

Finance and Operations Committee

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 9 November 2022

Time: 6pm

Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)
13 Mair Street, Benalla

Meetings are live streamed and recorded. Members of the public are encouraged to watch the live broadcast of the meeting at www.benalla.vic.gov.au

Any person wishing to participate in Public Submissions in accordance with Rule 7.3 of the *Governance Rules 2020* should contact the Council by emailing council@benalla.vic.gov.au or telephoning Governance Coordinator Jessica Beaton on (03) 5760 2600.

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the *Governance Rules 2020* an audio recording will be made of the proceedings of the meeting.

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Agenda

Chair	Councillor Justin King	
Councillors	Councillor Danny Claridge	
	Councillor Peter Davis	
	Councillor Don Firth	
	Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)	
	Councillor Punarji Hewa Gunaratne	
	Councillor Gail O’Brien	
In attendance	Dom Testoni	Chief Executive Officer
	Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
	Jane Archbold	Manager Community
	Cathy Fitzpatrick	Manager Finance
	Janine McMaster	Manager People and Performance
	Jessica Beaton	Governance Coordinator

Acknowledgment of Country

We, the Benalla Rural City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Apologies

Recommendation:

That the apology/ies be accepted and a leave of absence granted.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes have been circulated to Councillors and posted on the Council website www.benalla.vic.gov.au pending confirmation at this meeting.

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the Finance and Operations Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 5 October 2022 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Governance Matters

This Committee Meeting is conducted in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Benalla Rural City Council *Governance Rules 2020*.

Recording of Council Meetings

In accordance with the *Governance Rules 2020* clause 6.4 meetings of Council will be audio recorded and made available for public access, with the exception of matters identified as confidential items in the agenda.

Behaviour at Meetings

Members of the public present at a meeting must remain silent during the proceedings other than when specifically invited to address the Committee.

The Chair may remove a person from a meeting for interjecting or gesticulating offensively after being asked to desist, and the chair may cause the removal of any object or material that is deemed by the Chair to be objectionable or disrespectful.

The Chair may call a break in a meeting for either a short time, or to resume another day if the behaviour at the Council table or in the gallery is significantly disrupting the meeting.

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor must declare any Conflict of Interest pursuant to Section 130 of the Act in any items on this Agenda.

At the time indicated in the agenda, a Councillor with a conflict of interest in an item on that agenda must indicate they have a conflict of interest by clearly stating:

- the item for which they have a conflict of interest;
- whether their conflict of interest is general or material; and
- the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest.

Immediately prior to the consideration of the item in which they have a conflict of interest, a Councillor must indicate to the meeting the existence of the conflict of interest and leave the meeting.

Business

1. 2022/2023 Community Sponsorship Program

SF/2857

Jane Archbold – Manager Community
Tom Arnold – Community Development Coordinator

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents funding applications under the 2022/23 Community Sponsorship Program.

BACKGROUND

The Community Sponsorship Program enables local community groups, clubs and organisations to seek funding to increase their capacity to work in partnership with the Council and others to address local needs and enhance the local community.

The Community Sponsorship Program distributes grants up to \$500 on a monthly basis, allowing local clubs, groups and organisations the opportunity to seek funds when the need arises.

DISCUSSION

Applications for consideration under the 2022/23 Community Sponsorship Program are detailed in the table below.

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Rotary Club of Benalla	Rotary are planning to send approximately 30 Students to the Portsea Camp (formally known as the Lord Mayor's Camp). The Club has been committed to this excellent project since 1954 and has provided the opportunity for disadvantaged students to attend. Students are able to have a holiday by the sea and gain invaluable peer experience through positive leaders and support networks.	\$500	\$500
Stroke Association of Victoria (SAV)	A number of referrals have been received for peer support in the Benalla region. There is currently no non-clinical community-based support for Stroke survivors in the Benalla region. SAV is requesting funding to cover the cost of room hire to facilitate support groups. SAV envision fortnightly support group meetings for approximately two hours each day.	\$500	\$500

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Lima School Community Centre Committee	<p>The Committee are coordinating a Community Christmas BBQ event to be held on Friday 9 December 2022. The event is as a post COVID-19 community engagement opportunity to reconnect and aimed to appeal to all community members.</p> <p>The committee hope to provide a fun casual night where people can engage and reconnect with neighbours in a rural community setting to provide a valuable support network.</p> <p>The Committee are a small non-for-profit group of volunteers with limited financial resources and are applying for a sponsorship grant to cover the costs of the BBQ for the attendees along with a "Santa gift" for each child in attendance.</p>	\$500	\$500
Thoona and District Progress Association Incorporated	<p>Farmers BBQ event to be held at the Thoona Hotel on 19 November 2022. Event is aimed at supporting local farmers who are facing large financial losses, mental health issues and stress due to the current weather conditions.</p> <p>Within the community there are 38 families that were directly impacted by the current weather conditions. The event is designed to bring the community together and provide emotional support to let people know they are not isolated during tough times.</p>	\$500	\$500
Total		\$2,000	\$2,000

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

- *A healthy, Safe and resilient community.*
- *A connected, involved and inclusive community.*

Leadership

- *Engaged and informed community.*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council’s *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed that, due to administrative nature of the Policy, that community engagement be undertaken at the ‘Inform’ level under the International Association for Public Participation’s IAP2 public participation spectrum.

Level of Public Participation	Promise to the community	Techniques to be used
Inform	We will provide information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of program via media, website and social media. ▪ Program presented in public reports to the Council. ▪ Outcomes advised directly to applicants. ▪ Outcomes detailed in Annual Report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *2022/23 Budget* allocates \$15,000 to the Community Sponsorship. To date, \$4,000 in Community Sponsorship grant funding has been allocated.

To ensure transparency and accountability, where assistance is provided in meeting the cost of Council facility hire, the payment is reflected in relevant ledger accounts via an internal transaction.

