



Date: Tuesday, 24 October 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 OCTOBER 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) and Lisa Clue (Manager Governance)

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:** Tracy Hunt, Governance Coordinator**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirm the Minutes of the following meetings as previously circulated to Councillors:

1. Council Briefing of 26 September 2023
2. Council Meeting of 26 September 2023
3. Council Forum of 10 October 2023.

REPORT

This report seeks Council confirmation of Minutes from the September 2023 Council Briefing and Council Meeting, and October 2023 Council Forum as previously circulated to Councillors.

RESOLUTION 2023/100**Moved:** Cr Wendy Murphy**Seconded:** Cr Neil Beattie

That Council confirm the Minutes of the following meetings as previously circulated to Councillors:

1. Council Briefing of 26 September 2023
2. Council Meeting of 26 September 2023
3. Council Forum of 10 October 2023.

CARRIED

6 COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS**6.1 RECORD OF COUNCIL AUSPICED MEETINGS****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Tracy Hunt, Governance Coordinator**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

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

1. Council Briefing 26 September 2023
2. Council Forum 10 October 2023

Rule 35 of Council's Governance Rules requires a record of meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to be presented to the next available scheduled Council meeting for confirmation that must include:

- a) a record of which Councillors and officers 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 and officers and any Councillors or officers that left the meeting whilst a matter that their conflict of interest related to was being discussed.

Section 3 of the Governance Rules defines meetings conducted under the auspices of Council to mean a meeting of the kind described in section 131(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 and includes a meeting which:

- a) is schedule or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- b) is attended by a majority of Councillors;
- c) is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- d) is not a Council meeting or delegated committee meeting.

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

1. Council Briefing 26 September 2023
2. Council Forum 10 October 2023

Meeting details	Briefing
Date	26 September 2023
Councillor Attendees	Cr Beattie Cr Holt Cr Jungwirth Cr Murphy Cr Straub (Mayor)
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer 2. Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing 3. Steven Phillips, Director Operations 4. Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate 5. Tracy Hunt, Governance Coordinator 6. Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services - Item 2 below 7. Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator - Item 5 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strategy Workshop 2. Budget Timetable 3. Australia Day Awards 4. Pyramid Hill Community Enterprise 5. Planning Application 5912 - Use of Part of a Dwelling and Shed at Lot 1 Market Street, Newbridge 6. General Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wedderburn RV Friendly Status • Victorian Farmers Federation and Property Overlays • Feedback • Murray River Group of Councils • VNI West Update • Victorian Government Housing Statement • MAV State Council
Conflict of Interest Disclosures – Councillor/officer making disclosure	n/a
Councillor/officer left room	n/a

Meeting details	Forum
Date	10 October 2023
Councillor Attendees	Cr Beattie Cr Holt Cr Jungwirth Cr Murphy Cr Straub (Mayor)
Staff/ Stakeholder representatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer 2. Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing 3. Steven Phillips, Director Operations 4. Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate 5. Lisa Clue, Manager Governance 6. Martin Mark, Community Development Officer – Item 1 below 7. Sophia Herrington and Wendy James, Boort Tourism and Development – Item 1 below 8. Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services – Items 2 and 3 below
Item(s) discussed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boort Community Plan 2022 - 2031 Presentation 2. Review of the Financial Services Policy 3. Section 181 Sales Update - Sale of Properties for Unpaid Rates and Charges 4. Fair Work Legislation Amendment Act 2022 5. Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2023 - Update 6. First Right of Refusal - 2 St Arnaud Road, Wedderburn 7. Scheduling of Special Meeting for the Election of Mayor 8. General Business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarnagulla Supply Store • Calder Highway Improvement Committee • Rural Councils Victoria • Murray River Group of Councils • Small Towns Strategy • General Updates
Conflict of Interest Disclosures - Councillor/officer making disclosure	n/a
Councillor/officer left room	n/a

RESOLUTION 2023/101

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

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

1. Council Briefing 26 September 2023
2. Council Forum 10 October 2023

CARRIED

7 REVIEW OF ACTIONS**7.1 REVIEW OF ACTIONS****File Number:** 02/01/002**Author:** Tracy Hunt, Governance Coordinator**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Resolutions Acted Upon Since the September 2023 Council Meeting**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the September 2023 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 September 2023.

All actions from September 2023 Council meeting resolutions have been completed.

RESOLUTION 2023/102

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council receive and note resolutions acted upon since the September 2023 Council meeting as attached to this report.

CARRIED

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

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

REPORT

Mayor Straub presented a verbal report at the meeting.

Murray River Group of Councils	
20/10/2023 – Meeting in Echuca with Senator David Van re Murray Darling Basin Plan delivery and water buy-backs (included site visits to Cohuna and Gunbower)	
North Central Local Learning and Employment Network	
11/10/2023 - Meeting – virtual	
17/10/2023 – Board Meeting - Charlton	
Rural Councils Victoria	
06/10/2023 - Annual General Meeting - virtual	
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
02/10/2023	Council Small Towns Strategy workshop - Wedderburn
05/10/2023	Municipal Flood Recovery Committee meeting – Serpentine
10/10/2023	Council Forum – Wedderburn
13/10/2023	Melbourne Cup Tour function – Boort
14/10/2023	Boort Show
18/10/2023	Victorian Local Government Grants Commission meeting – Wedderburn
19/10/2023	All staff meeting - Serpentine

RESOLUTION 2023/103

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That Council receive and note the Mayoral Report.

