



**Date:** Tuesday, 24 January 2023  
**Time:** 3.00pm  
**Location:** Loddon Shire Council Chambers, Wedderburn

# **MINUTES**

## **Council Meeting**

**MINUTES OF LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL  
COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEDDERBURN  
ON TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2023 AT 3.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Cr Dan Straub (Mayor), Cr Neil Beattie, Cr Gavan Holt, Cr Linda Jungwirth and Cr Wendy Murphy

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Lincoln Fitzgerald (Chief Executive Officer), Wendy Gladman (Director Community Wellbeing), Steven Phillips (Director Operations), Amanda Wilson (Director Corporate), Lisa Clue (Manager Governance) and Tracy Hunt (Governance Coordinator)

**1 OPENING AFFIRMATION**

The Mayor read the Opening Affirmation

**2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The CEO read the Acknowledgement of Country

**3 APOLOGIES**

Nil

**4 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Nil

**5 PREVIOUS MINUTES****5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****File Number: FOL/19/45615****Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance****Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer****Attachments: Nil****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm the Minutes of the:

1. Council Briefing of 13 December 2022
2. Council Meeting of 13 December 2022.

**REPORT**

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the December 2022 Council Briefing and Council Meeting as previously circulated to Councillors.

**RESOLUTION 2023/1****Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth****Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy**

That Council confirm the Minutes of the:

1. Council Briefing of 13 December 2022
2. Council Meeting of 13 December 2022.

**CARRIED**

**6 ADVISORY MEETINGS****6.1 RECORD OF ADVISORY MEETINGS****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm records of the following as detailed within this report :

1. Council Briefing 13 December 2022.

Rule 51 of Council's Governance Rules requires a record of Councillor briefings, Councillor forums and advisory committees to be confirmed at scheduled Council meetings, and that the record include:

- a) a record of which Councillors attended the meeting;
- b) a summary of the matters considered in the meeting; and
- c) a record of any conflicts of interest disclosed by Councillors.

This report seeks confirmation of the following meetings and forums, conducted since the last Ordinary meeting of Council and detailed within this report:

1. Council Briefing 13 December 2022.

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	13 December 2022
Councillor Attendees	Cr Beattie Cr Holt Cr Jungwirth Cr Murphy Cr Straub
Staff/Stakeholder representatives	Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing Steven Phillips, Director Operations Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate Lisa Clue, Manager Governance
Items discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review of Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy</li> <li>2. Section 181 Sales Update – Sale of properties for unpaid rates and charges</li> <li>3. Review of the Financial Reserves Policy</li> <li>4. Review of the Financial Management Policy</li> <li>5. Bridgewater on Loddon Community Plan 2022 – 2032 Presentation</li> <li>6. GWM Water’s Strategic Directions</li> <li>7. Major Recreation Reserve Floodlighting Upgrade – Serpentine and Calivil</li> <li>8. Introduction to the Organisation Development Team</li> <li>9. Skinners Flat Reservoir Discussion</li> <li>10. Wedderburn access to business standard NBN</li> <li>11. CEO Updates</li> </ol>
Conflict of Interest Disclosures - Councillor/officer making disclosure	Nil
Councillor/officer left room	N/A

**RESOLUTION 2023/2**

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council confirm records of the following as detailed within this report :

1. Council Briefing 13 December 2022.

**CARRIED**

**7 REVIEW OF ACTIONS****7.1 REVIEW OF ACTIONS****File Number: 02/01/002****Author: Lisa Clue, Manager Governance****Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer****Attachments: 1. Status of actions****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the December 2022 Council meeting as attached to this report.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this report, or involved in the subject matter of the report.

**REPORT**

A document containing the status of actions from Council meeting resolutions is attached to this report.

There were no outstanding actions from Council meeting resolutions prior to December 2022.

All actions from December 2022 Council meeting resolutions have been completed.

**RESOLUTION 2023/3****Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy****Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth**

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the December 2022 Council meeting as attached to this report.

**CARRIED**

**8 MAYORAL REPORT****8.1 MAYORAL REPORT****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

**REPORT**

The Mayor presented a verbal report at the meeting.

