and also create a seed saving bank. The latter could be done in collaboration with the Neighborhood house as well a bulk buying group.</p> <p>I think it is important to have fruit and veggies shops but even more so local markets that can provide essential products. I mainly saw second hand trinkets at the local monthly market which I find deeply unsatisfactory.</p> <p>However, this can be better achieved with CSA (community supported agriculture) where small biodiverse organic farms can sell directly to the public (from their farms or from the local market), making food more affordable and farmer's income more stable. And create new jobs for the younger generations.</p>
<p>In relation to the ARCC Draft Budget, here is my submission:</p> <p>1. I have concerns about the Moyston tip permanently closing for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of community consultation. Suggest a ARCC representative address the community to inform properly.</li> <li>- Removing waste facility from farmers and small businesses owners to utilise for waste too big for bins. Suggest cutting open times to once or twice a month instead of a permanent removal of service.</li> <li>- Likely increase in illegal rubbish dumping. Suggest a percentage of funds saved from transfer station reductions go towards mitigating rubbish dumping in our beautiful nature reserves.</li> </ul> <p>2. The omission of toilet upgrades at the Moyston Recreation Reserve is disappointing. Suggest ARCC perhaps work with the Moyston community in helping make the upgrades to the outdated toilet block eventuate.</p> <p>Thank you for reading. [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>Waste Management This service provides for collection and processing of four materials streams from household collection: general waste, mixed recyclables, glass, and green organics. Council has committed to local processing where possible. Council has local processing of green organics and glass at the Ararat Transfer Station. To achieve budget efficiencies and maintain low rates, Council will consolidate waste services by closing the Willaura, Elmhurst, Moyston and Pomonal Transfer Stations on 30 June 2025. Declining usage alongside ongoing operational costs render the sites no longer financially viable. Ararat and Lake Bolac Transfer Stations will remain open to serve the community's needs.</p> <p>* Figures suggest minimal "financial benefit gained" by closing Willaura, Elmhurst, Moyston and Pomonal.</p> <p>* Lake Bolac and Ararat transfer stations too far away from the towns that utilize the 'closing transfer stations'. Ratepayers would have to travel considerable distance and incur considerable expense. Some of these Ratepayers being older community members, farmers and people who rely upon others for assistance in removing items from their property for disposal. (ie) wire, green waste, old tyres, car batteries, gas bottles and hard rubbish. Basically, items that cannot be placed</p>

into the kerbside bins .

\* Items may end up remaining on properties, becoming both eyesores and hazards to all.

\* Removing access to a 'local transfer station' will also be removing yet another piece of infrastructure from a struggling town. (Elmhurst). As property owners here, we personally own two properties and regularly use the Elmhurst Transfer station to dispose of rubbish and associated items that have been lying dormant on our properties for years prior to us acquiring them. Believe it or not, the fact the Transfer station is here was a factor that we considered positively when we decided to purchase here, roughly 8 years ago!

\* We would be extremely disappointed if the Elmhurst Transfer Station closes, and would view it as further evidence that the Rural City of Ararat is not interested in the viability of this township.

Regards,

[Personal information removed for privacy]

Good Morning,

I refer to your recent Moyston Engagement Meeting regarding your draft budget.

Closing the Moyston Transfer Station is a major blow to our local community, residents, farmers and property owners.

Our community has suffered great losses over the last 16 months and to also here that there will be a 1.5% rate increase as well.

As our Community Council we would expect much more loyalty instead of bringing more financial burdens to an already struggling community.

Perhaps the key is for better transparency and organisation of a meeting with the community after 5pm, when we would have the opportunity to attend and address your changes.

Kind Regards

[Personal information removed for privacy]

Dear Councillors

As a Moyston resident, property owner and who is environmentally conscious, the closure of the Moyston transfer station is undesirable.

This impacts the whole community including farmers who rely on this service.

This would add traffic to Ararat taking our rubbish that potentially could increase unnecessary hazards on the roads including the township, it would certainly increase the amount of rubbish pile at the Ararat transfer station.

Our time is valuable and for farmers time is money. The time taken to drive to Ararat, then I can imagine the long waiting queues at the station and the drive back home.



Our rates have increased and yet services in our area have decreased.

I've personally have waiting for months the council workers to slash the grass on the AFL monument side of the fence.

With the recent bushfire, I would have thought the council workers would be vigilant and slash the dried grass closest to my property that if sparked would impact my property.

But my the point is Moyston is left out and as a small community we have a lot to offer being mid point for travellers as a stop over, various events at the oval to name a couple.

Closing the transfer station is a blow to our farming community that is important to our economy.

I thank you for your time to read this.

Kind regards

[Personal information removed for privacy]

I have just heard that Moyston is going to loose its transfer station?

Where are we supposed to take our extra rubbish?

I also hear our rates are rising by 1.5%, but your reducing services like the transfer station?

What about the disabled toilet at the oval promised this time last year?

The gravel to 300 meters of campbells Reef rd that the council trucks continue to destroy and kick up dust for residents? I was told, when I attended the council office, that this was going to be done with the other roads in town, but it wasn't.

But my rates go up and I get nothing in return? Not even a gravel road.

Please reconsider the transfer station. Please gravel the 300 meters of campbells Reef rd.

Elmhurst needs the tip, I moved here in December and the costs involved are ridiculous enough without having that added stress of travelling to and from Ararat to do tip runs.

The population here is increasing and we are seeing many new residents coming to our town as young families.

things that would make a difference to the community is wifi, phone tower -

Cell service is horrendous

The net is extremely slow making working from home a stressful experience!

A playground at the recreation reserve for the kids in the town would be great too!

127.8 full-time equivalent staff employed by the council is not financially (\$13M) sustainable when considering the current small population that is serviced. Is there plans to outsource some services to reduce the employee costs? What services can be automated to release staff resources?



### Feedback received via email

<p>Drinking fountain Ararat town hall square I would like to suggest that council consider some funding allocation for maintenance and upkeep for the drinking fountain cnr Barkly -Vincent streets I am concerned that if not maintained - it could fall into disrepair The fountain is of historical significance to Ararat [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>Dear Sirs, I would like to protest at the imminent closure of the Elmhurst Tip. Surely residents will not be expected to travel 35 kilometres into Ararat to a tip. Please think again! Our rates are high enough Surely we can afford to keep our Tip. [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>To Whom it may concern. 1-5-2025</p> <p>As a resident of Elmhurst I am writing to you to express my concern regards the pending closure of the recycle station in our fair village.</p> <p>Residing on three acres the green waste that is generated by far exceeds the capacity of my green waste bin, the same with my yellow recycling bin numerous times in a year it is overflowing forcing us to make other arrangements.</p> <p>To expect the residents to cart their generated waste be it hard rubbish or green waste into Ararat transfer station in the name of environmental sustainability is an absolute folly.</p> <p>The majority of Elmhurst residents will have to travel at least a 76 klm return trip into Ararat towing a trailer, another expense on an overtaxed household budget. A greater percentage of Elmhurst residents are in their senior years and cannot utilise the current facility as it requires hoisting their waste over the side of a very high skip unable to do so they are forced to drive into Ararat.</p> <p>We as rate payers ask the council to consider opening the recycle facility once a week to ensure all residents have an opportunity to dispose of their waste in an environmentally friendly way.</p> <p>Lessening the impending cost to both council and ratepayers a win for all and the environment.</p> <p>[Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>Elmhurst Depot/Tip to remain</p> <p>I wish to have Elmhurst depot/tip to remain as it is convenient to dispose unwanted materials and waste.</p> <p>Sincerely, [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>

Hi Dr Tim Harrison,

As a rate payer of Elmhurst I am writing to you to express my concern regarding the pending closure of the recycle station in Elmhurst.