CARRIED

9 COUNCILLORS' REPORT**9.1 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS****File Number:** 02/01/001**Author:** Tracy Hunt, Governance Coordinator**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 Jungwirth

Council activities	
Date	Activity
26/09/2023	Council Small Towns Strategy workshop - Wedderburn
02/10/2023	Small Towns Strategy consultation session – Wedderburn
05/10/2023	Municipal Flood Recovery meeting – Serpentine
	Dinner with Dipper – Bridgewater
08/10/2023	Whole Loddon Love event - Newbridge
10/10/2023	Council Forum – Wedderburn
11/10/2023	Tarnagulla Community Centre Committee meeting – Tarnagulla
12/10/2023	MAV Annual Conference - Melbourne
13/10/2023	MAV State Council meeting - Melbourne
13/10/2023	Melbourne Cup Tour function - Boort
14/10/2023	Boort Show
18/10/2023	Victorian Local Government Grants Commission meeting – Wedderburn
19/10/2023	All staff meeting (Real Life Resilience) Legless and Blind - Serpentine

Cr Holt

Municipal Association of Victoria	
12/10/2023 – Annual Conference, dinner and awards night - Melbourne	
13/10/2023 – State Council meeting - Melbourne	
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
02/10/2023	Council Small Towns Strategy workshop - Wedderburn
04/10/2023	'Dipper's Destination' visit to Loddon Shire
10/10/2023	Council Forum - Wedderburn

Cr Beattie

Section 65 Community Asset Committees:	
28/09/2023 - Little Lake Boort AGM	
Other Council activities	
Date	Activity
26/09/2023	September Council Briefing and Meeting – Wedderburn
02/10/2023	Tourism and Development AGM
06/10/2023	Ladies Pink Night Out – Boort Park
10/10/2023	October Council Forum - Wedderburn
13/10/2023	Melbourne Cup Tour function – Boort
14/10/2023	Boort Show
18/10/2023	Boort Grain Co-op AGM
24/10/2023	Council Briefing and Meeting and Citizenship Ceremony - Wedderburn

Cr Murphy

Council activities	
Date	Activity
27/09/2023	Risk Survey Results discussion with Loddon Shire Council Internal Auditors, AFS & Associates
28/09/2023	Inglewood Development & Tourism Committee meeting
29/09/2023	Inglewood Outdoor Event Space opening celebrations - Inglewood Town Hall.
02/10/2023	Small Towns Strategy workshop - Wedderburn
05/10/2023	Loddon Shire Council Flood Recovery meeting - Serpentine
07/10/2023 – 08/10/2023	Loddon Valley Arts Trail venues - Inglewood and Wedderburn
10/10/2023	Council Forum - Wedderburn
13/10/2023	Melbourne Cup Tour function - Boort
14/10/2023	Boort Show
17/10/2023	Tour of Inglewood & Districts Health Services facilities and new works with Mayor Straub
18/10/2023	Victorian Local Government Grants Commission meeting - Wedderburn
19/10/2023	Legless and Blind presentation at the Loddon Shire Council all staff gathering - Serpentine
	Bridgewater On Loddon Inc meeting - Bridgewater
21/10/2023	Bridgewater Memorial Hall Centenary Celebrations - Bridgewater
22/10/2023	Back To Bridgewater event - Bridgewater

Mayor Straub closed the Councillors' Reports agenda item by also speaking of the recent all staff meeting and Dipper's visit to the shire.

RESOLUTION 2023/104

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council receive and note the Councillors' reports.

CARRIED

10 DECISION REPORTS**10.1 COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE FORMAL RECOGNITION - KORONG VALE****File Number:** FOL/21/3165**Author:** Martin Mark, Community Development Officer**Authoriser:** Paul Scullie, Manager Community Partnerships**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council formally recognise the Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc. as the Community Planning Committee for the Korong Vale community.

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

At the April 2019 Council Forum, the criteria and framework for community groups to become the recognised Community Planning Committee was discussed.

Following further consultation, the Community Planning Framework (the Framework), including criteria, was endorsed at the November 2019 Council Meeting.

Since this time Council has formally recognised sixteen Community Planning Committees at Council meetings as detailed in the table below:

Community	Community Planning Group	Formal Recognition at Council meeting
Calivil	Calivil Hall & Recreation Reserve	23/02/2021
Dingee	Dingee Progress Association Inc.	23/02/2021
Inglewood	Inglewood Development and Tourism Committee Inc.	23/02/2021
Mitiamo	Mitiamo Progress Association Inc.	23/02/2021
Serpentine	Serpentine Community Planning Group Inc.	23/02/2021
Wedderburn	Wedderburn Development Association Inc.	23/02/2021
Campbells Forest & Yarraberb	Campbells Forest & District Community Action Planning Group Inc.	25/05/2021
Newbridge, Arnold, & Llanelly	Newbridge Arnold Llanelly Community Plan Committee Inc.	25/05/2021
Kingower	Kingower Development & Tourism Committee Inc.	24/05/2022
Bridgewater	Bridgewater on Loddon Development Inc.	26/07/2022
Eddington	Eddington Community Planning Group Inc.	26/07/2022
Tarnagulla	Tarnagulla Community Planning Group Inc.	26/07/2022
Boort	Boort Tourism and Development Inc.	26/04/2023
Yarrowalla	Yarrowalla Community Planning Committee Inc.	26/04/2023

