

Finance and Planning Committee

Agenda

Date: Wednesday 1 November 2023

Time: 6pm

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

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 Jess Pendergast on (03) 5760 2600.

In accordance with Rule 6.4 of the *Governance Rules 2020* the Committee meeting will be lived streamed via the Council's website and an audio recording will be made of the proceedings of the meeting.

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

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Agenda

Chair Cr Danny Claridge

Councillors Councillor Peter Davis
 Councillor Don Firth
 Councillor Bernie Hearn (Mayor)
 Councillor Punarji Hewa Gunaratne
 Councillor Justin King
 Councillor Gail O'Brien

In attendance

Dom Testoni	Chief Executive Officer
Robert Barber	General Manager Corporate
Jane Archbold	Manager Community
Cathy Fitzpatrick	Manager Finance
Adrian Gasperoni	Manager Assets and Infrastructure
Catherine Macmillan	Acting Manager Economic Development and Sustainability
Janine McMaster	Manager People and Performance
Greg Robertson	Manager Facilities and Information Technology
Nilesh Singh	Manager Development
Jess Pendergast	Governance Coordinator

Opening and Acknowledgment of Country:

The Chair will open the meeting and recite the following Acknowledgement 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.

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.

Confirmation of the previous Meeting Minutes

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 Planning Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 27 September 2023 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Business

1. Financial Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1519

Cathy Fitzpatrick – Manager Finance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the financial result compared to budget for the quarter ended 30 September 2023 and presents outcomes from the first quarter budget review.

BACKGROUND

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that at 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 meeting that is open to the public.

The budget report must include a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to data and an explanation of any material variations. 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 maybe, required.

OPERATING RESULT

Year To Date 30 September 2023 Operating Result Compared to Budget

The report contains the Standard Income Statement and Statement of Capital Projects. The operating result for the quarter ended 30 September 2023 was a surplus of \$14.148 million which was \$703,000 more favourable than the budgeted surplus of \$13.455 million as shown in Table 1 below.

Full Year (30 June 2024) Forecast Operating Result Compared to Budget

The forecast operating result for the year ending 30 June 2024 has been updated to reflect the budget review aligned with the forecast result for the 2023/24 including carry forward items from the *2022/23 Budget*.

The forecast operating result for the year ending 30 June 2024 is a surplus of \$4.991 million which is an unfavorable variance of \$4.462 million compared to the budgeted surplus of \$9.453 million as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Net Operating Result For the Period Ended 30 September 2023 and First Quarter Forecast Compared To Budget As At 30 June 2024

	Notes	2023/24 YTD Actuals \$'000	2023/24 YTD Budget \$'000	2023/24 YTD Variance \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Budget \$'000	2023/25 Full Year Forecast \$'000	2023/24 Forecast Variance \$'000
Income / Revenue							
Rates and charges	1	\$21,734	\$21,592	\$142	\$21,899	\$21,899	\$0
Statutory fees and fines	2	\$167	\$152	\$15	\$606	\$606	\$0
User fees	3	\$908	\$889	\$19	\$3,622	\$3,611	-\$11
Grants - operating	4	\$729	\$584	\$144	\$6,839	\$2,443	-\$4,396
Grants - capital	5	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,356	\$14,611	\$255
Contributions - monetary and non-monetary	6	\$30	\$19	\$11	\$257	\$253	-\$4
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		\$8	\$6	\$2	\$25	\$25	\$0
Other income	7	\$214	\$197	\$17	\$231	\$602	\$372
Unearned income	8	\$25	\$0	\$25	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total income/revenue		\$23,815	\$23,439	\$376	\$47,835	\$44,050	-\$3,784

Income Statement	Notes	2023/24 YTD Actuals \$'000	2023/24 YTD Budget \$'000	2023/24 YTD Variance \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Budget \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Forecast \$'000	2023/24 Forecast Variance \$'000
Expenses							
Employee costs		\$3,513	\$3,499	-\$14	\$13,450	\$13,450	\$0
Materials and services	9	\$4,131	\$4,257	\$126	\$15,743	\$17,573	-\$1,830
Bad and doubtful debts - allowance for impairment losses		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14	\$14	\$0
Borrowing costs		\$25	\$29	\$4	\$253	\$394	-\$140
Other expenses		\$203	\$83	-\$120	\$341	\$341	\$0
Finance costs - leases		\$7	\$5	-\$2	\$116	\$116	\$
Amortisation - intangible assets		\$98	\$63	-\$35	\$19	\$19	\$
Amortisation - right of use assets		\$89	\$85	-\$4	\$555	\$655	-\$100
Depreciation	10	\$1,601	\$1,973	\$372	\$7,891	\$6,497	\$1,394
Total expenses		\$9,668	\$9,994	\$327	\$38,382	\$39,058	-\$676
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		\$14,148	\$13,445	\$703	\$9,453	\$4,991	-\$4,462

Income Statement Notes:

1. Rate and charges revenue supplementary rates and charges \$163,106 offset by reduced garbage charges to date.

No change in forecast is calculated as consideration of objections to valuations are yet to be determined which may impact the final rate revenue outcome.

2. Statutory Fees and Fines favourable variance significant items:

▪ Permit Fees	\$6,990
▪ Fines	\$3,609
▪ Certificate Charges	\$2,619

No overall forecast variance to 30 June 2024.

3. User Fees: Favourable variance year to date \$18,978.

Significant favourable variances:

▪ Landfill Service fees	\$38,629
▪ BPACC Operation	\$23,853
▪ Art Gallery Fees and Sales	\$19,096

Unfavourable variances:

▪ Sale of steel	\$25,264
▪ Registration fees and charges	\$33,811

Forecast results to 30 June are expected to have an unfavourable variance of \$11,345.

4. Operating Grants: Grant funding has increased revenue by \$144,000 due to additional funded grants for:

▪ Reginal Partnership Program to Benalla Art Gallery 2023/24 (70 per cent grant payment received earlier than forecast)	\$73,500
▪ Roadside Weeds and Pest Management Program	\$41,956
▪ Government Paid Maternity Leave	\$21,214

Forecast results to 30 June is unfavourable \$4.396 million.

Significant decrease in Financial Assistance Grant (FAG) 23/24 Operations as it was prepaid in 2022/23:

▪ FAGS 2023/24 Operations	\$2,947,130
▪ FAG 23/24 Roads	\$1,593,860

5. Capital Grants - End of year favourable \$255,000 due to a new Blackspot funding grant.
6. Contributions: Favourable variance \$11,000 as additional contribution funding received and timing variations:
- Art Gallery – Community Heritage Grant contributions \$5,900
 - Freeza Program \$5,000

Forecast result to 30 June is not projected to alter significantly.

7. Other income: Favourable variance of \$16,559 due to higher Interest received \$21,344 and offset by variances in reimbursements associated with Workcover and long service leave transfers.

Forecast results to 30 June is expected to be favourable \$372,000.

8. Unearned Income: Favourable variance of \$24,642 attributed to grants which income cannot be reflected as earned income unless in direct reflection of the project's percentage complete.

All capital projects will be reviewed by the Manager Assets and Infrastructure quarterly and capital grant revenue and unearned income adjusted accordingly.

No variance forecast to 30 June as income will be 'earned' under Grants.

9. Materials and services: Overall forecast results YTD were favourable by \$126,000 million. Impacted by decreases in contract payments \$107,414 and materials \$48,892. Offset by increases in Computer support/software \$34,400.

Forecast results to 30 June is expected to be unfavourable \$1.829 million. Impacted by Carry forward project expenditure 22/23 \$1.604 million and significant additional forecast specifically:

- Aquatic Centre Contract \$89,754
- Community Engagement survey \$13,000

Materials and services expenditure to 30 September 2023 are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

10. Depreciation: Favourable variance \$0.372 million as some 2022/23 capital works projects are yet to be finalised to date.

Forecast results to 30 June is favourable \$1.394million as capital project will be finalised in 2024 and revaluation of infrastructure assets in 2022/23 and asset useful life has resulted in less depreciation costs.

Capital Projects Program Result

The Capital Projects Program result for the three months ended 30 September 2023 was expenditure of \$1.639 million which was \$0.233 million more than the budgeted expenditure of \$1.406 million as shown in Table 2 below. An update on the Capital Works Program to 30 September 2023 is provided in Item 6.

Table 2 – Capital Program result for the period ending 30 September 2023 and First Quarter Forecast to 30 June 2024

Asset By Type	2023/24 YTD Actuals \$'000	2023/24 YTD Budgets \$'000	2023/24 YTD Variance \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Budget \$'000	2023/24 Q1 Full Year Forecast \$'000
Aerodrome	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25	\$65
Bridge	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$600
Buildings	\$646	\$933	\$288	\$2,931	\$3,802
Computers and Telecommunications	\$28	\$0	-\$28	\$452	\$672
Drainage	\$130	\$95	-\$35	\$1,182	\$1,248
Fixture Fittings and Furniture	\$80	\$30	-\$50	\$30	\$266
Footpath	\$61	\$9	-\$52	\$185	\$503
Library Stock	\$3	\$4	\$1	\$96	\$96
Other Infrastructure	\$22	\$0	-\$22	\$244	\$357
Plant and Equipment	\$2	\$3	1	\$650	\$690
Parks Open Space and Streetscapes	\$145	\$20	-\$125	\$128	\$729
Recreational, Leisure and Community	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$104	\$104
Roads	\$497	\$287	-\$210	\$12,046	\$12,851
Waste Management	\$26	\$25	-\$1	\$2,633	\$2,649
Total	\$1,639	\$1,406	-\$233	\$21,206	\$24,633

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Leadership

- Good governance.
- High performance culture.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Significant additional carry forward items from 2022/23 Budget for both operating statement items and capital works projects have been forecast to spend throughout 2023/24 year.

As a result carry forward items from 2022/23 Budget \$1.604 million for Materials and Services expenditure is included in the 30 June 2024 forecast, this is funded from unspent revenue recognised in the prior year.

Additional flood recovery expenditure will be required for infrastructure operating statement items and capital grant projects (some income part recognised 2022/23 and others in 2023/24) associated with Emergency Events – Flood October 2022.

The forecast result is based on the Council’s status as at 30 September 2023, the impact of 4-5 October 2023 Flood event and associated costs are yet to be estimated.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with the Council’s *Community Engagement Policy*, it is proposed 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"> ▪ Report presented to Council. ▪ Report published on Council’s website.

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 the report be noted.

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Materials and services expenditure to 30 September 2023

Materials and Services	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance
04: Vandalism	\$ -	\$ 2,157.00	\$ 2,157.00
05: Contract Staff	\$ 81,262.10	\$ 25,797.00	-\$ 55,465.10
06: Catering & Refreshments	\$ 7,311.93	\$ 9,240.00	\$ 1,928.07
07: Materials	\$ 253,134.61	\$ 302,027.00	\$ 48,892.39
08: Contract Payments	\$1,042,132.17	\$1,149,546.00	\$107,413.83
09: Merchandise	\$ 17,353.80	\$ 14,799.00	-\$ 2,554.80
10: Functions & Receptions	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 7,011.00	\$ 4,371.00
11: Stores Issues	\$ 55,881.07	\$ 40,452.00	-\$ 15,429.07
12: Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 46,111.69	\$ 107,319.00	\$ 61,207.31
18: Lease Payments	\$ 5,980.40	\$ 27,087.00	\$ 21,106.60
20: Bank Charges	\$ 11,683.00	\$ 13,824.00	\$ 2,141.00
21: Advertising & Promotion	\$ 17,468.85	\$ 17,685.00	\$ 216.15
23: Exhibitions	\$ 18,846.72	\$ 27,507.00	\$ 8,660.28
24: Insurance	\$ 458,754.09	\$ 471,486.00	\$ 12,731.91
25: Legal Expenses	\$ 66,283.04	\$ 76,036.54	\$ 9,753.50
26: Consultants General	\$ 114,123.00	\$ 125,262.00	\$ 11,139.00
27: Membership & Subscriptions	\$ 136,836.07	\$ 113,309.28	-\$ 23,526.79
28: Security Expenses	\$ 11,000.72	\$ 10,005.00	-\$ 995.72
29: Postage & Freight	\$ 8,674.17	\$ 14,091.00	\$ 5,416.83
30: Printing, Copying & Stationery	\$ 18,205.48	\$ 26,037.00	\$ 7,831.52
31: Rent	\$ 15,598.14	\$ 13,713.00	-\$ 1,885.14
32: Computer Support/Software	\$ 409,787.17	\$ 375,387.52	-\$ 34,399.65
33: Internal Plant Hire Expense	\$ 4,655.50	\$ 54,366.00	\$ 49,710.50
35: Travel Expenses	\$ 4,783.37	\$ 750.00	-\$ 4,033.37
36: Meeting Expenses	\$ 2,457.50	\$ 1,515.00	-\$ 942.50
37: Staff Training / Courses	\$ 28,588.15	\$ 34,242.00	\$ 5,653.85
38: Vehicle Expenses	\$ 963.04	\$ -	-\$ 963.04
39: Electricity	\$ 73,913.72	\$ 130,971.00	\$ 57,057.28
40: Water Consumption	\$ 8,572.20	\$ 18,879.00	\$ 10,306.80
41: Gas	\$ 8,672.71	\$ 8,682.00	\$ 9.29
42: Telephone	\$ 18,178.06	\$ 37,257.00	\$ 19,078.94
43: Contributions & Reimbursements	\$ -	\$ 444.00	\$ 444.00
47: Green Waste Mulching	\$ 19,908.00	\$ 5,325.00	-\$ 14,583.00
49: Machine Hire	\$ -	\$ 2,625.00	\$ 2,625.00
51: E.P.A. Levy	\$ 429,598.28	\$ 281,658.00	-\$147,940.28

Materials and Services	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance
52: Domestic Animals Levy	\$ -	\$ 3,480.00	\$ 3,480.00
53: Management Committees	\$ 10,508.82	\$ 36,129.00	\$ 25,620.18
54: Cleaning Expenses	\$ 52,106.59	\$ 56,644.00	\$ 4,537.41
103: Vehicle Fuel	\$ 86,350.01	\$ 85,863.00	-\$ 487.01
104: Vehicle Maintenance - Standard	\$ 14,628.81	\$ 20,949.00	\$ 6,320.19
105: Vehicle Lease Payments	\$ 14,534.77	\$ 4,047.00	-\$ 10,487.77
109: Canteen Trading Purchases	\$ 4,035.15	\$ 1,860.00	-\$ 2,175.15
110: Performing Fees	\$ 16,322.41	\$ 12,474.00	-\$ 3,848.41
126: Landfill Daily Cover	\$ -	\$ 3,417.00	\$ 3,417.00
127: Landfill Rock Supplied	\$ 8,743.60	\$ 9,186.00	\$ 442.40
128: Gas Monitoring - Landfill	\$ 1,310.00	\$ 4,794.00	\$ 3,484.00
130: PAG Meal Costs	\$ -	\$ 21.00	\$ 21.00
131: Diesel Rebate (Negative Expense)	-\$ 13,902.00	-\$ 6,873.00	\$ 7,029.00
138: Councillors Training	\$ 1,737.00	\$ 3,675.00	\$ 1,938.00
140: Carry Forward Expenditure	\$ 3,565.10	\$ -	-\$ 3,565.10
144: Vehicle Maintenance - Repairs	\$ 44,461.69	\$ 34,650.00	-\$ 9,811.69
145: Tyres Purchased for Plant	\$ 21,506.81	\$ 4,455.00	-\$ 17,051.81
146: Registrations	\$ 17,868.80	\$ 5,838.00	-\$ 12,030.80
16: Services (Non Contract) To Council	\$ 376,419.29	\$ 346,122.00	-\$ 30,297.29
160: Audit / Monitoring costs Landfill	\$ 35,969.00	\$ 37,125.00	\$ 1,156.00
170: Museum Fees	\$ -	\$ 264.00	\$ 264.00
171: Volunteer (Internal Charge) expenses	\$ -	\$ 25,209.00	\$ 25,209.00
179: Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging	\$ 137.96	\$ -	-\$ 137.96
199: Internal Charge - Expense	\$ 30,360.82	\$ 4,611.00	-\$ 25,749.82
34: Goods Delivered (Contractual)	\$ 5,279.07	\$ 16,782.00	\$ 11,502.93
Total	\$4,131,302.45	\$4,257,214.34	\$125,911.89

2. Finance Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

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 2023.