**Cr Straub**

The Mayor, Cr Straub commenced his first report for 2023 speaking of the great sense of community around the Loddon Shire with some great attractions in the past weeks, including the Master Ski Race in Bridgewater, and the Boort Trotting Club meeting he attended on 2 January. Some local community groups and progress associations have also recently met, showing a positive outlook for 2023 so far.

Cr Straub then spoke of the current round of State funding for roads that includes roads throughout the Loddon Shire, specifically noting the Bendigo-Pyramid Hill Road, that Council has long advocated for, and which has been identified in this funding round.

Cr Straub closed his report by encouraging everyone to celebrate Australia Day at one of a number of ceremonies planned across the municipality on Thursday.

**RESOLUTION 2023/4****Moved:** Cr Neil Beattie**Seconded:** Cr Gavan Holt

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

**CARRIED**

**9 COUNCILLORS' REPORT****9.1 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

**REPORT**

Each Councillor presented a verbal report at the meeting.

**Cr Murphy**

<b>Local Government Women's Charter:</b>	
15/12/2022 – Online session – Examining the political trajectories of women in local government	
<b>Section 65 Community Asset Committees:</b>	
11/01/2023 - Campbells Forest Hall Community Asset Committee meeting	
<b>Other Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
13/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council December Briefing and Council Meeting, and Citizenship Ceremony
16/12/2022	Official opening, Inglewood exercise equipment at the Inglewood Community Sports Centre
22/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council end of year functions - Serpentine and Dingee
20/01/2023	Site visit - Bridgewater Ski Club, future works discussion

**Cr Beattie**

<b>Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
22/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council end of year function - Dingee
24/12/2022	Boort Park Run
25/12/2022	Lake Boort reached full level
02/01/2023	Boort Trotting Club Summer Meeting
07/01/2023	Boort Park Run
24/01/2023	Loddon Shire Council January Briefing and Council Meeting



**Cr Holt**

<b>Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
22/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council end of year functions - Serpentine and Dingee
12/01/2023	Funeral – David Fry, former employee of Korong and Loddon Shire Councils
12/01/2023	Boort Trotting Club January Meeting
23/01/2023	AGM Wedderburn Harness Racing Club

**Cr Jungwirth**

<b>Council activities</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
13/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council December Briefing and Council Meeting and Citizenship Ceremony
13/12/2022	Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve meeting
15/12/2022	Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meeting
15/12/2022	Tarnagulla Community Centre Committee meeting
21/12/2022	Meeting with Council's Tourism and Marketing Coordinator
22/12/2022	Loddon Shire Council end of year function
14/01/2023	Newbridge Flood Recovery Concert – Newbridge Hall
20/01/2023	Rise 2023 – held by Core Confidence - online
20/01/2023	Funeral - John Lavery, long term publican, Golden Age Hotel in Tarnagulla

Cr Jungwirth spoke briefly of work undertaken on a septic system at Tarnagulla servicing public facilities and repairs to a historic horse trough at the Tarnagulla Recreation Reserve by a member of the local community.

**RESOLUTION 2023/5**

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

**CARRIED**

## 10 DECISION REPORTS

### 10.1 VICTORIAN CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS WORLD HERITAGE BID

**File Number:** FOL/21/958

**Author:** Renae Colls, Executive Assistant

**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Participate in the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid; and
2. Endorse the Chief Executive Officer representing Loddon Shire Council on the Program Steering Committee.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this paper, or involved in the subject matter of the paper.

#### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Action 3.1.1 of Council's Annual Plan 2021-2025 includes *Participate in the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid* as a 2021/22 action. This action was included in the plan following community consultation and Councillor workshops.

Councillors were provided a presentation at the Council Forum in March 2022 by Susan Fayad, Coordinator Heritage and Cultural Landscapes at City of Ballarat and Trevor Budge, Strategic Projects Officer at City of Greater Bendigo.

Victorian Central Goldfields World Heritage Bid was discussed at the October 2022 Council Forum.

#### BACKGROUND

The World Heritage listing of Australia's Central Victorian Goldfields is an unprecedented region wide partnership of thirteen local governments and a transformational project that will shine the light on the extraordinary story of the Central Victorian Goldfields and place the region and Victoria on the world stage. It will make our region nationally competitive during the COVID-19 recovery period, bring investment and jobs, and build stronger, diverse and more sustainable economies and communities.