For example, if the Council agrees to meet the hire cost of the Benalla Town Hall a credit would be made to the Town Hall income ledger account and a debit made to the Community Support Program expense ledger account.

In addition, recipients of support throughout the financial year are detailed in the Annual Report.

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

Recommendation:

That \$500 grants from the 2022/2023 Community Sponsorship Program be allocated to Rotary Club of Benalla, Stroke Association of Victoria (SAV), Lima School Community Centre Committee and Thoona and District Progress Association Incorporated.

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2. People and Performance Department Activity Report for The Quarter Ended 30 September 2022

SF/1538

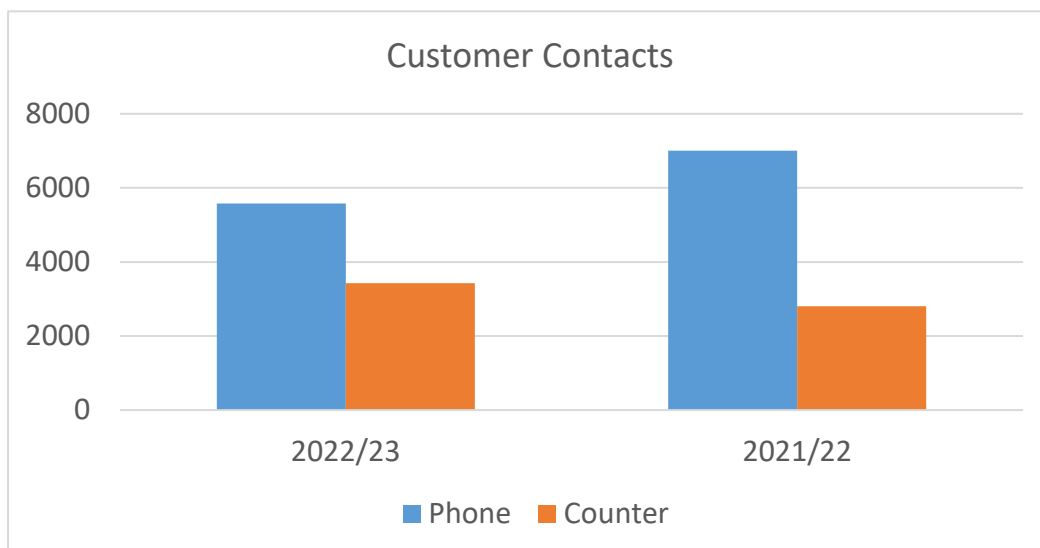
Janine McMaster – Manager People and Performance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

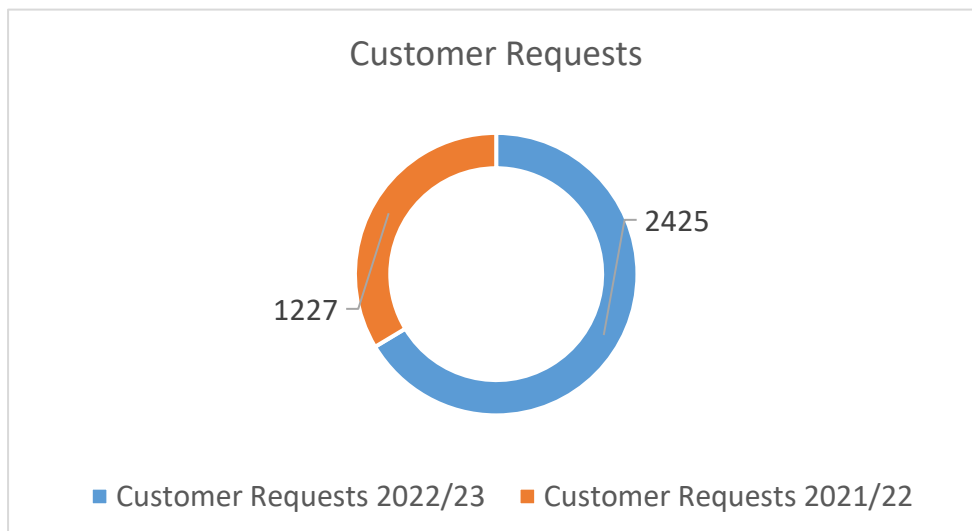
The report presents the activities of the People and Performance Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2022.

Customer Relations

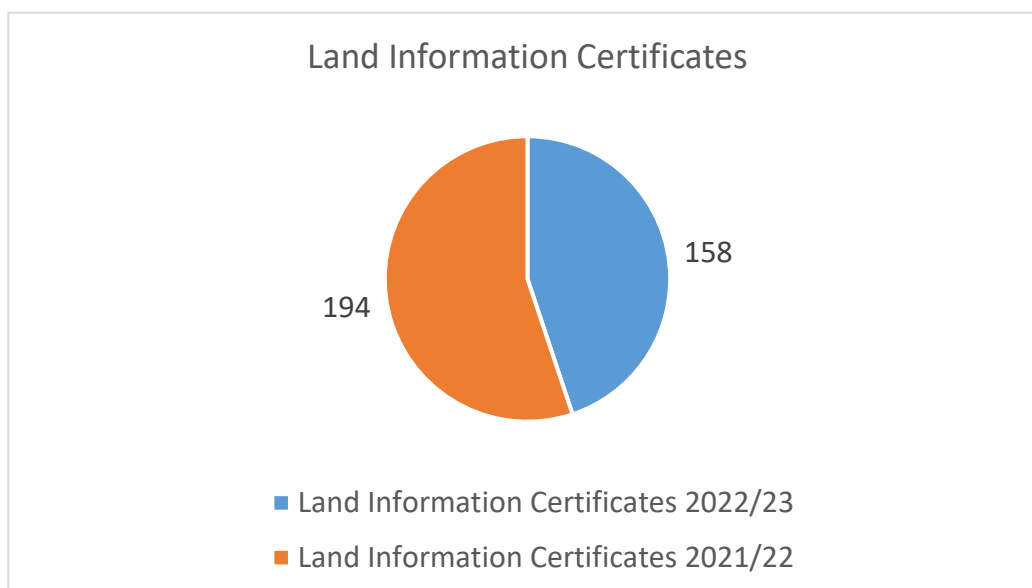
- The customer contacts (phone and counter) decreased by 8 per cent for the quarter compared to 2021/22. The phone contacts decreased by 20 per cent for the quarter.