Finance

- Undertaking Victorian Auditor-General's Office audit process for 2022/23 Statements and Roads to Recovery Annual Report Acquittal. Audit is yet to be finalised.
- Coordinated responses from other departments on assets revaluations undertaken utilising professional valuers and indexation percentage increases on asset types.
- Landfill Provision 2023 recalculation.
- Essential Services Commission - Annual rate rise compliance return submitted.
- Preparation of financial systems with budget phasing 2023/24 and inclusion of carried forward items from Budget 2021/22.
- Issuing standing purchase orders for 2023/24 regular supplies.
- VAGO Production of draft Annual Statement and Performance report 2022/23.
- Reviewed financial data as at 30 September 2023 and commenced First Quarter Review and forecast for 30 June 2024.

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
30/09/23	\$87,821	\$83,695	\$125,195	\$348,241	\$644,952
30/06/23	\$34,236	\$95,687	\$128,329	\$492,225	\$750,477
31/03/23	\$76,473	\$7,629	\$117,961	\$618,359	\$820,422
31/12/22	\$60,095	\$115,348	\$174,703	\$441,560	\$785,310
30/09/22	\$51,004	\$6,093	\$64,942	\$378,602	\$500,642

Investment Portfolio

In accordance with the Investment Policy, details of investments held at 30 September 2023 are provided in the following table.

Table 1. Investments held at 30 September 2023

Bank	Short-term credit rating	Investment type	Amount invested '000	Interest rate	Term (days)	Maturity date
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$5,000	4.96%	124	30-Oct-23
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$951	4.77%	270	24-Nov-23
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$2,055	4.75%	181	27-Nov-23
Westpac	A-1+	TD	\$1,103	4.99%	182	25-Mar-24
ANZ	A-1+	TD	3,900	4.83%	184	24-Jan-24
NAB	A-1+	TD	\$3,114	4.32%	276	07-Feb-24
NAB	A-1+	TD	\$943	4.96%	274	21-Mar-24
Subtotal:	\$17,066					
CBA	A-1+	At call	\$4,268	0.25%		
CBA	A-1+	Operating	\$3,977	3.60%		
Subtotal:	\$8,245					
Total:			\$25,311			

*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
16 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

Procurement

Contracts and Works Awarded Under Delegation

The purpose of this sections is to inform the Council and the community of publicly advertised tenders which have been awarded under delegation for the period 1 July 2023 – 30 September 2023.

Seventeen contracts were awarded for the period 1 July–30 September 2023.

No	Name of Contract	Name of Business
1	Benalla Safer Places River Walk Section G	Websters Electrical and Lighting
2	Former Benalla Migrant Camp Hut 65 and Toilet Block Conservation	David Wightman
3	Benalla Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment - External Works - Mair Street Carparking and Drainage	Tactile Australia Pty Ltd
4	Asphalt Pavement Patching, Samaria Road between Bridge Street and Kilfeera Road, Benalla, Reseal Preparation 2023-24	Bitu-mill (Civil) Pty Ltd
5	Stabilised Pavement Patching, Old Thoona Road and Racecourse Road, Benalla 2023-24	Cleave's Earthmoving and Drainage
6	Benalla Festival - Provision of Event Curation and Management Services	Blank Vault Productions Pty Ltd
7	Kerb and Channel Replacement, Hope Street, Benalla, 2023-24	Tactile Australia Pty Ltd
8	Climate and Environment Strategy Carbon Accounting Planning	Ironbark Group Pty Ltd
9	RFQ Curation Event Management Services for 2024 Benalla Street Art Festival	Eddie Zammit Pty Ltd
10	Crack Sealing of various roads Benalla for reseal preparations	SuperSealing Unit Trust
11	Asphalt Pavement Patching, Arundel Street, Garden Street and Benson Street, Benalla, Reseal Preparation 2023-24	Bitu-mill Pty Ltd
12	Asphalt Road Edge Reinstatement for Kerb Reconstruction, Hope Street, Benalla	Bitu-mill Pty Ltd
13	Kindergarten Workforce Plan 2024-2029	Local Logic Place P/L
14	Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan 2023	Local Logic Place P/L
15	Art Gallery Business Case	Social Ventures
16	Benalla Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment - External Works - Mair Street Road Surface Reinstatement	Bitu-mill Pty Ltd
17	Benalla Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment - External Works - Mair Street Roadworks	Tactile Australia Pty Ltd

Delegation of Procurement Authority to Chief Executive Officer

As per the *Procurement Policy*, instances where the Chief Executive Officer approved expenditure for statutory charges or other matters, generally consistent with the approved or revised budget, be reported quarterly.

The following table provides a summary of approvals.

Date Endorsed	Type	Amount (ex. GST)
3 August 2023	WorkCover 2023/24 Insurance Renewal	\$507,986.29

Revenue, Property and Valuations

- In contrast to prior years, high-level debts were not referred to the debt collection agency in July. New legislation was introduced in late June 2023 that had yet been tested by the Victorian rating sector.
- 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 – 488 (+73)
 - BPAY View – 407 (+5).

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 2023/24 were issued on 17 August 2023 with payment of the first instalment due by 30 September 2023. All properties have been revalued with the updated 2023 level valuations detailed on the notices.

Valuation objections must be lodged by 22 October 2023 – two months from the recognised postage date.

To date, many valuation enquiries have been received, resulting in 24 formal valuation objections being lodged. It is expected this number will increase slightly as the due date for lodgment gets closer.

Appendix 2 details the overall rates and charges generated and collected and apportions the unpaid balance between arrears from previous years of roughly \$859,000 and unpaid charges levied in the current year amounting to just under \$15,000,000.

Rate arrears collected in the current year amount to \$69,000. This figure has remained stable in relation to the last quarter but is much lower (-30 per cent) than Q1 last year. This decrease was expected due to the lack of collection activities owing to uncertainty regarding new legislation introduced on 20 June 2023.

Collections, as a proportion of overall debt, are down compared to Q1 last year (-2 per cent). This was partly expected due to reduced formal collection activities. Accordingly, the number of properties with outstanding balances has increased by 740 properties – many of these are likely due to the due date for the first instalment falling on a Saturday and the timing of data extraction.

Appendix 3 provides a graph summary comparing the 2023/24 rate instalments due with the total instalments paid as at 30 September 2023.

Spatial Data Management

The following table includes spatial data management statistics.

Task	Sept 2023	Jun 2023	Mar 2023	Dec 2022
Rural Road numbers and urban addresses issued (not part of new subdivisions)	25	1	9	14
M1s forwarded to the Spatial Information Division of DEECA to update the State mapping datasets with new addresses and Council Property Numbers and rectify anomalies	56	94	203	252
Maintenance and auditing parcels and Mapbase	90	110	220	208

Corporate GIS

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

Provided various mapping layers to assist Spatial Vision with the GMCA Resilient Public Estates Project data analysis.

Roadside weed and pest program – translated and mapped the data received and captured from the contractors G and K Weed and Vermin Control of the recorded treatment sites with supporting information. This data assists the Environmental Sustainability unit with identification and location of various weeds, future planning, and the yearly reporting under the Government funding agreements.

A request from Ambulance Victoria to assign property addresses in various identified public spaces has proved problematic and emergency markers are the preferred option. In conjunction with the Coordinator Open Spaces (COS) the GIS Coordinator prepared mapping and supporting data to assist with a grant application to fund the emergency markers.

Attended and participated in the annual Hands-on Trade Day at Winton Raceway by giving students and teachers an overview of the Geographical Information System.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

	Notes	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance	2023/24 Full Year Budget	2023/24 Full Year Forecast
Accounting Services	1	(\$15,926)	\$30,122	\$46,068	(\$2,188,975)	\$388,667
Property and Valuations	2	(\$17,419,004)	(\$17,255,142)	\$163,862	(\$17,411,678)	(\$17,411,678)
Acquisition and Disposal of Council Properties		(\$7,967)	(\$6,249)	\$1,718	(\$25,000)	(\$25,000)
Total		(\$17,442,896)	(\$17,231,269)	\$211,627	(\$19,625,653)	(\$17,048,011)

Notes:

1. Interest expense favourable variance \$21,781 as interest expenses actual lower than budgeted. Partly offset by unfavourable additional online transaction charges and higher 2022/23 audit fees expense of \$17,291.

Unfavourable forecast variance due to prepayment of \$2.947 million Financial Assistance Grant. Paid in June 2023 but budgeted for receipt in 2023/24.

2. Rate and charges revenue supplementary rates and charges \$163,106. No change in forecast is calculated as consideration of objections to valuations are yet to be determined, which may impact the final rate revenue outcome.

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> .	Recognition of 2022/23 Budget carry forward items in Q1 forecast result for 30 June 2024.

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

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Loans held at 30 September 2023

Interest to be paid:

Loan Number	2023/2024 Year	2024/2025 Year	2025/2026 Year	2026/2027 Year	2027/2028 Year	2028/2029 Year	2029/2030 Year	2030/2031 Year	2031/2032 Year	Totals
15A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	\$5,087	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$5,087
17	\$11,512	\$3,737	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$15,249
18	\$5,630	\$3,561	\$1,371	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$10,562
19	\$10,573	\$7,723	\$4,717	\$1,559	-	-	-	-	-	\$24,573
20	\$9,499	\$7,528	\$5,394	\$3,286	\$1,062	-	-	-	-	\$26,770
21	\$9,798	\$8,166	\$6,507	\$4,794	\$3,032	\$1,197	-	-	-	\$33,495
22	\$76,207	\$65,839	\$55,902	\$45,964	\$36,122	\$26,089	\$16,151	\$6,214	-	\$328,492
Total Interest Payable	\$128,307	\$96,556	\$73,893	\$55,604	\$40,217	\$27,286	\$16,151	\$6,214	\$0	\$444,232

Principle to be paid:

Loan Number	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	Totals
15A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	\$133,676	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$133,676
17	\$109,511	\$105,231	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$214,742
18	\$54,569	\$56,638	\$58,818	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$170,026
19	\$52,484	\$55,333	\$58,339	\$51,865	-	-	-	-	-	\$218,023
20	\$51,654	\$53,625	\$55,758	\$57,866	\$50,060	-	-	-	-	\$268,965
21	\$48,950	\$50,582	\$52,241	\$53,954	\$55,716	\$58,373	-	-	-	\$319,817
22	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$190,000	-	\$1,520,000
Total Principal Payable	\$640,846	\$511,411	\$415,157	\$353,686	\$295,777	\$248,373	\$190,000	\$190,000	\$0	\$2,845,253

Rates and Charges Collections Report

As at 30 September 2023

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Arrears as at 01/7/2023	\$860,264	\$50,692	\$16,794	\$927,750	Unpaid amounts up to and including the 2022/23 rating year
Payments					
30/09/2023	-\$59,898	-\$8,507	-\$810	-\$69,215	
31/12/2023				\$0	
31/03/2024				\$0	
30/06/2024				\$0	
Arrears Rates Balance	\$800,366	\$42,185	\$15,984	\$858,535	<i>Arrears Unpaid as at 30/09/2023</i>

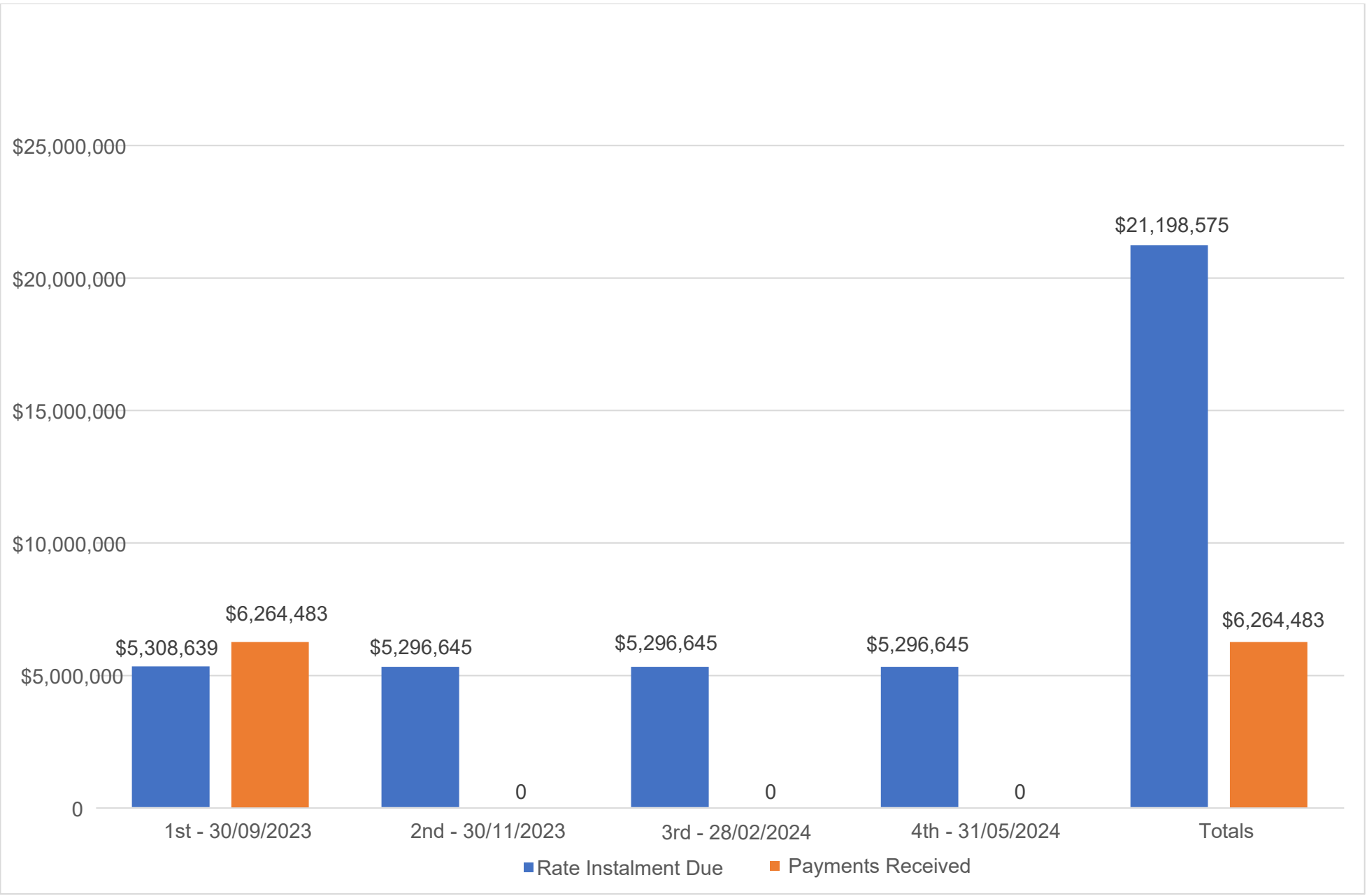
	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Current Rates/Charges					2023/24 Rates including Municipal and Waste Management Charges (includes additional rates levied on new houses and subdivided lands)
Raised					
30/09/2023	\$21,610,933	\$6,254	\$5,739	\$21,622,926	
31/12/2023				\$0	
31/03/2024				\$0	
30/06/2024				\$0	
Total	\$21,610,933	\$6,254	\$5,739	\$21,622,926	

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Pension Concessions					State Govt - reimbursed by DFFH
30/09/2023	-\$424,351	\$0	\$0	-\$424,351	
31/12/2023				\$0	
31/03/2024				\$0	
30/06/2024				\$0	
Total	-\$424,351	\$0	\$0	-\$424,351	

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Net Rates for Collection	\$21,186,582	\$6,254	\$5,739	\$21,198,575	Payments received to date for current year rates
Payments					
30/09/2023	-\$6,262,005	-\$1,335	-\$1,144	-\$6,264,484	
31/12/2023				\$0	
31/03/2024				\$0	
30/06/2024				\$0	
Total	-\$6,262,005	-\$1,335	-\$1,144	-\$6,264,484	

	Rates	Interest	Legal	Total	Comments
Current Rates Balance	\$14,924,577	\$4,919	\$4,596	\$14,934,092	<i>Current Unpaid as at 30 September 2023</i>
Balance Remaining	\$15,724,943	\$47,104	\$20,580	\$15,792,627	<i>Balance as at 30 September 2023</i>

2023/24 Rates and Charges - Due and Collected to 30 September 2023



3. Building and Planning Approvals – August 2023

SF/255

Sarah Ford – Building Coordinator
 Joel Ingham – Planning Coordinator
 Nilesch Singh – Manager Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details planning permit applications and building approvals for September 2023.