Priorities delivered through the campaign's staged projects include:

- Building the bid by delivering a watertight case that proves what makes the Central Victorian Goldfields the best in the world and then securing a World Heritage listing.
- Strengthening the region by growing the region's local and international profile, building stakeholder capacity to deliver world class offerings and experiences, and identifying and filling investment gaps by delivering world-class product and infrastructure.

#### ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The World Heritage Bid is not seeking a blanket protection of public land in the region but instead will focus on 10-20 specific sites across the 13 council areas. These sites will be the best example of their heritage asset type and located in places that can be managed effectively (for example a former court house in public ownership).

At this stage it is unknown if any of the proposed sites will be located within Loddon Shire as assessments are being undertaken by independent experts. Regardless of specific sites being located within Loddon Shire, this opportunity has the potential to significantly improve tourism visitation and branding of the region to a broader audience than currently exists. Loddon Shire has an existing and high quality goldfields tourism product including heritage streetscapes, prospecting events and visitor experiences.

The process of progressing this bid will require support of the Victorian Government and Commonwealth Governments before being submitted for World Heritage consideration.

### **COST/BENEFITS**

Recently the Goldfields World Heritage bid was successful in receiving \$500,000 from the Victorian Government's Fast Track fund. Victorian Goldfields Tourism and the 13 LGAs have also combined to provide a further \$125,000 in support of the bid.

In October 2022 an Economic Benefit Assessment was prepared outlining the World Heritage listing will grow the visitor economic progressively over time with the return continuing to increase each year. By the tenth year the growth would see:

- an additional 2.2 million visitors to the region
- \$40 million spent in the local economy
- 1,750 additional jobs, and
- regional income (wages, business profits, etc) increases of \$150 million.

Further detail: <https://goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au/about-the-bid/economic-benefits/>

### **RISK ANALYSIS**

There has been bi-partisan support across governments, including a strong collaborative and highly motivated region-wide partnership model in place to progress this bid. Loddon Shire Council's Chief Executive is a member of the Program Steering Committee.

The bid has been built on a strong body of evidence gathered by specialist experts. This work outlines that the Goldfields heritage is unprecedented.

The World Heritage Bid is seeking protection of specific sites rather than a blanket protection. This means existing activities on public land will not be unreasonably restricted through this process.

### **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

13 local government Chief Executive Officers form the Program Steering Committee and key officers from across the local government partners have co-designed investment priorities. The local government partners include Ararat Rural City Council, Campaspe Shire Council, Central Goldfields Shire Council, City of Ballarat, City of Greater Bendigo, Golden Plains Shire Council, Hepburn Shire Council, Loddon Shire Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Moorabool Shire Council, Mount Alexander Shire Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council and Pyrenees Shire Council.

A community survey for the region received 1,000 responses from across the region to guide investment priorities that can best benefit local people.

Communities and stakeholders are being brought along on the journey. This includes special interest groups (such as Prospectors and Miners Association), Registered Aboriginal Parties, tourism organisations and key industry representatives. Ministers and local members engaged at both federal and state level. State government departments engaged to date includes RDV, DEWLP, DJPR, Tourism Victoria, Heritage Victoria.

Stakeholders, communities and interested parties are invited to 'get involved' in the bid through the program website – [goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au](https://goldfieldsworldheritage.com.au)

**RESOLUTION 2023/6**

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council:

1. Participate in the Central Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Bid; and
2. Endorse the Chief Executive Officer representing Loddon Shire Council on the Program Steering Committee.

**CARRIED**

## 10.2 PRESENTATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND WELCOME TO COUNTRY POLICY FOR ADOPTION

**File Number:** GF/21/581

**Author:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing

**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy document

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy as attached to this report.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this paper, or involved in the subject matter of the paper.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

The draft Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy was presented to Councillors at the December 2022 Council Forum.

### BACKGROUND

The review of the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy stemmed from the action in the Loddon Aboriginal Community Partnership Plan 2019-2022 to review the current policy to include reference to the traditional custodians by name. This update is also consistent with the Council Plan: Strategy 2.2.2 - *Promote welcoming and safe communities*.

### ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The review of the document has provided the opportunity to incorporate reference to traditional owners by name, and also to incorporate changes to language to align with current State Government guidelines.