- The customer requests (CRMS) increased by 98 per cent for the quarter compared to 2021/22. Of this total, there were 677 caddy bag requests received over the counter and by phone.



- The land information certificates decreased by 19 per cent for the quarter compared to 2020/21.



Human Resources

Service	March 2022	June 2022	September 2022
Recruitment	5	5	6
Turnover	5	34	5
Training Applications	20	50	30
Workplace incidents	14	5	10
WorkCover claims	0	0	1

- The workplace incidents ranged from equipment use, vehicle use, impact with object and manual handling. The numbers are slightly higher than the previous quarter, which is positive as this indicates staff are reporting.
- Commence the roll out of the 2022/23 Staff Performance and Development Review Program.
- Ongoing maintenance and administration of the Human Resources functions, including the following areas: recruitment, interviews, inductions, organisational wide training and monitoring the training budget.

Payroll

- Finalised redundancy payments for Aged and Disability staff.
- Completed end of financial year processing.
- Assisted in Council audit.
- Maintained Payforce database in response to changes in employee details and terms of employment.
- Maintained the organisation structure module of Payforce to incorporate resignations, employment of new staff as well as changes to staff terms of employment.
- Responded to internal payroll enquiries.
- Prepared managers' payroll reports each fortnight and other ad hoc reports and costing requests.

Risk Management

Occupational Health and Safety

OH&S continues to be monitored through the following regular:

- workplace inspections
- designated Workplace Group meetings
- incident and hazard reporting and monitoring
- incident and hazard action lists
- reporting to the Leadership Team and OH&S Committee
- reporting at department team meetings.

Information Management

- 17,411 electronic documents were saved into Content Manager during this quarter which was 2,287 less than the June quarter.
- Kapish Content Manager training was provided to the Information Management staff and the Administration Champion Group. The training took place over two and a half days and covered advanced training for both groups and included systems training for the Information Management staff.

Volunteer Development

Overall numbers are down due to the ceasing of services for Meals on Wheels, Volunteer Transport and Social Support.

All Volunteers from these programs were thanked for their many years of service to the programs and Council. Contact has also been made to inform these Volunteers of other opportunities within the Council for Volunteering.

There has been interest expressed from some Volunteers for the Visitors Information Centre, Benalla Art Gallery and the L2P program and all the expressions of interest have been forwarded to the relevant program Coordinators.

Three new Volunteers have been inducted, two for the Visitor Information Centre and one for the Benalla Art Gallery.

A celebration to say goodbye and thank you was held at the Red Gum Room, Lakeside Centre.



The Mayor and Councillors attended the morning tea with each of the Volunteers receiving a Certificate of Recognition, a pen and a plant as thanks for their services to the Benalla Community and Benalla Rural City.

Volunteers from Meals on Wheels, Volunteer Transport and Social Support were thanked for their many years of service and dedication.



Volunteer Services	July 2022		September 2022	
	Current	Current & Active	Current	Current & Active
Aged & Disability Services (includes Rotary MOWs)	63	15	0	0
Arts & Tourism	34	12	51	37
Events and Festivals (includes Australia Day)	10	7	16	8
Youth Programs	19	6	25	18
L2P (Mentors only)	24	23	27	24
Gardens maintenance and Litter Reduction (includes airport)	38	34	36	33
Specialist Committees & Steering Groups (includes Age Friendly and CASI)	35	5	45	41
RedB4 Bookshop	37	37	34	34
Benalla Library	6	3	8	3
Friends of Groups	40	11	53	41
Total	308	153	295	239

Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop Learning Centre

Over this period, Benalla Library have welcomed 14,680 patrons through the doors and loaned a total of 19,193 items. The increase of 4,071 items loaned compared to last quarter is very positive and an indication that patrons are returning to our Library.

Activity	July 2022	August 2022	September 2022
Total Visits	4,500	5,282	4,898
Total Loans	6,257	6,883	6,035
Total Members	5,314	5,299	5,277

The Benalla Library hosted their inaugural Book Launch during Book Week in August. The book is a compilation of many stories, drawings, and planning by our Junior Creative Writing Group. The launch was an absolute success followed by a pizza party for the children.



- Benalla Library staff dressed up and had fun over Book Week to help engage children and make children’s programs extra special. Staff dressed in a different costume every day, held games, and created suggested book packs to help encourage children to branch out of their reading comfort zone.
- Benalla Library welcomed its first published author back since COVID. Author Sulari Gentil was extremely enjoyable to listen to, very thoughtful, and wickedly funny. The event was held on Wednesday 10 August with over 30 patrons attending.



COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Community

A Connected, Involved and Inclusive Community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Encourage, support, value and celebrate volunteering in the community.	Develop and adopt a strategy for engaging new volunteer participation.	Strategy under review.

Leadership

High Performance Culture		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Improve customer experience through responsive, timely, efficient, well planned, and accessible services.	Review and update the <i>Customer Relations Strategy</i> .	Strategy under review.
Develop a skilled, efficient, and high performing customer focussed workforce.	Develop a <i>Benalla Rural City Council Workforce Plan</i> .	Workforce Plan adopted December 2021 and will be reviewed annually.
In collaboration with key community partners support an inclusive and safe workplace, aiming to increase awareness of and access to appropriate training for staff in the prevention of all forms of violence.	Develop a <i>Gender Equity Action Plan</i> .	<i>Gender Equality Action Plan</i> adopted March 2022. Under the plan, Gender Equity and Bystander training must be provided to staff within 12 months of its adoption. Gender Equality and Bystander training scheduled for February 2023.