Planning Permit Applications Determined under Officer Delegation

File No	Description	Property Address	Decision	
1	DA5777	Construction of a shed	89 Goorambat-Thoona Road, Goorambat	Approved
2	DA373	Alterations and additions to the existing dwelling	15 Market Street, Benalla	Approved
3	DA3485	Construction and display of business identification signage	57 Samaria Road, Benalla	Approved
4	DA7550	Two lot subdivision (boundary realignment)	123 James Road, Warrenbayne	Approved
5	DA7580	Construction of a carport	70 Benson Street, Benalla	Approved
6	DA7341	Construction of a shed	2 Piccadilly Court, Benalla	Approved
7	DA7548	Construction of a shed	206 Tulley Road, Lima East	Approved
8	DA7528	Construction of an inground swimming pool	7 McConnan Street, Benalla	Approved
9	DA4073	Two lot subdivision	25-29 Gillies Street, Benalla	Approved
10	DA7549	Construction of a dwelling	16 Mayfair Drive, Benalla	Approved
11	DA6957	Construction of a verandah	9 Mclvor Street, Benalla	Approved
12	DA6532	Construction of a verandah and deck	18 Goomalibee Street, Benalla	Approved
13	DA7481	Extension to an existing dwelling	16 Crammond Street, Benalla	Approved
14	DA7540	Removal of vegetation	357 Green Road, Upper Lurg	Approved
15	DA6306	Use of land for a transfer station	22 Irwin Road, Benalla	Approved
16	DA7559	Lopping of native vegetation	136 Alexander Road, Lurg	Approved
17	DA7341	Construction of a shed	2 Piccadilly court, Benalla	Approved
18	DA4073	Two lot subdivision	25-29 Gillies Street, Benalla	Approved

Planning Permit Amendments Determined Under Officer Delegation

File No		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	DA7221	Construction of an agricultural shed	472 Greta Road, Glenrowan West	Approved

Planning Permits Issued Under VicSmart

There were no VicSmart planning permit applications issued during the month of September 2023.

Planning Permit Applications Determined by the Council

File No		Description	Property Address	Decision
1	DA5485	Use and development of the land for a service station and food and drink premises, alteration of access to a road in a transport Zone 2 and signage	18-20 Bridge Street West, Benalla	Approved (Notice of Decision)

Planning Permit Amendments Determined by the Council

There were no planning permit amendments determined by Council during September 2023.

Planning Permit Applications Withdrawn or Lapsed

File No		Description	Property Address	Status
1	DA4778	Repairs to the existing awnings	Mackellar Street, Benalla	Withdrawn

Notices of Decision

File No		Description	Property Address
1	DA5485	Use and development of the land for a service station and food and drink premises, alteration of access to a road in a transport Zone 2 and signage	18-20 Bridge Street West, Benalla

A Notice of Decision (NOD) is issued when Council has decided to grant a planning permit when objection(s) are received regarding the application.

An objector may appeal to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) against the decision to grant the permit within 21 days of a Notice of Decision being issued. After 28 days if no appeal has been lodged Council will issue the Planning Permit.

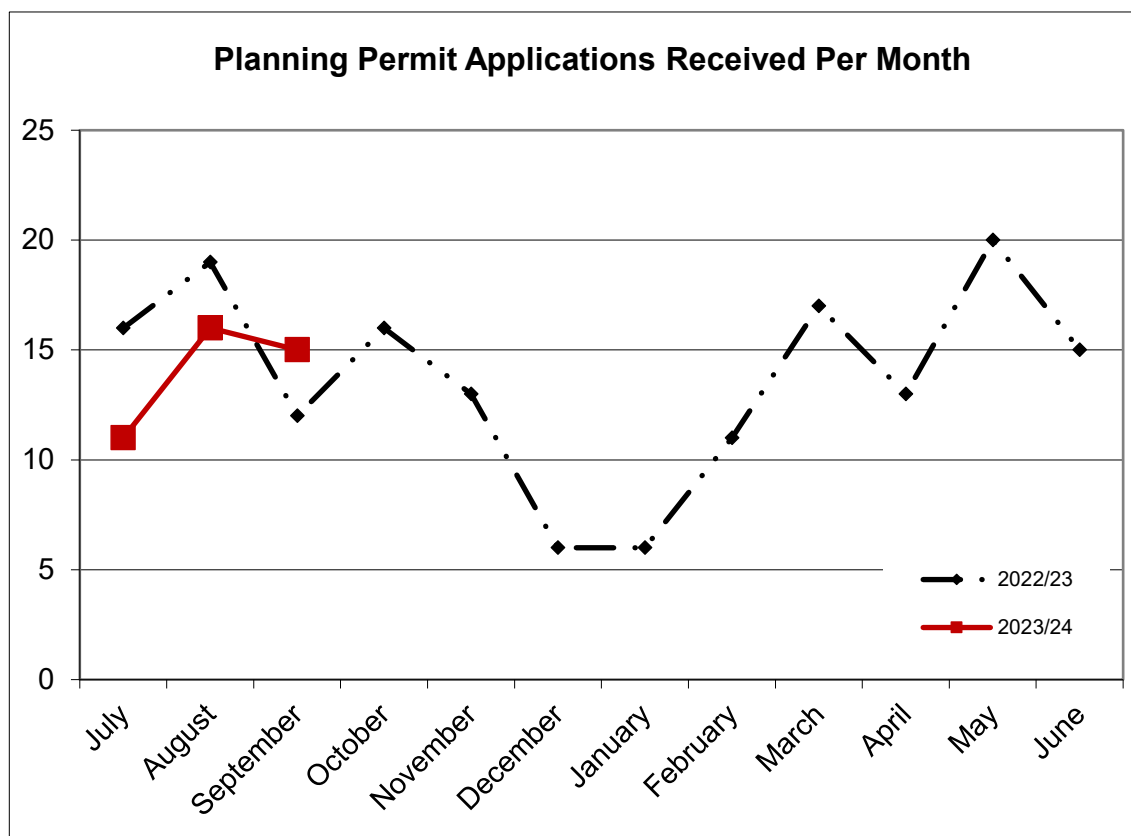
Planning Permit Applications Determined by VCAT

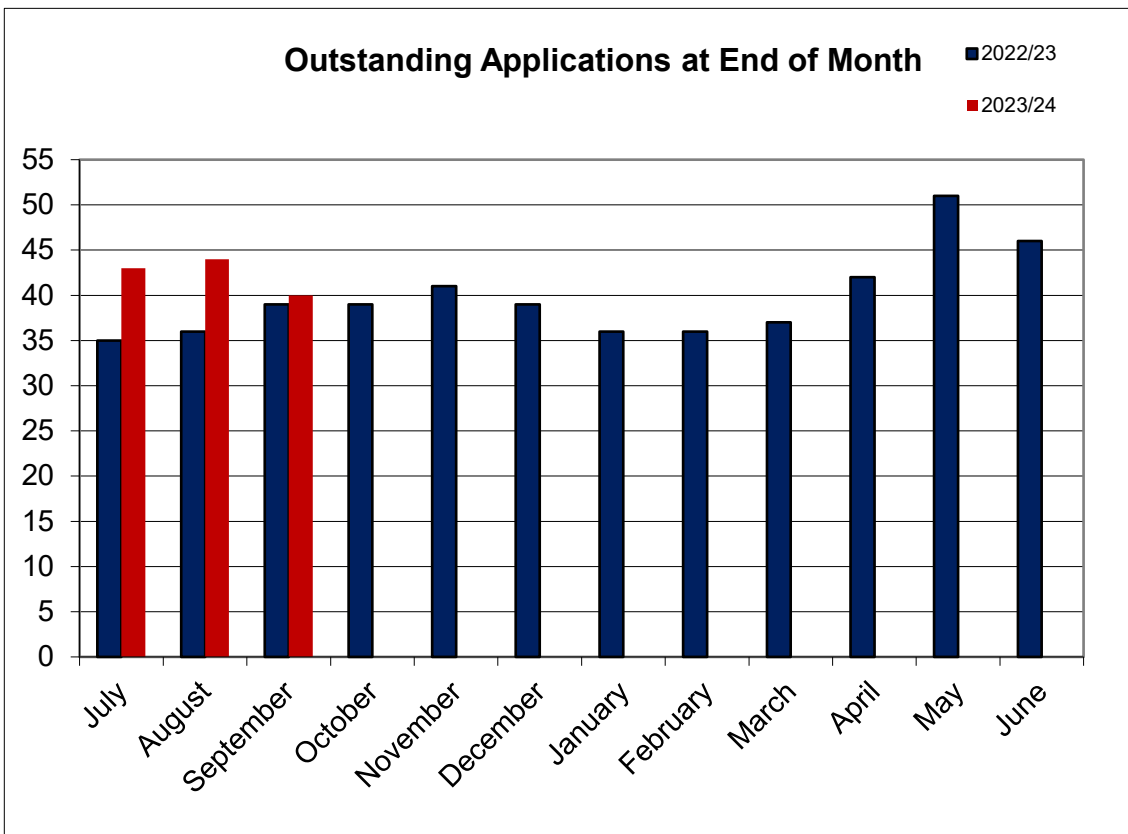
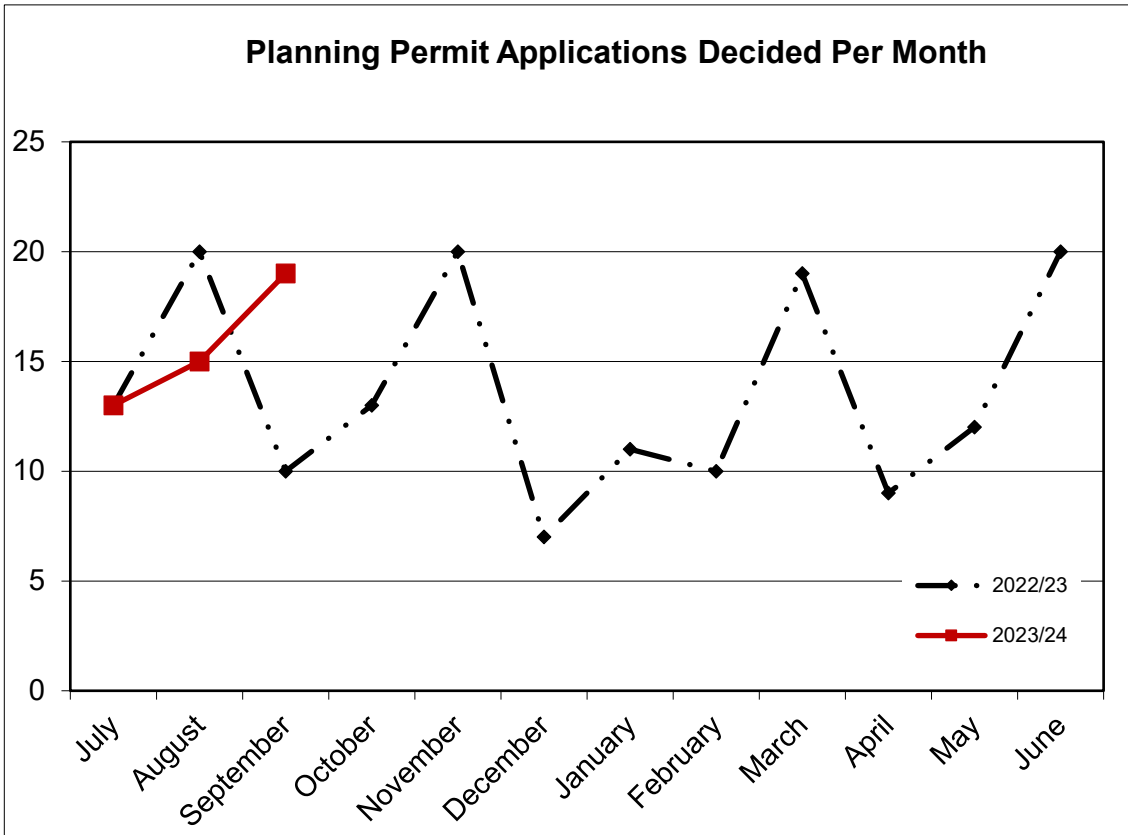
There were no planning permit applications determined by VCAT during September 2023.

Matters Before VCAT

DA7395	Use and development of land for extractive industry (Sand quarry) at 1726 Dookie Devenish Road, Devenish
Status	At a Council meeting on 19 April 2023 it was resolved that the Council refuse to grant a permit for the use and development of the land for extractive (sand quarry). The applicant has lodged an appeal to VCAT. The Tribunal hearing will be held between the dates of 23 to 26 October 2023.