I have ½ an acre in town & the green waste that is generated by far exceeds the capacity of my green waste bin, the same with my yellow recycling bin numerous times in a year it is overflowing forcing us to make other arrangements.

To expect the residents to cart their generated waste be it hard rubbish or green waste into Ararat transfer station in the name of environmental sustainability is a stretch.

Most Elmhurst residents will have to travel at least a 76 Ks return trip into Ararat towing a trailer, another expense on the household budget.

A greater percentage of Elmhurst residents are in their senior years and cannot utilise the current facility as it requires hoisting their waste over the side of a very high skip bin unable to do so they are forced to drive into Ararat I believe the cost cutting exercise implementing the skip bins in the first place has added to the declining usage and not the requirement.

We as rate payers ask the council to consider opening the recycle facility once a week to ensure all residents have an opportunity to dispose of their waste in an environmentally friendly way and at ground level for the more senior rate payers of Elmhurst.

Lessening the impending cost to both council and ratepayers a win for all and the environment.

If the Elmhurst tip was to close, then I would expect any savings made by the Ararat Rural City council will be passed in full onto all Elmhurst residents only via the rates bill.

Thank you

[Personal information removed for privacy]

As a resident ratepayer and age pensioner living in Elmhurst I am compelled to express my concern regarding the pending closure of the transfer station here Elmhurst.

In my opinion, to expect the residents to deliver their generated waste, hard rubbish or green waste into Ararat transfer station in the name of environmental sustainability requires more consideration.

In my case I wonder if you have usage data because on many occasions I've had a neighbour generously add any scrap metal or green waste to his load and take it to the transfer station. So one vehicle turning up at the ETS could be carrying waste for more than one user.

I ask the council to consider keeping our transfer facility open, even if it means reduced days of access to ensure all residents have an opportunity to dispose of their waste in a local and environmentally friendly way.

<p>This would lessen the impending cost to both council and ratepayers while retaining what we in Elmhurst consider a vital service to our community. A win for all, the environment and a much needed service retained.</p> <p>Thank you in advance.</p> <p>Kind regards, [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>
<p>To Whom it may concern. 1-5-2025</p> <p>As a resident of Elmhurst I am writing to you to express my concern regards the pending closure of the recycle station in our fair village.</p> <p>Residing on three acres the green waste that is generated by far exceeds the capacity of my green waste bin, the same with my yellow recycling bin numerous times in a year it is overflowing forcing us to make other arrangements.</p> <p>To expect the residents to cart their generated waste be it hard rubbish or green waste into Ararat transfer station in the name of environmental sustainability is an absolute folly.</p> <p>The majority of Elmhurst residents will have to travel at least a 76 klm return trip into Ararat towing a trailer, another expense on an overtaxed household budget. A greater percentage of Elmhurst residents are in their senior years and cannot utilise the current facility as it requires hoisting their waste over the side of a very high skip unable to do so they are forced to drive into Ararat.</p> <p>We as rate payers ask the council to consider opening the recycle facility once a week to ensure all residents have an opportunity to dispose of their waste in an environmentally friendly way. Lessening the impending cost to both council and ratepayers a win for all and the</p> <p>I hope that this will show community support for the Elmhurst community's woe</p>
<p>Afternoon, I do not agree with the recommendations of closing the rural transfer stations. [Personal information removed for privacy]</p>

## Note Received at the Council Office

☐ Attention  
☐ Copy for your information  
☐ As requested

with compliments  Ararat Rural City

\* COXELLS WITH  
REFUSED TO THE  
PROPER TO BECAUSE  
HEAVY VEHICLE TRAFFIC  
VIA GUYA-BOW BOIS  
6, THIS WILL  
OCCUR AFTER  
SHALL COMMUNITIES  
SUCH AS BATHURST  
+ WARRACK  
- PEOPLE SEND  
ANY + ALL INFORMATION  
REGARDING CONCERN HAS  
FOR THE RE-ROUTING  
HEAVY-VEHICLE TRAFFIC  
TO

Address  
Municipal Office  
Century Village 46  
High Street, Ararat

Postal Address  
Post Office Box 240  
Ararat, Victoria  
Australia, 3277

Telephone  
(03) 8366 6280

Fax  
(03) 8366 4749

Email  
council@ararat.vic.gov.au

Ararat & Grampians  
Visitor Information  
Centres

Address  
Rushey Station Complex  
81 High Street, Ararat

Telephone  
(03) 8355 0591

For more info

[Personal information removed for privacy]



### 3.5 CHANGES TO MEETING DATE - JUNE 2025

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21044

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the Statutory Meeting held on 12 November 2024, Council resolved that the Council Meetings be held on the last Tuesday of each month.

This report outlines a proposed change to the meeting date of the June 2025 Council Meeting, due to the National General Assembly falling on the last Tuesday of the month.

#### **DISCUSSION**

It is proposed to change the date of the June 2025 Council Meeting, as the National General Assembly is being held the same week.

Proposed changes to the current schedule are as follows:

- June 2025 Council Meeting will be set one week earlier to 17 June 2025

#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

6 Strong and effective governance

We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

##### ***Budget Implications***

Advertising of Council Meeting dates is allocated in the Annual Budget

##### ***Policy/Relevant Law***

Schedule set for Council Meetings, meetings advertised and placed on Council website as required under the Governance Rules.

##### ***Risk Assessment***

None identified.

##### ***Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement***

The change of Council Meeting dates was discussed at the Council briefing held on Tuesday 20 May 2025

Following adoption of this report an advertisement will be placed in a local newspaper and on Council's website advising the community of the changes to Council Meeting schedule for 2025

RECOMMENDATION

*That Council:*

- 1. Adopts the revised Council Meeting dates for 2025 as follows: 6.00pm - Tuesday 17 June 2025; and*
- 2. Advertises the dates and times of the Council Meeting dates for 2025 in a local newspaper and on Council's website.*

**MOVED CR JOYCE  
SECONDED CR SANDERS**

**That Council:**

- 1. Adopts the revised Council Meeting dates for 2025 as follows: 6.00pm - Tuesday 17 June 2025; and**
- 2. Advertises the dates and times of the Council Meeting dates for 2025 in a local newspaper and on Council's website.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5138/25**

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments in relation to this item.