Pyramid Hill	Pyramid Hill Progress Association Inc.	27/06/2023
Rheola	Rheola Community Planning Inc.	22/08/2023

BACKGROUND

The Framework was developed to assist communities as they formulate local community plans and to formalise the relationship between the community planning committees and Council.

As detailed in the Framework, community groups that meet the following criteria are eligible to request formal recognition from Council as a community planning committee:

- are incorporated bodies
- have community planning detailed in their constitution's purpose, and
- have a membership structure that allows wider community participation

Access to Council's annual community planning funding program is prioritised for those groups who have received formal recognition and who have developed their community plan consistent with the principles of the Framework.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc. has requested Council recognition as the community planning committee for the Korong Vale and district community and has demonstrated that they meet the minimum requirements as detailed in the Framework.

Community	Community planning group	Request for recognition received	Information request form received	Incorporated	Constitution purpose includes community planning	Open membership
Korong Vale	Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Committee is developing their new Community Plan and representatives plan to attend a future Council Forum to present their plan and its priorities to Council.

COST/BENEFITS

Formal recognition signals to the community that the group has agreed to:

- develop a community plan in accordance with the principles outlined in the Framework
- have open membership for community members
- be representative of their community.

Community planning committees provide the conduit for their community to represent their collective views, ideas and strategic direction to Council and beyond.

Council provides financial assistance to community planning committees to offset administrative and insurance costs. The table below outlines the support that will be provided to the Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc. on an annual basis.

Community Planning Committee	Proposed allocation - Administration	Proposed allocation - Insurance	Total
Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc.	\$200	\$1,050	\$1,250

RISK ANALYSIS

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent flood event slowed momentum in 2020 – 2022 for the remaining groups as they transitioned to meet the recognition requirements of the Framework and commence the review and/or redevelopment of their community plan. The framework specifies that projects submitted by non-recognised community planning committees receive a lower prioritisation.

By transitioning to the parameters around Council's framework, the community planning committees will be operating in the spirit of the framework and providing assurance around open membership and representation of their respective community's views.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Community Partnerships team liaise with and guide the committees as they complete the actions needed to meet the eligibility criteria needed to be recognised by Council as their community's community planning committee.

RESOLUTION 2023/105

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That Council formally recognise the Korong Vale Community Planning Committee Inc. as the Community Planning Committee for the Korong Vale community.

CARRIED

10.2 BRIDGEWATER BOWLING CLUB INC. - FEE WAIVER APPLICATION

File Number: -
Author: Steven Phillips, Director Operations
Authoriser: Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer
Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to waive the Planning Permit Application fee of \$1,185.00 for Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc.

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

At its July 2021 Ordinary meeting, Council resolved to adopt the Fees and Charges – Waiver or Reduction Policy.

BACKGROUND

Council's Fees and Chargers – Waiver or Reduction Policy applies to any not for profit organisation, incorporated association or unincorporated community group which provides a community benefit to the Shire and wishes to apply to have a fee and or charge waived or reduced. Applications over \$1,000 are reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and submitted to Council for approval via a formal resolution.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc. have applied for a Planning Permit as part of a project they are undertaking that that has been funded through the State Governments Green's Lighting Project. They have requested that Council waive the Planning Permit Application fee of \$1,185.00. This assist the bowling club financially, so they can provide community activities and competitions.

This project has been a Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc. initiative and is being delivered by them. The Club has submitted a Council Community Grant funding application for \$10,000 to support them with this project. The Community Grant is currently being assessed by Community Support officers. Council has not provided any other funding to the project.

The granting of a fee waiver in no way affects or influences Council's obligations to assess the Planning Permit Application on its merits against the Loddon Planning Scheme. In fact the planning application has been assessed and a Permit has been issued.

COST/BENEFITS

The cost to the community is \$1,185.00. The Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc. expects that the fee waiver will assist the Club financially to support events and competitions at their site.

RISK ANALYSIS

The risks associated with this fee waiver is considered low.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council officers have had discussions with the Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc. on this matter.

RESOLUTION 2023/106

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council resolve to waive the Planning Permit Application fee of \$1,185.00 for Bridgewater Bowling Club Inc.

CARRIED

10.3 NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES (PLACES OF LAST RESORT)**File Number:** fol/19/432270**Author:** Lisa Clue, Manager Governance**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate**Attachments:** 1. Loddon Shire Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan - September 2023**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopt the Loddon Shire Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan - September 2023, which includes and confirms designated Neighbourhood Safer Places within the municipality in the townships of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Serpentine and Wedderburn.

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.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Council first adopted the Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) Plan in 2010.

In September 2011, Council endorsed the NSP assessment process and resolved to continue identification and assessment of potential sites for NSPs, and once identified report these back to Council for consideration.