Planning Permit Applications

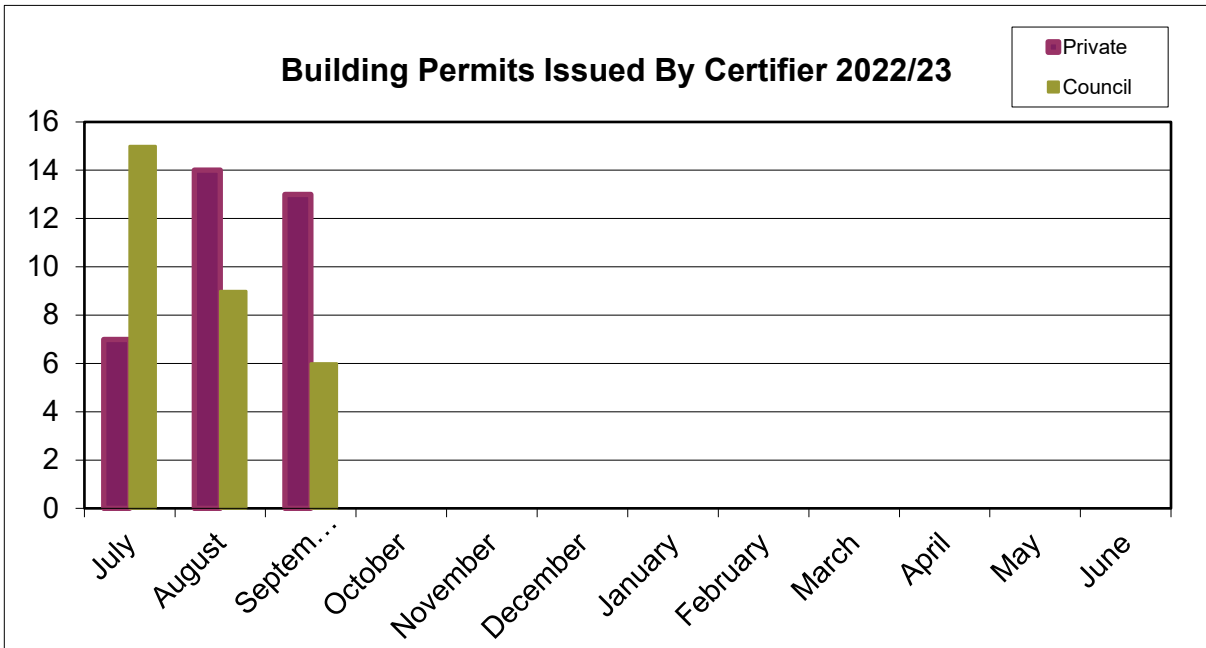
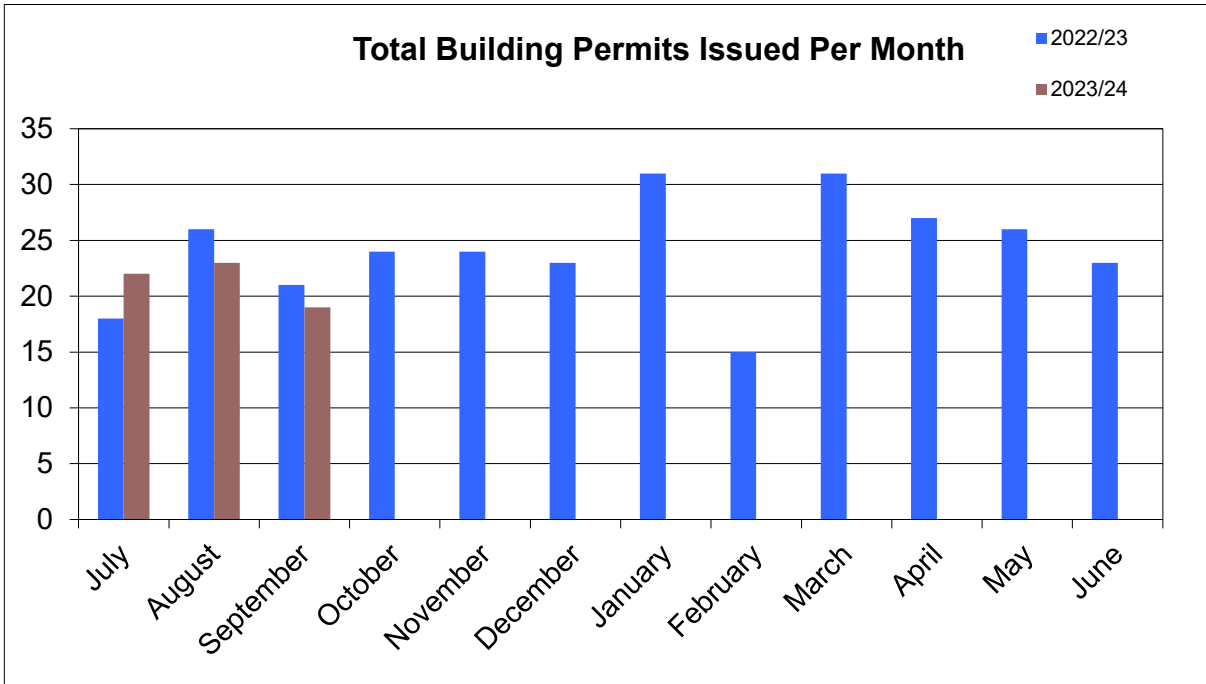


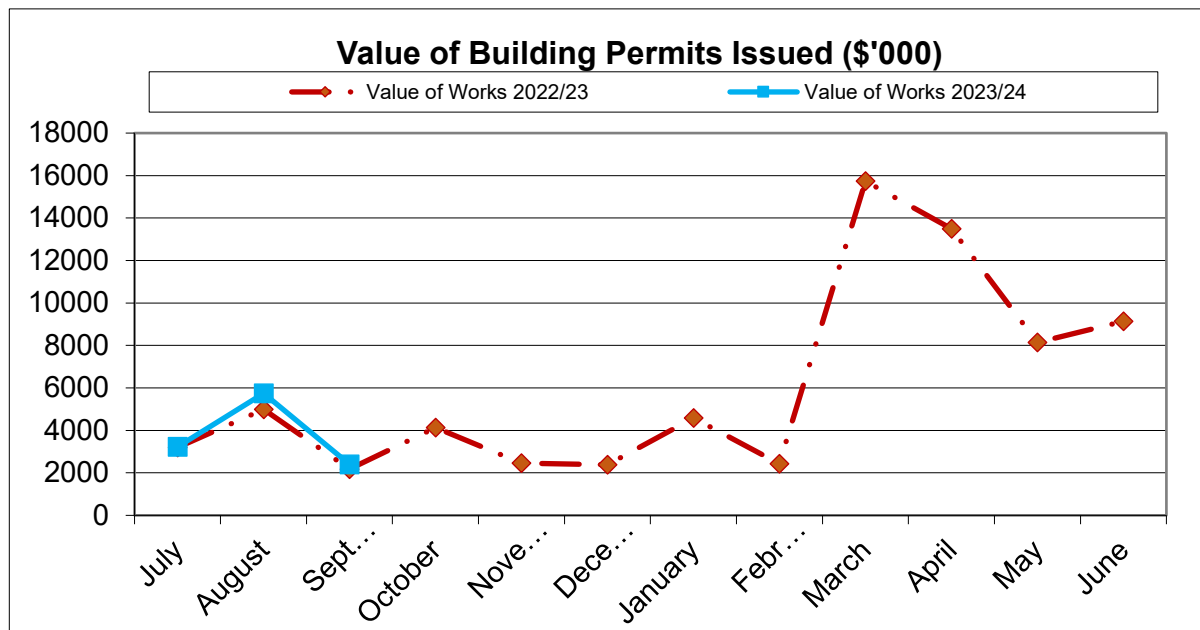


Building Approvals Issued by Council and Private Practitioners

	File No	Description	Property Address	Value
1	DA7149	Construction of shed	28 Simkin Drive, Benalla	\$26,475
2	DA5916/2	Construction of shed and canopy	353 Coach Road, Benalla	\$70,000
3	DA7526	Construction of farm shed	189 Swanpool-Lima Road, Swanpool	\$65,000
4	DA6559	Construction of carport	93 Lakeside Drive, Chesney Vale	\$10,000
5	DA7546	Construction of shed	66 Faithfull Street, Benalla	\$24,864
6	DA7297	Construction of workshop/storage shed	28 Yellum Track, Swanpool	\$70,000
7	DA5287	Construction of farm shed	755 Wattle Creek Road, Lurg	\$16,000
8	DA7574	Construction of farm shed	287 Police Track, Lima East	\$30,000
9	DA4776	Shade sail structure	2 McCallum Street, Devenish	\$12,430
10	DA7387	Construction of dwelling and garage	35 Inglis Road, Benalla	\$439,722
11	DA7566	Construction of dwelling and garage	52 Livingston Boulevard, Benalla	\$367,000
12	DA1638/7	Construction of security gate	49-55 Smythe Street, Benalla	\$22,277
13	DA7567	Construction of dwelling and garage	4 Ambridge Avenue, Benalla	\$287,985
14	DA4183	Construction of swimming pool	55 Tiger Hill Road, Tatong	\$53,540
15	DA7553	Construction of dwelling and garage	23 Livingston Boulevard, Benalla	\$274,782
16	DA5069	Relocation of dwelling	31 Meadows Avenue, Benalla	\$35,000
17	DA5069	Construction of dwelling	31 Meadows Avenue, Benalla	\$250,000
18	DA2154	Construction of two storey police station stage 1	17-19 Bridge Street West, Benalla	\$55,000
19	DA7554	Construction of dwelling and garage	37 Livingston Boulevard, Benalla	\$294,446
Total				\$2,404,521

Building Permits Issued by Certifier by Month





COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 IMPLICATIONS

Community

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

Livability

- Vibrant public spaces and places.
- Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking.

Economy

- Population growth.

Environment

- Healthy and protected natural environment.

Leadership

- Good governance.

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 the report be noted.

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4. Development Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/255

Nilesh Singh - Manager Development

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the Development department for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

Strategic Planning

- At a Planning and Development Committee Meeting on 5 October 2022 it was resolved to adopt the engagement plan for the Heritage Study. The engagement plan will now be implemented to obtain as much information as possible to inform the Heritage Study.

In the meantime, the Regional Planning Hub has provided Council with the remaining allocated funds to complete the study works (Stage 2). Procurement has been completed to engage a heritage consultant to complete the heritage study. An inception meeting is being organised with the heritage consultant to progress the study.

Work is currently being undertaken by Heritage consultants to undertake the heritage study in consultation with key stakeholder groups as outlined in the engagement plan (Stage 1). The Heritage Committee will be commencing its meeting within the following quarter.

- Procurement for technical reports to progress the Benalla Urban Growth Study is in progress. The technical reports will inform how residential growth can be achieved in the area to the west of Mansfield Road and to the north west of Benalla.

Statutory Planning

- 45 applications received during the quarter.
- 43 applications decided during the quarter.
- 75.56 per cent of applications were decided within statutory timeframes.
- 381 phone calls received.

Building Surveying

- 174 building inspections
- 85 building certificates
- 30 building permits issued
- 34 private building permits issued
- 505 phone calls.

Public Health

- A recent outbreak of gastro virus locked down a nursing home for a week or so and almost everyone suffered from the symptoms and many mysteriously suffered the same symptoms again three days later. We were extremely lucky there were no deaths and although seven faecal samples were tested, the causative organism/s could not be identified. It shows still how vulnerable we are to infections even after a pandemic when so many dangerous new infections, so few are not resistant do are circulating.

Compliance

- The compliance team impounded 101 domestic animals.
- Responded to 138 domestic animal related requests.
- 36 dogs and cats were returned to their homes.

Emergency Management

- EMC participated as EMLO in a missing persons case and subsequent search at Winton Wetlands/Chesneyvale area. Despite an intensive search the missing person has not been located.
- EMC participated as EMLO at Benalla SES ICC for a moderate flood event in Benalla.
- EMC with EHO together with Department of Health and local medical people have written a (Draft) Pandemic Plan.
- EMC joined an all agency seasonal briefing at DECC Benalla Office.

Manager Development**Septic Tanks**

- 15 'Permit to Install' issued.
- 12 'Certificate to Use' issued.
- 60 septic inspections conducted.

Engineering Referrals for Planning Permit

- 40 applications referred to Manager Development for engineering comments for planning proposals.
- 12 Certification of a Plan of Subdivision issued.
- 6 Statement of Compliance of a Subdivision issued.
- 25 Legal Point of Discharge applications processed.

Wastewater Referrals for Planning Permit

- 34 applications referred for planning comments to Manager Development for engineering comments for planning proposals.

Fee Dispensation

The Council supports community groups and not-for-profit organisations through fee dispensation or reduction and responding to other circumstances as warranted.

For the quarter ended 30 September 2023, 10 applications to the value of \$5,600.60 in fee dispensations were approved:

Community Events	0
Fundraising	2
Burning Off	2
General	1
Food premises Late Registrations	0
Planning Matters	3
Building Matters	2
Other	0

Applications Received:

Applicant	Permit Type	Value (\$)
Devenish Public Hall	Building Permit	\$1,680.90
Carol Moloney	Building Permit Extension	\$276.50
Benalla Cemetery Trust	Open Air Burning	\$64.00
Benalla Hospital Auxiliary	Fundraising	\$64.00
Benalla Euroa Violet Town Legacy Group	Fundraising	\$64.00
Peranbin Primary College	Open Air Burning	\$64.00
Benalla Rural City Council	General Permit	\$64.00
Regent Honey Eater Project	Planning Permit	\$1,232.30
Albert Heaney Oval Committee	Planning Permit	\$675.80
Regent Honey Eater Project	Planning Permit	\$1,415.10
Total		\$5,600.60

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Community

A healthy, safe and resilient community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Work closely with community and key stakeholders to plan for emergencies and build community resilience.	Develop a new <i>Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP)</i> .	Developed and adopted by the Municipal Emergency Planning Committee.

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.	Investigate development of an Off-Leash Dog Park.	Handed to Asset and Infrastructure Department for Construction. Opening scheduled for 26 October 2023

Livability

Vibrant public spaces and places		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Advocate for and act on opportunities to protect, maintain and preserve heritage assets.	Develop <i>Benalla Rural City Heritage Study</i> .	Consultant have completed stage one of the project which is the significance of areas and objects. Stage 2 of the project out for procurement. Completion of significance report pending consultant appointment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating budget for the period ending 30 September 2023

	Note	2022/23 YTD Actuals	2022/23 YTD Budget	2022/23 YTD Variance	2022/23 Full Year Budget	2022/23 Full Year Forecast
Development Operations		\$60,038	\$63,308	\$3,270	\$244,506	\$244,506
Planning	1	\$25,478	\$33,343	\$7,865	\$135,970	\$436,342
Building	2	\$67,821	\$89,118	\$21,297	\$344,458	\$241,264
Compliance		\$127,207	\$123,294	-\$3,914	\$696,319	\$690,897
Public Health		\$23,420	\$23,832	\$412	\$90,751	\$90,751
Emergency Management	3	\$29,993	\$21,615	-\$8,378	\$23,910	\$128,081
Total		\$333,958	\$354,510	\$20,552	\$1,532,913	\$1,831,840

Notes:

1. Favourable variance due to more than budgeted revenue from permit fees.
2. Awaiting consultant invoice for Municipal Building Surveyor services.
3. Awaiting funding Emergency Management Coordinator funding from Local Government Victoria.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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5. Capital Works Program Update As At 30 September 2023

SF/1242

Malcolm Bromley – Coordinator Technical Services
Adrian Gasperoni – Manager Assets and Infrastructure

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents an update on the Capital Works Program as at 30 September 2023.

BACKGROUND

Capital projects are funded from general revenue and grant funding. An update on the status of key capital projects is discussed below.