### 3.6 J-WARD LEASE EXTENTION

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** GOVERNANCE AND RISK LEAD  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21045

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

J-Ward was originally the Ararat County Gaol and later a psychiatric facility for the criminally insane. J-Ward officially closed in 1991 and in 1993 was opened as a museum providing tours. J-Ward is staffed by volunteers which form the committee known as Friends of J-Ward. Council currently has a lease with the Friends of J-Ward.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Friends of J-Ward are a group of dedicated volunteers who promote the rich history of the Gaol in our region. Council has had a lease in place with the Friends of J-Ward, for the use of J-Ward as a museum since 2005. The initial lease was for 15 years with an option of 2 further five-year leases.

The Friends of J-Ward have completed the original 15 years and acted on their first 5-year option that was from 2020 to 2025. This 5-year option is about to expire on the 8 June 2025. Council has received a letter from the Friends of J-Ward wishing to act on their second 5-year option that will see the current lease conclude on the 7 June 2030.

#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

- 2.3 Engage with Grampians and Local businesses to drive growth in high yield tourist outcomes.
- 5.3 Partner with community groups, not-for-profits and traditional owner organisations to develop Ararat Rural City as a more inclusive and diverse community.

##### ***Budget Implications***

There are no budget implications arising

##### ***Policy/Relevant Law***

Lease agreement between Council and Friends of J-Ward

##### ***Sustainability Implications***

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

##### ***Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement***

Friends of J-Ward

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. Council endorses Friends of J-Ward request to act of their second 5 year lease option

**MOVED CR JOYCE  
SECONDED CR SANDERS**

That:

1. Council endorses Friends of J-Ward request to act of their second 5 year lease option

**Cr Joyce spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5139/25**

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no Attachments relating to this item



### 3.7 DISABILITY DROP OFF ZONE IN BARKLY STREET, ARARAT

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21046

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Ensuring accessibility for all members of the community is a fundamental aspect of an inclusive and functional public space. Establishing a designated disability drop-off area in Barkly Street is crucial for improving safety, convenience, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities and their carers. This report outlines the key reasons for implementing such a space and the benefits it will provide.

At the Council meeting of 25 February 2025 the disability drop off zone was approved to go out to community consultation through the Engage Ararat website. This report details the response from the community.

#### **DISCUSSION**

A designated area for disability vans and maxi taxis to safely unload their clients is essential for reducing hazards associated with on-street drop-offs. Without a dedicated space, vehicles may be forced to stop in unsafe locations, creating potential risks for passengers, pedestrians, and other road users. The report of 25 February 2025 suggests the implementation of a designated disability drop-off area at the bend outside Quinn & Co Eyewear in Barkly Street, Ararat.

Community engagement through the Engage Ararat website received five (5) responses as follows:

1. Great idea, not a good option on the corner. I can't remember the last time I saw a taxi parked in the taxi zone next to the pedestrian crossing. I believe this would be a better location.
2. Silly place to put it.
3. I am a motorcyclist and often use this park. There wasn't any consultation before this change was made. I note that it is used by vans dropping off goods to the businesses nearby. The other motorcycle parking at the pedestrian crossing will only cater for a single bike.
4. Great idea.
5. This will help a lot of people.

A better option for consideration by Council is the creation of dual use parking zones from the existing parallel loading zones in Barkly St. This would provide safe egress, away from traffic, for wheelchairs, with the added benefit of having multiple drop off locations along Barkly St.

The dual use zone would maintain existing loading zones for commercial vehicle use, while providing a ten-minute disability drop off zone to improve safety and access. This option will seamlessly integrate into the current parking layout in the CBD with no need for alterations. In addition to this Council proposes to undertake a review of the current adequacy of disability parking in Barkly Street to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the community.

#### **KEY CONSIDERATIONS**

##### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

4. Developing and Maintaining Key Enabling Infrastructure.

We will ensure that we plan, fund and develop new infrastructure in ways that delivers strong public value. Existing infrastructure will be managed, renewed and maintained to ensure that it continues to service identified public needs.

5. Enhancing Community Life

We will work with the communities of Ararat Rural City to maintain social cohesion, support community activity and cultural life, and enhance safety.

**Budget Implications**

There are no budget implications arising.

**Policy/Relevant Law**

- Road Management Plan
- Fair Access Policy
- Universal Design Process
- ARCC – Local Laws
- VicRoads Parking Standards

**Sustainability Implications**

This will provide greater accessibility to the CBD for people with accessibility requirements providing safety for all users.

**Risk Assessment**

Low risk – further assessment and mitigation will be undertaken as a part of the project development.

**Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

Community engagement through Engage Ararat website has been undertaken as part of this project.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That:*

1. Council approves the creation of dual use parking zones from the existing parallel loading zones in Barkly St. The dual use zone would maintain existing loading zones for commercial vehicle use, while providing a ten-minute disability drop off zone to improve safety and access
2. Council approves a review of disability parking in Barkly Street, Ararat, CBD area in the 25/26 financial year.

**MOVED CR PRESTON**

**SECONDED CR R ARMSTRONG**

**That:**

1. Council approves the creation of dual use parking zones from the existing parallel loading zones in Barkly St. The dual use zone would maintain existing loading zones for commercial vehicle use, while providing a ten-minute disability drop off zone to improve safety and access
2. Council approves a review of disability parking in Barkly Street, Ararat, CBD area in the 25/26 financial year.

**Cr Preston, Cr Sanders and Cr Joyce spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0**

**5140/25**

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no Attachments relating to this item

### 3.8 KOKODA PARK TENNIS COURTS BUILDING

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** MAJOR PROJECTS LEAD  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21047

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Kokoda Park Tennis Courts facility has been disused for a number of years and is falling into a state of disrepair with graffiti, rubbish and vandalism being reported by residents in the area.

This report discusses the options for the removal of the small site building at the location.

#### **DISCUSSION**

The Kokoda Park Tennis Courts are a facility no longer used for their intended purpose by the local community. The fencing and in particular the small building located next to the tennis courts are becoming an area for damage, vandalism, graffiti and a regular late night meeting place for people in the area.

Council has received complaints and customer requests from various residents in the area, relating to the ongoing issues with a request for the unused building to be demolished and removed.



Council's Building Works Coordinator and Civil Works Coordinator have both visited the site and advised that demolition is a simple job that can be undertaken internally.

It is recommended for the safety of the community that the tennis court building at Kokoda Park be demolished.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### **Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives**

- 4. Developing and Maintaining Key enabling Infrastructure.
- 4.3 Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, promote community wellbeing and safety, and align with Council's financial sustainability.

### **Budget Implications**

Cost of demolition will come under the building maintenance budget.

### **Policy/Relevant Law**

ARCC Asset Management Policy

### **Sustainability Implications**

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

### **Risk Assessment**

Works are considered low risk

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

Customer requests have initiated these works.

## RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council approve the demolition of the small building and any ancillary assets related to the tennis courts at Kokoda Park Ararat.

## MOVED CR WATERSTON SECONDED CR PRESTON

That:

- 1. Council approve the demolition of the small building and any ancillary assets related to the tennis courts at Kokoda Park Ararat.

Cr Waterston and Cr Preston spoke for the motion

**CARRIED 7/0**  
**5141/25**

## ATTACHMENTS

There are no Attachments relating to this item



### 3.9 MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21048

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The financial statements and performance indicators have been prepared for the period ended 30 April 2025.