Council most recently reviewed and adopted the NSP Plan, reconfirming designated NSPs at Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Serpentine and Wedderburn at its meeting in October 2023.

BACKGROUND

NSPs and the NSP Plan are direct consequences of the Black Saturday fires and recommendations from the Interim Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission report and legislated under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958 (CFA Act).

The process to establish and maintain a NSP includes:

- identification of potential locations by Council in collaboration with the CFA
- assessment of location by Council against Council's criteria
- assessment of location and certification by CFA against CFA criteria
- formal designation of NSP by Council
- establishment of NSP (including signage)
- annual review of NSPs by Council and CFA.

Section 50J of the CFA Act requires Council to conduct a review of each designated NSP in its municipal district, by 31 August each year. The review determines the current suitability of each location as a designated NSP and includes submitting a request to the CFA to assess each NSP in accordance with CFA Assessment Guidelines.

Following the review process, and in accordance with section 50K of the CFA Act, Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer provides the CFA with an up to date list of all designated NSPs within the municipality, by 30 September each year.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Following requests made in accordance with Section 50J of the CFA Act, the CFA conducted assessments of Council's designated NSPs, and subsequently certified in writing that all met the criteria set out in the CFA Assessment Guidelines.

In August 2023, using the NSP Assessment Criteria Auditing and Assessment Tool, Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer assessed and confirmed that each Council designated NSP is compliant with Council criteria.

As stated in the NSP Plan, the process of NSP identification is ongoing by Council and the CFA, assessing at the end of each fire season the need for any additional NSPs within the municipality. There was no identified need for additional NSPs at the end of the 2022/23 fire season.

Following the review process, and in accordance with section 50K of the CFA Act, Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer provided the CFA with an up to date list of all designated NSPs within the municipality prior to 30 September 2023.

The NSP Plan presented and attached to this Agenda report has been reviewed to include the most recent Council NSP assessments (Section 5). A number of administrative updates and corrections have also been made to the Plan, some relating to signage, others reflect current emergency management arrangements.

COST/BENEFITS

Administration of the NSP process requires the allocation of Council and CFA resources to undertake the necessary assessments, and prepare the associated reports and supporting documentation. The cost of maintaining the NSPs contained within recreation reserves and at a local hall is borne by the associated committees of management for these facilities, the remaining location is maintained by Council through routine operations.

Provision and maintenance of designated NSPs where deemed suitable within the municipality contributes to the overall safety and wellbeing of the local community in the event of a bushfire.

RISK ANALYSIS

Failure to adequately and regularly assess the designated NSP locations for compliance against specified criteria has the potential to place members of the community utilising these places at risk should conditions change over time. Failure to meet the inspection and reporting timelines may result in Council failing to meet its legislated obligations under the CFA Act.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Determination of the suitability to retain the designated NSP locations has been made in consultation with the CFA.

RESOLUTION 2023/107

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt
Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That Council adopt the Loddon Shire Council Neighbourhood Safer Places Plan - September 2023, which includes and confirms designated Neighbourhood Safer Places within the municipality in the townships of Boort, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Pyramid Hill, Serpentine and Wedderburn

.CARRIED

10.4 REQUEST FOR FUNDS TO BE ALLOCATED FROM THE LAND AND BUILDINGS RESERVE

File Number: GF/19/83695
Author: Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services
Authoriser: Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate
Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approves a budget variation to transfer \$18,000 from the Land and Buildings Reserve to fund the purchase of land, council property number 54100410.

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

This property transfer was discussed with Councillors as part of the Section 181 update at the October 2023 Council Forum.

BACKGROUND

The Land and Buildings Reserve is outlined within the Financial Reserves Policy to be used to fund the purchase and development of land and buildings which includes residential, commercial and industrial. It is a reserve that can only have movements approved by Council. It is expected to have a balance of \$1.25M at the end of 2023/24.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Council has been moving through the staged process to recoup unpaid amounts for properties where the rates and charges have remained outstanding for a period greater than three years. This process is outlined within Section 181 of the Local Government Act 1989 (S181).

One property has reached the final stage of the S181 process. The issue with the parcel is that it is currently 'land locked' making it unsuitable for sale or transfer on its own. In order to resolve this issue, Council has purchased this property, at the \$18,000 valuation provided in the formal report provided by LG Valuations. This property will then be able to be sold with an adjacent property which is also owned by Council.

This property (property number 54100410) is located at Logan-Wedderburn Road, Kurraca. It is formally identified as Lot 1 TP587250, Township of Kurraca, Parish of Kurraca.

To fund this purchase a request is made to use the funds set aside within the Land and Buildings Reserve. It is expected that once this property is sold these funds will be returned to the reserve.

COST/BENEFITS

The \$18,000 purchase price is proposed to be allocated from the Land and Buildings Reserve. When the property is sold these funds will be returned to the same reserve. This will also enable Council to recoup the outstanding rates and charges which currently sits at just over \$10,000.

Generally with all S181 property processes external costs associated with the recovery of overdue rates can be offset against the income received from the sale of the property under the Local Government Act 1989. Where there is a shortfall of funds, Council is required to write off the amount as a bad debt.