DISCUSSION

Capital Projects

Highlights for the year to date include:

- Visitor Information Centre Redevelopment completed.
- Footpath projects progressing, first package awarded with a second package at tender stage. Works to be undertaken in October 2023.
- Kerb and channel works complete in Hope Street. Works in Riverview Road, Faithfull Street and Dunlop Place at tender stage. Works to be undertaken in second quarter.
- Mair Street footpath, drainage and parking bays are 90 per cent complete and due for completion during October 2023.
- Mural all abilities footpath consultation progressing, construction to commence in second quarter of 2023.
- Hanger Lane sealing works, at Benalla Airport is ongoing. Estimated completion late 2023.
- Witt Street, Benalla asphalt patch at rail crossing deferred until first quarter of 2024.
- Reseal contract for 2023/24 awarded. Works to commence in second quarter of 2023.
- Tender released for Devenish Drainage upgrades. Tender is closing in October 2023 for construction to be completed early 2024.
- Midland Highway, Benalla shared path to racecourse community consultation ongoing.
- Benalla Landfill Stage 2A Rehabilitation design verification report addendum submitted to EPA for its consideration.

Emergency Events

Benalla Rural City has been affected by several emergency events since January 2022 and have previously been reported at previous Finance and Planning Committee meetings.

A summary of each event update on the events is provided below.

January 2022 Storm Event

A storm event in January 2022 damaged community asset (roads), throughout the north and north-eastern areas of the municipality.

October 2022 Flood Event

A flood event in October 2022 affected more than 160 assets requiring some level of flood restoration.

January 2023 Storm Event

A storm event in January 2023 damaged trees as well as community and private structures.

October 2023 Flood Event

A flood event on the 5 October 2023 resulted in moderate flood event on the Broken River at Benalla. The event has been approved for Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). Council is in the process of scoping the damaged assets from the event. Damage costs to assets are unknown at this time.

Council is liaising with DRFA representatives, in relation to all events to ensure that asset recovery and restoration works are undertaken within the established guidelines and time frames.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

Community

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

Livability

- *Vibrant public spaces and places.*
- *Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking.*

Environment

- *High quality efficient and sustainable waste management.*
- *Sustainable practices.*

Leadership

- *Good governance.*
- *High performance culture.*
- *Engaged and informed community.*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Capital Projects Program result for the three months ended 30 September 2023 was expenditure of \$1.639 million which was \$233,000 more than the budgeted expenditure of \$1.406 million as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Capital Program result for the period ending 30 September 2023

Asset By Type	Notes	2023/24 YTD Actuals \$'000	2023/24 YTD Budgets \$'000	2023/24 YTD Variance \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Budget \$'000	2023/24 Q1 Full Year Forecast \$'000
Aerodrome		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25	\$65
Bridge		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$600
Buildings	1	\$646	\$933	\$288	\$2,931	\$3,802
Computers and Telecommunications		\$28	\$0	-\$28	\$452	\$672
Drainage		\$130	\$95	-\$35	\$1,182	\$1,248
Fixture Fittings and Furniture		\$80	\$30	-\$50	\$30	\$266
Footpath		\$61	\$9	-\$52	\$185	\$503
Library Stock		\$3	\$4	\$1	\$96	\$96
Other Infrastructure		\$22	\$0	-\$22	\$244	\$357
Plant and Equipment		\$2	\$3	\$1	\$650	\$690
Parks Open Space and Streetscapes	2	\$145	\$20	-\$125	\$128	\$729
Recreational, Leisure and Community		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$104	\$104
Roads	3	\$497	\$287	-\$210	\$12,046	\$12,851
Waste Management		\$26	\$25	-\$1	\$2,633	\$2,649
Total		\$1,639	\$1,406	-\$233	\$21,206	\$24,633

1. No expenses incurred for the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment project.
2. Several carried forward projects, including Mural Precinct upgrade, Off-Leash Dog Park and various lighting projects.
3. Work in progress: Kerb and Channel Renewal program \$122,122. Sealed roads preparation expense of \$113,387 carried forward from 2022/23 (included in forecast).

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

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6. Assets and Infrastructure Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1242

Adrian Gasperoni – Manager Asset and Infrastructure

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the Assets and Infrastructure Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

Assets and Infrastructure

Assets and Infrastructure department continued to provide maintenance throughout the municipality and undertake capital works projects, as well as continuing to provide emergency asset restoration works throughout the municipality following the Flood and Storm events over the past 18 months.

Highlights for the quarter are detailed below.

Operations

- Completed grading of approximately 119 kilometers of unsealed road.
- Completed grading of four kilometers of sealed road shoulders.
- Completed leaf pick up throughout Benalla.
- Carried out routine maintenance on the sealed road network with the jet patcher.
- Completed fireplug inspections and maintenance.
- Carried out rural drainage maintenance on various roads.
- Carried out routine footpath maintenance.
- Carried out underground drainage works in Bridge Street to alleviate flooding issues.
- Maintained storm damaged roads.
- Assisted the Benalla Landfill with day-to-day operations.

Parks and Gardens and Open Spaces

- Installed the Dog Park at Churchill Reserve.
- Carried out landscaping works at the Visitor Information Centre.
- Carried out the tree pruning program.
- Carried out building maintenance at the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre.
- Carried out the annual rose mulching and fertilising program at the Benalla Botanical Gardens.
- Carried out track resurfacing at the Benalla Botanical Gardens.
- Collaborated with the Sports and Equestrian Centre Committee of Management for new sub delegation arrangements.
- Commenced the following contracts: Elm Leaf Beetle treatment, Weed Control and Spraying - roadside and reserve, Electrical Line Clearance and Provision of Slashing Services.

Waste

- Completed final contract negotiations for the Hume Collaborative Waste tender.
- Undertook public consultation for the Glass collection bin.
- Placed the soil protection layering on the exposed batter in Cell 3A.
- Carried out repairs to various infrastructure from regular break ins.
- Carried out repairs to leachate and storm water pumping onsite.
- Completed quarterly gas, groundwater and leachate monitoring.
- Finalised the following contracts: Landfill Compactor hire tender extended, Scrap metal recycling and transport, green waste and processed timber shredding, ground water and leachate monitoring, landfill gas monitoring, Landfill environmental auditing services, FOGO processing.

Asset Management

The following table outlines requests for works received through the *Asset Edge - Reflect* program of inspection and *Customer Request Management System*.

Task	December 2022	March 2023	June 2023	Sept 2023
Defects overdue on roads and drains - safety only:				
Link roads	1	14	1	13
Collector roads	2	15	0	24
Access roads	1	12	2	13
Defects overdue on footpaths - safety only	0	0	0	0
Defects rectified - routine maintenance and safety – road, footpath and parks	407	209	461	252
Defects and maintenance - items outstanding - road, footpath and parks	298	346	197	348
Unsealed roads graded (km)	132	188	141	119
Sealed road shoulders graded (km)	12	66	45	4

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025

Livability

Vibrant public spaces and places		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Maintain and develop sport and recreation facilities and reserves, parks, gardens, playgrounds, and walking and cycling paths to increase passive and active community participation and social connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Benalla Ceramic Mural Precinct Upgrade project. ▪ Progress the Benalla Indoor Recreation Centre Redevelopment Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mural Precinct upgrade Project, path works to be undertaken with the Mair Street Footpath Upgrade works, consultation has been undertaken and works will commence in coming weeks. ▪ Tender evaluations have been completed
Ensure open spaces and public places in existing and developing communities are thoughtfully planned, connected, green, sustainable, accessible, engaging and inclusive and consider the needs of an ageing community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the Playground Renewal Program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tender process for accessible playground equipment commenced
Beautify streetscapes, landscaping, signage and town entrances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver the Bridge Street Streetscape project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently planning to redevelop Bridge Street, Benalla through landscape and streetscape improvements. Ongoing focus with maintaining and improving entrances to our townships through improved signage and streetscape work will continue.

Connected and accessible roads, footpaths, transport and parking		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Deliver and maintain accessible and safe footpaths and cycle paths in existing and new neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Kerb and Channel Replacement program. ▪ Deliver Lakeside Walk Boardwalk Renewal project. ▪ Deliver new footpath works ▪ Review and update <i>Pathways to the Future – Shared Path Project strategy</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Program commenced and will continue into the 2023/2024 Financial year. ▪ Sustainable material currently being sought – Project postponed to second quarter of 23/24. ▪ 2023/2024 Program has commenced ▪ Remaining priorities from strategy have been identified and expected to be delivered within current financial year
Maintain and improve drainage, bridges, parking and road networks to meet the needs of the current and future population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver Fawckner Drive, Benalla Upgrade project. ▪ Develop and adopt a <i>Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan</i>. ▪ Implement <i>Benalla Rural City Council Drainage Strategy</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project complete ▪ Benalla Rural City Council Asset Plan Adopted ▪ Priority projects from the strategy identified and planning and scoping commenced.

Environment

High quality, efficient and sustainable waste management		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Actively promote responsible behaviours to reduce waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update <i>Waste Management Policy</i>, considering the introduction of hard waste collection and ‘tip vouchers’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and Adoption of Waste Policy complete
Provide efficient and sustainable waste management services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring Benalla Landfill and Resource Recovery Centre Transfer Station into operation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community consultation for the Glass Collection has been undertaken

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating budget for the period ending 30 September 2023

	Note	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance	2023/24 Full Year Budget	2023/24 Full Year Forecast
Capital Projects Operations		\$135,591	\$135,483	-\$108	\$1,371,225	\$1,371,225
Operations Support	1	\$415,794	\$378,325	-\$37,469	-\$101,932	\$1,526,027
Plant Operations	2	\$67,913	\$13,239	-\$54,674	\$53,034	\$76,796
Operations and Capital Grant Income	3	-\$32,856	-\$1,248	\$31,608	-\$14,361,258	-\$14,616,258
Sealed Roads	4	\$478,812	\$739,517	\$260,704	\$2,943,977	\$2,089,043
Unsealed Roads	5	\$314,776	\$449,392	\$134,615	\$1,774,556	\$1,515,475
Bridges	6	\$183,919	\$221,042	\$37,122	\$883,108	\$886,325
Drainage	7	\$237,872	\$177,311	-\$60,561	\$699,137	\$696,220
Mechanics Workshop		\$23,187	\$21,417	-\$1,770	\$82,726	\$82,726
Street Cleaning	8	\$13,397	\$19,439	\$6,041	\$75,764	\$75,764
Roadsides	9	\$91,893	\$139,406	\$47,512	\$550,173	\$533,045
Parks and Gardens	10	\$186,625	\$269,281	\$82,655	\$1,054,891	\$1,054,891
Asset Management Services	11	(\$13,113)	\$65,296	\$78,409	\$251,570	\$251,570
Landfill		\$357,959	\$331,680	-\$26,279	\$1,345,881	\$701,467
Kerbside Waste		(\$3,675,343)	(\$3,666,937)	\$8,406	(\$1,854,943)	(\$1,854,943)
Recreation	12	\$21,422	\$69,819	\$48,396	\$279,353	\$199,839
Total		(\$1,192,146)	(\$637,538)	\$554,608	(\$4,952,733)	(\$5,410,782)

Notes:

1. Additional spend relating to Flood recovery works and Road condition data supplied by ARRB Group.

2. Plant operating Income is \$35,000 lower than expected. Additional expenses for tyre replacement and fuel costs.
3. Unbudgeted funding received for 'Lighting the Lake' \$32,856.
4. Depreciation expense is lower than expected, with a main review due at the end of quarter 2. Sealed road spending is also lower than expected with additional works likely in the warmer months.
5. Depreciation expense is lower than expected, with a main review due at the end of quarter 2. Unsealed spending is lower than budget with the major focus planning for recovery from natural disaster events.
6. The variance of \$37,122 is due to bridge maintenance works being delayed until later in the financial year.
7. There has been a strong focus on the delivery of drain cleaning maintenance for the first quarter. Ongoing works are expected to match the full year budget.
8. Less spend than budgeted but full year budget remains on track.
9. The \$47,512 variance is as a result of lower spend on roadside furniture and roadside vegetation works.
10. Contract pruning works for street tree pruning and powerline clearance are due later in the financial year.
11. A positive variance of \$78,000 as a result of Drainage Head Works Income associated with planning subdivisions. Additionally, the Asset Management Coordinator role remains vacant which has provided a large saving.
12. Depreciation expense is lower than expected, with a main review due at the end of quarter 2. Several facilities run through a Committee of Management are yet to invoice.

Recommendation:**That the report be noted.**

7. People and Performance Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1538

Janine McMaster – Manager People and Performance

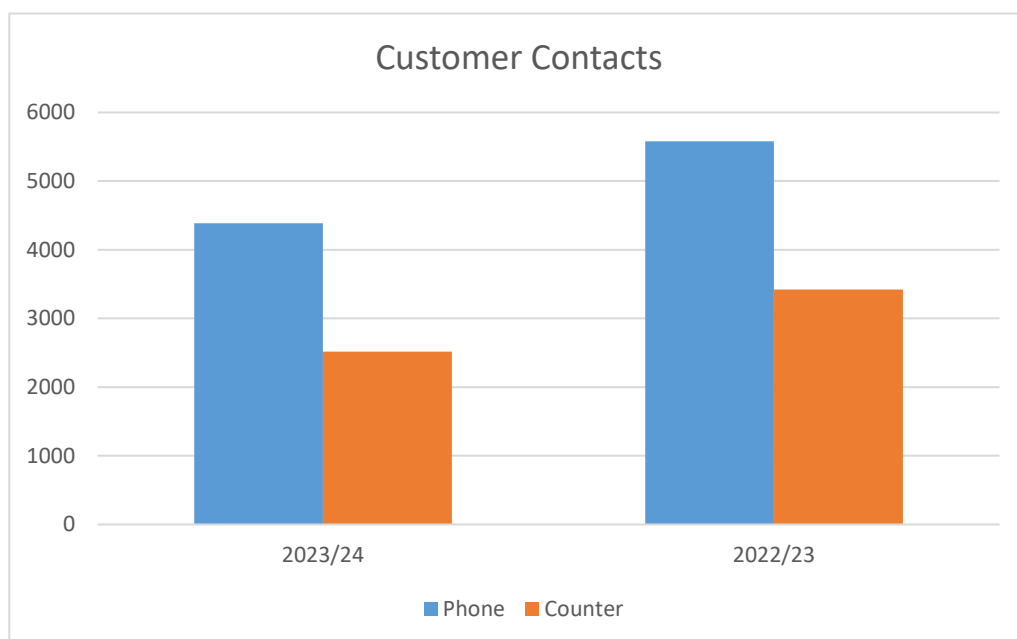
PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the People and Performance Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

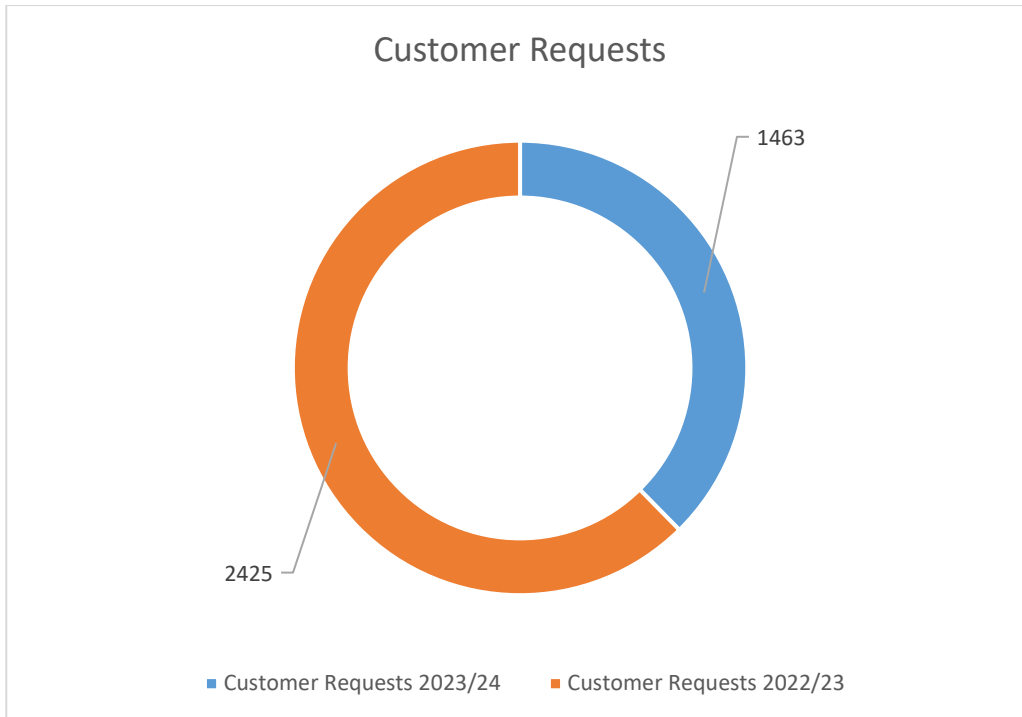
Customer Relations

Customer contacts have decreased by 23 per cent for the quarter compared to 2022/23.