Based on the information provided by responsible officers and managers Council's overall financial performance is in line with budget.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Council must establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound financial management.

#### **Key Financial information:**

##### **Income Statement (Attachment 1)**

The Income Statement measures how well Council has performed from an operating nature. It reports revenues and expenditure from the activities and functions undertaken, with the net effect being a surplus or deficit. Capital expenditure is excluded from this statement, as it is reflected in the Balance Sheet.

Attachment 1 shows that Council generated \$30.707 million in revenue and \$28.005 million in expenses to 30 April 2025. This has resulted in an operating surplus of \$2.702 million for the ten months ended 30 April 2025.

##### **Income**

**Rates and charges** account for 50% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25. Rates and charges are recognised when the rates have been raised, not when the income has been received. An amount of \$17.912 million has been recognised as income for the ten months ended 30 April 2025.

**User fees** account for 4% of the total budgeted income for 2024/25 and \$1.469 million has been received to 30 April 2025. The majority of this relates to transfer station fees, fitness centre income and commercial waste management charges.

**Recurrent Operating Grants** total \$8.362 million to 30 April 2025, including \$4.583 million from the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission for general purpose grants and \$2.975 million for the local roads grants.

**Non-recurrent Operating Grants** total \$1.274 million to 30 April 2025. Council has been successful in obtaining several grants that had not been budgeted for, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Operating Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Ararat Housing Transition	-	-	300
Digital Twin Victoria	-	5	949
Free Public WiFi Services	-	47	1,196
Supported Playgroups	65	55	-
Ararat Rural City Sport, Active Recreation & Open Space Strategy	-	-	36
CALD Outreach Workers Initiative	-	64	-
Tiny Towns Fund - Pomonal Community Hub	-	83	117
Natural Disaster Relief	-	160	-
Council Support Fund - Pomonal Fires	-	750	-
Centenary Park Dog Park	-	25	-
Other Minor Grants (under \$30,000)	-	85	-
	<b>65</b>	<b>1,274</b>	<b>2,598</b>

**Non-recurrent Capital Grants** total \$0.474 million to 30 April 2025, as detailed in the table below. The amounts shown as unearned income will be treated as income in future accounting periods once the performance obligations of the grant have been met.

Non-Recurrent Capital Grants	Budget 2024/25 \$'000	Income 2024/25 \$'000	Unearned Income \$'000
Mt William Road reconstruction	5,000	-	-
Back Bolac Road reconstruction	-	229	-
Churchill Avenue reconstruction	843	-	-
Pedestrian Infrastructure Program	-	20	50
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Recreation Reserve Pavillion Redevelopment	-	-	50
Tatyoan Oval Upgrade Grant	-	225	-
Tiny Towns Fund - Buangor Cobb & Co Stables	-	-	30
Pony Club Sports Arena	-	-	447
	<b>5,843</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>577</b>

#### Note

It is important to note the following:

1. Unearned revenue received in prior years has been adjusted between the Original Budget and Current Budget with an additional \$2.936 million for Grants Operating (non-recurrent), \$0.366 million for Grants Capital (recurrent) and \$0.070 million for Grants Capital (non-recurrent) included in the Current Budget on the assumption that each of the grant projects will be completed during the 2024/25 financial year.
2. These changes in the budget, plus the note reported under expenses, create a change in the reported surplus position from a projected surplus of \$8.163 million to a surplus of \$9.205 million for 2024/25. The year-end variance is a deficit of \$1.235 million when the actual year to date expenses are compared to the year to date budget.

#### Expenses

**Employee Costs** account for approximately 40% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the ten months ended 30 April 2025 Council has incurred \$9.750 million in employee costs, which includes additional wages for emergency management relief and recovery, and organisation restructure costs. Workcover premiums have increased by \$0.104 million compared to 2023/24.

**Materials and Services** account for approximately 29% of the total budgeted expenditure for 2024/25. For the ten months ended 30 April 2025, Council has incurred \$9.580 million in materials and services costs. There are a number of projects, including those carried forward from 2023/24 that are expected to be completed before the end of the financial year.

**Depreciation** totals \$8.099 million to 30 April 2025. The higher than budgeted depreciation has resulted from increased asset valuations being received as at 30 June 2024 after the budget was finalised.

#### **Note**

It is important to note the following:

There has been an increase in expenditure on materials and services from \$8.259 million in the Original Budget to \$10.589 million in the Current Budget for 2024/25. This has resulted from a carry forward amount of \$2.330 million from the 2023/24 financial year surplus and unspent grant funds which will be used for additional activity in 2024/25.

#### **Balance Sheet (Attachment 2)**

The Balance Sheet is one of the main financial statements and reports Council's assets, liabilities and equity at a given date, in this case 30 April 2025. Comparative figures have been provided as at 30 June 2024.

Council's current assets have increased by \$2.493 million from \$11.732 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$14.225 million as at 30 April 2025. Cash and cash equivalents have increased by \$5.818 million from \$3.049 million to \$8.867 million. Trade and other receivables have increased by \$0.073 million from \$5.212 million as at 30 June 2024 to \$5.285 million as at 30 April 2025.

Total liabilities have decreased from \$8.777 million in 2023/24 to \$8.062 million in 2024/25. Trade and other payables have decreased by \$0.024 million and trust funds and deposits have decreased by \$0.137 million. Unearned income/revenue decreased by \$0.197 million, which includes grants received by Council, where in accordance with accounting standards, they are held as a liability until grant-related performance obligations have been met.

#### **Statement of Cash Flows (Attachment 3)**

The Statement of Cash Flows shows how changes in the Statement of Financial Position and Income Statement affect Cash and Cash Equivalents, and breaks down the analysis to operating activities, investing activities and financing activities.

The Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the financial year of \$3.049 million have increased by \$5.818 million to \$8.867 million as at 30 April 2025.

Net cash of \$11.079 million was provided by operating activities, \$4.810 million was used in investing activities, and \$0.451 million was used in financing activities.

Investing activities includes payments for property, plant and equipment, and infrastructure.

#### **Financial Performance Indicators (Attachment 4)**

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework requires Councils to report various performance indicators at the end of each financial year.

A full list of financial performance indicators is included in Attachment 4.