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

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3. Finance Department Activity Report for The Quarter Ended 30 September 2022

SF/1519
Cathy Fitzpatrick – Manager Finance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents an overview of the functions of the Finance Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2022.

Finance

- Undertaking Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit process for 2021/22 Statements and Roads to Recovery Annual Report Acquittal.
- Co-ordinated responses from other departments on audit enquiries on several major assets revaluations undertaken utilising professional valuers and indexation percentage increases on assets types based on data from Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- Landfill Provision 2022 recalculation based on RSD Auditors review of 21/22 Landfill provision.
- Essential Services Commission - Annual rate rise compliance return submitted.
- Preparation of financial systems with budget phasing 2022/23 and issuing standing orders for 2022/23.
- VAGO Production of Annual statement and Performance report 2021/22.
- Reviewed financial data as at 30 September 2022 and commenced First Quarter Review and forecast for 30 June 2023

Sundry Debtors

An analysis of the unpaid sundry accounts as at that date with comparative data for the previous year is as follows:

Debtors Balances:

Date	90 days	60 days	30 days	Current	Total
30/09/22	\$51,004	\$6,093	\$64,942	\$378,602	\$500,642
30/06/22	\$39,404	\$9,579	\$53,089	\$633,443	\$735,515
31/03/22	\$256,068	\$162,834	\$42,295	\$628,796	\$1,089,993
31/12/21	\$38,995	\$83,149	\$154,539	\$192,538	\$469,222
30/09/21	\$27,217	\$11,894	\$47,244	\$518,689	\$605,044

Investment Portfolio

In accordance with the Investment Policy, details of investments held at 30 September 2022 are provided in the following table.

Table 1. Investments held at 30 September 2022

Bank	Short-term credit rating	Investment type	Amount invested '000	Interest rate	Term (days)	Maturity date
NAB	A-1+	TD	\$3,050	0.60%	273	08-Nov-22
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$2,005	0.67%	273	25-Nov-22
NAB	A-1+	TD	\$923	0.60%	275	21-Dec-22
ANZ	A-1+	TD	\$3,900	1.00%	275	24-Dec-22
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$934	2.37%	277	26-Feb-23
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$1,053	3.20%	273	23-Mar-23
Subtotal:			\$11,865			
CBA	A-1+	At call	\$4,262	0.20%		
CBA	A-1+	Operating	\$12,454	1.85%		
Subtotal:			\$16,716			
Total:			\$28,581			

*TD refers to general term deposits where the use of interest earned is not restricted.

These funds are required to meet the Council’s short-term commitments, including capital and operating supplier payments, employee payroll costs and loan repayments.

Loan Portfolio

Details of existing loans held at 30 September are attached in **Appendix 1**.

Loan terms are:

Loan Number	Type	Term
15 to 17	Variable	10 years
18	Fixed – principal and interest	10 years
19	Variable	10 years
20	Fixed	10 years
21	Fixed	10 years
22	Variable	10 Years

Revenue, Property and Valuations

- High-level debts referred to debt collection agency – 34 properties (76 from July 2021).
- Issued annual valuation and rate notices to property owners.
- Annual Rate Cap compliance data submitted to the Essential Services Commission.
- Annual Return submitted (not yet approved) to the State Revenue Office for Fire Service Property Levy.
- Completion of Municipal Rates Concession annual verification.
- E-notice stats:
 - EzyBill – 300 (+68)
 - BPAY View – 397 (0)

EzyBill is a method of receiving quarterly rate notices via email. The EzyBill portal allows access to rate notices from any electronic device making payment both easy and convenient.

BPAY is an easy and secure way to pay and manage bills from your online banking.

Rates and Charges Revenue

The annual notices for 2022/23 were issued on 19 August 2022 with payment of the first instalment due by 30 September 2022. All properties have been revalued with the updated 2022 level valuations detailed on the notices.

Valuation objections must be lodged by 24 October 2022 – two months from the recognised postage date.

To date, many valuation enquiries have been received, resulting in 19 formal valuation objections being lodged. It is expected this number will increase slightly as the due date for lodgment gets closer.

There is still one unresolved valuation objection –a large supermarket chain remains is in the process of being finalised by VCAT.

Appendix 2 details the overall rates and charges generated and collected and apportions the unpaid balance between arrears from previous years of \$744,000 and unpaid charges levied in the current year amounting to \$13.6 million

Rate arrears collected in the current year amount to \$99,000. This figure has increased on last quarter, but is 50 per cent lower than Quarter one 2021/22. This change was expected due to the lack of collection activities/penalty interest during 2020/21, coupled with a smaller brought forward balance.

Collections, as a proportion of overall debt, are slightly down compared to Quarter One 2021/22. The number of properties with outstanding balances has increased by 262 properties.

Appendix 3 provides a graph summary comparing the 2022/23 rate instalments due with the total instalments paid as at 30 September 2022.

Spatial Data Management

The following table includes spatial data management statistics.

Task	Sept 2022	June 2022	March 2022	Dec 2021	Sept 2021
Rural Road numbers issued	23	12	24	8	8
M1s forwarded to the Spatial Information Division of DELWP to update the State mapping datasets with new addresses and Council Property Numbers and rectify anomalies	83	371	184	212	224
Maintenance and auditing parcels on Mapbase	105	390	220	245	240

Corporate GIS

Provided training to new staff with the corporate GIS software *Spectrum Spatial Analyst* (SSA).

Continued with data audit of mapping files to translate their projection from GDA94 to GDA2020 which is happening nationally.