RISK ANALYSIS

Any financial or reputational risks are mitigated through the adherence to both the S181 process and the Financial Reserves Policy. The Land and Buildings Reserve adequately supports the amount required for transfer.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Staff have consulted with Executive Services around the potential benefits in selling these parcels as one property, and once ready will consult with relevant stakeholders to complete the process.

RESOLUTION 2023/108

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Council approves a budget variation to transfer \$18,000 from the Land and Buildings Reserve to fund the purchase of land, council property number 54100410

.CARRIED

10.5 FINANCE REPORT FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**File Number:** FOL/22/4399**Author:** Deanne Caserta, Manager Financial Services**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate**Attachments:** 1. Finance Report - quarter ending 30 September 2023**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council

1. receives and notes 'Finance Report for the quarter ending 30 September 2023'
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 2023/24 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 2023/24.

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.

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 2023 quarter at the April 2023 Council Meeting. The 2022/23 full financials were presented to Council at the August 2023 Council Meeting.

BACKGROUND

The Finance Report for the quarter ended 30 September 2023 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 2023/24 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 July 2023 by \$2.77M to \$6.99M. The main variations include an increase to the expected interest to be received for the financial year along with additional income from infrastructure grants.

Income Statement (revenue) - Council's year to date (YTD) operating revenue is at 35% of total budget. Revenue brought to account for the quarter was \$18.2M. Fees and charges, non-recurrent operating grants and recurrent capital grants actuals are all behind YTD budget. Other income types including reimbursements, recurrent operating grants, non-recurrent capital grants and interest income are ahead of YTD budget.

Income Statement (expenditure) - Council's operating expenditure is at 18% of total budget. Payments for this quarter totalled \$11.7M. Contractors and utilities are tracking behind expected budget expenditure and creditors and labour tracking ahead. The most significant variances are contractors and creditors.

Capital Works - The revised budget for capital works is \$25.1M and is 10% complete in financial terms for the current financial year. Works for the quarter totalled \$2.54M.

The main variations within capital expenditure relate to:

- LRCI funded projects which have not yet been started or have commenced but expenditure is tracking behind budget
- plant replacement, equipment has been ordered but there is an extensive delivery delay with some items of plant.

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 \$40.3M with \$4.26M in general accounts. Total debtors at the end of September 2023 are \$13.8M, this includes \$12.7M in rates. Sundry debtors total \$1.2M 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 2023/24.

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 2023/109

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council

1. receives and notes 'Finance Report for the quarter ending 30 September 2023'
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 2023/24 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 2023/24

.CARRIED

10.6 ANNUAL REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2023**File Number:****Author:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Annual Report for Year Ending 30 June 2023**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the Loddon Shire Council Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2023.

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.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Council discussed the Annual Report at the Councillor Forums on 12 September and 10 October 2023.

BACKGROUND

In accordance sections 98, 99 and 100 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) Council must prepare an Annual Report in respect of each financial year.

The Act no longer requires Council to submit the budget or annual report to the Minister for Local Government. The Annual Report must however be presented to Council, at a meeting open to the public, within four months of the end of the financial year.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

The Annual Report for the 2022/23 period has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

The attached Annual Report includes:

- a report of operations of the Council
- an audited performance statement
- audited financial statements
- a copy of the auditor's report on the performance statement and
- a copy of the auditor's report on the financial statements

The report of operations contains a statement of progress on implementation of the Council Plan, which includes the results of the strategic indicators; a statement of progress in relation to the major initiatives identified in the budget and the measures and performance of the prescribed indicators of service performance.

The financial statements included in the attachment have been prepared in accordance with the regulations and have been audited by the Victorian Auditor General's Office.

COST/BENEFITS

As well as being a legislative requirement, preparation of the Annual Report provides Council with an opportunity to formally record the achievements of the financial year at an organisation level and by individual staff.

RISK ANALYSIS

Timely preparation and approval of the Annual Report ensures that Council complies with legislative requirements outlined in the Act.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

There is no longer a requirement to submit the Annual Report to the Minister of Local Government however Council must comply with its public transparency policy and the public transparency principles in section 58 of the Act.

A public notice was placed in the Bendigo Advertiser and Loddon Herald to advise the public the Annual Report has been prepared and is available for inspection at Council's office in Wedderburn, and on Council's website, and will be presented at the 24 October 2023 Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 2023/110

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council adopts the Loddon Shire Council Annual Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2023

.CARRIED

10.7 DECISION REPORT 5917: RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR EARTHWORKS (LASER GRADING AND CHANNEL CONSTRUCTION).**File Number:****Author:** Darcy Jackson, Statutory Planning Officer**Authoriser:** Louise Johnston, Statutory Planning Coordinator**Attachments:** 1. **Decision Report - PA5917**2. **Irrigation Works Design Plan**3. **Objections (grouped) - Confidential**

This attachment is designated as confidential in accordance with Section 3(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It contains personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

(under separate cover)

4. **Photo report from site inspection 7 September 2023 (labelled)****RECOMMENDATION**

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 5917 for retrospective earthworks (irrigation channels and laser grading) that change the rate of flow or discharge point of water across a property boundary in the Farming Zone and carry out works (earthworks) in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay subject to the following conditions:

1. Amended Plans Required

Prior to any further earthworks commencing as part of this approval, plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be generally in accordance with Irrigation Design Plan by NJC Irrigation Solutions but modified to show:

- Whole farm management plan, which incorporates the existing irrigation on Crown Allotments 106A, 106B, 107A, and 107B to the south and the new irrigation on Crown Allotments 108 and 109. The plan will need to show all of the requested changes in condition 8 and how floodwater is conveyed through both sites.