Indicator	30/6/2024	30/04/2025
<b>Working capital</b> <i>Measure - Current assets compared to current liabilities.</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework 100% to 400% Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of working capital suggests an improvement in liquidity	162%	219%
<b>Loans and borrowings</b> <i>Measure - Loans and borrowings compared to rates.</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 0% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of interest-bearing loans and borrowings should be appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities. Low or decreasing level of loans and borrowings suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	1.71%	0.86%
<b>Indebtedness</b> <i>Measure - Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 2% to 70% Indicator of the broad objective that the level of long-term liabilities should be appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities. Low or decreasing level of long-term liabilities suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	7.49%	7.97%
<b>Rates concentration</b> <i>Measure - Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - 30% to 80% Indicator of the broad objective that revenue should be generated from a range of sources. High or increasing range of revenue sources suggests an improvement in stability	73.82%	59.33%
<b>Expenditure level</b> <i>Measure - Expenses per property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework \$2,000 to \$10,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of expenditure suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency	\$4,592	\$3,761
<b>Indicator - Revenue level</b> <i>Measure - Average residential rate per residential property assessment</i> Expected values in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework - \$700 to \$2,000 Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of rates suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency	\$1,993	\$2,002



Indicator	30/6/2024	30/04/2025
<b>Indicator - Percentage of total rates collected</b> The internal audit conducted in 2019 on Rates Revenue and Rate Debtor Management found no routine or regular reporting of large and long outstanding rates debtors. The outstanding Rates Debtors is reported in the Annual Financial report. As at 30 April 2025 the outstanding Rates Debtors totalled \$4.490 million compared to \$2.320 million as at 30 June 2024, an increase of \$2.170 million. In percentage terms 77.7% of the rates raised have been collected at 30 April 2025 compared to 78.9% up to 30 April 2024. Outstanding rates are currently charged 10% interest. Council issues approximately 7,900 rate notices. In 2024/25 there are 2,158 assessments paying by instalments compared with 2,640 assessments in 2023/24.	88.1%	77.7%
<b>Indicator - Asset Renewal &amp; Upgrade</b> <i>Measure - Asset renewal &amp; Upgrade compared to depreciation</i> Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework – 40% to 130% Assessment of whether council assets are being renewed or upgraded as planned. It compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, replacing or upgrading existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 1.0 indicate there is a lesser risk of insufficient spending on Council's asset base.	124.63%	90.79%

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework provides "Expected ranges" for each indicator. The framework has been developed to consider results at the end of the financial year so some results during the year are outside the expected range due to the timing of receipts and payments.

Explanations are provided in Attachment 4 for those indicators that are outside the "expected ranges".

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

- 6 Strong and Effective Governance  
We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices
- 6.1 Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness

### Budget Implications

Council's financial performance is in line with expectations. Council's cash position was expected to reduce in the first half of the year, and then increase in the third quarter with many ratepayers electing to pay their rates in full due 15 February 2025 and the third instalment due 28 Feb 2025.

### Policy/Relevant Law

Section 97 - Quarterly Budget Report of the Local Government Act 2020 states:

1. As soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly budget report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.
2. A quarterly budget report must include—
  - a. a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; and

- b. an explanation of any material variations; and
  - c. any other matters prescribed by the regulations.
3. In addition, the second quarterly report of a financial year must include a statement by the Chief Executive Officer as to whether a revised budget is, or may be, required.

### **Sustainability Implications**

There are no economic, social or environmental implications in relation to the item

### **Risk Assessment**

Council is required to establish and maintain a budgeting and reporting framework that is consistent with the principles of sound management and this report assists Council in meeting that requirement.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

Council's financial performance reports will continue to be published monthly.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. *The Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators for the period ended 30 April 2025 be received and adopted.*

### **MOVED CR SANDERS**

### **SECONDED CR WATERSTON**

That:

1. **The Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators for the period ended 30 April 2025 be received and adopted.**

**Cr Sanders and Cr Waterston spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5142/25**

### **ATTACHMENTS**

The Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Financial Performance Indicators are provided as Attachment 3.9

Attachment 1  
Comprehensive Income Statement for the ten months ended 30 April 2025

	Original Budget \$'000	Current Budget \$'000	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Variance
<b>Income</b>						
Rates and charges	17,950	17,950	17,795	17,912	117	1%
Statutory fees and fines	272	272	227	207	(20)	-9%
User fees	1,515	1,515	1,296	1,469	173	13%
Contributions - cash capital	-	-	-	37	37	0%
Contributions - cash operating	100	100	67	103	36	54%
Grants - operating (recurrent)	8,258	8,258	7,975	8,362	387	5%
Grants - operating (non-recurrent)	65	3,001	62	1,274	1,212	1955%
Grants - capital (recurrent)	1,461	1,827	666	666	-	0%
Grants - capital (non-recurrent)	5,843	5,913	474	474	-	0%
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, plant and equipment	-	-	-	(198)	(198)	0%
Other income	722	722	602	401	(201)	-33%
Fair value adjustments for investment property	-	-	-	-	-	0%
Share of net profits/(losses) of associates and joint ventures accounted for by the equity method	-	-	-	-	-	0%
<b>Total income</b>	<b>36,186</b>	<b>39,558</b>	<b>29,164</b>	<b>30,707</b>	<b>1,543</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>						
Employee costs	11,333	11,333	9,459	9,750	291	3%
Materials and services	8,259	10,589	8,742	9,580	838	10%
Bad and doubtful debts	-	-	-	-	-	0%
Depreciation	7,681	7,681	6,401	8,099	1,698	27%
Amortisation - right of use assets	302	302	252	255	3	1%
Borrowing costs	6	6	5	7	2	40%
Finance costs - leases	74	74	61	64	3	5%
Other expenses	368	368	307	250	(57)	-19%
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>28,023</b>	<b>30,353</b>	<b>25,227</b>	<b>28,005</b>	<b>2,778</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>8,163</b>	<b>9,205</b>	<b>3,937</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>(1,235)</b>	<b>-31%</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>						
Net asset revaluation increment	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>Total comprehensive result</b>	<b>8,163</b>	<b>9,205</b>	<b>3,937</b>	<b>2,702</b>	<b>(1,235)</b>	

**Attachment 2**  
**Balance Sheet as at 30 April 2025**

	30/04/2025 \$'000	30/06/2024 \$'000
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	8,867	3,049
Trade and other receivables	5,285	5,212
Financial assets	-	3,040
Inventories	73	71
Prepayments	-	360
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>14,225</b>	<b>11,732</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Trade and other receivables	5	5
Investments in joint venture	998	498
Property, plant and equipment, infrastructure	307,314	308,261
Right of use assets	1,137	1,359
Investment property	1,535	1,535
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>310,989</b>	<b>311,658</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>325,214</b>	<b>323,390</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	1,000	1,024
Trust funds and deposits	166	303
Unearned Income	3,175	3,372
Provisions	2,097	2,104
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	(1)	150
Lease liabilities	48	275
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>6,485</b>	<b>7,228</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Provisions	292	293
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	156	156
Lease liabilities	1,129	1,100
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>1,577</b>	<b>1,549</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>8,062</b>	<b>8,777</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>317,152</b>	<b>314,613</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated surplus	100,828	98,126
Reserves	216,323	216,487
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>317,151</b>	<b>314,613</b>

Printed 14/05/2025



Attachment 3

Statement of Cash Flows for the ten months ended 30 April 2025

	Ten months to 30/04/2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000	Forecast Year End to 30/06/2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Rates and charges	15,852	17,943
Statutory fees and fines	208	272
User fees	1,528	1,715
Grants - operating	9,887	10,270
Grants - capital	2,479	7,304
Contributions - monetary	93	100
Interest received	280	500
Trust funds and deposits taken	286	-
Other receipts	138	222
Net GST refund/payment	1,635	-
Employee costs	(10,800)	(11,527)
Materials and services	(9,917)	(10,666)
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(329)	-
Other payments	(261)	(368)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>11,079</b>	<b>15,765</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>		
Payments for property, plant and equipment, infrastructure	(7,513)	(15,513)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment, infrastructure	163	163
Proceeds from investments	3,040	3,040
Payments for investments	(500)	(1,000)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(4,810)</b>	<b>(13,310)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>		
Finance costs	(7)	(6)
Repayment of borrowings	(150)	(150)
Proceeds from borrowings	-	-
Interest paid - lease liability	(64)	(74)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(230)	(283)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities</b>	<b>(451)</b>	<b>(513)</b>
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	5,818	1,942
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	3,049	3,049
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>	<b>8,867</b>	<b>4,991</b>