Some of the key changes from the previous document include:

- changing of the term 'custodian' to 'owner' to reflect the change in language at State Government level
- changing from Acknowledgement of Country to Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners to more accurately reflect the action being undertaken
- the inclusion of only the Dja Dja Wurrung people to be referenced by name, reflecting State Government guidelines indicating that a reference to a specific traditional owner group in an acknowledgement is completed for formally recognised Traditional Owners on the land which your event is taking place
- the ability for the person delivering the acknowledgement to include wording that relates to the event being conducted. For example a reference to the health equity gaps experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may be included at an event being conducted in relation to health and wellbeing.

**COST/BENEFITS**

A Welcome to Country is a service provided by Traditional Owners representatives who are remunerated for their time and commitment.

There are no costs associated with the recitation or publication of an Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners.

Incorporating acknowledgement and welcome protocols into official meetings and events promotes awareness of and respect for the history and culture of indigenous people within Council and the wider community. These forms of recognition are also acknowledged, in part, as contributing to ending the history of silence and exclusion that has resulted in indigenous disadvantage.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

The practice of acknowledging Traditional Owners or being welcomed to Country at official events can engender polarising opinions within the community. This may be balanced through the provision of supporting background information to the community and ongoing cultural awareness training for Council staff.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The policy has moved through the internal policy approval framework process.

The Dja Dja Wurrung were contacted regarding their preferred title to be used in an acknowledgement of Traditional Owners.

**MOTION**

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council adopt the Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Welcome to Country Policy as attached to this report.

**LOST**

**RESOLUTION 2023/7**

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That consideration of this Policy be deferred to a subsequent Council meeting.

**CARRIED**

**10.3 REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL RESERVES POLICY**

**File Number:** FOL/19/432511  
**Author:** Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services  
**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate  
**Attachments:** 1. Financial Reserves Policy v10

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the Financial Reserves Policy v10.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this paper, or involved in the subject matter of the paper.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The current version of Financial Reserves Policy (the Policy), version nine, was approved in April 2020 with a two year review.

**BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Policy is to detail how Council provides funds in the reserve and uses funds from the reserve.

Council currently has 23 active financial reserves after three were closed in 2019/20. During that revision Council also applied a capping to a further seven reserves.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Operation of Council's financial reserves includes allocation of funds into reserves during the annual budget process and at any other time by Council resolution. Cash amounts are transferred into the financial reserves bank account to ensure they are fully cash backed.

During development of the latest Financial Plan, discussions were held regarding the current financial reserves levels and whether they were providing best value for money. An action was included in the Financial Plan: 'Review Financial Reserves Policy to ensure cash is not constrained unnecessarily'. To commence this process, the purpose and relevance of each reserve was discussed at the Council Forum in March 2022, and further discussions held with the Leadership and the Management Executive Groups at Council.

Some of the key reserve changes include:

- combining the Economic Development Reserve into the Land and Buildings Reserve and updating of the movements description to include industrial and commercial
- removal of the balance cap for the Waste Management Reserve and Urban Drainage Reserve and place caps on the Fleet Replacement Reserve, Plant Replacement Reserve and the Information Technology Reserve
- closure of the Boundary and Township Signage Reserve and Units Reserve
- minor wording adjustments for some reserves to provide further clarification of the true intent of the reserve
- renaming of the Recreation Facilities Improvement Reserve to provide further transparency on the purpose of this reserve
- removal of some policies within the document that were closed in 2019/20.

These alterations will ensure that no cash is constrained unnecessarily, which will free it up for allocation to priority projects. It will also provide more robust clarification around reserve transfers, and complete item four within the Financial Plan action list.

**COST/BENEFITS**

Closing some of the reserves, formalising yearly allocations for others, and setting caps with other reserves will reduce the restricted amount held in these reserves at any given point in time. It will also return cash back to Council for allocation to higher priority projects.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

The policy defines the specified purpose of each reserve and the conditions around the movements in and out of each reserve. The review and actions out of this report will provide more robust guidelines around the use of financial reserves.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

After consultation with Council, this policy was drafted into a version 10 and it followed through the required review stages including Loddon Leaders and MEG, prior to presentation again to Council for discussion and meeting for adoption.

**RESOLUTION 2023/8**

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council adopts the Financial Reserves Policy v10.