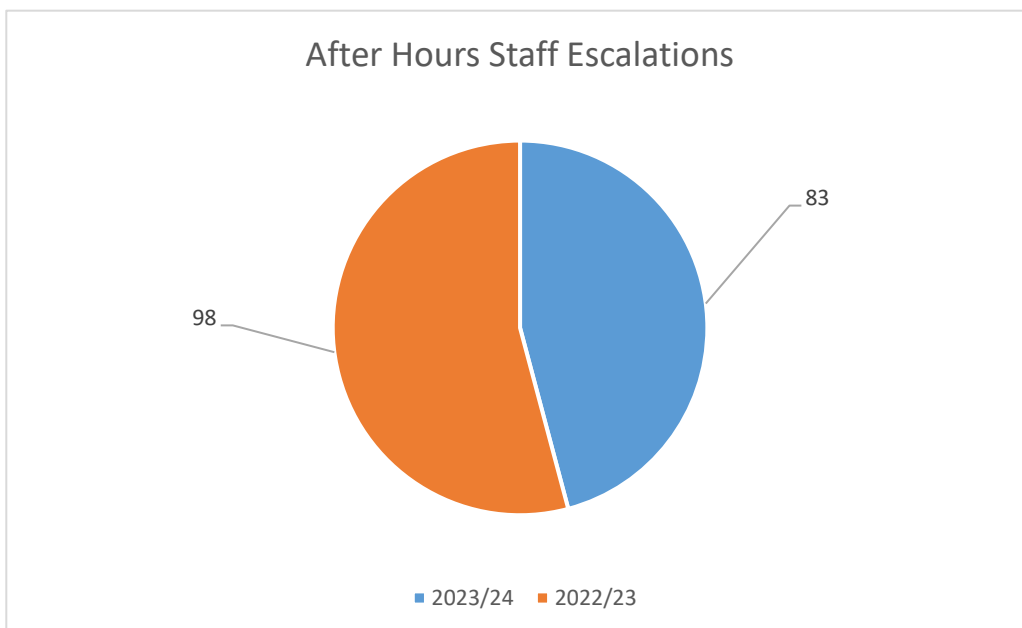
- Phone contacts have decreased by 21 per cent for the quarter.
- Counter contacts have decreased by 26 per cent for the quarter.



Customer requests (CRMS) decreased by 40 per cent for the quarter compared to 2022/23.



After hours phone service decreased by 15 per cent for internal staff escalations.



Human Resources

- The workplace incidents ranged from vehicle use, fatigue, slip, trip or fall and musculoskeletal. The only Workcover claim was the musculoskeletal. No time was lost and the staff member has made a full recovery.
- Ongoing maintenance and administration of the Human Resources functions, including the following areas: recruitment, interview, induction, organisational wide training and monitoring the training budget.
- Commenced the roll out of the revised Staff Performance and Development Review Program. The staff reviews are now being conducted on the individual staff member’s anniversary date rather than all staff reviews being performed at the same time each year.

Service	June 2023	September 2023
Recruitment	5	6
Turnover	1	3
Training Applications	20	22
Workplace incidents	5	5
WorkCover claims	1	1

Payroll

- Maintained Payforce database in response to changes in employee details and terms of employment.
- Responded to internal payroll enquiries.
- Prepared managers’ payroll reports each fortnight and other ad hoc reports and costing requests.
- Annual report data and surveys data provided as required.
- Continuing the rollout of automated payroll processing (removing timesheets from majority of staff).

Risk Management

Occupational Health and Safety

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

- workplace inspections - all site inspections were completed in September with no outstanding actions
- 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.

OH&S Committee meeting was held at the end of August, no major issues reported.

Continuing work on the development of council's Risk Registers.

Conducted OH&S inductions for five new staff members.

In collaboration with the Statcom Group, the Corporate Risk Coordinator has been coordinating the professional review and update of Evacuation Plans for all of council work sites.

Information Sessions

The Corporate Risk Coordinator has attended the following webinars and training sessions during this quarter:

- MAV Insurance Best Practice forum
- WorkSafe Manual Handling Basics.

Information Management

- 19,263 electronic documents were saved into Content Manager during this quarter, which was 592 more than the last quarter
- ongoing processing of both electronic and hard copy information
- information and User Guides regarding Protective Markings is now live on Council's intranet for all staff.

Volunteer Development

- The Volunteer Development Coordinator has been assisting volunteers in the process of renewing their registration or registering as a new volunteer with the North East Council Contractor on-line Induction (NECCI). Volunteers who have been experiencing difficulty with the on-line registration process now have the opportunity to complete a hard copy version to capture their details and agree to the OH&S terms and conditions.

- The Volunteer Development Coordinator has registered Benalla Rural City Council for membership with Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau Inc. This will enable us to access assistance with resources, training, publications, marketing and promotion and also provides an opportunity for networking with other Volunteer Development Coordinators.

Volunteer activity for the quarter:

Volunteer Activity	Current 2023	
	Registered	Active
Arts and Tourism	58	44
Events and Festivals	18	11
Youth Programs	25	18
L2P (Mentors only)	36	33
Gardens maintenance and Litter Reduction (includes airport)	33	21
Specialist Committees and Steering Groups	48	41
RedB4 Bookshop Benalla Library	66	39
Friends of Groups	53	41
Total:	337	248

Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop Learning Centre (Benalla Library)

Over this period, Benalla Library has welcomed 14,337 patrons through our doors and loaned a total of 16,614 items.

Activity	July	August	September
Total Visits	4,634	5,102	4,601
Total Loans	5,736	5,767	5,111
Total Members	5,214	5,240	5,257



Benalla Library was extremely happy to host a special morning tea and story time in celebration of International Teddy Bear’s Picnic Day, welcoming thirty humans and thirteen teddy bears to the event! During July, Benalla Library started a partnered program with Benalla Purmaculture on fortnightly Saturday mornings - RetroSuburbia Book Club. We also welcomed Alison Stuart for an author talk.

James singing songs during our Teddy’ Bears Picnic Celebrations

During August, Benalla Library welcomed fifty kindergarten children to a series of collaborative events aimed at engaging with our smallest locals. August also means, Book Week! Tomorrow Today’s PEEP and Gumnut’s Kindergarten attended multiple events during Book Week, with James running a massive 17 events! During August, Benalla Library also excitedly welcomed three new staff members – Ingrid, Kate, and Ramey.



Staff dressed up for Book Week

September continued the children’s area commitments, with St Josphe’s Prep to Year Three students coming for a visit, a story, and some crafts. During the school holidays, staff ran a multitude of events. Events ranged from numeracy based “Tangram Time” and coding based “Turing Tumble”, to film sessions and a creative writing workshop.



Children participating in Craig Dent’s Wild Parallels Creative Writing Workshop

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.	The Benalla Rural City Council Volunteer Development and Engagement Strategy 2023-2025 is in draft format and currently under review. Volunteering has been celebrated at a recent function where Service Awards were presented to our deserving volunteers who had reached some major milestones.

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> .	A <i>Customer Experience Strategy</i> is currently under review.
Develop a skilled, efficient, and high performing customer focussed workforce.	Develop a <i>Benalla Rural City Council Workforce Plan</i> .	Workforce Plan was adopted 2021 and is currently under review.
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> .	As part of council’s commitment to our <i>Gender Equality Action Plan</i> , Gender Equity training was provided to all staff in March 2023. A follow up session was held in May 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating budget for the period ending 30 September 2023

	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance	2023/24 Full Year Budget	2023/24 Full Year Forecast
People and Performance	\$162,205	\$191,378	\$29,174	\$748,515	\$737,170
Customer Relations	\$100,385	\$123,827	\$23,442	\$478,181	\$538,181
Records Management	\$68,392	\$81,085	\$12,693	\$315,302	\$315,302
Volunteer Development	\$11,286	\$40,271	\$28,985	\$59,917	\$59,917
Risk Management	\$512,772	\$514,353	\$1,581	\$754,928	\$754,928
Library	\$117,873	\$161,920	\$44,047	\$469,901	\$438,584
Total	\$972,912	\$1,112,834	\$139,922	\$2,826,744	\$2,844,081

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

8. Economic Development and Sustainability Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1893

Courtney Naughton – Manager Economic Development and Sustainability

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activity of the Economic Development and Sustainability Department for the quarter ending 30 September 2023.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Future of Benalla and District Project

Draft Regional Context Analysis Report (RCA) has been completed. Over 100 people were interviewed through the first stage of the project. This interview data along with demographic and economic data from REMPLAN informed the RCA.

There were many strengths and assets that were mentioned by the interviewees. Some of these include:

- The Benalla Art Gallery
- Street Art
- Winton Wetlands
- The gardens and lake precinct
- Tomorrow Today
- The Benalla Migrant Camp
- Climate, rainfall and soil conditions suited to many agriculture/horticultural pursuits
- Location and access. Road and rail access is good, and 2 hours from Melbourne, an hour from the border.

The analysis also found that there are already some strong links between research institutions and the Benalla region. One local business is working with University of Melbourne and Swinburne University to investigate natural health compounds, while the Winton Wetlands has partnerships with many research institutions.

The interview process and data analysis has identified a number of distinct innovation opportunities that warrant further investigation through an Entrepreneurial Discovery Process. This context analysis suggests six assets and opportunities that should be the focus of Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP) workshops. These are:

- Arts and Culture
- Eucalypt derived health products
- Benalla Migrant Camp
- Farm/Agroforestry
- The Winton Wetlands
- Manufacturing Ecosystem.

The Regional Context Analysis Report will be presented back to community at two launch events in early October. After presenting the report, there will be a short period for people to provide feedback on the RCA.

The project team then plans to hold Entrepreneurial Discovery Workshops to further develop the opportunities toward the end of November and start of December. A full day workshop will be held for each opportunity/asset. Once the workshops have narrowed the assets into specific development opportunities, Innovation Working Groups will be formed to deliver on these projects. This will likely commence in February 2024.

- Project Coordinator attended the Global Entrepreneurship Congress in September. Approximately 2000 people from 120 countries were in attendance. It was a really interesting week with workshops focussing on Innovation ecosystem building, policy, funding and skills development.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

National Energy Transition

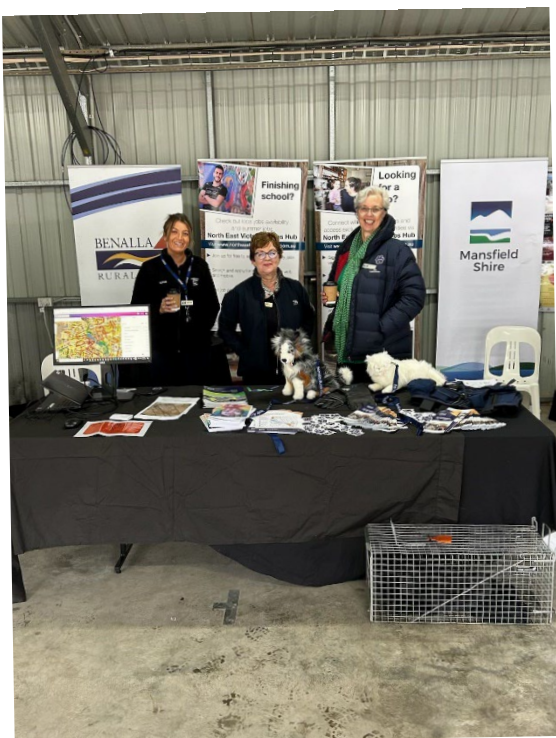
- Business Development Coordinator attended a roundtable with the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner Andrew Dyer in Wangaratta regarding the rollout of the new Energy Transition Lines across Australia, the community engagement and skills required for it.

Benalla Street Art

- Successful outcome for grant application for the Regional Events Fund for the Benalla Street Art Festival 2024.
- Expressions of Interest for the Benalla Street Art Advisory Committee (BSAAC) were advertised in this quarter and nine members were appointed. The first meeting was held on Monday 24 July.
- The group comprises five community members: Raelene Stratton (Chair), Alex Ross (Deputy Chair), Joel Spencer, Ian Gonzagna and Toby Benador; Two Councillors: Cr Don Firth and Cr Gail O'Brien; two Council staff: Courtney Naughton (Manager Economic Development and Sustainability), and Eric Nash (Director Benalla Art Gallery). Regular observers at meetings include: Charlie Vincent (Head of Industry Engagement, Tourism North East), Alison Angus, (Visitor Economy Co-ordinator), Sharon Geer (Events Co-ordinator), Catherine Macmillan (Business Development) and Kirsten Hein (Admin/Minutes).
- Expressions of Interest for a curator for the Benalla Street Art Festival 2024 was advertised in August. The successful applicant was Eddie Zammit.

Jobs and Skills

- Members of the Economic Development Team attended the Bush Summit in Wodonga on Thursday 17 August.
- Attended the Housing Taskforce Roundtable organised by VECCI on 15 August
- Assisted the Benalla Future Jobs Steering Committee co-ordinating visits to let businesses know about the new Under Age Legislation which came in on 1 July.
- Hands on Trades Day was held Winton Motor Raceway on Thursday 10 August with 1300 students and 50 exhibitors attending from across the NeVic region. Benalla businesses were very well represented with excellent interactive displays by: North East Tree Services, Thales Australian Munitions, LS Quarry and Concrete, James Civil Group, GoTafe (Electric training vehicle and Agriculture, Horticulture and Viticulture courses), Benalla Rural City Council, Coinda and the Centre.



Business Engagement and Support

- Business Development Coordinator has co-ordinated a new monthly Benalla Business Coffee Connections which commenced this quarter. Held on the second Wednesday of the month between 8am-9am and shared around local cafes. Venues to date have included Zeus (July), Stella Stella at Rambling Rose (August), and Chillout Smoothie Bar (September). On average eight to 10 people have been attending these meetups with positive feedback about the networking and information sharing opportunities.