Attended the Local Government Spatial Reference Group (LGSRG) capability workshop where Land Use Victoria (DELWP) presented on the major changes to the core digital data and the impact it will have on Councils in assisting with this.

Provided the following assistance and requests from various internal and external departments:

- Translated and mapped data for Roadside Weed and Pest program. Data was captured from contractors of the recorded treatment sites with supporting information. This data assists the Environmental Sustainability team with identification and location of weeds and provides data for annual reporting requirements under the Government funding agreements.
- Digital data request to assist with the Open Space Strategic Plan.
- Extracted names and addresses for Winton Flood Study in a defined area to assist with a mail out seeking flood related information.
- Extracted addresses within the rural and urban waste collection zones to assist with updating information the online *BRCC Waste* app.
- Assisted Mansfield Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in providing names and addresses for identified areas as part of the public planned autumn burn program.

Addressing

Liaised with VicMap officers at Land Use Victoria to provide advice regarding complex address applications and queries received from the public and Ambulance Victoria.

VicMap recently assigned new internal addresses to cabins at a caravan park as part of the State complex addressing program. This will now assist park residents with enrolling on electoral rolls, postal and service deliveries and requiring the emergency services.

Assisted Australia Post regards them auditing delivery entrances in alignment with assigned rural road numbers.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Leadership

Good Governance		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Deliver responsible budget outcomes linked to strategy that maintain financial sustainability and deliver value for money and rating fairness.	Ongoing development of <i>Financial Plan</i>	Financial Plan adopted 29 June 2022. Council continues to work with Rural Councils Victoria on developing a Financial Plan model tailored for smaller councils.

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

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Loan Schedule

Interest To Be Paid		2022/2023 Year	2023/2024 Year	2024/2025 Year	2025/2026 Year	2026/27 Year	2027/28 Year	2028/29 Year	2029/30 Year	2030/31 Year	2031/32 Year	Totals
Loan Number	15A	\$ 1,922.17										\$ 1,922.17
	15B	\$ 4,172.69										\$ 4,172.69
	16	\$ 10,190.30	\$ 3,740.74									\$ 13,931.04
	17	\$ 7,505.83	\$ 4,120.28	\$ 794.00								\$ 12,420.12
	18	\$ 7,615.00	\$ 5,630.00	\$ 3,561.15	\$ 1,371.71							\$ 18,177.87
	19	\$ 8,471.54	\$ 7,588.63	\$ 5,709.98	\$ 3,780.36	\$ 1,788.94						\$ 27,339.45
	20	\$ 11,385.31	\$ 9,499.21	\$ 7,528.09	\$ 5,394.85	\$ 3,286.35	\$ 1,062.37					\$ 38,156.18
	21	\$ 11,304.30	\$ 9,774.72	\$ 8,142.20	\$ 6,482.53	\$ 4,768.43	\$ 3,005.77	\$ 1,169.98				\$ 44,647.92
	22	\$ 54,742.52	\$ 53,683.78	\$ 46,518.25	\$ 39,496.99	\$ 32,475.73	\$ 25,521.80	\$ 18,433.21	\$ 11,411.95	\$ 4,390.69		\$ 286,674.93
Total Interest Payable		\$ 117,309.65	\$ 94,037.38	\$ 72,253.68	\$ 56,526.44	\$ 42,319.44	\$ 29,589.94	\$ 19,603.19	\$ 11,411.95	\$ 4,390.69	\$ -	\$ 447,442.37

Principal To Be Paid		2022/2023 Year	2023/2024 Year	2024/2025 Year	2025/2026 Year	2026/27 Year	2027/28 Year	2028/29 Year	2029/30 Year	2030/31 Year	2031/32 Year	Totals
Loan Number	15A	\$ 105,376.08										\$ 105,376.08
	15B	\$ 230,546.91										\$ 230,546.91
	16	\$ 142,407.39	\$ 130,121.80									\$ 272,529.20
	17	\$ 111,532.92	\$ 114,939.84	\$ 64,404.50								\$ 290,877.26
	18	\$ 52,584.72	\$ 54,569.72	\$ 56,638.57	\$ 58,818.68							\$ 222,611.68
	19	\$ 48,099.47	\$ 48,982.38	\$ 50,861.03	\$ 52,790.65	\$ 67,881.90						\$ 268,615.44
	20	\$ 49,767.97	\$ 51,654.07	\$ 53,625.19	\$ 55,758.43	\$ 57,866.93	\$ 50,060.97					\$ 318,733.56
	21	\$ 47,444.18	\$ 48,973.76	\$ 50,606.28	\$ 52,265.95	\$ 53,980.05	\$ 55,742.71	\$ 57,536.82				\$ 366,549.76
	22	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	
Total Principal Payable		\$ 977,759.65	\$ 639,241.57	\$ 466,135.58	\$ 409,633.71	\$ 369,728.89	\$ 295,803.68	\$ 247,536.82	\$ 190,000.00	\$ 190,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,785,839.90

Rates and Charges Collections Report

30 September 2022

Appendix 2

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Arrears as at 1 July 2022	\$787,623	\$49,123	\$6,687	\$843,433	Unpaid amounts up to and including the 2021/22 rating year.
Payments 30/09/2022	-\$86,799	-\$11,854	-\$400	-\$99,053	
Arrears Rates Balance	\$787,623	\$49,123	\$6,687	\$843,433	<i>Arrears Unpaid as at 30 September 2022</i>