**CARRIED**



**10.4 REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY V6**

**File Number:** FOL/19/432511  
**Author:** Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services  
**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate  
**Attachments:** 1. Financial Management Policy v6

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the Financial Management Policy v6.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this paper, or involved in the subject matter of the paper.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

The current version of the Financial Management Policy (the Policy), version five, was adopted in August 2021, with a review timeline of August 2025.

**BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Policy is to provide principles to ensure strong financial management for Council.

**ISSUES/DISCUSSION**

Since most recent review and adoption of this Policy, an insurance review was undertaken and a discussion held around the risks of communicating credit card information. It was recommended as a strong financial practice to include a further section within the policy and communicate this to all relevant staff.

This recommendation has been included at clause 3.3.1 within the policy which states:

*Credit card details*

*Credit card details are not to be communicated via electronic mail. This is a control put in place to minimise risk of potential unauthorised access to customer card accounts. Details may be taken over the phone and input direct into an EFTPOS machine or online receipting portal.*

*No credit card details are to be written or kept for future use. In exceptional circumstances, where personal details have been written, they must be disposed of immediately in a secure manner.*

**COST/BENEFITS**

There are no direct costs associated with the adoption of this policy. It does however provide the benefit of a clear overall direction, along with providing protections to place further security around the financial management of Council.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

The policy will assist in providing guidance to staff to ensure sound financial management practices for Council. The updates also ensure that it complies with any requirements outlined in the Local Government Act 2020.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

The document has been subject to the endorsement process of the Policy Review Group, Management Executive Group and the Audit and Risk Committee prior to presentation to Council.

**RESOLUTION 2023/9**

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council adopts the Financial Management Policy v6.

**CARRIED**

**10.5 FINANCE REPORT FOR THE QUARTER 31 DECEMBER 2022****File Number:** FOL/22/4399**Author:** Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate**Attachments:** 1. Finance Report for the quarter to 31 December 2022**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council

1. receives and notes 'Finance Report for the quarter ending 31 December 2022
2. approves budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only
3. approves the supplementary valuations of rateable and non-rateable properties in respect of the 2022/23 financial year, as returned by the Shire Valuer, LG Valuations Pty Ltd, and endorses them being incorporated into the Register of Rateable and Non Rateable Properties and Rate Book for 2022/23.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest for any Council staff member involved in the preparation of this paper, or involved in the subject matter of the paper.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

A report was presented and adopted in April 2021 that recommended that Council be provided with finance reports on a quarterly basis. The only exception is when changes to the Council Meeting timetable result in the Council Meeting occurring before the completion of the end of month finance procedures.

The last quarterly report presented was for the March 2022 quarter at the April 2022 Council Meeting. The 2021/22 full financials were presented to Council at the August 2022 Council Meeting.

**BACKGROUND**

The Finance Report for the period ended 31 December 2022 includes standard quarterly information about budget variations, cash, investments, interest, debtors and creditors, and provides a comparison of year-to-date actual results to year-to-date budget (by dollars and percentage) and total revised budget (by percentage).

The information is in the format provided in the adopted 2022/23 Budget, and includes operating results, capital expenditure and funding sources. The report also includes a cash flow statement and the community planning program financials.

This Finance Report also includes reporting on supplementary valuations. Each year Council makes a number of additions, subtractions and alterations to the valuations contained in the annual rate book. These changes arise from various sources including:

- splitting of parcels into new rateable assessments
- development of vacant or unproductive land (urban and rural)
- consolidation of separate rateable assessments into one assessment
- re-assessment of property valuations arising from objections to the initial valuation
- additions and cancellations of licences (grazing and water frontages)

- change of use
- covenant on Title
- area amendment
- change of Australian Valuation Property Classification Code (AVPCC)
- supplementary valuation corrections.

## ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Budgeted Surplus - Council's budgeted cash surplus has increased from September 2022 by \$0.3M to \$5.84M. The main variations include an increase to the expected interest to be received for the financial year offset by additional funds allocated to the capital works program of the swimming pools.

Income Statement (revenue) - Council's year to date (YTD) operating revenue is at 69% of total budget. Revenue brought to account for the quarter was \$4.15M. Statutory fees, interest, reimbursements and non-recurrent grants are all ahead of expected budgeted income. Fees and charges, contributions and recurrent capital grants are all behind.