Christmas

- New Interactive decorations planned as part of a new Christmas Precinct near the Ceramic Mural and Splash Park plus use of existing tree, street flags, corflutes and lights from past years.
- P-12 and Benalla Flexible Hands on Learning students plus the Men's Shed are involved with making some decorations.
- Family Christmas Event to turn on the lights on Friday 1 December in planning.
- Busking and window decorations competitions will be promoted again this year.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - GRANT

Media Coverage – Highlights from the quarter ended 30 September 2023

- The opening of the Mair Street Visitor Centre and Cinema received strong coverage across the region in print, on radio and television.
- Reporting of a Recycling Truck fire due to an incorrectly disposed E-Cigarette (Vape) received national attention, being reported on by The Guardian as well as by waste sector publications and local and regional media.
- The rejection by an independent panel of bullying allegations within the Council was heavily reported in The Ensign during this period.
- The Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG) received state-wide television coverage on WIN News following an interview proactively organised by Communications. This coverage is estimated to have reached a total audience close to 30,000.

Community Engagement Activities

The Communications and Engagement team facilitated a Councillor Listening Post at the Devenish Markets on Sunday 3 October. The market was well attended by the surrounding communities and by visitors to the region thanks to some fine weather.

Councillors received a number of feedback items from the community, mostly from Devenish residents about issues directly relating to that locality. As the purpose of this engagement was to hear from the local community, the feedback received indicates that this event was a success.

EVENTS

Winter event - Flame Fest

A new Winter event for Benalla support by Benalla Rural City, FlameFest was held on Saturday 12 August, 4pm – 10pm at the Benalla Racing Club. Organisers chose the Benalla Racing Club venue for its proximity to Benalla, its ability and capacity to host events of this type and scale.

The event was a modern day festival with a fire show, fire performers, live music, light show, children's amusements, roving performers, stunt shows and food trucks. The event was ticketed with entry \$10 per adult, children \$5 under 4 free.

Council's Economic Development and Sustainability team secured the event through Sports Marketing Australia's (SMA) Event Placement Program with the owner of the event, Event People delivering the FlameFest. Event People owns and operates the Food Truck Carnivale, Sufferfest Triathlon Series, Australian Beach Games, Mornington Running Festival, Peninsula Busking Festival, Mornington Country Music Festival, and Colour Carnivale.

The objective is to attract and host major events that provide economic, community and branding benefits to LGA partners. SMA is contracted by 62 LGAs and tourism organisations across Australia.

Three thousand spectators attended the event – a first year sell out. Attendance was a mix of local, regional and metropolitan spectators. Predominately the attendance was from out of town. The FlameFest contributed to accommodation being close to fully booked for the weekend.

Based on Tourism Research Australia figures the national average spend of a domestic overnight tourist whose purpose of travel is to either compete in or spectate at a Sporting/leisure event is now \$382 per person per night.

In terms of total average spend per trip, a domestic overnight tourist whose purpose of travel is to either compete in or spectate at a Sporting/leisure event will spend on average \$1,123 per person per trip.



Photo: Benalla Racing Club FlameFest 2 August 2023

Benalla Festival – 3-12 November 2023

Sponsorship

A Sponsorship Prospectus sent to major industry and local businesses to invite sponsorship of the Benalla Festival program 3-12 November 2023.

Expressions of Interest to host an event

Working with community groups and organisations to host an event as part of the 2023 Benalla Festival Program. Theme: Past, Present, future. 40 expressions of interest received to host events and exhibitions both in Benalla and rural townships.

The program will highlight events across rural townships during the first weekend from Saturday 4 November 2023. The second weekend will feature events in Benalla from Friday 10 – Sunday 12 November 2023. The Launch of the Benalla Festival will be held on Friday 3 November 2023 in Benalla.

Visitor Economy

- ARIA and eight times Golden Guitar award winning singer-songwriter Fanny Lumdsen, and her incredible band The Prawn Stars, were one of the last performances at BPACC on Sunday 6 August 2023. Two hundred and forty three patrons enjoyed the show with patrons coming from not only Benalla but also Mansfield and Shepparton.
- Staff attended the Victorian Tourism Industry Council – VTIC, Visitor Services Summit in Wangaratta. With a theme of ‘A catalyst for Action’, the program had over 20 guest speakers who provided highlights, case studies, tools and data to assist with the better supporting the visitor journey.
- Members of the Benalla Aboriginal Advisory committee were one of the first community groups to see the new Visitor Centre. This was part of a cultural walk though. During the walk through it was decided were to place an acknowledgement to country and other information regarding Aboriginal Culture.
- Benalla Visitor Centre and Cinema was officially opened on 14 September 2023. To prepare for the opening, both the temporary Visitor Centre and BPACC both needed to be packed up, moved and unpacked in their new permanent home.
- Staff in the cinema have adapted well with new changes as this included undertaking training in a new ticketing system and new cinema procedures.
- The cinema opened ready for school holidays and in that short time to September 30, 746 pax have enjoyed the cinema.
- Attend the Henty Machinery Field Days from 19 – 21 September 2023. Although it seemed quieter this year, we still engaged with 233 potential visitors to Benalla with and interest in both the silo and street art.

Benalla Art Gallery

- For the quarter 1 July to 30 September 2023, Benalla Art Gallery has welcomed 19,589 exhibition visitors, and staged 40 public and education programs for 676 participants.
- Benalla Art Gallery has secured grant funding through the Community Heritage Grant to undertake a Preservation Needs Assessment by engaging the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation. This is the second stage in a three staged grant program, following the completion of a Significance Assessment in 2022.

- Council submitted its expression of interest to the Growing Regions Program, seeking to expand the outcomes of the possible Stage 1 redevelopment of Benalla Art Gallery. BRCC is seeking Australian Government funding to match the existing \$3m Victorian Government funding. The intent of the application is to increase the scope of Stage 1 redevelopment to allow the Gallery to meet sector standards and hence broaden the scope of its programming, while positively building towards the broader vision for full redevelopment. Should the Benalla Rural City Council's EOI be successful, a full application will be invited on 1 November, with submissions required by 12 December. Approvals and announcements of recipients would be anticipated in the following eight weeks.
- Social Ventures Australia have been engaged to develop a business model and governance review of the Benalla Art Gallery in relation to scoped options for redevelopment per the Masterplan being prepared by Williams Boag architects (WBa).
- The Benalla Art Gallery team and Benalla Rural City Council's Social Inclusion Action Group Coordinator Matt Debreceny, are now at the stage of one-on-one mentor sessions as part of the Fair Play program. Fair Play Regional Victoria is a 20-week tailored training program to promote greater equity and inclusion in Regional Victorian arts and cultural Organisation/Venues funded by Creative Victoria.

The program focuses on developing each venue's skills and capacity in working with First Nations people, people from underrepresented cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and people with disability. Fair Play is led by people who identify as First Nations and people from Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) or Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CaRM) backgrounds. An anticipated outcome of the program is the development of an Equity Action Plan specific to our gallery.

Sustainable Environment

- Council has engaged Ironbark consultancy to undertake analysis of Council operations and associated emissions to establish a way forward to reducing or offsetting our emissions and setting a realistic net zero target for Council. Ironbark's report will feed into the draft Climate and Environment Strategy.
- Community consultation on the invasive weed spray program was complete with only two people submitting on the program.
- Council participated in National Tree Day in partnership with the Regent Honeyeater Project to do a community planting along the Hollands Biolink Channel. More than 300 trees were planted by 25 community volunteers.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Economy

Thriving business and industry		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Work together with key stakeholders to engage, support, strengthen, enhance and diversify local business.	Develop the <i>Economic Diversification Plan</i> .	Over 100 formal interviews conducted to date. Interviews held with GoTafe, Thales, Schneider Electric, Local sporting and community groups, Tomorrow Today. Currently investigating the formation of a “Benalla Innovation Network”. How is this best done? Networking dinners, guest speakers, facilitators?
Attract new investment, business and industry to the Benalla Rural City to facilitate business growth and job creation.	Develop the <i>Economic Diversification Plan</i> .	It’s too early in the process for this to occur. The Regional Context Analysis report draft has been finalised, and will be presented to community and key stakeholders at the start of October. Opportunities will be investigated November/December. Investment attraction will be the focus of the project throughout 2024.

Flourishing tourism		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Strengthen the visitor economy through growth of events and promotion of unique assets and experiences and visitor attractions.	Review and update the <i>Events and Tourism strategy</i> .	The new Destination Management Plan tender scope is completed and ready to go out in October.

Sustainable practices		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Work with key stakeholders to improve local learning and employment pathway opportunities that address skills gaps, align with future needs and support lifelong learning.	Develop the <i>Economic Diversification Plan</i> .	Discussions have been had with Tomorrow Today, GoTafe, Department of Education and the Victorian Skills Authority. Initial discussions around creating the Benalla Innovation network.

Environment

Healthy and protected natural environment		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Partner with agencies and the community to manage and enhance our natural environmental assets, water quality and river health across Benalla Rural City and support the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Regional Catchment Strategy and other regional environmental strategies.	Review and update the <i>Environmental Strategy and the Climate Change Adaptation Plan</i> .	Council officers continue to take part in the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority Biodiversity Roundtable meetings.

Sustainable practices		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Partner with business, industry and community to plan and implement local approaches and initiatives that respond to climate change.	Review, update and adopt <i>Benalla Rural City Council Environment Strategy</i> .	Council officers have begun developing a draft <i>Climate and Environment Strategy</i> . Stakeholder engagement around the strategy was held with several government agencies. Ironbark have been engaged to deliver the carbon accounting model for Council. National tree planting day occurred on 30 July, partnering with Regent Honeyeater Project to do a community planting along the Hollands Biolink Channel.
Advocate, promote, support and encourage the use of renewable and clean energy and technology.	Review, update and adopt <i>Benalla Rural City Council Environment Strategy</i> .	Council officers are working alongside the GMCA towards a community Renewables Bulk Buy project. To allow residents and community groups across most of the GMCA councils the opportunity to acquire renewable energy products at bulk prices.
Improve Council’s sustainability performance through greater use of renewable energy and demonstrating sustainability leadership to the community.	Review, update and adopt <i>Benalla Rural City Council Environment Strategy</i> .	Council has been successful at securing collaborative funding with GMCA to undertake a neighborhood battery initiative.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating budget for the period ending 30 September 2023

	Note	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance	2023/24 Full Year Budget	2023/24 Full Year Forecast
Economic Development and Sustainability		\$112,510	\$118,365	\$5,855	\$428,985	\$546,032
Art Gallery	1	\$61,133	\$176,202	\$115,069	\$779,652	\$598,830
BPACC		\$56,026	\$61,791	\$5,765	\$240,851	\$248,791
Communications		\$89,726	\$92,638	\$2,912	\$359,657	\$359,657
Events	2	\$52,930	\$85,256	\$32,326	\$294,418	\$315,118
Tourism		\$124,442	\$126,871	\$2,430	\$319,874	\$330,412
Environmental Sustainability	3	(\$4,717)	\$38,689	\$43,406	\$151,142	\$140,686
Business Development		\$40,784	\$49,659	\$8,875	\$193,650	\$162,150
Total		\$532,834	\$749,471	\$216,637	\$2,768,230	\$2,701,678

Notes:

1. Unfavourable variance due to budget phasing.
2. Favourable variance due to the delay in the procurement of a curator for the Benalla Festival.
3. Favourable variance due to less than budgeted expenditure on environmental projects.

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

9. 2023/24 Quick Response Grants Program

SF/2857
Tom Arnold Community Development Coordinator
Jane Archbold - Manager Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents funding applications for 2023/24 Quick Response Grants.

BACKGROUND

The Quick Response grant 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 program distributes grants up to \$500 allowing local clubs, groups and organisations the opportunity to seek funds when the need arises.

DISCUSSION

Applications for consideration under the 2023/24 Quick Response Grant program are detailed in the table below.

Applicant	Details	Amount Requested	Proposed Assistance
Lima School Community Centre Committee	<p>Community Christmas BBQ 2023.</p> <p>In 2022 the Committee trialed a "Community Christmas BBQ" as a post Covid community engagement opportunity to reconnect. The event was aimed to appeal to all community members from the older generations of farmers to the young families and new members of the community.</p> <p>The event was a major success being one of the largest attended functions the Community Centre had experienced in a long time (even prior to COVID). The community enjoyed the event so much that they are already requesting the Committee "hold it again please".</p> <p>The committee is a small group of volunteers with limited financial resources and are applying for a Quick Response Grant to cover the costs of the BBQ for the attendees along with a "Santa gift" for each child in attendance.</p>	\$500	\$500
Total		\$500	\$500

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 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 *2023/24 Budget* allocates \$15,000 to the Quick Response Grant program. To date, \$1,400 in funding has been allocated.

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 a \$500 grant from the 2023/24 Quick Response Grant program be allocated to the Lima School Community Centre Committee.

10. Community Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1534

Jane Archbold – Manager Community

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents activity for the Community Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

Community and Youth Development

- Youth Development Coordinator supported Live4Life Moira by delivering Teen MHFA training to two Year 11 classes at Yarrowonga P-12.
- Local fundraiser group, The Lockie Project, donated their Easter fundraiser money to Live4Life Benalla. Media release was created to highlight their amazing work and contribution. This funding will go towards the training and resources for Teen and Youth MHFA.
- Benalla P-12 Live4Life crew hosted a R U OK? BBQ for the whole Faithfull St campus. The crew did an amazing job cooking up the BBQ for over 300 students.
- Youth Development Coordinator attended the Youth Live4Life Spring Dinner at the RACV Club in Melbourne. This is a night that all Live4Life communities are invited to as a celebration of the program. Benalla crew alumni Nathan Tolliday was a guest speaker.
- The North East Skate Park Series is now being ran by Al's Skate Co from Wodonga with all neighbouring Councils signed up to the Series. Great turn out for the Benalla event on 13/08/2023, with 48 registered competitors, our highest ever registration of BMX competitors. With the add on of spectators, over 100 people attended the event in total.
- FReeZA and Engage! funded the Yandell Walton workshop that was a two day workshop in September, attended by four local young people.
<https://benallaartgallery.com.au/surrounding-connections/>
- Engage! funding offered young people the chance to complete RSA training at only \$20 at Benalla Community Care. 10 young people attended this training during the school holidays.
- Application successful for Youth Fest funding \$2000.



- Accessibility Reference Group met once this quarter with the key focus of the meeting being a presentation from the ARTC regarding the Benalla Train Station Redevelopment.
- Grants – The 2023/24 round of Quick Response Grants opened in July. During this quarter Quick Response Grants were awarded to Swanpool Community Cinema, Australian Christian College and Tatong Market and More.
- The Fawckner Drive Precinct Masterplan – Consultation on the Draft Report continued during this quarter resulting in 31 community submissions that were presented to Council for consideration.
- Swanpool and Thoona community visits conducted by Community Development staff including inspection of grant funded works completed by Swanpool Bowls Club.
- Goulburn Valley Sport Recreation Infrastructure Forum attended by Community Development Coordinator and Open Space Coordinator.
- Fair Access Policy work and participation in community of practice meetings.
- Community Development Coordinator was the guest speaker at U3A Meet and Mingle to discuss Fawckner Drive Masterplan and other Council projects.
- Cessation of Grants Management and Event Project Policy – This policy was reviewed by Council staff and will be replaced by a simplified process more suited to community groups seeking funding.
- In L2P program, 48 learners in July, 58 in August and 51 in September (Average 51 per month) Target is 50.
- Six young people got their licence during the quarter.
- An average of 20 volunteers actively drove over the quarter, providing over 800 driving hours to participants.
- Forty-nine professional driving lessons were undertaken in the quarter.