Printed 14/05/2025

Attachment 4

Financial Performance Indicators for the ten months ended 30 April 2025

Result

Material Variations

**LIQUIDITY**

**Dimension - Operating position**

**Indicator - Adjusted underlying result**

Measure - Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)

7.26%

[Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100

No material variation

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting

-20% to 20%

Framework

Indicator of the broad objective that an adjusted underlying surplus should be generated in the ordinary course of business. A surplus or increasing surplus suggests an improvement in the operating position

**Dimension - Liquidity**

**Indicator - Working capital**

Measure - Current assets compared to current liabilities

219% No material variation

[Current assets / Current liabilities] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting

100% to 400%

Framework

Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of working capital suggests an improvement in liquidity

**Indicator - Unrestricted cash**

Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities

84.44% No material variation

[Unrestricted cash / Current liabilities] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting

10% to 300%

Framework

Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient cash which is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of unrestricted cash suggests an improvement in liquidity

Financial Performance Indicators for the ten months ended 30 April 2025

Result

Material Variations

## OBLIGATIONS

### Dimension - Obligations

#### Indicator - Loans and borrowings

Measure - Loans and borrowings compared to rates

0.86% No material variation

[Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

0% to 70%

Indicator of the broad objective that the level of interest bearing loans and borrowings should be appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities. Low or decreasing level of loans and borrowings suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations

Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates

0.88% No material variation

[Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

0% to 20%

#### Indicator - Indebtedness

Measure - Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue

7.97% No material variation

[Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

2% to 70%

Indicator of the broad objective that the level of long term liabilities should be appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities. Low or decreasing level of long term liabilities suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations

#### Indicator - Asset renewal (& Asset Upgrade included now also)

Measure - Asset renewal & Upgrade compared to depreciation

90.79% No material variation

[Asset renewal expenses / Asset depreciation] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

40% to 130%

Indicator of the broad objective that assets should be renewed as planned. High or increasing level of planned asset renewals being met suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations

## STABILITY

### Dimension - Stability

#### Indicator - Rates concentration

Measure - Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue

59.33% No material variation

[Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

30% to 80%

Indicator of the broad objective that revenue should be generated from a range of sources. High or increasing range of revenue sources suggests an improvement in stability

#### Indicator - Rates effort

Measure - Rates compared to property values

0.27% No material variation

[Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100

Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework

0.15 to 0.75%

Indicator of the broad objective that the rating level should be set based on the community's capacity to pay. Low or decreasing level of rates suggests an improvement in the rating burden

Financial Performance Indicators for the ten months ended 30 April 2025	Result	Material Variations
<b>EFFICIENCY</b>		
<b>Dimension - Efficiency</b>		
<b>Indicator - Expenditure level</b>		
Measure - Expenses per property assessment [Total expenses / Number of property assessments]	\$3,760.57	No material variation
Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework \$2,000 to \$5,000		
Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of expenditure suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency		
<b>Indicator - Revenue level</b>		
Measure - Average rate per property assessment [Total rate revenue (general rates and municipal charges) / Number of property assessments]	\$2,001.88	<b>Outside Expected Range</b> The average rate per property assessment is slightly above the expected range.
Expected range in accordance with the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework \$700 to \$2,000		
Indicator of the broad objective that resources should be used efficiently in the delivery of services. Low or decreasing level of rates suggests an improvement in organisational efficiency		



## SECTION 4 - INFORMATION REPORTS

### 4.1 2024/2025 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM - APRIL 2025

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT:** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 21049

#### **OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Council has approved its 2024/2025 Capital Works Program as a pivotal component of the current budget. With a substantial capital works investment totalling \$15.513 million, the budget primarily targets infrastructure enhancements.

Key initiatives include:

- Mount William Road Stage Two Construction - supported by Federal Government funding.
- Buangor Ben Nevis Road Stage One Construction - beginning from the Western Highway section for approximately 1.5 kilometres
- Urban Gravel to Seal Road Upgrades continuing to upgrade accessibility across urban areas.
- Maintenance of Footpaths, Drainage, and Kerb and Channel

These projects underscore the Council's commitment to improving local infrastructure and fostering community development in the 2024/2025 fiscal year.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Council's 2024/2025 Capital Works Program marks a significant shift from previous years, reintroducing larger road and bridge construction projects post-pandemic. The program's budget has increased by \$6 million, with substantial state and federal funding, alongside smaller targeted works.

The focus for 2024/2025 remains on renewing and updating Council assets, leveraging in-house capabilities, and supporting local employment and contractors.

Key areas include:

- Enhanced roads reseal program.
- Urban drainage improvements
- Footpath network upgrades
- Major urban road gravel to seal program
- Stage two of Mt William Road Reconstruction
- Roads to Recovery funded projects (Webb Street & McCrows Road Bridge)

#### **Budget Status:**

As of 30 April 2025, 47% of the budget is expended.

Buangor Ben Nevis Road plans are complete and the Cultural Heritage Management Plan has been received, and stage two of Mt William Road is expected to commence once the CHMP is received which is expected by the end of May 2025.

Additional resealing and OTTA seal works commenced in April 2025.

With the Yarram Gap Road fires it is likely that our capital works budget will again be affected with emergency works being a priority in early 2025. Construction on Churchill Avenue is continuing with utilities and service provision being undertaken and footpath works ongoing.

	Budget	Committed/ Contracted	Expended	%	Notes
<b>PROPERTY CAPITAL</b>					
Property Capital	<b>\$270,000</b>		\$241,628	91%	Works have been completed for the resurfacing of the Pomonal Tennis Courts, replacement of windows at the Town Hall in the Arts & Crafts Room, painting of the Maroona Rec Reserve and new touch screen kiosks. .
Ararat Library Upgrade	<b>\$200,000</b>		\$226,496	113%	Works have been complete.
Tatyoona Oval, Drainage, Irrigation & Resurfacing	<b>\$333,500</b> <b>\$83,500 Council</b> <b>\$250,000 CFNP</b>		\$339,437	103%	Aqualines Irrigation Pty Ltd have completed the works with the new pump connections to the reservoir to be completed before commencement of the football season.
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY</b>			<b>\$807,924</b>	<b>101%</b>	
<b>PLANT &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>					
Book stock - Library Book Replacement	<b>\$40,000</b>		\$41,261	103%	Fully expended for 2024/2025
<b>TOTAL PLANT &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>			<b>\$41,261</b>	<b>103%</b>	
<b>ROADS</b>			-	-	
Gravel Road Sheetting, Widening & Alternative Sealing	<b>\$1,800,000</b>	-	\$1,863,703	104%	Resheetting, widening and alternative seal works have been completed on a number of roads including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alexandra Oval resheetting</li> <li>Geelong Road Shoulders</li> <li>Bowen Place (OTTA)</li> <li>Railway Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Greenhill Drive (OTTA)</li> <li>Warrayatkin Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Nott Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Leach Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Grahams Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Tunnel Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Sugarloaf Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Tatyoona North Road (OTTA)</li> <li>Old Brewery Road (OTTA)</li> </ul>
Reseal Program	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	-	\$899,219	90%	Reseal works are 90% complete for the current financial year, additional works bought forward