2. Layout not altered

The development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

3. Channel and Banks

3.1. The irrigation channel banks must be constructed no higher than 300mm above the Design Water Level within the channel.

3.2. All channels and banks must be curtailed 20 metres from the end of the last irrigation bay. This area must free from spoil and levelled at natural ground level.

4. Siphons

All existing and proposed siphons must be constructed at natural ground level and must be maintained in accordance with the best practice guidelines – *Floodplain Management Guidelines for Whole Farm Plans within the Shepparton Irrigation Region, 2003*

5. Check Banks

5.1. All check banks must be constructed no higher than 300mm above natural ground level

5.2. Check banks must be curtailed at least 20 metres from the end of each irrigation bay to allow floodwater to be dispersed.

6. Access Tracks

All access tracks must be constructed or modified to be at natural ground level.

7. Spoil

7.1. All surplus spoil must be removed from the floodplain and located in an area that is not flood affected.

7.2. Where drain spoil runs across the direction of the flood flow, suitable openings must be constructed of at least 20 metres for every 40 metres of the spoil length.

8. Whole Farm Management Plan

Prior to any further earthworks commencing, a Whole Farm Management Plan (WFMP) must be prepared, approved and implemented to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. The WFMP must include:

- Changes to PP4132 to include:
- A new 30 metre wide siphon must be constructed where the section of the irrigation adjoins the wetland to the south, east of the existing siphon where the designated waterway is shown on an aerial map of the site.
- The existing siphon must be modified to ensure it is at natural ground level and no check banks are to be constructed across the siphon.
- The existing channel crossing on the access track must be reduced to natural ground level and the siphon extended for a width of 30 metres.
- Spoil associated with the new drains where it intersects the floodplain, suitable cuts and siphons must be installed to ensure the floodwater can flow through the site generally in the northern direction.

Changes to new irrigation to include:

- Levelling of all farm channel banks to a height of 300mm above Design Water Level
- Levelling all check and drain banks at 300mm above natural ground level
- Levelling all access tracks to natural ground level
- Removing all surplus spoil from the floodplain
- Curtailing check and channel banks 20 metres from the edge of the drains to allow water to disperse across the floodplain.
- Openings in drain spoil that runs across the floodplain as per condition 7.2.

9. Setback from waterway

All works must be setback a minimum of 30 metres from the existing waterway that traverses the subject site.

10. Expiry

This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances apply:

- (a) the development is not started within four months of the date of this permit;
- (b) the development is not completed within six months of the date of this permit.

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

There have been no previous Council discussion on this matter.

BACKGROUND

The application was lodged on the 4 August 2023 for earthworks (laser grading and channel construction). The works have already been completed therefore this is a retrospective application with modifications to be made to comply.

The application was referred externally to North Central Catchment Management Authority who have provided consent and Goulburn Murray Water who provided advice with no conditions.

The objections raised issues with the earthworks redirecting and obstructing floodwaters, increasing the risk to the life and property of landholders on the floodplain. Irrigation works approved in 2006 to the south of the property were also raised as obstruction to floodwaters in the area, this property was under the ownership of the applicant.

Officer recommendation is to issue a notice of decision to grant a planning permit.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act) the Minister of Planning delegates a municipal council power to become the planning authority for any planning scheme in force in its municipal district.

A municipal council is obligated to enforce and administer the relevant Planning Scheme and must use the scheme to determine applications. The Loddon Planning Scheme is the relevant Planning Scheme for Council. An application is referred to Council for determination, which:

- receive one or more objections, and/or
- are to be recommended for refusal by the Planning officer.

Pursuant to Section 52 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, notices were sent to owners and occupiers of adjoining land. Council has received 17 objections as the result of the public notification and as such, the matter is being brought to Council for determination. A decision report detailing this application has been prepared and can be found in attachment 1, proposed plans in attachment 2, objections in attachment 3 and a photo report from site inspection conducted on 7 September 2023 is in attachment 4.

COST/BENEFITS

There are various costs associated with having a delegated Planning officer consider an application and make a recommendation as well as with the time of the Councillors to consider this recommendation.

The benefits associated with this report is the ability of Council to fulfil its requirement under law and provide the community with a statutory service that delivers well-managed and appropriate development.

RISK ANALYSIS

The risks of Council not fulfilling its statutory obligation under the Act include:

- inappropriate use and development which could endanger life and property
- Council's reputation as a Responsible Authority
- breaches of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 requiring compliance action.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Refer to the decision report for further detail on the application.