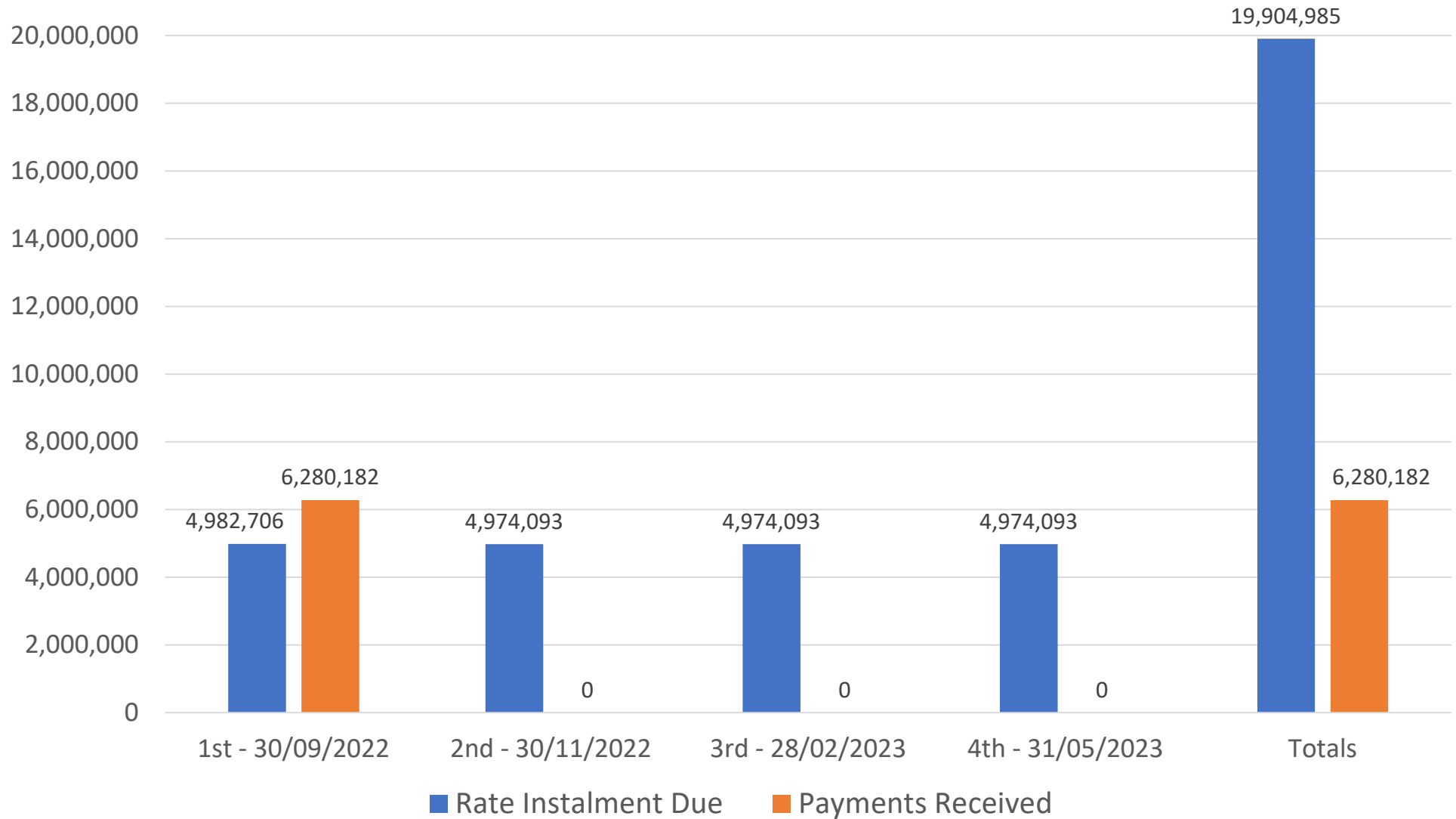
Current Rates/Charges	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Raised 30/09/2022	\$20,313,793	\$4,453	\$4,161	\$20,322,406	
Total	\$20,313,793	\$4,453	\$4,161	\$20,322,406	

Pension Concessions	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
30/09/2022	-\$41,7421	\$0	\$0	-\$41,7421	State Govt - reimbursed by DFFH.
Total	-\$41,7421	\$0	\$0	-\$41,7421	

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Net Rates for Collection	\$19,896,372	\$4,453	\$4,161	\$19,904,985	
Payments 30/09/2022	-\$6,277,617	-\$1,675	-\$891	-\$6,280,182	
Total	-\$6,277,617	-\$1,675	-\$891	-\$6,280,182	

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Current Rates Balance	\$13,618,755	\$2,778	\$3,270	\$13,624,803	<i>Current unpaid as at 30 September 2022</i>
Balance Remaining	\$14,406,378	\$51,901	\$9,957	\$14,468,235	<i>Balance as at 30 September 2022</i>

2022/23 Rates and Charges due and collected to 30 September 2022



4. Community Department Activity Report for The Quarter Ended 30 September 2022

SF/1534

Jane Archbold – Manager Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents activity for the Community Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2022.

Community and Youth Development

- Community Development Officer (CDO), Janine Brooks started with the team in August 2022. The CDO commenced work on a Township Planning project, which aims to assist rural communities to prioritise projects they would like Council to support. A community meeting was held with Swanpool community members to map out township plans and discuss community issues. The CDO has started updating the *Community Access and Inclusion Plan*.
- Safer Places funding has enabled lighting to be installed around parts of the lake walking track, with further works to be undertaken in the botanical gardens. Three project control group meetings for the Creating Safer Places project have been held.
- The Accessibility Reference Group meet during the quarter. The Coordinator Open Spaces attend the meeting as a guest speaker, highlighting several accessibility projects within the Benalla Rural City Community.
- The Community Development Coordinator completed 'Leadership for Systems Change' training with other key staff from across the region. This training was provided by the Goulburn Valley Public Health Unit.
- On-site meetings and on-line meetings for Fawckner Drive Precinct have taken place with consultants 'Playce' to discuss and commence work on the masterplan.
- Meeting held with Benalla Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club to discuss facility and funding opportunities.
- Rural Outreach worker was in contact with 66 community members, 20 of which were new referrals. Key issues continue to be to mental health, family and relationship issues as well as succession planning for farming families.
- The Community Activation and Social Isolation Initiative (CASI) funded a Community Directory. The Directory has been finalised and distributed to all households in Benalla.
The directory aims to reconnect and re-establish social networks promoting a variety of groups and organisations in Benalla. Copies will be included in new resident kits.
- COVID-19 relief has been finalised. Remaining food packages were delivered to Waminda Community House for future distribution.