					from the 25/26 program is currently underway.
Mt William Road (24/25 - HSVPP Funding)	<b>\$6,250,000</b>	-	\$156,193	2%	These works will commence on receipt of final cultural heritage management plan which is expected by the end of May 2025. The EMAC CHMP has been received for works over Fiery Creek.
Buangor Ben Nevis Road	<b>\$2,143,000</b>	\$68,522	\$159,289	7%	Plans and technical reporting have been completed. The cultural heritage management plan has been received. Finalisation of the native vegetation offsets is progressing.
Weighbridge Place, Lake Bolac			\$134,772		Asphalting works at Weighbridge Place have been completed. The intersection with Mortlake Ararat Road was in poor condition and required the upgrade to withstand the heavy vehicle use in the industrial area.
Churchill Avenue, Ararat	<b>\$800,000</b>	\$338,450	\$263,311	33%	Concrete footpaths are complete, road surface removal has been undertaken, stabilisation is commencing and kerb and channel works are underway. Works are to be completed by 30 June 2025 in line with LRCI funding.
Webb Street, Ararat	<b>\$700,000</b>		\$12,419	2%	Works will be undertaken in conjunction with works on Churchill Avenue.
Urban Road Gravel to Seal	<b>\$700,00</b>		\$995,992	142%	Works for this year's program have been completed at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bailey Lane</li> <li>• Currajong Ave/McLellan Street</li> <li>• ROW Dawson/High Streets</li> <li>• Mulcahy Road</li> <li>• Young Street.</li> </ul> Multiple design works are being finished for the coming years programs which will be prioritised by a matrix to be presented to Council soon.
Major Patching	<b>\$100,000</b>	\$	\$72,421	72%	Priority works have been completed in November 24. Other works are currently being prioritised.

Bridges	<b>\$80,000</b>	\$10,727	\$98,274	123%	Investigations into the works required for the Buangor Ben Nevis Road Bridge 1 project are underway. These works include McCrows Road Bridge which will be undertaken with Roads to Recovery funding as approved in January 2025. Other bridge strengthening works are being investigated and estimated for upcoming programs.
Footpath Renewal Program	<b>\$400,000</b>		\$443,531	111%	Council's footpath program has been fully expended. Other costs within this budget include works on Tunnel Track, Pomonal which was a funded project and make up part of the overrun.
Urban Drainage Works	<b>\$750,000</b>		\$387,255	52%	Drainage works are progressing with works currently completed at Ararat Cemetery and Thompson and Kneale Street and Queen Street Stormwater. Works on the main drain are being compiled for completion.
Kerb and Channel	<b>\$239,000</b>	\$84,500	\$309,106	129%	Committed works for Kerb and Channel in George Road is due for completion by 30 June 2025.
Miscellaneous			\$367,326		These works include finalisation of works at Gordon Street Reserve and Wilson Street construction and small projects carried over from previous years.
<b>TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b>		<b>\$502,199</b>	<b>\$6,162,811</b>	40%	
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS</b>		<b>\$502,199</b>	<b>\$7,011,996</b>	47%	

There are also projects that were funded in the 2023/2024 budget that have extended beyond the single financial year. The committed expenditure includes contracts entered for construction of various elements of the projects. The table below provides a summary of these projects:

	<b>Budget</b>	Previously Expended Funds	Committed/Contracted	Total Expended	%	Notes
Mt William Road	<b>\$1,000,000</b>	\$313,911		\$313,911	69%	Work commenced in late May 2024. The works have been set out, tree and stabilising works have been completed. There were significant soft spots found within the area and these have been remedied.



						Final works include class A stone and sealing works.
Buangor Recreation Reserve Kitchen Extension		\$53,849		\$303		<p>The project has been out to the market and came in with a significant price difference between the cost plan and the pricing received from the tenderers.</p> <p>Funding has been received as part of the Tiny Towns Funding Program which will help progress Stage 1 of this project.</p> <p>Council is currently undertaking quotation works with a local commercial builder to try to progress these works with alternative design options to provide better value to the community.</p>

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### **Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives**

The key financial drivers align strongly with the thrust of the Council Plan 2021-2025, particularly the following:

- 4.1** Ensure that asset development and renewal during the planning period matches that identified in Council's Asset Plan 2021-2031.
- 4.2** Work directly with asset users to manage and develop new and existing assets.
- 4.3** Deliver infrastructure outcomes that support economic growth, promote community wellbeing and safety and align with Council's financial sustainability.
- 6.1** Deliver responsible budget outcomes, linked to strategy, that deliver value, innovation, and rating fairness.

### **Budget Implications**

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represents a significant element of Council's 2024/2025 Budget. In the current civil construction market, it is essential that Council manages capital works expenditure carefully to ensure budget outcomes are met.

### **Policy/Relevant Law**

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program complies with the program funded in the 2024/2025 Budget.

### **Sustainability Implications**

There are no environmental sustainability implications. Council is mindful of considering new innovative approaches to improve its sustainability and environmental footprint as a part of the Capital Works program.

### **Risk Assessment**

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program was developed as a mitigation of the financial risks associated with market volatility currently being experienced in the civil and building construction sectors.

### **Innovation and Continuous Improvement**

Development of the 2024/2025 Capital Works Program represented an agile response to market conditions. A capacity to rework strategy based on a changing environment is a critical element in developing an innovative organisation.

**Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement**

The 2024/2025 Capital Works Program has been developed as an element of the 2024/2025 Budget. There was extensive community engagement undertaken prior to adoption.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That:*

1. *That Council receive the Capital Works Program - April 2025 report.*

**MOVED CR SANDERS  
SECONDED CR PRESTON**

**That:**

1. **That Council receive the Capital Works Program - April 2025 report.**

**Cr Sanders and Cr Preston spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5143/25**

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no Attachments relating to this item

## SECTION 5 - INFORMAL MEETINGS

### 5.1 COUNCIL BRIEFINGS

**AUTHOR'S TITLE:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**DEPARTMENT** CEO'S OFFICE  
**REFERENCE:** 13039074

#### OFFICER'S DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Governance Rules state that if there is a meeting of Councillors that:

1. is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of *Council* or briefing Councillors;
2. is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
3. is not a *Council meeting*, *Delegated Committee* meeting or *Community Asset Committee* meeting, the *Chief Executive Officer* must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting are:
  - a. tabled at the next convenient *Council meeting*; and
  - b. recorded in the minutes of that *Council meeting*.