RESOLUTION 2023/111

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth
Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That the Responsible Authority having considered all matters which the Planning and Environment Act, 1987, requires it to consider, decides to issue a Notice of Decision to grant a planning permit 5917 for retrospective earthworks (irrigation channels and laser grading) that change the rate of flow or discharge point of water across a property boundary in the Farming Zone and carry out works (earthworks) in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay subject to the following conditions:

1. Amended Plans Required

Prior to any further earthworks commencing as part of this approval, plans to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority must be submitted to and approved by the Responsible Authority. When approved, the plans will be endorsed and will then form part of the permit. The plans must be generally in accordance with Irrigation Design Plan by NJC Irrigation Solutions but modified to show:

- Whole farm management plan, which incorporates the existing irrigation on Crown Allotments 106A, 106B, 107A, and 107B to the south and the new irrigation on Crown Allotments 108 and 109. The plan will need to show all of the requested changes in condition 8 and how floodwater is conveyed through both sites.

2. Layout not altered

The development as shown on the endorsed plans must not be altered without the prior written consent of the Responsible Authority.

3. Channel and Banks

3.1. The irrigation channel banks must be constructed no higher than 300mm above the Design Water Level within the channel.

3.2. All channels and banks must be curtailed 20 metres from the end of the last irrigation bay. This area must free from spoil and levelled at natural ground level.

4. Siphons

All existing and proposed siphons must be constructed at natural ground level and must be maintained in accordance with the best practice guidelines – *Floodplain Management Guidelines for Whole Farm Plans within the Shepparton Irrigation Region, 2003*

5. Check Banks

5.1. All check banks must be constructed no higher than 300mm above natural ground level

5.2. Check banks must be curtailed at least 20 metres from the end of each irrigation bay to allow floodwater to be dispersed.

6. Access Tracks

All access tracks must be constructed or modified to be at natural ground level.

7. Spoil

7.1. All surplus spoil must be removed from the floodplain and located in an area that is not flood affected.

7.2. Where drain spoil runs across the direction of the flood flow, suitable openings must be constructed of at least 20 metres for every 40 metres of the spoil length.

8. Whole Farm Management Plan

Prior to any further earthworks commencing, a Whole Farm Management Plan (WFMP) must be prepared, approved and implemented to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority. The WFMP must include:

- Changes to PP4132 to include:
- A new 30 metre wide siphon must be constructed where the section of the irrigation adjoins the wetland to the south, east of the existing siphon where the designated waterway is shown on an aerial map of the site.
- The existing siphon must be modified to ensure it is at natural ground level and no check banks are to be constructed across the siphon.
- The existing channel crossing on the access track must be reduced to natural ground level and the siphon extended for a width of 30 metres.
- Spoil associated with the new drains where it intersects the floodplain, suitable cuts and siphons must be installed to ensure the floodwater can flow through the site generally in the northern direction.

Changes to new irrigation to include:

- Levelling of all farm channel banks to a height of 300mm above Design Water Level
- Levelling all check and drain banks at 300mm above natural ground level
- Levelling all access tracks to natural ground level
- Removing all surplus spoil from the floodplain
- Curtailing check and channel banks 20 metres from the edge of the drains to allow water to disperse across the floodplain.
- Openings in drain spoil that runs across the floodplain as per condition 7.2.

9. Setback from waterway

All works must be setback a minimum of 30 metres from the existing waterway that traverses the subject site.

10. Expiry

This permit will expire if one of the following circumstances apply:

- (a) the development is not started within four months of the date of this permit;
- (b) the development is not completed within six months of the date of this permit.

CARRIED

10.8 2023 OFFICE CLOSURE**File Number:** fol/20/7226**Author:** Janine Jackson, Manager Organisation Development**Authoriser:** Amanda Wilson, Director Corporate**Attachments:** Nil**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. approve the closure of the Wedderburn administrative centre from midday Friday 22 December 2023 with a proposed reopening at 8.15 am on Tuesday 2 January 2024.
2. give notice of the amended office hours by publishing the details in the public notices section of the Bendigo Advertiser, in the Loddon Herald, on Council's website and on social media.

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

Nil

BACKGROUND

The Loddon Shire Council has historically closed the Wedderburn administrative centre to the public over the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

In 2023, Christmas Day falls on a Monday and it is proposed that Council closes the Wedderburn administrative centre from midday Friday 22 December 2023 and reopens at 8.15 am on Tuesday 2 January 2024.

This is traditionally a quiet period for Loddon Shire Council services and is disjointed due to the public holidays. Office closure allows staff to draw down annual leave with minimal service disruption.

Minimum staffing levels will be maintained across the Christmas/New Year period to attend to any emergency callouts.

COST/BENEFITS

The shutdown provides the opportunity to enable staff to have a refreshing break with minimum interruption to business activities at the end of the calendar year.

The office closure has no direct cost to Council, as staff are required to access leave accruals for the period of leave.

RISK ANALYSIS

This Christmas New Year period is generally a time of low customer enquiry and minimal operational deadlines in the organisation.

Staff will be on call as required, to attend to any incidents that may occur during the closure.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The proposed office closure over the holiday period is endorsed by the Consultative Committee.