- A NBN forum was held at Benalla Ray Sweeny Community Care Building (45 Cost Street, Benalla) at the end of August. Five Councillors and 20 community and business representatives were in attendance. The forum focused on improving connectivity and increasing capability. NBN is able to run free community sessions on subjects such as cyber safety including scams doing the rounds.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group met with members of the Benalla Historical Society in September 2022. The groups have agreed to work together on a history of Benalla before and after colonisation. The Aboriginal Advisory Group have also connected with the Benalla Art Gallery Director. Both Benalla Health and Benalla Police are actively seeking Aboriginal artists to contribute to projects.
- Benalla Rural City has been recognised as a Mental Health First Aid Australia Champion Community. The successful Live4Life program has trained over 1,000 teens and over 165 adults to recognise and respond to the signs of mental health problems in young people. Benalla Rural City Council is the lead agent implementing the program alongside community partnership members; Benalla Health, NE Tracks LLEN, Tomorrow Today Foundation, Victoria Police, NESAY, NECAHMS and local community members.
- The youth team partnered with The Centre to offer Barista training for local young people as part of the Engage program in September 2022. Ten young people attended the two day training and receive certificates in Workplace Hygiene and Barista training. This training was \$220 per person to deliver attendees paid only \$20 to complete the training.
- The Benalla P-12 Live4Life crew held a BBQ for *R U OK Day* for Faithfull Street campus students.
- Eight young Live4Life crew members from Benalla attended the Youth Live4Life camp at Lady Northcote YMCA (Glenmore) during September 2022 school holidays. Forty-five young Life4Life crew members spent three days of outdoor activities, workshops, trivia and dance parties. Attendees were from Baw Baw, Moira, Glenelg, Bass Coast and South Gippsland local government areas.



Participants at the Live4Life camp and crew members organising a BBQ for *R U OK Day*.

- The L2P program supported 31 learner drivers in July, 32 learner drivers in August and 34 learner drivers in September 2022 (averaging 32 learner drivers per month). During the quarter six young people received their probationary license and was supported by 19 volunteer mentor drivers who provided more than 660 driving hours.
- An increase in funding for the L2P Program has been received. Additional funding will assist with staff and driving instructor costs.



Learner drivers supported by the L2P program.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

- Twenty one births were recorded for the July to September 2022 quarter.
- All client consultations remain face to face. There have been nil changes in the requirement for PPE. Staff and clients continue to wear masks during consultations and home visits.
- The First Time Parent Group was run during Term 3. 11 to 12 parents were in attendance at the sessions.
- The Sleep and Settling Program is now reserved for clients with highest needs. Clients are being seen for Sleep and Settling through the Enhanced MCH Program.
- Stats show an increased participation rate for the MCH service, with a 19 per cent increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children accessing the service.
- The Early Years Network have been working to improve communication between the MCH service and other services. The aim is to increase attendance at 3 and 4 year old kinder.
- Over 40 people attended the Benalla Whole of Community Early Years Forum held on 22 August 2022. Participants workshopped the services currently available and how the community can better cater for children who are developmentally vulnerable.

Integrated Family Services (IFS)

- Six referrals were received by Benalla Family Services from The Orange Door (TOD). Referral rate is still below average and continued work is occurring between IFS and TOD to improve the allocation process and experience of families.
- Service hour targets for the quarter finished at 81.51 per cent. Referrals can only be received through the Orange Door. While staff continue to support clients and work through cases, available capacity is being reported on a weekly basis to TOD.
- Benalla Family Services has met with Benalla P-12 College in relation to referral pathways for assessments. All schools, early childhood education and care facilities in the LGA have been invited to TOD referral workshops over the coming months.
- Positive feedback has been received from The Orange Door Practice and Child Protection Community Based service. Family Services Officers are flexible, innovative, empowering in the support they offer their clients.
- During the quarter two families received funding through the Ovens and Murray Child and Family Services Alliance.
- Working collaboratively with Family Services, Family Liaison has supported four new families over the quarter. Family Liaison plays an integral role in supporting families in the Benalla community and works closely alongside Family Services to assess risk and complexities for support.
- IFS is working collaboratively with Upper Murray Family Care Community and Benalla P-12 College to deliver a group parenting support program in November 2022. This program is being implemented as a result from the Increased Outcomes for Vulnerable Families project.
- IFS provided a Pediatric First Aid course for parents and a printed activity booklet and cookbook 'Kitchen Connections' as a part of NAIDOC week.
- Supported playgroup saw an increase in families attending this quarter. Sixteen families are now attending the group. The group are meeting face to face and attending local community venues.

Discussions with Waminda Community House have commenced to support the establishment of a community playgroup in 2023.

Age Friendly Benalla

- The Aged and Disability Services Coordinator Tracey Hooper finished her role at Council in September 2022. Tracey worked for Council for 25 years and was an integral member of the Community Services team.
- A workshop is planned for November 2022 for members of the Age Friendly Benalla Reference Group to develop an action plan for the Age Friendly Benalla Strategy adopted in 2020.

Age Friendly Benalla Reference Group representatives met with the CEO and Councillors on 20 September 2022 to promote advocacy and resourcing for older people in our community and continued support of the Age Well in Benalla Info Hub.