Social Inclusion Action Group (SIAG)

- Conducted community consultation and awareness around SIAG program / EOI processes in Warrenbayne, Swanpool, Tatong, Goorambat, and Baddaginnie.
- Also met with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, Centre Against Violence, Age Friendly Benalla (AFB) Reference Group, Full Impact Squad (Tomorrow Today), VicPol, Mental Health and Wellbeing Local (Wellways), Waminda Community House, Brick by Brick, Room at The Table, and Elder Rights Advocacy to promote awareness of SIAG program.
- Established Community of Practice with SIAG coordinators from other 4 LGAs to share strategies.
- In partnership with Comms team, engaged in media pieces (ABC radio Shepparton, WIN news syndicated) around SIAG program.
- Conducted EOI process, receiving 21 submissions. Panel of SIAG Coordinator, Acting Manager Community Tom Arnold, and community member Lucy Mitchell-Long evaluated EOIs and identified 11 suitable members to form SIAG.
- Meeting with Parliamentary Secretary for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Tim Richardson, and his advisors, on 19 September. Also in tow were Mayor Bernie Hearn, Acting Manager Community Tom Arnold, and Youth Development Coordinator Steph Brack. We provided an overview of our vision for SIAG and discussed the local mental health landscape.
- In partnership with staff from Mental Health and Wellbeing Local, addressed the Tatong Anglers Group on Mental Health issues and services available to provide support.
- Joined Art Gallery staff in FairPlay Regional Victoria Creative Equity Training.
- Attended Rainbow Ready Roadmap (LGBTQIA+) workshops.
- Enrolled in YMHFA Instructor training to support delivery of Live4Life Benalla.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

- Thirty-five Birth Notices received for the Quarter July to Sept 2023 (an increase of 15 from last quarter).
- MCH Service has been advised the Department of Health will no longer support Benalla Health to facilitate the INFANT program under health promotion funding – come 2024 this responsibility is to fall on the MCH Service.
- During the month of September, two information sessions were held promoting ‘Dad’s Group Grant Program’ – Lencia Moll has attended both sessions and has commenced an application for the grant with the aim of expanding the ‘First Time Parent Group for Dad’s’ currently running twice per year.

Integrated Family Services (IFS)

- Family Services targets: throughput sitting at 18 YTD (target 15 YTD), and service hours target sitting at 115.78 per cent YTD.
- Flexible packages: Nine families (inclusive of 24 children) have been supported with Alliance flexible package funding during Q1, with a total of \$5,588 expended.
- Jan Day is back in Family Liaison – increased consistency with data capture and admin has occurred with Jan now back on deck. Family Liaison is currently sitting at full capacity with clients.
- Welcome back to Corena Brennan, Corena attended training with us in Sept, however back from maternity leave as of the start of October.
- DFFH APSS has approved our 2022/23 underspend to be carried forward for staffing which has allowed us to retain Louise Morris following Corena’s return. Lou is working 0.4EFT and is with us until the end of September 2024.
- IFS is currently hosting Lucy, a Masters Social Work Student from LaTrobe University. Lucy will be with the program until the end of November.
- Common themes – family violence, mental health (especially gaps in accessing MH supports for children), NDIS support in applications/reviews, school disengagement. OMCFS Alliance exploring training options for practitioners in the regions to upskill in relation to commonly occurring themes.
- Ovens Murray Child Family Services Alliance Operations group are working through themes and will have Department of Education and Junction Navigator at attendance at November meeting.
- IFS is experiencing multiple cases with significant risk whereby risk is assessed and being reported to statutory bodies (Child Protection) and while meeting risk threshold to move to Child Protection Investigation and Response, due to no current evidence of harm, Child Protection are unable to take further action. Due to this gap in the sector, this leaves IFS holding significant risk at a community level. Further work is required with Child Protection in relation to holding risk.
- Supported Playgroup is currently offering two groups, Tuesday morning at Waminda Neighbourhood House and Thursday morning at Benalla Girl Guide Hall. Six families, inclusive of eight children, are being supported through SPG at present. Referrals can be made directly to the program.

- External supervision (group reflective practice) has recommenced with new facilitator – Donna Richards (Australian Childhood Foundation).

Age Friendly Benalla

- Meeting with Senior Facilities Officer Elise Wood to see what improvements can be made to the U3A room at Senior Citizens Club to re-establish the Info Hub on a trial basis.
- Resource guide and brochures available.
- Working on getting signs updated.
- Working with Lou Sigmund from Men’s Shed re a brochure display unit.

Regional Assessment Service

- The availability of home support services has increased, allowing Assessment Officers to make referrals for the higher needs supports in the home. This includes personal care, shopping, flexible-respite, transport and social supports.
- Domestic assistance remains unavailable to newly identified people needing support. The local provider is up to date with their waitlist pre June 2023 and will now work through the long list of approximately 100 people who have been identified as needing domestic assistance since July 2023.
- The numbers of new referral and support plan review requests has remained in line with last quarter. This is showing a trend for a sustained higher than usual level of people requesting assessment or review.

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 Benalla Rural City Municipal Health and Wellbeing Action Plan (MPHWBP).	Resourced two meetings of the Benalla Health and Wellbeing Partnership Group. Continually seeking feedback from the partnership of any programs and activities undertaken that align with the MPHWBP.
Offer programs, services, activities and events that support, develop and connect community members of all abilities and lead the community in being age	Update and adopt Benalla Rural City Council Community Access and Inclusion Plan.	Resource Accessibility Reference Group (ARG), Age Friendly Benalla Reference Group. Draft Disability Action Plan presented to ARG. Internal

A healthy, safe and resilient community		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
friendly and child and COVID safe.		Child Safe Working Group continues to meet. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

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 Benalla Rural City Council Youth Strategy.	Youth Strategy adopted by Council 29 June 2022, supported by annual action plans.
Continue to respectfully engage, include, celebrate and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and people.	Develop and adopt a Benalla Rural City Council Aboriginal Reconciliation Plan.	RAP working group continues to meet regularly and is linking in with Benalla Health’s RAP. Continue to resource Aboriginal Advisory Group who are also linking in with the RAP.
Promote, support and actively engage with smaller rural communities.	Deliver Township projects.	Rural Community Activation grants of up to \$750 provided to Thoona, Moorngag, Goorambat, Devenish, Tatong, Warrenbayne, Swanpool, Molyullah and Boweya to host community gatherings.
	Develop Rural Township Plans. Reintroduce Councillor Rural Community Visitation program.	Work continues on drafting Rural Township Plans

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 and update the Long-Term Community Plan.	Updating of community vision completed.

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 and update the Long-Term Community Plan.	Ongoing work in progress ensuring aspirations of long-term community vision are captured in work undertaken by variety of community groups and organisations
Create opportunities for deliberative engagement prior to decision making and actively improve and enhance Council's community engagement practices.	Develop and adopt a Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit.	Policy adopted and engagement now the responsibility of the Communications Coordinator.
Provide timely and effective communications in plain language to the community about Council services, activities and decision making.	Develop and adopt a Benalla Rural City Council Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework and Toolkit.	Policy adopted and engagement now the responsibility of the Communications Coordinator.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating budget for the period ending 30 September 2023

	Note	2023/24 YTD Actuals	2023/24 YTD Budgets	2023/24 YTD Variance	2023/24 Full Year Forecast	2023/24 Full Year Budget
Community Operations	1	\$180,000	\$176,719	-\$3,281	\$826,454	\$1,288,675
Youth Programs		(\$39,964)	(\$30,339)	\$9,625	\$98,974	\$177,891
Rural Programs		\$800	\$23,394	\$22,594	\$93,581	\$2,703
ADS Aged and Disability Services		\$2,546	\$3,615	\$1,069	\$14,500	\$18,873
ADS Assessment		\$3,506	\$8,681	\$5,176	\$17,096	\$17,096
ADS Social Support		\$0	\$21	\$21	\$737	\$0
FCS Maternal Child Health		\$29,972	\$38,184	\$8,212	\$136,108	\$353,434
FCS Family and Childrens Services	2	\$64,023	\$10,201	-\$53,822	\$117,231	\$264,592
Total		\$240,883	\$230,476	-\$10,406	\$1,304,681	\$2,123,264

Notes:

1. Forecast variance for 30 June 2024 due to unbudgeted grant funding received for Social Inclusion Action Group Program (\$177,180) and Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase 3 - Town Projects (\$286,954).
2. Unfavourable variance due carry forward expenditure for various programs.

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

11. Facilities and Information Technology Department Activity Report For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1544

Greg Robertson – Manager Facilities and Information Technology

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the activities of the Facilities and Information Technology Department for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

Facilities Management

- Coordinated furniture and equipment relocation to the new Visitor Information Centre.
- Undertook graffiti removal in the Botanical Gardens and 24-hour toilets under the Benalla Library.
- Scheduled maintenance on Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems completed for all Council facilities.
- Assisted Police with a number of official requests for Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) footage in public areas. Council CCTV is available to Police to support official investigations in-line with Council Policy, and where a legal obligation exists to provide such information to authorities.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

- Completed ICT network configuration for Visitor Information Centre, including the provision of a highspeed wired internet connection to the Benalla Cinema for delivery of digital movies.
- New helpdesk software and remote access tool currently in beta testing. The system will improve in-house ICT support capabilities and service delivery.
- Staff continue to work on the Collaborative Digital Innovation Project (CODI) in conjunction with Strathbogie, Mansfield and Murrundindi Shires, which will replace the following core software systems by end of 2024:
 - Finance System
 - Rates and Property
 - Customer Management
 - Information Management (Records)
 - Planning, Building, and Regulatory Services.

Benalla Aquatic Centre YMCA

- Centre Membership stands at 444, an increase on the 427 memberships reported last quarter.
- Swimming Lesson memberships stand at 589 enrolments, down on the 629 Swimming Lesson memberships reported last quarter. Numbers are expected to increase in the warmer months.

Highlight

- Facilities and ICT staff supported the move to the new Visitor Information Centre and Benalla Cinema, meeting tight deadlines for the Official Opening.

COUNCIL PLAN 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

Liveability

Vibrant public spaces and places		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Maintain the amenity and cleanliness of townships, public spaces, roadsides, and community facilities.	Deliver Benalla Town Hall Infrastructure Upgrade project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heating and cooling upgrade is almost complete, waiting on the switch board upgrade by AUSNET.
Enhance and maintain key places of significance.	Update Benalla Airport Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BARC Hut 61, 62 and 65 conservation works have been awarded to Whitehorse Construction with permit conditions awaiting the final approval form Heritage Victoria.

Leadership

High performance culture		
Strategy	Action	September Quarter Update
Improve customer experience through responsive, timely, efficient, well planned, and accessible services.	Review, update and implement the <i>Benalla Rural City Council Information Technology and Communications strategy</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Migration of core function to new production servers completed. ▪ Coster Street Community Care NBN Connection underway. ▪ Continued involvement in project CODI.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Operating Budget result for the period ending 30 September 2023

	Note	2023/24 YTD Actuals \$'000	2023/24 YTD Budgets \$'000	2023/24 YTD Variance \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Budget \$'000	2023/24 Full Year Forecast \$'000
Facilities	1	\$825,606	\$665,219	-\$160,387	\$2,645,208	\$3,637,478
Information Technology		\$597,925	\$641,704	\$43,778	\$1,719,537	\$1,587,884
Benalla Airport	2	\$22,537	\$69,972	\$47,435	\$318,063	\$183,344
Saleyards	3	(\$3,393)	\$7,266	\$10,659	\$29,112	\$29,112
Aquatic Centre	4	\$215,858	\$195,810	-\$20,048	\$783,246	\$873,000
Total		\$1,658,533	\$1,579,971	-\$78,562	\$5,495,166	\$6,310,818

Notes:

1. Unfavourable variance depreciation expense for BRCC owned facilities is \$257,000 higher than budgeted due to revaluation of buildings in prior year. Forecast depreciation expense for year has been amended to align with new valuations. Offset by reduced material and services expenses as works restricted due to 23 October flood event.

2. Favourable variance as repairs and maintenance works delayed in first three months due to weather conditions. Expenditure on Living Heritage Grants Program, Former Benalla Migrant Camp Conservation projects works rephased to late in 2024.
Forecast expenditure for year reduced as depreciation expense for Benalla Airport less due to review of assets useful life and valuations in prior year.
3. Favourable variance as truck wash income more in first quarter due to flood event usage. Also, less expenditure on Saleyards repairs and maintenance due to weather conditions, works rephased to later in 2023/24.
4. Unfavourable variance on contract management fees (CPI rise impact). Forecast result for year reviewed accordingly.

Recommendation:**That the report be noted.**

12. Councillors' Expenses For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/1557

Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details expenditure associated with Councillors' mobile phone usage, attendance at professional development courses, conferences and seminars, and reimbursement of expenses incurred.

Councillors' Information and Communication Expenses

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

Councillor	2023/24 Q1 (ex. GST)
Cr Claridge	\$147.24
Cr Davis	\$147.24
Cr Firth	\$51.81
Cr Gunaratne	\$147.24
Cr Hearn	\$147.24
Cr King	\$147.24
Cr O'Brien	\$147.24
Total	\$935.28

Councillors' reimbursement of expenses

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

Councillors' reimbursements are detailed in the table below:

Date	Councillor	Details	Amount (ex. GST)
25 July 23	Cr Hearn	Fuel reimbursement	\$104.44
Total			\$104.44

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, conferences and seminars.

Quarter ended 30 September 2023:

Date	Councillor	Description	Professional Development (ex. GST)	Conferences & Seminars (ex. GST)
28/07/2023	Cr Hearn, Cr King and Cr O'Brien	MAV Housing Summit	\$0	\$0
01/09/2023	Cr Hearn and Cr Claridge	Victorian Local Government Association - Global Executive Panel: Harmonious council decision making – Setting up councils for Success	\$100	\$0
21/09/2023	Cr O'Brien	Australian Local Government Women's Association - Hands Up for Mayor and Deputy Mayor	\$0	\$0
27/09/2023	Cr Hearn, Cr Claridge and Cr Firth	MAV Conference and Dinner	\$0	\$1,590
Total			\$100	\$1,590

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The *2023/24 Budget* allocated for Councillors' attendance at professional development courses, conferences and seminars is \$14,700.

Summary	Professional Development (ex. GST)	Conferences & Seminars (ex. GST)
Quarter ended 30 September 2023	\$100	\$1,590
Total spend as at 30 September 2023	\$100	\$1,590

Recommendation:
That the report be noted.

13. CEO Credit Card For The Quarter Ended 30 September 2023

SF/5486

Tracey Beaton – Executive Coordinator

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details expenditure associated with the corporate credit card issued to the Chief Executive Officer for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

BACKGROUND

As part of an audit of the Council's 2017/18 financial statements, the Victorian Auditor General's Office recommended that the Chief Executive Officer's credit card transactions be reviewed and authorised by a Council member.

In response to the recommendation, transactions on the CEOs credit card are reported quarterly to the Council.

CEO Credit Card Transactions for the Quarter ended 30 September 2023

Date	Details	Amount (ex. GST)
09/07/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$21.30
10/08/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$4.68
12/08/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$7.93
12/08/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$17.76
14/08/2023	Tesla Inc – EV Charging	\$9.08
19/08/2023	Tesla Inc – EV Charging	\$11.45
20/08/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$11.31
27/08/2023	Tesla Inc – EV Charging	\$24.05
06/09/2023	Tesla Inc – EV Charging	\$13.17
14/09/2023	Tesla Inc – EV Charging	\$9.08
28/09/2023	Evie Networks – EV Charging	\$9.53
Total		\$139.34

Recommendation:

That the report be noted.

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14. Urgent Business

Closure of Meeting