#### DISCUSSION

As a requirement of the Governance Rules, a summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings held since the last Council Meeting are presented to Council and will be recorded in the minutes.

INFORMAL MEETINGS
Council Briefing held on 21 May 2025

#### Matters discussed at the briefing:

- Draft Budget Submissions
- Budget 2025/26
- Revenue and Rating Strategy
- Financial Plan
- Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-2029 Community Feedback
- Disability Parking Space - Dual use loading zone
- JWard Lease extension
- ESVF
- Change of June Council meeting date
- Kokoda Park Tennis Court Facilities
- Hooklift Truck
- Land Sale
- Capital Works Program
- Monthly Performance Report
- Audit & Risk Committee Appointment
- CEO Employment and Remuneration Chair Appointment
- Building approvals
- Planning approvals under delegation

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

### ***Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives***

The report supports the strategic objective of the Council Plan 2021-2025:

#### **6. STRONG AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE**

We will work hard to build models of governance that place delivering public value at the centre through effective financial management; well measured risk management; and implementation of effective community engagement practices.

#### **6.3** Continuously improve Council's community engagement process and practices in line with deliberative engagement practices, while acknowledging the need for a range of different techniques to ensure effective engagement.

### ***Financial***

There are no financial impacts for the receiving of Informal Meetings of Councillors.

### ***Policy/Relevant Law***

Reporting of Informal Meetings is in line with the requirements of the Governance Rules.

### ***Risk Assessment***

Following the requirements of the Governance Rules will ensure that Council meets its legislative requirements.

### ***Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement***

A summary of matters discussed at the Council Briefings are presented for community information.

## RECOMMENDATION

*That*

*the Informal Meetings of Councillors Report be received.*

## MOVED CR JOYCE

## SECONDED CR WATERSTON

**That**

**the Informal Meetings of Councillors Report be received.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0**

**5144/25**

## ATTACHMENTS

The Summary of Council Briefings are provided as Attachment 5.1.



## Councillor Briefing Agenda



**Date: Wednesday 21 May 2025**

**Commencement: 5.00 pm**

**Location: Council Chamber, Shire Offices**

**Councillors:** Cr Jo Armstrong  
Cr Rob Armstrong  
Cr Peter Joyce  
Cr Teli Kaur  
Cr Luke Preston  
Cr Bob Sanders  
Cr Bill Waterston

**Officers:** CEO, Dr Tim Harrison

### Disclosure of Conflict of Interests

Disclosure of Interests are to be made immediately prior to any relevant item being discussed (**Local Government Act 2020 - Section 131 and Chapter 5, Section 6 of the Governance Rules**).

### Matters Considered

1	Mayor's roundup
2	Draft Budget Submissions
3	Budget 2025/26
4	Revenue and Rating Plan
5	Financial Plan
6	Community Vision 2035 and Council Plan 2025-2029 Community Feedback
7	Disability Parking Space – Dual use loading zone
8	JWard Lease extension
9	ESVF
10	Change of June Council Meeting date
11	Kokoda Park Tennis Court Facilities
12	Hooklift Truck
13	Land Sale
14	Capital Works Program
15	Monthly Performance Report
16	Audit & Risk Committee Appointment
17	CEO Employment and Remuneration Chair Appointment
18	Building approvals
19	Planning approvals under delegation

**Dr Tim Harrison**

**SECTION 6 - COMMITTEE MINUTES/REPORTS**

No Committee Minutes/Reports received

## **SECTION 7 - NOTICES OF MOTION**

A *notice of motion* must be in writing signed by a Councillor and be lodged with or sent to the *Chief Executive Officer* no later than 12.00pm (noon) and at least six (6) days prior to the Council Meeting to allow sufficient time for the *Chief Executive Officer* to include the *notice of motion* in agenda papers for a *Council meeting*.

**No Notices of Motion received**

## **SECTION 8 - URGENT BUSINESS**

Items cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of *Council* and only then if it:

- 1 relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the *agenda*; and
- 2 cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next *Council meeting*.

### **No Urgent Business arising**



## **SECTION 9 - CLOSE SESSION (CONFIDENTIAL)**

In accordance with section 66(2)(a), 3(1) *Confidential Information* (a) of the Local Government Act 2020, the following agenda items are listed for consideration in the confidential section:

- Item 9.1 – Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member Appointment
- Item 9.2 – CEO Employment and Remuneration Chair Appointment
- Item 9.3 – Supply and Delivery of one new Hooklift Truck
- Item 9.4 – Sale of Industrial Land

## **CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO THE PUBLIC - 6:43pm**

The Open Council Meeting will now be closed, but members of the public are welcome to rejoin the Council Meeting following the recommencement of the meeting.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.*

### **MOVED CR R ARMSTRONG SECONDED CR SANDERS**

**That the meeting be closed to members of the public pursuant to section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 to consider confidential reports.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5145/25**

## **OPEN COUNCIL MEETING RECOMMENCEMENT - 7:05pm**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That the Open Council Meeting recommence.*

### **MOVED CR SANDERS SECONDED CR PRESTON**

**That the Open Council Meeting recommence.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5150/25**

**Gallery invited to return to Council Chamber.**

## LIFTING OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTIONS

### RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. *The confidentiality of the report in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 not be lifted on adoption of the motion*
2. *The confidentiality of the decision in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 be lifted on adoption of the motion*
3. *The confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Item 9.3 and 9.4 not be lifted on adoption of the motion.*

**MOVED CR SANDERS**

**SECONDED CR R ARMSTRONG**

**That:**

1. **The confidentiality of the report in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 not be lifted on adoption of the motion**
2. **The confidentiality of the decision in relation to Item 9.1 and 9.2 be lifted on adoption of the motion**
3. **The confidentiality of the report and decision in relation to Confidential Agenda Item 9.3 and 9.4 not be lifted on adoption of the motion.**

**No Councillors spoke for or against the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0**  
**5151/25**

## 9.1 RECRUITMENT FOR INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR COUNCIL'S AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE

**MOVED CR SANDERS**

**SECONDED CR KAUR**

**That:**

1. **Council appoints Ms Janet Dore as an independent member of the Audit Committee to replace Ms Zoe Allen, with a term that commences on 3 June 2025 and conclude on 2 June 2028.**
2. **The confidentiality of the report not be lifted on adoption of the motion**
3. **The Confidentiality of the decision be lifted on adoption of the motion.**

**Cr Sanders and Cr Kaur spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0**  
**5146/25**

**9.2 CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT CHAIR  
APPOINTMENT**

**MOVED CR SANDERS  
SECONDED CR WATERSTON**

**That:**

- 1. Council appoints Mr Greg Jakob as Independent Chair of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee**
- 2. The confidentiality of the report not be lifted on adoption of the motion**
- 3. The confidentiality of the decision be lifted on adoption of the motion**

**Cr Sanders and Cr Waterston spoke for the motion**

**CARRIED 7/0  
5147/50**

**Meeting closed at 7:06pm**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT PAGES 10774 - 11009 INCLUDING PAGES 796 - 811 OF THE CLOSED SESSION ARE CONFIRMED AND ARE A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD.

**MAYOR - CR JO ARMSTRONG**