RESOLUTION 2023/112

Moved: Cr Gavan Holt

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That Council:

1. approve the closure of the Wedderburn administrative centre from midday Friday 22 December 2023 with a proposed reopening at 8.15 am on Tuesday 2 January 2024.
2. give notice of the amended office hours by publishing the details in the public notices section of the Bendigo Advertiser, in the Loddon Herald, on Council's website and on social media

.CARRIED

11 INFORMATION REPORTS**11.1 DINGEE PRESCHOOL ASSESSMENT AND RATING OUTCOME****File Number:** FOL/23/2804**Author:** Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing**Authoriser:** Lincoln Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer**Attachments:** 1. Dingee Preschool Notice of Rating**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive and note the report detailing the outcomes of the National Quality Framework assessment conducted at the Loddon cluster kindergarten at Dingee.

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

There has been no previous discussion in relation to this report.

BACKGROUND

The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement in education and care services. All services approved under the Education and Care Services National Law are assessed and rated by their state or territory regulatory authority.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the National Quality Framework and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education. The NQS includes seven quality areas that provide important outcomes for children. Services are assessed and rated by the regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating based on those results.

The available ratings are:

- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

ISSUES/DISCUSSION

Correspondence received from the Department of Education Quality Assessment and Regulation Division has advised that following a recent assessment and rating visit, the Dingee Preschool received the following rating outcome:

Quality Area 1	Educational program and practice <i>Educational program and practice of educators are child-centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development.</i>	Meeting NQS
Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety <i>Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety and wellbeing.</i>	Meeting NQS

Quality Area 3	Physical environment <i>Physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development.</i>	Meeting NQS
Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements <i>Qualified and experienced educators, who develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create predictable environments and encourage children's active engagement in the learning program.</i>	Meeting NQS
Quality Area 5	Relationships with children <i>Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.</i>	Meeting NQS
Quality Area 6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities <i>Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children, and community partnerships based on active communication, consultation and collaboration are essential.</i>	Meeting NQS
Quality Area 7	Governance and leadership <i>Effective leadership and governance of the service contributes to quality environments for children's learning and development. Effective leaders establish shared values for the service and set clear direction for the service's continuous improvement.</i>	Meeting NQS
This service is rated overall at:		Meeting NQS

The NQS aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in services. The assessment provides service improvement suggestions that will assist Council's Early Years team to reflect on the assessment and rating experience and to continue to improve the quality of the service provided.

COST/BENEFITS

This assessment indicates that children attending the Loddon Cluster Kindergarten at Dingee receive a quality program which enhances their learning in the two years prior to primary school.

Research shows quality education and care early in life leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life. The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Quality education and care shapes every child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning.

The work undertaken to satisfy the needs of the assessment and rating visit were undertaken within the existing budget.

RISK ANALYSIS

There are no risks associated with this report.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Notice of Rating is displayed in each centre and is published on the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) national registers and ACECQA's family focused website, Starting Blocks.

RESOLUTION 2023/113

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council receive and note the report detailing the outcomes of the National Quality Framework assessment conducted at the Loddon cluster kindergarten at Dingee

.CARRIED

12 COMPLIANCE REPORTS

Nil

13 URGENT BUSINESS**RESOLUTION 2023/114**

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Neil Beattie

That the following item be admitted as urgent business:

1. Submission of advocacy priorities for Calder Highway improvements to the Calder Highway Improvement Committee.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2023/115

Moved: Cr Wendy Murphy

Seconded: Cr Gavan Holt

That Loddon Shire Council submits a list of advocacy priorities for Calder Highway improvements to the Calder Highway Improvement Committee that includes:

1. Increase the bridge load limit at Bridgewater,
2. Support signalised pedestrian crossing at Wedderburn,
3. The Department of Transport and Planning partner with Loddon Shire Council in development of the Inglewood Streetscape, and
4. The ongoing upgrade of the Calder Alternate Highway.

CARRIED

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 Scheduling of Special Meeting for the Election of Mayor

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(f) 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 personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

This report will consider a number of matters that may require discussion of personal information such as personal interests and availability.

RESOLUTION 2023/116

Moved: Cr Neil Beattie

Seconded: Cr Linda Jungwirth

That the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(1) and 66(2) of the Local Government Act 2020 while Council considers Agenda item 14.1 – Scheduling of Special Meeting for the Election of Mayor

:CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2023/117

Moved: Cr Linda Jungwirth

Seconded: Cr Wendy Murphy

That Council:

1. call a Special Meeting on Tuesday, 14 November 2023 at 3pm for the purpose of electing the Mayor of the Loddon Shire for 2023/24
3. review its representation on Council and other Committees and advise of any changes.

.CARRIED

The Chief Executive Officer took the Chair and invited nominations for Loddon Shire 2023/24 Mayor Elect.

Cr Holt nominated Cr Straub
Cr Straub declined the nomination

Cr Jungwirth nominated Cr Murphy
Cr Murphy accepted the nomination

Cr Beattie nominated Cr Holt
Cr Holt accepted the nomination

The Chief Executive Officer called for a show of hands for each candidate.

With an absolute majority of votes, Cr Holt was declared Loddon Shire Council Mayor Elect 2023/24.

Mayor Straub returned to the Chair.

NEXT MEETING

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

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 4.45 pm.

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

.....
CHAIRPERSON