- An advertisement was placed in the *Benalla Ensign* to promote the 2022 Seniors Festival. Events and activities will be run over the month of October. Activities include Waminda Community House High Tea, U3A Get Online lunch, Senior Citizen's Fun, Games and Music afternoon and subsidized movie screenings at BPACC and Swanpool.

Regional Assessment Service

- The Regional Assessment team have continued to provide assessments under the My Aged Care system and referring for Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services.
- The Assessment team have been facing challenges with limited service provider options for referrals and support services. Many of the support services required are currently not available on an ongoing level, this is leaving people without support and is putting additional pressure on service providers who only hold short term funding.
- The team continue to strive for strong relationships with CHSP service providers and Benalla Health to ensure positive outcomes for clients and carers.
- The team has achieved 98.06 per cent ranking from survey results, 13.06 per cent above the health department's goal of 85 per cent.
- Performance Indicators have been met for assessments actioned and completed in the required timeframes (48 assessments completed and 90 support plan reviews completed).
- The team has noticed additional workload outside of the assessment role since the Team Leader of Aged and Disability has finished. The additional tasks include administration, reporting duties (finance and health department) and liaising with department key stakeholders.

Highlights

- NAIDOC Week celebration events started on Monday 4 July 2022. More than 100 people were in attendance at the flag raising and children's activities at the Benalla Library. The event was supported by the Aboriginal Advisory Group. NAIDOC Week is an important date in the Australian calendar and is a time to come together to celebrate and recognise the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This year's NAIDOC Week theme was '*Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!*'.



Celebrating NAIDOC week with Aboriginal Elders Aunty Patsy, Desiree Walker at flag raising event and story time at the Benalla Library.



COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Community

A healthy, safe and resilient community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Work closely with our community and key stakeholders to address some of the priorities of the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023: healthy eating and active living; mental wellbeing, preventing violence and injury, and climate change and its impact on health.	Development, implementation and monitoring of <i>Benalla Rural City Municipal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan</i> .	Benalla Health and Wellbeing Partnership Working group has developed the Benalla Rural City Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.
Offer programs, services, activities and events that support, develop and connect community members of all abilities and lead the community in being age friendly and child and COVID safe.	Update and adopt <i>Benalla Rural City Council Community Access and Inclusion Plan</i> .	Draft CAIP finalised. The plan will be rebranded the <i>2023 – 2026 Disability Action Plan</i> to bring it into line with State Government language and to clarify the purpose of the plan.

A connected, involved and inclusive community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Support and promote opportunities for the community to participate in a range of social, recreational, and arts and cultural programs, activities and events.	Update and adopt <i>Benalla Rural City Council Youth Strategy</i> .	Strategy adopted June 2022. Youth team developing an action plan.
Continue to respectfully engage, include, celebrate and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and people.	Develop and adopt a <i>Benalla Rural City Council Aboriginal Reconciliation Plan</i> .	Funding to develop plan to be considered for inclusion in the <i>2022/23 Budget</i> .
Promote, support and actively engage with smaller rural communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Rural Township Plans. ▪ Deliver Township projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ongoing. Fifteen draft plans developed. Work has been Development team have begun process of working with communities to update and develop each respective plan. Swanpool, Baddaginnie and Thoona are immediate priorities. ▪ To be delivered once plans finalised.

Leadership

Good Governance		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Ensure key community priorities captured in the long-term community vision are reflected in the Council Plan.	Review, update and implement the <i>Benalla Rural City Community Plan 2016-2036</i> .	Community Vision included in Council Plan. Community Plan Implementation Steering Committee disbanded.

Engaged and informed community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Work in partnership with community members, groups and organisations to achieve the aspirations captured within the Benalla Rural City long-term Community Vision.	Review, update and implement the <i>Benalla Rural City Community Plan 2016-2036</i> .	Community Vision included in Council Plan. Community Plan Implementation Steering Committee disbanded.
Create opportunities for deliberative engagement prior to decision making and actively improve and enhance Council's community engagement practices.	Develop and adopt a <i>Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit</i> .	<i>Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit</i> adopted February 2022.
Provide timely and effective communications in plain language to the community about Council services, activities and decision making.		

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

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5. Councillors Expenses For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2022

SF/1532-08
Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details expenditure associated with Councillors’ mobile phone usage, attendance at professional development courses and conferences and seminars, and reimbursement of expenses incurred during the quarter ended 30 September 2022.

Councillors’ Information and Communication Expenses

Councillors' information and communication expenses for mobile phones and iPads are detailed in the table below:

Councillor	2022/23 Q1
Cr Claridge	\$39.54
Cr Davis	\$39.54
Cr Firth	\$39.54
Cr Gunaratne	\$39.54
Cr Hearn	\$39.54
Cr King	\$39.54
Cr O’Brien	\$39.54
Total Inc GST	\$276.78

Councillors' reimbursement of expenses

The Council at its meeting on 15 December 2021 adopted the *Councillor Resources and Reimbursement Policy*.

There were no reimbursements for councillors from 1 July 2022–30 September 2022.

Councillors' attendance at training courses, conferences and seminars

The Council at its meeting on 12 October 2022 adopted the *Professional Development for Councillors Policy*. The policy states that a quarterly report be submitted to the Council detailing year to date expenditure on Councillors' attendance at professional development courses or conferences and seminars.

Professional Development attendance by Councillors from 1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022:

Date	Councillor	Description	Registration & Accommodation (Ex. GST)
10/07/2022	All Councillors	The Change Agent Network Pty Ltd	\$2,495
21/07/2022	Cr Punarji Gunaratne	MAV Community Leadership Training, accommodation and breakfast	\$722
Total			\$3,217

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2022/23 Budget allocated for Councillors professional development is \$14,000.

Professional Development	Total (Ex. GST)
Quarter one	\$3,217
Total spend as at 30 September 2022	\$3,217

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

Closure of Meeting