Income Statement (expenditure) - Council's operating expenditure is at 42% of total budget. Payments for this quarter totalled \$9.13M. All expense items are tracking behind expected budget expenditure with creditors and contractors the most significant.

Capital Works - The revised budget for capital works is \$24.6M and is 16% complete in financial terms for the current financial year.

The main variations within capital expenditure relate to:

- building and property maintenance of \$406K, the Building Asset Management Plan allocations are now finalised and some works are underway, but others are still in the design phase
- multiple community planning projects which have not yet being started, these will progress over the year
- plant replacement of \$251K due to delay receiving the plant item as there is a back log for the supplier.

Service Areas – Appendix 3 provides Council with net results for each service area. As further work is undertaken on service planning and reviews throughout the year, the cost of each service will be refined.

Balance Sheet - Council has a cash total of \$38.65M with \$2.46M in general accounts. Total debtors at the end of December are \$10.6M, this includes \$10.07M in rates (\$11.78M rates at the end of September 2022). Sundry debtors total \$0.61M with invoices outstanding for 90 or more days relating to community wellbeing debtors and local community groups totalling approximately \$0.2M.

Reports are also provided on the community planning programs to show the progress against budget along with the expenditure and income to date for the caravan parks.

## COST/BENEFITS

The benefit to Council and the community is that accurate and regular financial reporting is disclosed, along with an accurate representation of property valuations being reflected in Council's rating system and the distribution of rate notices for the year 2022/23.

Provision of financial reports on at least a quarterly basis is a requirement of the Local Government Act.

**RISK ANALYSIS**

The provision of regular and accurate finance reports to Council minimises the risk of Council not delivering projects within the approved budget. Council's risk exposure is increased if the rating system does not reflect the valuation changes associated with supplementary valuations as Council will not be aware of the changes, which can alter the rate revenue in the current year and in future rating years.

During October 2022 Loddon Shire experienced significant flooding which has resulted in many operational staff being diverted to respond or support flood recovery. This reallocation of human resources limits delivery of programmed services and infrastructure. There is potential that this could continue over the coming years as infrastructure is rebuilt creating variance between budget and delivery.

**CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

There has been considerable consultation internally with respective managers in understanding budget responsibilities and keeping within budgetary constraints.

Consultation with ratepayers and authorities that act on behalf of ratepayers occurs when a change to a property is required or occurs by virtue of a sale.

External engagement with the community was undertaken during the submission period of the budget, and regular reporting provides a mechanism of monitoring the financial outcomes of Council against that expectation.

**RESOLUTION 2023/10**

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That Council

1. receives and notes 'Finance Report for the quarter ending 31 December 2022
2. approves budget revisions included in the report for internal reporting purposes only
3. approves the supplementary valuations of rateable and non-rateable properties in respect of the 2022/23 financial year, as returned by the Shire Valuer, LG Valuations Pty Ltd, and endorses them being incorporated into the Register of Rateable and Non Rateable Properties and Rate Book for 2022/23.

**CARRIED**

**11 INFORMATION REPORTS**

Nil

**12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS**

Nil

**13 URGENT BUSINESS**

Nil

**14 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020:

**14.1 Contract 547 Construction of new cabins and administration office - Wedderburn Caravan Park**

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(a) and (g(ii)) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released and private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Pursuant to Section 66 (5)(b) of the Local Government Act 2020, if released the information to be received, discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item, may prejudice the commercial position of Council and /or disadvantage a private business, as various negotiations remain pending.

**RESOLUTION 2023/11**

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020 while Council considers the confidential report listed below:

14.1 Contract 547 Construction of new cabins and administration office – Wedderburn Caravan Park.

**CARRIED**

**14.1 CONTRACT 547 CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CABINS AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICE  
- WEDDERBURN CARAVAN PARK**

**RESOLUTION 2023/12**

Moved: Cr Neil Beattie

Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That Council:

1. Award Contract 547 – the construction and installation of new cabins and administration office for Wedderburn Caravan Park to Fleetwood Australia.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to undertake the necessary administrative actions to complete the Contract documents.

**CARRIED**

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on 28 February 2023 at Wedderburn commencing at 3.00pm.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 4.25 pm.

Confirmed this.....day of..... 2023

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**CHAIRPERSON**